

Aussie eye on SA yachts

Cape Times Yachting
Correspondent

AUSTRALIAN yachtsmen will be watching the Cape-to-Rio fleet with the kind of interest one horse trainer shows in another's string at the dawn gallops.

A complicated train of comparison starts from the New Zealand sloop *Buccaneer*, which led all the way in the recent 630-sea-mile Sydney-Hobart race.

The three boats which finished after her have been chosen as Australia's Admiral's Cup team, and will sail against the South African team in the English Channel this summer.

Buccaneer and *Graybeard* are closely enough matched for fair comparison, and it only remains to allow for differences in sailing conditions to arrive at a measure of the strength of the South African boats.

* * *

SALACIA, *Ragamuffin* and *Koomooloo*, the Australian team members, have established reputations in ocean racing, but the South Africans are unknown contenders.

In European sailing circles South Africans have good reputations, based on the efforts and successes of a few boats, crews and skippers in the past.

* * *

NOTABLE and very rightly well known among these is Bobby Bongers, the builder and skipper of *Outburst* who, in spite of a popular misconception, has never been awarded Springbok colours during his long career as a yachtsman.

His brother Eric won South Africa's highest place in Olympic yachting with a sixth position in the Finn class at Melbourne in 1956, but Bobby has tended always to ocean racing, and had an outstanding season with *Voor-trekker* in her Cowes initiation.

* * *

FOR any sailing craft a day's run of 200 sea miles is good; Sir Francis Chichester is in the North Atlantic right now trying to drive *Gypsy Moth V* at this average over a 4 000-mile course.