

Solid silver trophy goes to Tuks

Annual regatta delivers excitement

ROWING

By TYLER RIDDIN

THE last day of the RMB Buffalo Regatta was jam-packed with exciting finals which saw visiting and local crews fight it out as one of the country's most prestigious regattas came to a close.

Up for grabs on Saturday were the Silver Sculls trophy and the Grand Challenge trophy. Both are made of solid silver and are collectively worth more than R1-million.

The junior women U19 first eight final saw the St Stithians girls' crew comfortably produce a win over Clarendon High.

In the final for the senior women coxless four, dubbed the "Princess Challenge", the Tuks crew, stroked by Jessica King, led the pack for first place with Rhodes close behind in second and the Tuks Blanshard boat in a distant third.

The junior men U19 coxless pair race had the lane two St Benedicts boat claiming a clean win with St Andrews in second and the other St Benedicts boat in third.

A close race was had in the junior men U19 sculls final where St Albans, Smit, was able to clinch first with Bishops close on his tail and the Plunket twins claiming third and fourth.

One of the day's premier events, the final for the senior men's sculls, known as the Silver Sculls, did not disappoint. The race saw a tight battle with Vaughn Botes clinging onto first. The major part of the race he fought off Thabelo Masutha, who took bronze at the World Junior Championships in Lithuania.

Botes clinched first, Masutha was

hot on his heels in second and Bradley Betts secured a close third.

All three rowers were representing Tuks. In the final for the senior women eight, Tuks, again stroked by King, were the clear winners. UCT came behind them in second and Rhodes was a distant third.

The junior men's first coxless four final saw another hotly-contested race with St Johns, stroked by Matthew Chamberlain, racking up a win, with St Benedicts coming second and SACS third.

The senior men coxless four final, where the winner claims the prestigious Buffalo Challenge trophy, was yet another exhilarating race.

The two Tuks boats managed to hold the lead for the entire race, battling it out between one another for first.

Behind them was a fight for third between Rhodes and UCT.

The Tuks lane three boat, stroked by Sandro Torrente, put in a final push at the end of the race to widen the gap between them and their counterparts in lane four, securing the win.

Behind them in the fight for third spot, despite a valiant push by UCT, Rhodes managed to keep the gap they created and secured third.

The last race of the day and one of the crowd favourites was the junior men U19 eight's final.

The race, met with much cheering, was very tight, but saw St Andrews pulling away at the finish to snatch the win. Second was St Johns and close behind was Rondebosch in third.

Tuks dominated the trophies. To name a few: in the men's category they won the two most prestigious trophies, the Silver Sculls and Grand Challenge trophy. In the women's



JOY OF VICTORY: Tuks' team members Sandro Torrente, David Hunt, John Smith and Kyle Schoonbee, were the winners of the men's coxless fours final, winning the prestigious solid silver Buffalo Challenge trophy at the annual Buffalo Regatta in East London on Saturday

Picture: MARK ANDREWS

category they won the Princess Rose Plate and Ben Collins Plate.

The overall points winner was VLC with 420 points. The top varsity was the University of Pretoria with

410 points.

The top girls' school was St Andrews School for Girls with 390 points and the top boys' school was St Johns with 370 points.

Philip King, East London Boating Association Chairman, said: "The event has been a great success. We've managed to keep it on time all three days despite some bad con-

ditions.

"I think everyone enjoyed themselves and we saw some fantastic racing. Hopefully we'll see all the competitors return next year."

