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Yachts fan out to find best courses

By ROGER WILLIAMS
on board the guardship Tafelberg

AFTER THREE DAYS of fast downwind sailing, the Cape-to-Rio yachts have begun to fan out over a vast expanse of ocean—some obviously going far north to benefit from the trade winds at their strongest:

Others in the medium and smaller classes appear to be heading west, already on a more direct course to Rio.

Having once more remained ahead and out of the way of the yachts during the night we came back on a reciprocal course early yesterday morning to find the Canadian ketch Graybeard still forging ahead on a north-westerly course under full sail including her main spinnaker and a rainbow-patterned mizzen spinnaker.

It was not till 5 p.m. (SA time) that we saw the next Rio race yacht—the Dutch-registered ketch Stormy skip-



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pered by Kees Bruynzeel, of Stellenbosch.

She was a good 60 miles from Graybeard and about 400 miles west by south of Luderitz, and headed on a more westerly course than the Canadian yacht was on yesterday morning.

While Graybeard was still moving along at a steady clip, Stormy was making a bare three or four knots in light airs, in spite of the huge spinnaker and the mizzen staysail she was carrying.

As we left Stormy behind, the foot of her spinnaker was trailing in the water and all

her sail were slatting about for want of wind. Before sighting Stormy we passed close by the American schooner Marie Celeste, which is cruising around the world and which spent a few days in Cape Town before resuming her voyage last week.

SIREN BLASTS

Tafelberg sounded three long blasts on her siren as we passed down her starboard side. Both she and Stormy, which is one of the pace-setters in the race to Rio, were some 600 miles from Cape Town when we saw them.

The weather in the past day has been “perfect out here” yesterday the skies were clear, the sea beautifully calm and there was only a mild wind.

When I spoke to Brian Lello in Albatros 2 yesterday morning, he said the Knysna sloop was then passing through a mild rain squall. The boat was making six knots in a 15-knot wind.

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