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Race to Rio

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ONE DAY TO GO FOR RACE

By a Staff Reporter

WITH the first Cape-to-Rio race just one day away, Cape Town's yacht basin is humming with activity as skippers and crews make last-minute preparations for tomorrow's mass start at 4.30 p.m.

'The start will be the culmination of 2½ years of work,' Mr. Tom Unite, executive secretary of the race organising committee, said today.

'Everything is going smoothly and all we hope is that there will be brighter weather for the spectators tomorrow.'

Close on 100 000 people are expected to crowd the shoreline near Mouille Point and the slopes of Signal Hill to see the yachts sail over the starting line off Ranger Bay when the Mayor of Cape Town (Dr. Jan Dommisse) fires the starting gun on the A. Navy minesweeper S.A.S. *Wesselbaai*.

Earlier, at 2.30 p.m., the National Sea Rescue Institute will give a demonstration off the breakwater and at 2.50 three divers are scheduled to drop into the sea to be 'rescued' by helicopters.

Dommisse, who is to travel to Rio for the end of the race — and Mrs. Dommisse will be guests of the Mayor of Rio de Janeiro today: 'I am really looking forward to the race.'

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ing forward to the start. To me, the race symbolises the fact that the South Atlantic links rather than separate the cities of Cape Town and Rio de Janeiro.

'It is heartening to see that enterprising men are prepared to accept the challenge of the sea in these small yachts.'

Mr. Justice Louis van Winsen, a member of the organising committee, said: 'This is substantially our first entry into serious international ocean racing. It will be a magnificent start. One can only hope that the rest of the race will bring it to its fulfilment.'

And at the yacht basin, scene of all the activity, the vice-commodore of the Iate Clube do Rio Janeiro (Mr. Jean Barbara) said the fleet looked 'marvellous.'

He said he was looking forward to the sight of all the yachts moored at his club alongside the many coming in during the race from Buenos Aires.

Mounting public excitement in Cape Town was reflected in the large numbers of cars that crowded the yacht basin area last night. People armed with cameras swarmed on the quay-side, ogling the boats.

'It's like Newlands after a test match,' said an official.

WITHDRAWAL

Last night the skippers attended a briefing to clear up any queries they might have had. Tonight there will be a farewell dinner for all the competitors.

Many of the skippers, including some like Peter Poland of the British entry *Matchless*, who have competed in numerous races, praised the organisation of the race. 'I have never seen anything like it,' Lieutenant-Commander Poland said.

For a few of the yachts, there was still work to be done today.

A late withdrawal from the race today was the concrete-hulled *Quo Vadis*, built in a suburban backyard. 'We were notified this morning by the owners that she would not take part,' Mr. Unite said. 'No reason was given.'