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High spirits
replace
queasiness

'THIS IS WHERE RACE IS WON OR LOST'

Warrior on the charge in Rio battle

LISA TEMPLETON

SPIRITS are soaring on board the Cape-to-Rio yacht crewed by West-erford High School pupils as glori-ous conditions prevail in the Atlantic and queasiness becomes a thing of the past.

As fellow pupils prepared to return to school today, members of the 13-strong crew on board the 20-metre ketch Diel spoke to the Cape Times via radio from the Atlantic to describe life in the wild blue yonder.

"Spirits are extremely high and we are making good progress now that we are firmly into the south-east trade winds," said Mr Henry Timme, one of the adults on board. "We have had the spin- naker up for three days and are doing over 10 knots.

"There was a little bit of queasi-ness among the nine pupils at first as they settled into life at sea, but with one of the pupil's dads, Mr Noel Greeff, cooking some mean meals, appetites are returning fast," he said.

The crew have been doing shifts at the helm — including four-hour watches in the dark Atlantic night — and some very successful fishing between watches, reeling in yellow fin tunny for Mr Greeff to cook.

Mr Timme said the conditions were great, with agreeable temper-atures and blue skies allowing them to cast aside their oil skins.

Ryan Lewis, who has just finished matric and who spent much time working on the interior of the yacht before the race, said he was enjoying every minute of it and that everyone was getting on well.

And how does it feel to be sur-ounded by the big blue and not much else? "Different," Ryan laughed.

"WE ARE SAILING HARD — sometimes spending double and triple watches on deck (16 hours at a stretch) to keep the boat at maximum speed," say the crew of Warrior.

CAPETONIAN yacht Warrior is pulling out all the stops in the Rothmans Cape-to-Rio race to chase handicap and actual leader Fancourt's Morning Glory.

The leading yachts are heading for the island of Ilha de Trinadade, the race marker that will see them on the final lap down the South American coast to Rio.

Fancourt Morning Glory heads the handicap leader board again today after briefly surren-dering the lead to Warrior over the weekend. Fancourt is the early favourite to capture both line and handi- cap honours.

Warrior remains in sec-ond place, trail- ing Fancourt by 301 miles of the water.

"The last two days have been great, good speeds with the record of 17,5 knots (about 3,4 km/h) being set on a dark night with no moon — like sailing with your eyes closed," bowman Ken Vnn said.

"Life on bord is getting tense as the island loms ahead. This is where the race can be won or lost.

"We are saing the boat harder now (if that is possible) and have only lost 10 mps to Fancourt in the past 24 hrs — she needs to take at least 0 miles out of us a day to ensura win."

As the yachts lie on the water, Fancourt is 1,209 miles to go, Nicorette 310 and unofficial

entrant Corum Watches (Whit- bread 60), 1 375. Barring unfore- seen circumstances, this is likely to be the order in which they finish in Rio de Janeiro this weekend.

The best performance of the day came from the Italian entry Orchidea Seac Banche, which cov- ered 226 miles. Andrea Scarabelli and crew have looked threatening all week, following a more norther- ly routing than the other top con- tenders.

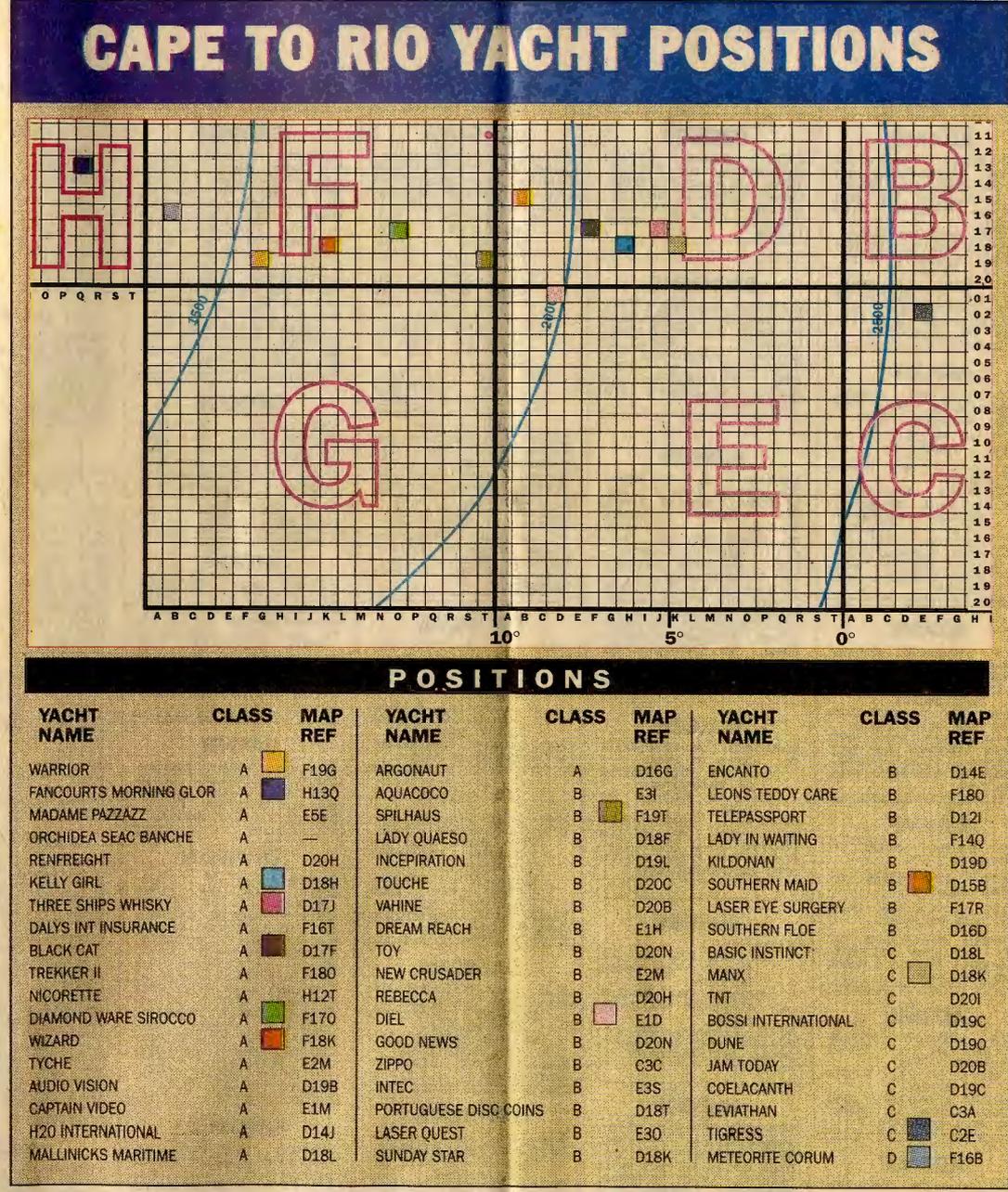
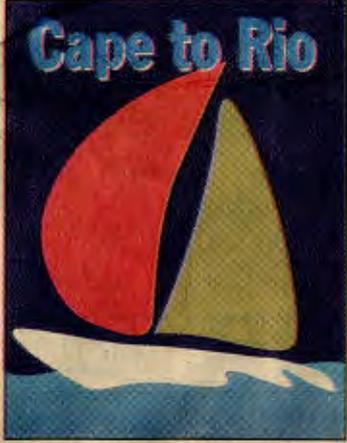
Orchidea has moved into third position on handicap, displacing both Wizard and Nicorette.

Nicorette covered an excellent 239 miles yesterday, but such is the maxi's handi- cap rating that even this run could not prevent her from

slipping a notch. Both Orchidea and Renfreight, the surprise pack- age of the race so far, are lying ahead.

Jan Reuvers is still as solid as a rock and his yacht Wizard occupa- pies fourth place.

Many of the yachts are taking strain after more than eight straight days at sea. On Kelly Girl, the all-women entry skippered by Marion Cole, the first days proved just how demanding ocean racing can be. Smothered by leaking diesel and the stench from blocked heads, the crew found their first days out at sea far from pleasant.



This was compounded by a twisted spinnaker around the forestay which saw teenage crew member,

Dominique Provoyeur, being hoisted up to effect repairs. Still, being 21st out of a fleet of

54, they are showing many of the more muscular competitors how it should be done. — Staff Reporter