

Graybeard varies her sail colours

29. 1. 71

From ROGER WILLIAMS
in the Guardship Tafelberg

AT 2 p.m. South African time yesterday we caught up and closed with the Canadian ketch Graybeard (skipper L. Killam) almost 12 degrees west and 19 south. And unlike yachts we saw on Tuesday which were almost becalmed, this ocean racing giant was making good headway under full sail in a 15-knot south-easterly wind.

There was no other yacht in sight and the only boat we passed in the night was Kees Bruynzeel in Stormy.

Graybeard rings the changes almost every time we intercept her so far as her sail colours are concerned.

When she left Cape Town and for a few days thereafter she wore a massive white spinnaker with two partly red

stripes at the head of the sail. Later she was flying before the wind with an equally big spinnaker set, but this time it was powder blue with two dark blue stripes near the head, and yesterday her spinnaker was mustard coloured again with two dark blue stripes in the same position as on the other sails. Her Mizzen sail was rainbow coloured and the mainsail was plain white.

The combination of colours over the deep shimmering blue of the South Atlantic made a truly magnificent picture as the ketch moved towards Rio.

The position we found Graybeard in was about 2977 km (1850 miles) from Cape Town and 2800 km (1740 miles) from Rio. She was on a west-north-westerly course.

We are now looking for other leaders in this ding-dong race which becomes more fascina-

ting as we go along, and yachts' positions are plotted on Tafelberg's special chart as they are received.

We are in the dark at present about the latest position of Ocean Spirit (R. Knox-Johnston and L. Williams) as well as progress made by the French yachts Pen Duick III (E. Tabarly) and Raph (A. Glikman).

Of special interest is the sudden appearance on the scene of another French entry, Striana (A. Maupas), which is now well to the west of the tenth degree meridian but much farther south than Graybeard. The German yawl Hamburg VII (G. Reper) appears not far behind Striana.

Latest reported positions indicate the decisions of skippers to take northerly or southerly courses, and the second half of the race which we are now entering will show whose gamble is going to come off.

From the archives of Richard Crockett
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