

18.2.71

Bouquets for Sprinter

From Staff Reporter Neil Lurssen

RIO DE JANEIRO, Thursday.

BOUQUETS of flowers for each of the five crew members — this is part of the big welcome that awaits Sprinter, due in here this afternoon.

Molly Warr and her girls may not have beaten anyone, but theirs is the yacht of the race, the yacht Rio is waiting for.

There was anxiety about Sprinter before she was sighted by a Brazilian Air Force plane earlier this week. Race officials emphasised there was no cause for alarm, but they looked worried while they said it.

Their worry was that the small yacht would run short of water, a problem compounded by the high temperatures off the Brazilian coast right now. And there was the absence of lights, too.

Since the air force sighting further reports yesterday afternoon indicate that Sprinter was about 70 miles from here and going well.

Going better, in fact, than Barbette, an even smaller yacht skippered by Adam Clackson of Britain. This yacht has been dismasted and it looks as though it cannot get here without the help of the Brazilian guardship that has gone to it.

Meanwhile eight more yachts had crossed the line, bringing the total to 38, out of the 57 starters.

First in yesterday was Jakaranda, the South African yawl, skippered by Bruce Dalling.

Three other South African craft followed her about four hours later, almost chasing one another over the line. These were the sloop Flica, the ketch Three Bears and the masthead sloop Diana K.