

YACHTING MEN WATCH THE HANDICAPS

By a Staff Reporter 26.1.71.

WHILE the Rio fleet front-runners — and the yachts with problems — continue to dominate news from the South Atlantic, yachtsmen are watching the handicap positions with great interest. For the big prize, the trophy for the overall winners, will go to the yacht that wins on handicap.

This is the R2500 gold and silver South Atlantic Floating Trophy presented by the Chamber of Mines of South Africa.

But the glamour yacht — the yacht that is first over the finish line at Rio — will also receive a handsome award, the Cape of Good Hope Trophy, presented by the city of Cape Town.

According to the latest computerised positional report, the French yacht *Striana* is leading the pack for the finish line, but the Canadian *Graybeard* and the British *Ocean Spirit*, in second and third place respectively, seem to be better placed for 'line honours.'

They are farther north than *Striana* and are thus likely to find more favourable winds westward.

The computer puts a South African in first place on handicap — the 12.8-metre *Knysna* sloop *Albatros II*, skippered by the shrewd and experienced John Goodwin.

Sailing relatively close to *Albatros* is the Durban sloop *Mercury* (also 12.8m), whose skipper, rugged Bob Nuttall, says there is only one purpose in the race — to win.

Albatros and *Mercury* are fifth and sixth respectively on actual position. Both have chosen to sail a course that is considerably farther south than those chosen by the bigger yachts — and some of the smaller ones like *Applemist*, the 12.2-metre flyer skippered by silver-haired Jacko Jackson of Cape Town.

HARD DECISION

Applemist is placed ninth on actual position and seventh on handicap.

While the bigger yachts, such as *Ocean Spirit*, *Graybeard* and *Fortuna* seem to have had no alternative but to take a northerly course, the choice of course for the smaller yachts represents a hard decision.

The more southerly curve to Rio is shorter — but there is the likelihood of lighter winds and even the possibility of headwinds at time.

A feature of the progress reports so far is the excellent performance of veteran Peter Strong's 15.2 metre Durban ketch *Wayfarer*.

Wayfarer started 24 hours after the rest of the fleet. Last night, the computer put her in 25th actual position and 33rd on handicap on a course that puts her roughly in the middle of the north-south extremities of the fleet.

From the archives of Richard Crockett & Sailing Publications.

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