

Adams and Soldini are flying

By DALE GRANGER

THE pedigree of state-of-the-art BOC Challenge around-the-world Class Two yachts was illustrated in the Roaring Forties yesterday as Giovanni Soldini of Italy and Australian David Adams locked horns at breathtaking speeds of 19 knots.

Adams's True Blue led Soldini's Kodak by just six miles, with the pair lying fourth and fifth overall respectively just 132 miles astern of Class One leader Christophe Auguin on the high-tech Sceta Calberson on the second leg to Sydney, Australia.

In the midst of their match-racing duel below the 51st parallel on their downwind flyers, Adams said: "This is fantastic sailing. We're both making 18 to 19 knots in 35-knots wind with a difficult cross sea.

The treacherous front which knocked down Class Two tailender Harry Mitchell of Britain on Henry Hornblower and dismasted South African Neal Petersen's yacht, Protect Our Sealife, was yesterday rapidly closing in on the second-leg leaders, who

were bracing themselves for the onslaught.

"The front is going to catch us soon. In a race like this, you can expect at least one decent storm. This is probably it," Adams reported.

There was little room for comfort for Auguin at the head of the pack yesterday as Sceta Calberson's speed whittled down to an average of 7,1 knots, which allowed second-placed Frenchman Jean Luc van den Heede (Vendee Entreprises) and third-placed American Steve Pettengill (Hunters Child) to make significant gains on him.

With an average speed of 12,7 knots, Van den Heede had progressed to within 51 miles of his countryman. Pettengill, however, was the fastest sailor in the Class One fleet with an average of 13 knots average. He was a further 35 miles astern.

South African JJ Provoyeur on Novell South Africa was still lying fourth in Class One as he sustained 10,4 knots at 50 31 South and 71 06 East with 3 600 miles left to sail to Sydney, Australia.

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