

RACE LEADERS IN JOSTLE FOR WIND

From NEVILLE PEAT on board Tafelberg

LEADING YACHTS in the Race to Rio, a week old today, are jostling for favourable winds in mid-ocean as the south-east trades weaken slowly.

From the guardship S.A.S. Tafelberg we can see how Ocean Spirit and Graybeard are trying to stretch out to the north, rather than west, in search of stronger winds.

There is a chance the Ocean Spirit-Graybeard tussle may wane for lack of wind and that a yacht like Fortuna, the Argentine Navy's 19 m yawl, could forge ahead.

Yesterday afternoon we closed on Fortuna, the only entry from South America, 150 miles north-east of the two front-runners.

Fortuna's crew waved as Capt. Dick Cousins sounded Tafelberg's siren before we headed back for the leading pair.

As I write, in fact, I can see a sail on the horizon. Ocean Spirit is leading Graybeard but the two are incredibly close considering the distance covered — about 1400 miles.

They may have erred, however, in not swinging far enough north for strong winds though Fortuna did not seem to be benefiting from the extra latitude.

For the first time, Raph, the French ketch of yachting

veteran Alain Glikzman, radioed Tafelberg last night. She is 70 miles farther north than Fortuna, but a little behind in terms of longitude.

● Meanwhile, Bruce Dalling's Jakaranda was flying after the fleet today. She left Cape Town yesterday after losing almost six days because of a broken rudder stock.

At 8.30 a.m. today, the yawl was 190 miles north-west of Cape Town — a good run in under 23 hours.

GOING WELL

Also going well at last report was Durban's Wayfarer, also a late starter.

Sprinter, the tiny Cape Town sloop crewed by five women under skipper Molly Warr, was again unplaced in the latest computer list because of a failure to report its position.

● Doug Tarbet, aboard Cariad I, handsomely at 12 knots at dawn today.

The wind began rising yesterday but it was erratic and Cariad was wallowing along at times at only two knots.

The weather was so calm that crewmen were diving overboard on the end of a line for a bath. Last night, it was taking only three men to handle the yacht while the other 12 played cards in the saloon.

But the wind began rising in the early hours today and the off watch were called from their bunks in pitch darkness to drop the Genoa.

We are beginning to hope we have found the favourable trade winds at last but we are not banking on it.

● Several readers telephoned The Argus today to ask why one of the Rio yachts had returned this morning, but it was the American trimaran ketch Chamaru, whose last port of call was Mossel Bay.

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