

RICUS van de Stadt may well glow with pride as the Cape-to-Rio fleet sails out of Table Bay; and he could have even greater cause for self-congratulation when the leaders glide into Rio harbour.

Making predictions is a perilous occupation, but as they say at the race track, the famous Dutch designer will 'have a lot of things going for him.'

Thirteen yachts conceived on his drawing board will push their sleek noses into the Atlantic swells on the big day. Their names make impressive reading.

● **Voortrekker**, South Africa's most famous yacht and second place-getter in the 1968 solo transatlantic race. She will be skippered by Cmdr. Micky Thomas and will carry a naval crew.

● **Ocean Spirit**, the first of the 'Ocean 70' series and one of the world's biggest glassfibre yachts will have Robin Knox-Johnston in command.

● **Stormy**, considered the successor to the famous Stormvogel and built in Denmark for owner-skipper Cornelius Bruynzeel of Stellenbosch.

● **Stormkaap**, almost a 'carbon copy' of Stormy, built in Germany for a Cape Town syndicate and to be sailed by Dave Abromowitz.

● **Mercury**, built in Durban for the Natal Ocean Racing Foundation. Skippered by Bob Nuttall.

● **Westwind**, another Cape Town entry, skippered by Fred Smithers.

● **City of Germiston**, built in the city of its name and based in Durban, will race under E. Jordan.

● **Sprinter**, another Durban-based entry, will sail with an all-woman crew under Molly Warr.

● **Albatros II**, built by the Thesen family in their own yards at Knysna. Skippered by Hout Bay yachtsman John Goodwin.

● **Adamastor**, entered by the Clube Naval de Lourenco Marques. Skippered by Capt. Rosa Coutinho of the Portuguese Navy.

● **Applemist**, built for a Cape Town syndicate. Skippered by Brian Robertson.

● **Barbette**, an English entry out of Poole, with A. G. H. Clackson as skipper.

'RACE HAS STIRRED MINDS OF THE PEOPLE'

● **Pionier**, a new Cape Town sloop sailed by owner-skipper W. Shутten.

All these ocean-going thoroughbreds have lightweight hulls, masts and spars of light metal and separate keels and rudders.

It is possible, he says, to reduce the 'drag' on a vessel by anything from 10 to 20 per cent by reducing the size of the keel and separating it from the rudder.

Van de Stadt considers the separation of keel and rudder to be the biggest break through for many years in the quest for faster racing craft.

'The hull's friction against the water makes up about 50 per cent of the yacht's total resistance. So if you have a smaller keel and reduce 'wetted surface' by 20 per cent you can save more or less 10 per cent in actual resistance.

'Speed is largely governed by resistance.'

The use of light metal alloys in masts and spars has been another major improvement. These and sails made from artificial fibres have made a tremendous difference to the efficiency of racing crews.

'In the old days we had cotton sails and at sea we were always having to repair them. But new sail materials are so

strong they will stand up to almost anything.'

Lighter rigging, masts and spars, among other improvements, meant craft being built today were from 25 to 50 per cent lighter than yachts of the same size built in the thirties.

Mr. van de Stadt was still at school when he sketched his first boat-building plan and he started building yachts in 1933.

Since then his energies have been directed more and more towards the drawing board and now yards all over the world turn out about 1200 yachts of his design every year.

'I think Stormy has a good chance and Knox-Johnston's boat has a chance too,' he says guardedly. 'Anyway, without doubt this race has stirred up the minds of people. This has been good for the sport and for international relations.'



RICUS VAN DE STADT
... his 13 yachts offer a formidable challenge.