

# Psychological warfare hots up

SAN DIEGO (California) — The America's Cup finals are still three days away but the psychological war between the U.S. defender and Italian challenger was well under way yesterday.

America3 Syndicate spokesman David Rosow fired a salvo across Il Moro di Venezia's bow on Monday when he accused the Italians of violating Cup rules by using French-made sails against New Zealand in the challenger finals.

Rosow's Italian counterpart, Stefano Roberti, yesterday dismissed the accusations as "ridiculous".

"We absolutely did not use them in racing. No French designer has made our sails," Roberti said.

"We have not raced with their sails. Their claim is useless. We could claim

that they are guilty too," he continued. "They practised on the French boat F-2 last year, but because it was not in competition our complaint would be useless too."

America's Cup rules state that syndicates can use only equipment made by citizens of the nation they represent.

Rosow said he is looking into the possibility of this week presenting evidence to the America's Cup Match Jury of the use of illegal sails by the Italians. He added that he wanted to get the issue settled before racing begins on Saturday.

America3 is also making an issue of the nationality of Il Moro skipper Paul Cayard ahead of the first Cup finals in which Americans will be at the helm of both boats.

Cayard told a news conference yes-

terday that he was sick of being called a "mercenary" by America3 syndicate chief Bill Koch.

Soon after beating Dennis Conner's Stars and Stripes for the right to defend the America's Cup, Koch declared: "I'm an American. I'm going to sail for America. Paul Cayard sails for money. He goes where the money is."

Koch added that he could not imagine representing any country but his own in international competition.

Cayard tried to brush off the criticism.

"I've heard that too many times," he said. "It doesn't bother me."

Cayard's navigator, fellow-American Robert Hopkins, was clearly annoyed by Koch's sniping.

"Koch is from Kansas," Hopkins said. "He should get out and see what the

world's about — a wonderful world. Sailing is international. That's its strength."

Roberti said Koch has been unsuccessful in his attempts to unsettle the Italian crew. "They should try some new idea if they want to bother us."

The best-of-seven series showdown in yachting's oldest championship starts on Saturday and the two survivors are taking contrasting approaches in the run-up to the finals.

"We're putting on a new keel, testing new sails, working on the hull — new everything," Rosow said earlier this week. "You won't recognise her — it's all in the name of lightness and speed."

The Italians say they are just practising this week and not doing any major adjustments to their boat, apart from some sail-testing. — Sapa-Reuter.