

The Cape to Rio race leaders were virtually within sight of each other as they passed the island Ilha da Trindade, setting the scene for an exciting finish. After 12 days of racing, Parker Pen posted a phenomenal 315-mile run yesterday, bettering race leader Broomstick's run by 80 miles and putting her about 90 miles adrift.

Broomstick still leading race but under pressure

By DALE GRANGER
Our man aboard SAS DRAKENSBERG

BROOMSTICK skipper Hanno Teuteberg was pushing his crew on exhausting four-hour watches around the clock to stay in front of a steaming Parker Pen yesterday, as the race leaders rounded Ilha da Trindade, the turning point for Rio.

The Rothman's Cape to Rio race leaders were virtually within sight of each other as they passed the island — setting the scene for an exciting finish.

Jacana (4 and 4) and Blue (12 and 23) are still the best placed on actual and handicap positions of the five Port Elizabeth entries in the race. The three others Martinique, Witchdoctor and Fortis are, however, still in the bundle. As they turned for the final 782-mile dash of the 3 600-mile race, Cruising Association of SA secretary Eric Wells predicted a fascinating finish.

The racing edge out on the Atlantic was evident as Teuteberg, obviously working the boat and crew hard, failed to contact guardship SAS Drakensberg and immediately went off the air after radioing positions yesterday morning.

Parker Pen's skipper Bruce Tedder was also silent.

With a near-record flying run of 315 miles, Parker Pen sliced a massive 110 miles out of Broomstick yesterday — amid speculation that Broomstick had suffered equipment failure.

Broomstick still holds the record with 320 miles sailed on the first day.

A repeat performance in the next 24 hours will see Parker Pen leading the fleet for the first time since the start of the race.

Meanwhile, to compound problems for Broomstick, Namsea Challenger was closing in from the south as the maxi battle intensified.

The notoriously tricky conditions from Ilha da Trindade was foremost in the minds of the leading sailors yesterday.

Although a few have satellite weather computers, most yachts will have to rely on Brazilian weather stations for forecasts.

