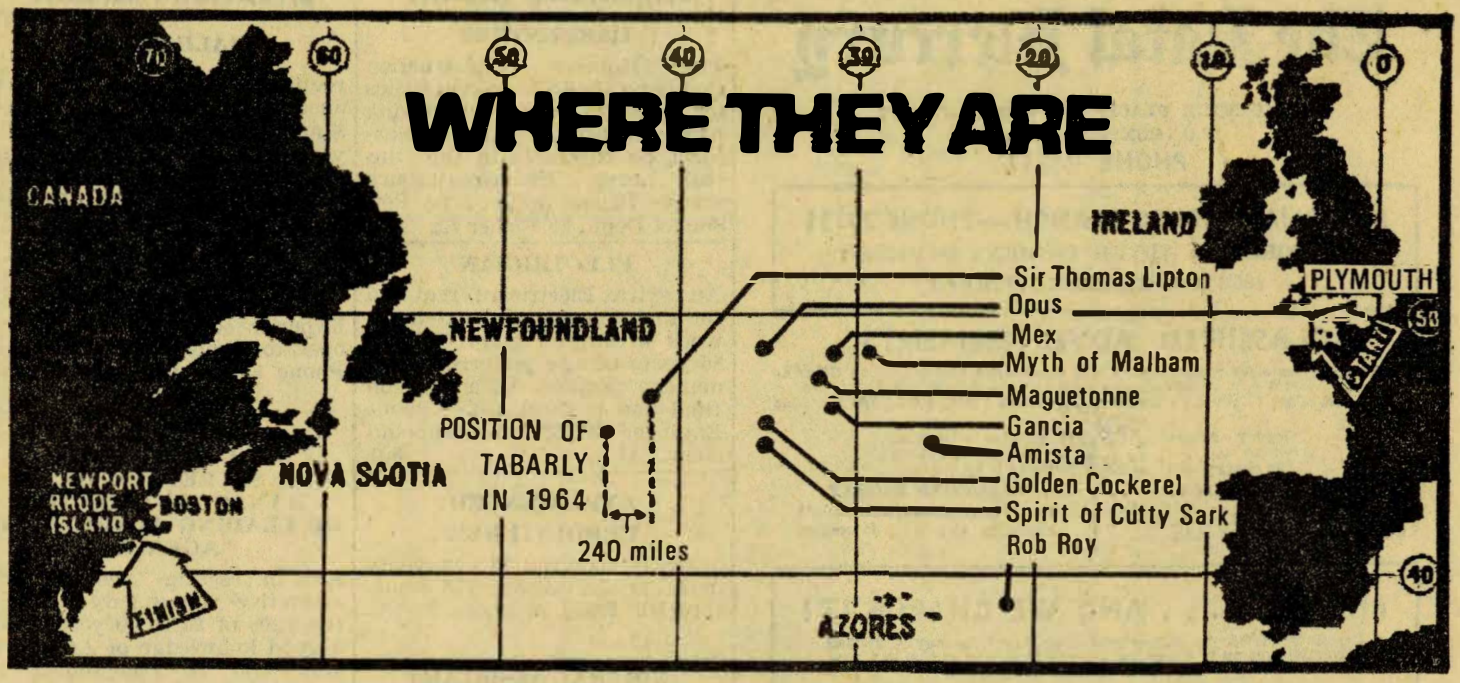


AN "OBSERVER" map showing the positions at the week-end of some of the competitors in the single-handed Atlantic yacht race. The South African entry, Voortrekker, is believed to be up among the leaders.

1968 06 17 - Mercury

Archives of Richard Crockett & Sailing Publications www.sailing.co.za - editor@sailing.co.za

Signal Is Heard From Voortrekker

CONTACT WITH DALLING FAINT

From Our Correspondent

LONDON. — Bruce Dalling's sister, Mrs. Carole Shamire, said yesterday she was very relieved to hear that Baldock radio station had picked up a faint radio signal from Voortrekker.

"At least we know now that Bruce is safe. Obviously he has been having trouble with his radio," she said.

The leading yachts are now so far out in the Atlantic that they are also at the extreme range of their radios.

But teacher Geoffrey Williams, in the big Sir Thomas Lipton, was able to report on Saturday that he was at 47.45 north, 42.45 west — which means that he is just entering the central part of the iceberg zone.

I do not believe that Sir Thomas Lipton is in the lead. In spite of the advice of the English Electric computer, the gale which struck almost all the competitors earlier this week has slowed him down considerably.

Last week he was averaging 140 miles a day and was some 160 miles ahead of Eric Tabarly's equivalent position in 1964.

This week he has averaged about 100 miles a day and is now about 240 miles behind Tabarly's equivalent position —at least one yacht, probably two, ahead of him.

Competition is so fierce this year that I feel someone will be neck and neck with Tabarly's 1964 record, although I must confess that "Blondie" Hasler, the originator of the race has a modest 10-bob bet with Jack Odling-Smee, commodore of the Royal Western Yacht Club, that no one will beat Tabarly's time of 27½ days.

POSITIONS

If someone is ahead of Geoffrey Williams in Sir Thomas Lipton, who is it likely to be? We have not received any positions this week from either Bruce Dalling in Voortrekker or the Frenchman, Alain Gliksman, in Raph (nee Neptune).

The GPO station at Baldock did have Voortrekker trying to get through to them yesterday but reception was so bad they could not get his position.

Leslie Williams, in Spirit of Cutty Sark, finally made contact yesterday, after having serious trouble with his radio. He said that being caught in the eye of the storm "cost me all chance of winning the race."

The most intriguing report of the week came from an American aircraft, which reported sighting "the two leading yachts, both two-masted, and only 20 nautical miles apart."

SIGHTINGS

"Blondie" Hasler has again corrected all last week's sightings for us and taken a mean time of Thursday, June 13.

These show that Lieut-Leslie Williams in the heavy Spirit of Cutty Sark was 120 miles behind Sir Thomas Lipton but 150 miles farther south.

Golden Cockerel, sailed by the ebullient Australian Bill Howell, had slipped farther behind and was 130 miles astern of Cutty Sark.

One of the senstations of the race has been the performance of bank manager Brian Cooke in Opus, the yacht which he borrowed and which was built in a backyard in Stanmore, Middlesex.