

A FLEET of 22 ocean racers will set off next Saturday to sail about 6 000 nautical miles from the Cape of Good Hope to Lisbon and you, the landlubber, can get into the spirit of things this weekend down at the Royal Cape Yacht Club.

The **Portnet Dias Yacht Race** — one of the longest blue ocean races in the world — sets off next Saturday, March 31, but today things will be buzzing with Portuguese atmosphere and fun down at the yacht club as entrants get things shipshape for the three-to-four week ordeal ahead.

The fun — including Portuguese rock, folk music and *fado*, Portuguese and local wines and foods — has been created by the Cruising Association of South Africa, organisers of the event, and the RCYC.

The club's galley has honed up on Portuguese cuisine, with the help of its splendid chef, I am told, and at lunch (12.30-



## A fun weekend à la Portuguese

3pm) and dinner (6-10pm), special dishes like grilled baby chicken, beef kebabs, garlic rice, garden salad and desserts will be served.

At around 6pm today, members of the Portuguese Folk Dancers, in traditional dress — brilliant with embroidered scarlet — will entertain on the quayside with dances from northern Portugal and Madeira, some of which go back to the time of Dias himself.

The public is invited and very welcome — but be warned that parking will be at a premium and only members may park in the yacht club's grounds.

On the day of the race the activities will be similar, and even though the contestants will be over the horizon by 5.30-6pm, the festive mood promises to continue.

The starter's gun will go off at 3pm. For those who want a good spectator view, try the break-

water, the beachfront at Mouille Point, High Level Road, Milnerton beach or Signal Hill.

I've been reliably told that if the wind is in the west, the contestants will hoist their spinnakers almost immediately after the start.

If it's blowing from the south or south-east, spinnakers will unfurl when the buoy (beyond the power station) has been rounded and under those conditions, Milnerton will be the best spot.

So Capetonians and sports fans, go along and give them your moral support.

CAPE TIMES

24/3/90