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# Ocean Spirit leads in Rio race

**T**HE 21.6 m British ketch Ocean Spirit has taken over the lead in the Cape-to-Rio race — 10 miles ahead of the French boat Striana.

The tiny Knysna sloop Albatros II and Durban entry Mercury, which have held the lead for the past four days, are battling to make headway in failing winds and have slipped back to fifth and sixth positions.

Both Albatros II (John Goodwin) and Mercury (Bob Nuttall) were late in reporting their positions last night and have not been included in the official com-

puterised race placings for the day.

On latest positional reports Robin Knox-Johnston and Leslie Williams's Ocean Spirit is just over 1000 miles from Rio de Janeiro.

Only 10 miles behind is the French entry Striana (Jacques Auclair) and 11 miles behind that is Kees Bruynzeel's Dutch-flagged ketch Stormy.

A surprise for race officials last night was the break in radio silence by Frenchman Eric Tabarly whose positional report put him a mere 140 miles behind the leader.

Tabarly last reported to the guardship S.A.S. Tafelberg nine days ago and it was believed that he was playing a silent hand and had moved well ahead of the field.

With Albatros II and Mercury still well placed among the leaders South Africa's hopes of a good handicap placing are still high.

Another South African entry which has moved well up in the handicap ratings is the False Bay Yacht Club's sloop Breezand (Simon Kramer).

Although it is only in 18th position on actual distance

covered Breezand is now topping the log on handicap — followed by Striana, Outburst (Bobby Bongers) and Omuramba (Ken Warr).

Twenty-two of the field of 56 yachts still in the race failed to report during their last positional call-up period.

It is reported from St. Helena that the Cape Town sloop Stormkaap has officially withdrawn from the race.

Skipper Dave Abromowitz is making plans to have the yacht, which was forced into the island with steering trouble, shipped back to Cape Town.