

S.A. YACHT FOR SINGLE-HANDED

TRANSATLANTIC RACE

CONSTRUCTION of a sleek, 50-ft. ocean-going yacht, in which a South African yachtsman will race 2,740 miles single-handed from Britain to North America, is under way in Cape Town.

The craft will be ketch-rigged and is now drawn out on the ground at a builder's yard in Westlake. It is to be South Africa's challenger in the third Plymouth to Newport Single - Handed Transatlantic Race, in June, 1968.

It will be the first Springbok entry in the event, which has only been staged twice previously—in 1960 and 1964—and is organized by the Royal Western Yacht Club, in Plymouth, England.

Behind the challenge is a group of prominent South African yachtsmen who have banded together as the Single Handed Transatlantic Race Committee, and have set themselves the task of creating a craft, naming it, finding a man to sail it—and raising R40,000 to cover costs.

The men are Judge Louis de V. van Winsen (chairman), Colonel Don Ord, Dr. Hamish Campbell, Mr. Brian Lello, Mr. Gordon Webb, Mr. Ray Hartman and Mr. David Susman.

Mr. Hartman, who is building the racer, also built the South African yacht Stormvogel. Mr. Webb was Stormvogel's first skipper.

The Transatlantic race rules are simple. Any kind of yacht may be entered, multiple or single hulled, as long as it is seaworthy. But there is a human requirement. To qualify, yachtsmen must have sailed single-handed on at least 500 miles non-stop on the open sea.

The South African committee claims that the yacht, designed by the creator of Stormvogel, will be the



lightest ocean-going racer of its size in the world.

Its planned weight is top secret. It will have two masts, its beam will be 12 ft., draught 9 ft. and it will have two berths, a galley and a chart table.

With construction and the collection of funds under way, the next big step will be the choice of a suitable yachtsman.

A number of men will be invited to take part in sailing trials in Cape waters (the stormier the better) until finally one is selected to fight it out with the ocean every second of every minute of every hour of every day — until he and his craft reach the finish.

Tremendous will-power,

besides physical endurance, is required in a race of this sort.

Loneliness is the biggest single soul-crusher. Yachtsmen have to be constantly aware of the slightest change in conditions — leaving little time for sleep. They must also cook to feed themselves, have knowledge of radio, and be able to repair their craft.

The race was last won in 1964 by a 24-year-old Frenchman. He took 24 days to cover the distance.

Footnote: Francis Chichester, winner in 1960 and runner-up in 1964, is said to have built his Gypsy Moth IV, in which he recently sailed single-handed from Britain to Australia, specially for the 1968 transatlantic race.