



Picture: ROBERT D'AVICE

THEY'RE OFF: Fireballs battle for position as they tack to windward at the start of the fourth round of the Durban Unlimited Fireball World Championships off Durban yesterday. 78 yachts from 11 countries are competing. **Report, P22**

NATAL DAILY NEWS

Pinnel and Cripps stretch their lead 16-3-94

Flying Brits cruise on

The World Fireball Championships continued off Durban yesterday.
Norman Sheriff reports

NOTHING and no one, it would appear, can come close to stopping 'Flying Brits' Ian Pinnel and Daniel Cripps, who yesterday notched up yet another win in the Durban Unlimited Fireball World Championships.

The British pair are now 37.4 points ahead of their nearest rivals, Craig Cobbin and Chris Schwarz of Australia, in the regatta which has attracted 78 Fireballs from 11 countries.

Not wishing to be drawn into making a prediction, Northampton-based skipper Pinnel said after yesterday's race, however, he was "quietly confident of overall victory".

Yesterday's fourth round was held in a lightish south-westerly which later veered round to the east and blew a relatively steady 8-14 knots.

After a general recall, race officer Ross Robson got the fleet off to a good start at the

second attempt. The usual cut-and-thrust battle up the first beat saw Cobbin and Schwarz leading from fellow Australians Heather and Chris Payne, who were the winners of the first race and overall winners of the pre-worlds.

Pinnel and Cripps were fourth at this stage behind Richard Perkins and Gareth Edwards, also of Great Britain.

The Payne husband-and-wife team took the lead on the reach but on the second beat to windward Pinnel took a long tack over to port and with his superior boatspeed took the lead which he gradually increased to take the race by about a minute.

The Paynes were second over the finishing line followed by defending champions Tim Rush and Jon Ward of Great Britain with compatriots Richard Perkins and Gareth Edwards fourth.

The first South African boat home yesterday was crewed by Martin Lambrecht and Simon Golliker of Cape Town who were seventh.

"We had a good first beat and were up to fifth place at one time," said Lambrecht. "I thought we were in with a chance but at this level of competition you just can't afford to make mistakes and we fell back to seventh on the final beat."

It's time to get back to grassroots level

OVERSEAS yachtsmen — and women — are dominating the Durban Unlimited Fireball World Championships with, at this stage, only two South African crews in the top 10 out of 78 yachts.

Why?

Possibly because of our sporting isolation for so many years but more likely a question of approach.

"We're just not assertive enough during the start," said one local Fireball crewman this week.

This is so true. Foreign Fireballers regularly sail in

**At
The
Helm**
Norman
Sheriff



fleets of well over 100 yachts and have the experience of handling the cut-throat battle to be over the line first. At a

South African nationals 30 or so boats would be the norm, so straight away we're at a disadvantage because of our small fleets.

Perhaps the sailing authorities would do well to concentrate more on promoting international classes such as Fireballs and 505s instead of the 'glamour' Olympic classes.

After all, at the Olympics only one competitor per country is allowed to enter while at a world championship there is virtually no limit to the number.

So would it not be better for the sport to get back to grassroots level by getting more people onto the water in reasonably priced boats than to push the 1% who want to compete in the Olympics?

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THERE'S a new twist to next year's America's Cup competition when, for the first time in its 142-year history, an all-girl crew will be competing.

The defence campaign is being put together by 1992 winner Bill Koch who said this week that the \$20-million project would hopefully have a new yacht but that America3 and Kanza were also available. Probable skipper at this stage is Dawn Riley, currently skippering Heineken in the Whitbread.

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LATEST on Durban solo round-the-worlder Ant Steward is that he should be rounding Cape Agulhas and be off Cape Town later today.

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THE monthly sailing seminar at the Point Yacht Club takes place tomorrow at 6pm. Alick Hardie will be giving a slide show and talking on chartering and cruising in Turkey.