

Veteran tells of grim storm

Chief Reporter

PETER BLAKE, skipper of the maxi yacht Lion New Zealand and a veteran of more than 200 000 sea-miles under sail, said last week he had never known a period "when the adrenalin ran so high" as in the storm that battered the leaders of the Whitbread Round-the-World Race fleet off the West Coast in October.

But, he said as guest speaker at a Cape Town Rotary Club lunch, the hospitality he and his crew of 21 had received in Cape Town ("people have really been far too kind!") had more than made up for the grim experience they had been through, in which the boat had been flung about in huge seas.

"We had four days and four sleepless nights of solid crashing into steep seas, and the noise down below made it like living in a hard-bashed drum."

Peter Blake, whose achievements have earned him an MBE, is one of the best-known international skippers at the Cape. He was in the crew of Ocean Spirit, the British yacht that took line honours in the first Cape-to-Rio Race, in 1971, and he has taken part in all four Whitbread Round-the-World races.

And the present race, he said at the Rotary lunch, would be his last. He wants to spend more time with his wife Pippa and their 2½-year-old daughter Sarah Jane, who have been with him during Lion New Zealand's stop-over in Cape Town.



Peter Blake

Sportsmen must unite — De Klerk

By ROGER WILLIAMS
Chief Reporter

MR F W de Klerk, the Minister of National Education, said at the presentation of first-leg prizes in the Whitbread Round-the-World Race that sportsmen of the free world "must unite against the misuse of sport for political purposes".

The host body at the prize-giving, attended by about 500 people and held in the Civic Centre on Saturday night, was the Cruising Association of South Africa (CASA). The Mayor of Cape Town, Mr Leon Markovitz, wished the competing yachtsmen bon voyage on the second leg to Auckland, New Zealand, starting in Table Bay at 11am on Wednesday.

The top prize for the first leg, the Whitbread Golden Globe, for the first boat on corrected

time, was presented by Mr De Klerk to Lionel Pean, skipper of the French entry l'Esprit d'Equipe, and the Long John Trophy for the first boat on elapsed time went to Pierre Fehlmann Jr, skipper of UBS Switzerland.

UBS Switzerland also collected the City of Cape Town Trophy for the first boat in Division A on elapsed time, and Lion New Zealand received the CASA prize for being runner-up.

The Whitbread Silver Globe, for second boat overall on corrected time, went to the Dutch entry Philips Innovator.

The only woman skipper in the race, Dr Nora Zehender-Müller, received the Royal Cape Yacht Club Trophy on behalf of her boat Shadow of Switzerland, for taking first place in Class D, on corrected time.