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Sprinter is near Rio: Barbette limping along

From NEIL LURSEN, Argus Staff Reporter

RIO DE JANEIRO, Wednesday.

WHILE Molly Warr and her all-woman crew in Sprinter head for Rio, where they will get a great welcome, another small yacht, Barbette, is making for Cape Frio, 60 miles from here, with rudder trouble.

Barbette's skipper, youthful Englishman Adam Clackson radioed that he required no assist-

ance and that he expected to reach Rio tomorrow.

At one stage, Barbette was the only threat to the overall handicap lead in the Cape-to-Rio race held by John Goodwin's Albatros II, which is now, of course, the clear winner.

Clackson, whose blue-hulled yacht is one of the smallest in the race, probably said he wanted no help because he might be disqualified if outside help were rendered.

If he does cross the line tomorrow, he will be well within the 40-day limit to qualify as an official finisher.

FIRST SIGHTING

The first sighting of the two small South African yachts Sprinter and Ingwe by a Brazilian Air Force patrol plane came yesterday afternoon.

There had been mounting anxiety about them, not that they might have foundered but that they might be short of water.

Both, are close to Rio and should arrive in a day or two.

Race officials here, however, are anxious to get word of Namar IV, the small Italian sloop, skippered by E. Guzzetti, which like Sprinter and Ingwe, failed to report to the guardship.

Namar was not in the big bag of boats collected by the patrol plane when it did its South Atlantic sweep yesterday.

YACHTS PLOTTED

The plane reported it had plotted Cariad, Active, Corsair, Jakaranda, Three Bears, Ariel, Armel Two, Barbette, City of Springs, Diana K, Eclipse, Eshowe, Flame, Flica, Gaivota, Shayele, Sprinter and Ingwe.

All are covering on the finishing line and the next few days will be joyful ones for the wives and girlfriends who have been keeping 24-hour watches here for their menfolk.

Not seen by the plane were Matchless, La Mer, Elegance, Sandefjord, Molly Brown, Namar, Tub and Qumbu.

The rest of the yachts are here—27 handsome boats tied up at the Yacht Club, their crews helping to threaten Rio with a beer drought.

200 MILES OUT.

Sprinter was sighted about 200 miles out. The weather forecast for her area is not certain but a rising south-east wind seemed likely to help Molly Warr and her girls on their way.

"They will be here tomorrow—as I always thought they would be," said a delighted Ken Warr, skipper of Omuramba and husband of Molly. Their daughter Cheryl, a violinist who has played with the Cape Town Orchestra, is also in Sprinter.

The patrol plane reported only Sprinter's number and her position which was given as 22.31 degrees south and 39.48 west. There was no word of her crew of any other detail the plane may have seen.

In fact, Sprinter's position is evidence of the remarkable skill of her crew. Without power, the yacht has no wind speed and direction indicator.

It is also possible that Sprinter has not been able to pick up weather reports and time signals. Each minute on the watch means 15 nautical miles when navigating.

Thus, a watch that is several minutes out can mean a major navigational headache for a yacht, and this is made even worse by fog. Yesterday the Rio coastal area was fogbound.