

# SUPER YACHT MAKES WAVES



**Super yacht:** Auckland Chamber of Commerce's Michael Barnett, left, presents the award to Ian Cooke of Yachting Development, which built Antares III.

Photo: Phil Doyle



**WHEN ISRAELI** computer billionaire Morris Kahn needed someone to knock him up a 30m superyacht a bit sharpish, he knew a bit of Kiwi ingenuity was called for.

The software genius contacted Auckland company Yachting Developments, which had the state-of-the-art boat in the water within 14 months. Now the company's achievement has been recognised with a KiaOraMai Awesome Services Award for managing director Ian

Cook. There were doubts the high-tech Antares III could be built in the timeframe allowed, but none of them were Cook's, who set his Hobsonville-based team to work.

He believes the Rugby World Cup will provide the industry with marketing opportunities. This year's Boat Show, usually in March, has moved to September, along with a superyacht captains' forum.

"That will give us a global profile,

so it's important companies position themselves to take advantage of any media exposure."

As president of the Marine Industry Association, Cook says the award shows Kiwi boatbuilders can win big contracts against overseas competition, by having confidence in their planning, and "getting support from staff and sub-contractors".

Kahn's agent Patrick Yeoward said the timeframe was a factor in the project being awarded to Yachting

Developments, rather than a northern hemisphere yard.

"Ian Cook ensured construction went like clockwork. Antares III was launched within 14 months and the quality has exceeded expectations.

The level of client service is an example of why we would strongly recommend New Zealand, Ian, and his company to overseas interests."

Industry sources estimate the Antares III would have cost about \$25 million. Auckland Chamber of

Commerce chief executive Michael Barnett, who judges the awards, says Cook's management of superyacht projects was outstanding.

"He employs about 140 people, generates foreign exchange, and demonstrates that New Zealand can cut it with the best in the world."

Yachting Development is now completing an 18-month refit of a 1934 J-class yacht named Endeavour, and building a 30m sailing catamaran.