

2-DAY ERROR IN RECKONING

Voortrekker trip was even faster

The Argus Special Representative

PLYMOUTH, Monday.

SOUTH AFRICA'S entry for the solo transatlantic race, Voortrekker, made the voyage from Cape Town to Plymouth in 43½ sailing days, not 45½ days as her skipper, Bruce Dalling, announced when the ketch arrived here on Friday.

The discovery that what had been regarded in any case as a remarkable fast voyage was, in fact, even faster, was made yesterday when Dalling found a quiet moment after the hectic arrival activities to check his log.

As he sat in Voortrekker's cabin checking and rechecking distances and times, Dalling said: 'Well, this is really remarkable. I thought the first time given was enough to raise our hopes, but this corrected time is almost astounding.'

He immediately sent off a cable to the Springbok Ocean Racing Trust giving the correct sailing time and a breakdown of the distances involved.

FAST LAST LEG

When the other members of Voortrekker's crew, Bobby Bongers and Gordon Webb, heard the news they were equally surprised.

Dalling explained: 'I knew we were doing well, and I computed that it would take us eight to nine days from the Azores to Plymouth, and reckoned we would therefore make Plymouth in approximately 45½ sailing days. But in the general rush of things I overlooked that we had, in fact, taken only six days 15 hours for the last leg.'

There have been other surprises this week-end for the three South Africans. Dr. Hamish Campbell, the Durban committee member of the Ocean Racing Trust was at Plymouth to welcome them. Dr. Campbell is on a business-cum-holiday trip to Britain.

MEETS SISTER

A surprise for Dalling was the arrival in Plymouth of his sister, Karel, who is married to a Foreign Office official, Mr. Anthony

Chamier, and who spent yesterday helping to sort out Voortrekker's provisions.

The South Africans were just in time, too, to attend the wedding here of an old yachting friend, Alan Higgins, an Englishman who lived in South Africa for a time and had done much sailing there.

Now, after the initial excitement, the three are getting down to the task of preparing Voortrekker for the race.

MINOR SNAGS

There will be much to do. Although the ketch was not damaged on the trip, the shake-down voyage has inevitably disclosed some minor snags that will have to be straightened out.

'None of them is serious in any way—just the sort of thing one is bound to find with a new boat put to a test like this,' said Dalling.

They are not completely satisfied with the self-steering, and have asked Mr. van der Stadt, the brilliant Dutch designer, to come from Holland to advise them before they do any modifications.

Mr. van der Stadt designed the famous race-winning South African ketch Stormvogel, of which Voortrekker might be said to be a smaller version.

NEW MAINSAIL

The South Africans may also try out a new mainsail, as well as make other tests off Plymouth. Voortrekker will also have to be taken to a yard for bottom cleaning. Much of the equipment carried for the three-man crew can now be dispensed with.

Dalling believes Voortrekker can be lightened in this way by up to three-quarters of a ton for the transatlantic race.