ENTRIES POUR IN FOR NEW AIR RACE

AS PLANNING for this month's Race of Champions moves into top gear, entries, which began as a trickle around the end of March, are now pouring in.

The organisers are confident that the "full house" limit of a hundred aircraft will be reached long before entries close on August 8 approximately a week before the race which is to be held from the 16 to 18th from the Letaba Airfield, near Tzaneen.

At the time of writing, with more than six weeks still to go, over 30 confirmed entries had been received from competitors throughout South Africa, some from as far away as Cape Town.

Although none had yet been confirmed from across the border, enquiries had been received from potential competitors in neighbouring states.

Latest news is that another major Pretoria-based sponsor has joined the team and that, for this year at least, the race will be known as the Novas Marine Race of Champions. Other sponsors include Air BP and Alexander Forbes.

Already there is a long list of trophies to be presented and more are expected before the race starts.

The winning team will receive the Champions Trophy with the Dries Briers Trophy going to the second-placed team. The *World Airnews* Trophy will be awarded to the first woman pilot home, but in the case of there being no women pilots taking part, the trophy will go to the first woman navigator across the line.

The Marius Schutte Trophy will be awarded to the highest-placed team whose pilot and navigator have a combined flight experience of under 500 hours.

The Jack Onderstall trophy will go to the winning homebuilt aircraft crew and the Chris Briers Trophy will be awarded to the team who displays the greatest professionalism in the race.

All fuel used in the race will; be sponsored. Numerous other prizes – many of them high value – will also be awarded. For example, there will be R300 000 worth of lucky drawer prizes.

The 2007 Novas Marine Race of Champions is the first of what is planned to be an annual race series.

This year's event forms part of the Golden Jubilee celebrations of the host club, the Letaba Flying Club, which also held a highly successful air show on June 30 *(see page 71)*.

Based on research of many years' race results, each aircraft type will be handicapped according to engine power and these handicap speeds will be posted on the organiser's website (www.airrace.co.za) at least 30 days prior to the race.

Aircraft which are not listed will be subject to a test flight on the day before the start of the race. ✈