

# YACHTS IN NORTH FAVOURERD

By a Staff Reporter 27.1.71

**W**ITH the Cape-to-Rio front-runners nearing the half-way mark between Cape Town and Rio, indications are that the yachts farther north are going to have better winds than those taking a more direct southerly route.

This will favour yachts such as Stormy, Golden City and Fortuna which are farther north than most of the fleet.

Yachts south of latitude 25 degrees south may run into north-west headwinds of 10 to 15 knots. About a quarter of the fleet are in this area, including the all-woman entry Sprinter, skippered by Molly Warr.

A meteorological officer in Cape Town said today's forecast to the fleet might be a little 'dicey' because of the lack of information from the South Atlantic west of Tristan.

## SQUARES

But the available information did make it possible to predict trends. For the sake of simplicity, the South Atlantic has been divided into a series of squares, each given a code letter.

The bulk of the fleet is in area D or 'Delta.' This is between latitudes 15 degrees and 25 degrees south and longitude 10 degrees west and the Greenwich meridian.

In this area, the winds (until midnight tonight) are expected to be easterly and blowing at five knots. These are light winds—but they are blowing in the right direction.

Farther south in area Delta, the expected winds will be

stronger (up to 10 knots), but blowing northerly.

In area E or 'Echo,' between latitudes 25 degrees south and 35 degrees south and longitude 10 degrees west and the Greenwich meridian, the winds will be least favourable — north-west at 10 to 15 knots. In other words, if these winds prevail, the smaller yachts in the south will be up against headwinds.

But the yachts farther north have nothing to chuckle about. After they pass the halfway mark they will move into area F or 'Foxtrot.' This is between latitudes 15 degrees south and 25 degrees south and longitudes 10 degrees west and 20 degrees west.

Here the forecast is for light and variable winds — not at all suitable for the bulky sails of yachts such as Graybeard, Ocean Spirit and Fortuna.

So the race is moving into a fascinating stage, with the skippers and navigators using all their skills to find speed in difficult weather conditions.

A feature of the latest positional report is the falling back of the Canadian ketch Graybeard, which is now fifth on actual position and 31st on handicap.

**From the archives of Richard Crockett & Sailing Publications.**

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