

## ● YACHTING

# Hi-tech Navy yacht

**By DALE GRANGER**

MAINTAINING their tradition of competitive yachting, the SA Navy — proud mentors of famous single-handed yachtsmen John Martin and Bertie Reed — have rallied to the challenge of the Rothmans Cape to Rio race with a new hi-tech 70 foot racing yacht.

The yacht, still to be named and currently under construction at John Robertson Yachts, will be skippered in the 3 600 mile race in January by Commander Hanno Tueberg, a yachtsman who crewed under Martin before going his own way to clinch victories in the Agulhas Race, the Lisbon race, and many regattas on the Navy's famous 60-footer, Voortrekker 2.

Alex Simonis, the designer, has pulled out all the stops on a creation specifically built to win line-honours in the race and which is likely to be the fastest racing yacht ever built in South Africa. He said that handicap honours had not even featured in the plans.

The key to the boat's downwind performance lies in her monster 700 m<sup>2</sup> sail area (her spinnaker is 102m<sup>2</sup> bigger than Voortrekker II's) but Simonis has enlisted the services of an on-board weather router, Marcel von Triest of Holland, who is one of the best in the world in his science.

Von Triest has sailed two Whitbread Round the World races and his most recent triumph was as a crew on the French Admirals Cup winning boat, Corum Diamond, last year.

Accompanying the router on the yacht will be his state-of-the art computers — the same

equipment being used on the new W-60 Whitbread yachts — with modern access to weather stations around the globe.

● The Navy have entered five other boats in the Cape to Rio race with top naval skipper Gus Mostert at the helm of their famous Voortrekker 2.

They have entered three 9,7m Centurion Yachts, Southern Maid, Southern Floe and Southern Isles which will be skippered by Fred Brown, Robert Bowman and Grant Whitford respectively.