

# Voortrekker: SA hope for 'Two-Star' race

Chief Reporter

SOUTH AFRICA'S veteran ocean-racing sloop Voortrekker will go to the start-line with 114 other entries from 18 countries when the new, short-handed transatlantic race, the "Two-Star", for yachts manned by a crew of two, gets under way at 2pm (SA time) at Plymouth, England, tomorrow.

The finishing point in this 3 000 nautical-mile race is Newport, Rhode Island, in the United States. The course is the same as for the Observer Single-handed Transatlantic Race in which Voortrekker did well last year in competition with some of the world's best ocean racers — in spite of a damaged and leaking hull.

The 13-year-old sloop's skipper in the "Two-Star" will again be Warrant-Officer Bertie "Biltong" Reed of the South African Navy, and the other member of the crew is Lieutenant John Martin, also

of the SAN.

Entries in the race are in six classes according to length, from 7,62 metres to 18,29 metres. Voortrekker, at 15 metres, is one of 28 in Class II.

Commodore Roy Kingon, who is in Plymouth as manager of the Voortrekker team, said in a message received by the Cruising Association of South Africa in Cape Town yesterday that in Classes I and II, from which the overall winner was bound to come, France was going all out, with 20 entries.

Every one of them, he said, was modern, fast — and out to win.

Eric Tabarly of France, for many years regarded as one of the world's outstanding small-boat sailors and ocean yachtsmen, will be racing his extraordinary hydrofoil-trimaran Paul Ricard, which made a record west-east Atlantic crossing last year.

Britain's hopes rest on

Robin Knox-Johnston in his huge catamaran, Sea Falcon, and on Chay Blyth in the trimaran Brittany Ferries, and the United States is looking to Warren Luhrs, in Tuesday's Child.

The Italian Edoardo Antonini, who did well in last year's single-handed race in the monohull Chica Boba, has brought her back with a heightened mast and a greatly increased sail-area.

The satellite tracking system Argos, which gave trouble in the single-handed race but which has been modified and tested, will be fitted to all entries. The system is aimed at regular and accurate position-reporting to race headquarters in Plymouth.

● Commodore Kingon reports that Reed and Martin are "very fit, and eager to be off".

And, he adds, both are determined, with Voortrekker's help, to give a good account of themselves.