

Hot reception awaiting Reunion raiders



LIP-SMACKER: Border stand-out Alice McGregor will captain the SA Emerging team.

REUNION ISLAND's junior surfing squad is in the Cape for a 'friendly' international against the South African Junior, SA Emerging Junior, Western Province and Boland teams.

The contest, held today and tomorrow, is part of a cultural and sporting exchange between Surfing South Africa (SSA) and Reunion Island.

The SA juniors are headed up by ISA World Junior Championships bronze medalist Davey Brand and WP teammate Mikey February, both of whom have four national caps and considerable national and international experience.

New caps Jarred Veldhuis of Kommetjie, recently crowned SA U14 champion Diran Zakarian of Melkbosstrand, JBay stars Steven Sawyer and Dylan Lightfoot, Heidi Palmboom of the Bluff, plus the experienced Dane Staples of St Francis Bay and super talented Sarah Baum of Durban should dominate the individual heats – and ensure the tag team title goes to the SA contingent.

Team reserve Jacob Mellish will surf for the national juniors as a guest as top seed Beyrick de Vries left for the USA on Thursday.

The SA team has a powerful look but hosts Western Province have selected a team with plenty of local knowledge and could surprise.

Captained by U18 SA champion Matt Bromley, WP include brilliant U14 Max Armstrong, Nic Nottan, Ethan Pentz, Benji Brand, Daniel Wilson, Jordan Alexander and Pani

Makinyane. National team trialists Holly Armstrong and Sabrina Scott are the two WP girls in the team.

The Boland team also looks strong and is out to prove a point. They beat Province by one point back in 2006, when the last event of this nature was held, and want to maintain their record.

Jeanré Bignaut, JP Olivier, Rigard Smit, Justin Torode, Leon Du Preez, Steffen Burrows and Dylan Wichmann, along with Morag Steele and Roche Louwrens, are the Boland lineup for this weekend.

SSA's Emerging SA Junior team will be led by Alice McGregor of Border who won the U18 national title at Nahoon Reef last Sunday.

Fellow Border surfer and U18 finalist at Nahoon Reef, Jean Du Plessis, will also turn out for the Invitation side along with SSA Lotto scholarship winners Grant Arendse and Brandon Benjamin of WP and Qhamani Bam of EP.

Southern Cape surfers Ruben Lamer and Vincent Withers have been called up after good SA Championships performances while Benjamin de Castro of Muizenberg and national junior trialist Emma Smith of EP are also in the team.

Included in the Reunion side are several age group champions and French junior team members who although experienced will be surfing in Cape Town for the first time.

● Contestants and officials gather at Long Beach in Kommetjie at 7.30am on both days to determine a venue. The venue will be available on the WP Info line from 8.30 on 082-233 4001.