

CAPE ARAUS 13-9-00

SAILING

Double danger off Cape coast

DON HOLLIDAY

NAVIGATIONAL skills will be tested to the limit as more than 60 yachts set out tomorrow night on one of the Cape's most exciting off-shore races, the First Bowring Double Cape.

The yachts will follow a 133 nautical mile anti-clockwise course through Table Bay, Hout Bay, Gordon's Bay and Simon's Bay, rounding Cape Point twice.

Much of the sailing will be done at night close to the rocky coastline and around submerged rocks with the possibility of large swells and strong

currents adding to the excitement and danger. Some beacons are only 500m off the coast.

The race is unique in that, while each yacht sails the same course, skippers have the choice of starting and finishing at one of four yacht clubs — Royal Cape, Hout Bay, False Bay or Gordon's Bay.

Ian Martin, skipper of the giant monohull Get More Fun, said the winner was likely to come from the Royal Cape stable. "Royal Cape is the strongest club and I think all the serious contenders will be starting from Table Bay."

The overall winner will be decided on the Performance Handicap Rating Factor — monohulls only. There are other classes for multihulls.

Choosing a likely winner is difficult. "It's wide open. There are a dozen boats who could pull it off. If the wind is strong Get More Fun has a good chance for line honours," said Martin.