

Rio race: Blue battles to move ahead

Daily Dispatch Reporter

EAST LONDON — The East London yacht, Blue, was still battling to improve her position yesterday after dropping 10 places on handicap last weekend, Cape-to-Rio organisers said.

The 63-foot yacht, owned by a King William's Town businessman, was reported to be 12th on actual position and 23rd on handicap yesterday while maintaining an average speed of 6.2 knots.

The yacht, which led the cruising class on the first two days, is skippered by Rob Archibald, the commodore of the Port Elizabeth Hobi-Cat Club, and has three Springboks among its 10-man crew.

"She's not looking too good at the moment but every day is different

and there are still nine days to go. She still has a chance of finishing near the front," a spokesman for the race organisers said.

The East London Cruising Club entry in the multi-hull class, Obelix, which was lying 19th in the entire fleet of 82 yachts on Tuesday, remained secure in class second place on handicap and actual position yesterday.

However, the new Angelo Lavranos designed craft, skippered by the

organising committee chairman, John Levine, has been unable to oust the Springbok, Chris King, on Searose Kwikfit who is still leading the small multi-hull fleet.

East London's second entry in the cruising fleet, Miscky, completed 139 nautical miles while averaging 5.8 knots yesterday. According to the organisers, it was 22nd on actual position and 18th on handicap.

Sapa reports that Broomstick's once seemingly unassailable lead

seemed to be threatened, as Namsea, skippered by Padda Kuttel, and Parker Pen, by Bruce Tedder, closed the gap on it.

When Broomstick reported in yesterday, it was only 11 miles from Ilha de Trinidad and was expected to round the island by last night.

Namsea clocked 288 miles, bettering Broomstick by 65, while Parker Pen managed 313, about 100 miles better. Parker Pen is only 96 miles behind Broomstick, and should also have rounded the island yesterday.

Wizard's navigator, Lynnath Beckley, reported a good run in the past 24 hours. — DDR-Sapa