

OCEAN RACE: IT MAY BE NECK AND NECK

Dalling chasing Williams

WITH Cornish hopes pinned on Geoffrey Williams's 57ft. ketch Sir Thomas Lipton in the Single-handed Transatlantic Race, there was a report last night that he is being hotly pursued by South African Bruce Dalling in the 50ft. ketch Voortrekker.

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Williams, a 25-year-old Redruth teacher, radioed that he was about 400 miles out from the end of the race, but reports showed that Bruce Dalling was only 50 miles behind him.

Williams gave his position as 43 13 north, 65 45 west, and last night Capt. T. W. B. Shaw, secretary of the Royal Western Yacht Club, said that a Canadian source reported Voortrekker 50 miles behind Sir Thomas Lipton.

He commented: "If conditions hold we should have someone in at the finish at Newport, Rhode Island, on Wednesday."

It is certainly possible Williams can break the record for the crossing of 27 days three hours set by France's Eric Tabarly.

But he has a 12-hour penalty and, even if he finishes first, he could lose first place to a yacht which finished within 12 hours of his arrival. The penalty does not affect any record Williams might set up for the crossing.

There are others

Even at this late stage in the race, with very little information coming from North America, it is still a matter of speculation that Williams is leading the race.

Nothing has been heard lately from the fast proa schooner Cheers, sailed by American Tom Follett. Follett has already crossed the Atlantic in Cheers in 29 days, so he must be regarded as a serious challenger.

Thought to be about 200 to 300 miles behind Sir Thomas Lipton are Lieut. Leslie Williams, sailing Spirit of Cutty Sark, Golden Cockerel, by Australian dentist Bill Howell, and Opus, the 32ft. sloop sailed by Brian Cooke, of Poole.

Holbeton hopes

Capt. Martin Minter-Kemp, of Holbeton, sailing Gancia Girl, is thought to be about 150 miles behind these three. Also probably well up in the field is Noel Bevan's 40ft. cutter, Myth of Malham.

The 60ft. yawl Raph, sailed by Frenchman Alain Gliksmann, and regarded as a very fancied entry, has put into St. John's, Newfoundland, with rudder trouble.

La Delirante, the 36ft. sloop entered by French student L. Paillard, 23, is reported to have turned about and to be heading back towards France.

A Frenchman who hit trouble very early in the race was 21-year-old M. Cuiklinski in his 37ft. sloop Ambrima. He was dismasted and taken in tow by a Portuguese steamer. Ambrima sank while in tow, and Cuiklinski was landed at a Spanish port.

Disappeared

Frenchman de Kat, whose trimaran Yaksha broke up in mid-Atlantic and was rescued by the Norwegian ore-carrier Jagona, gave about 20 journalists the slip as she anchored off the Shaw (Denmark) yesterday. They had gone out in a pilot cutter to greet him, only to find that he had slipped ashore in a fishing boat.

It had been hired by a French newspaper, probably the one financing his trip, to receive an exclusive rights story of how he spent 60 hours tossing in a small rubber dinghy awaiting rescue.

No sign of Rose

Despite a long search by R.A.F. Shackletons from St. Mawgan, no sign has been found of lone world yachtsman Alec Rose in his Lively Lady. Fog hampered the aircrafts' search in the area of the French coast.