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Planes hunt 2 S.A. yachts

From Staff Reporter
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RIO DE JANEIRO, Tuesday. — Long-range patrol planes of the Brazilian Air Force joined the search today for *Sprinter*, the small Cape Town sloop crewed by five women under skipper Mrs. Molly Warr.

The aircraft are also looking for *Ingwe*, the Durban yacht that has failed to report to the S.A. Navy guardship, S.A.S. Tafelberg.

Cape-to-Rio race officials here emphasise there is no cause for alarm. But their approach to the Brazilian Air Force is obviously based on fear that the two little yachts may be running short of water.

According to reports here, *Sprinter* had about 95 gallons of drinking water when she sailed over the starting line on January 16. Her plan was to give each crew member about half a gallon a day.

NEAR ISLAND

Thus she must be nearing the bottom of the barrel, though as an experienced yachtswoman, Molly Warr would have kept a tight ration on water supplies recently.

It is not known how much water *Ingwe* was carrying.

The Brazilian planes, routine patrol aircraft diverted at the request of the Race Committee, are concentrating their search in the vicinity of Trindade Island which many of the yachts passed on their way to Rio.

Late yesterday afternoon, I sailed out into Guanabara Bay with Dr. Ken Warr, husband of Mrs. Warr, in Bobby Bongers's Cape Town sloop *Outburst*.

We tried to call Tafelberg with *Outburst*'s powerful radio for news of *Sprinter* but were unable to raise the guardship. Also on board were Gordon and Jenny Webb and Peter Stockemann, all

of Cape Town, whose yacht *Pionier* was sunk by a whale.

However, on the overall winning yacht *Albatros II*, also out in the Bay south of Rio, crewman Brian Lello succeeded in contacting Tafelberg. Tafelberg told Lello there was no further news.

The Warrs' daughter, Cheryl, is with her mother in *Sprinter*. Their son Douglas is in *Elegance*, the veteran Cape Town ketch that escorted *Stormkaap* to St. Helena.

Clearly worried, in spite of his always calm attitude, Dr. Warr, skipper of *Omuramba* in the race, said his wife's yacht had not reported for three weeks because of generator trouble and power failure.

'This means they cannot call on the radio and they have no navigation lights at night. It also means they have no compass light for night steering,' he said.

'Their torch batteries must be pretty low now — and they need torches to flash on their sails at night if ships approach. It must be miserable out there without lights at night.'

In *Sprinter*, Molly Warr and her crew have a small portable radio through which they are probably aware that ships and aircraft are searching for them. They also have a metal radar reflector which, if hoisted up the mast, will enable ships in the vicinity to locate *Sprinter* on their radar screens.

In addition to Mrs. Warr and Cheryl, *Sprinter*'s crew includes Mrs. Mary King, the navigator, Miss Sue Baxter and Miss Sue Fielden.

It is reported that Mrs. King was ill and required medical treatment before she sailed in the race. But there have been no suggestions that she has been ill since the start.