

Leda (A26) and Rangī (B16) out in front soon after the start of the Tasman yacht race. Further back are the bipod-masted Tara and Solveig (third from right).

NINE yachts, a record field, crossed the starting line to compete in the Tasman yacht race from Auckland to Sydney. The race is regarded as one of the severest tests of ocean yachting in the world.

Once again Aucklanders rose to the occasion and provided a send-off the equal of which may not have been seen before at any similar international sporting event in the world. It was a spontaneous pageant. In its result it eclipsed such memorable aquatic galas as the welcoming escort to the battle-cruiser Renown, which brought the boyish Prince of Wales to New Zealand in 1920, or the Auckland Centennial Regatta last year.

It was a moving picture of crowding white sails, trim hulls, clugging pleasure launches and dashing speed-boats, large craft gliding like marine monsters among the minnows, aircraft circling overhead, a clear blue sky with the sun's rays glinting back from the wave-crests. The foreshore was lined with cars and the green slopes and headlands crowded with sightseers. The golden-sanded beaches slowly slipped by as the fleet moved down the channel, passed Rangitoto in sombre green, and entered the Hauraki Gulf and the widening expanse of sea beyond giving access to the broad Pacific.

#### Sparkling Morning

AFTER a week of storm, which has added to the preparation worries of the Tasman crews, Saturday morning broke fine and clear. A favourable southerly breeze provided an easy first stage for the yachts. Full sail was set including the largest extras. Masthead spinnakers up to 3500 sq ft in area billowed around the forestay.

Solveig, one of the Australian entrants, broke out her spinnaker as the starting gun was fired. The sail was set and drawing even as the trim ocean cruiser crossed the starting line. No other competitor was as workman-like in this respect, but the start, as a whole, was in the best traditions of racing, even although the gain of a second or two means nothing at the beginning of a 1300-mile voyage. Approximately 250 pleasure craft converged on the scene.

#### Out On The Deep

POSITIONS are likely to change throughout the race according to the conditions which prevail. The light-weather start favoured the smaller yachts. Rangī, Solveig, Ghost, Hope and White Squall all did well.

Ocean conditions will be more to the liking of the larger competitors, which will be better able to carry their way through the ocean swells.

Storms will provide the supreme test and good sailing under adverse conditions will make all the difference to individual chances. Crew work is of great importance in a prolonged contest calling for duty shifts, navigation and seamanship.

The larger competitors with large crews (Southern Maid has ten on board) have the advantage of manpower and easier reliefs. But there are experienced hands in all crews, including veterans

## THE STOUT SHIPS THEY SAIL

### Spectacular Send-off For Transtasman Yachts On Sunny Waitemata

By J.G.E.A.

of the Tasman and other ocean races. Leda has two women on the register, Mesdames C. G. and W. A. Wilson, wives of the co-owners.

The competitors vary in size from the 28ft Ghost to the 59ft Tara. Three exceed 50ft but the remaining six are all between 28ft and 38ft in length. Waterline length is the main factor governing ocean sailing speeds and is of great assistance in predicting which yacht is likely to finish first. The winner on handicap, is more difficult to find. Rating allowances, suitability of rig, efficiency of crew, vagaries of weather, and the many hazards of ocean sailing so affect individual chances as to make the race a first-class sporting gamble. Opinion inclines to favour those craft especially designed for ocean sailing, with stout, serviceable gear, large light-weather extras and experienced crews. On this score, Solveig, in the hands of the Halvorsen brothers, has many supporters. The Halvorsens are defending the trophy which they won with Peer Gynt on the last two occasions.

Solveig is a new sloop, 36ft in length, designed to obtain a favourable rating,

and equipped on the same efficient lines as Peer Gynt. She receives useful starts from the three 50-footers in the race. Solveig represents the Royal Prince Alfred Yacht Club, Sydney.

Considerable speculation exists as to which of the three big ships is likely to gain fastest time. A bipod mast is a novel feature of Tara, built and owned by Mr C. Wild, of Auckland. This 59ft cutter is of very solid construction. Her chances will be enhanced if stout breezes prevail during the Tasman voyage. Mr Wild gave Tara and its crew an exacting trial for the Tasman race by sailing completely round the North Island of New Zealand, a distance of 1700 miles. The yacht performed exceptionally well, especially in the heavy going. Her best runs were 219 miles in 27 hours and 317 miles (including patches of calm) in 45 hours. Tara represents the Royal New Zealand Yacht Squadron.

Next in size are Southern Maid, Mr W. Trautwein's 54ft Bermuda cutter,

representing the Queensland Yacht Club, and Leda, also a 54ft A-class cutter, owned by the Wilson brothers of Tauranga. Leda represents the Tauranga Yacht and Power-Boat Club.

Southern Maid has many supporters. Built as a fast ocean-going racer, she has twice competed in the Sydney-Hobart event. She has a welded steel hull and her 29 tons make her one of the heaviest yachts in the race. Her beam is 12ft 6in and she draws 8ft 6in. No expense has been spared in equipping Southern Maid. She carries sails for all weathers including an outsize spinnaker for light airs. The very latest radio aids to navigation should ensure her keeping a true course. Her skipper, Jack Callaghan, is confident of a double victory, first home and winner on time allowance.

Leda is a comparatively new keeler, built by her owners, Messrs C. G. and W. A. Wilson. The Tasman race is her most important test to date. She was primarily built for deep-water cruising yet has the trim lines of a racing cutter. Her canvas measures 1000sq ft in the main, jib and staysail, 750sq ft in her

Genoa jib and 2000sq ft in her parachute spinnaker. Like the other two 50-footers, she will appreciate heavy going.

Rangī, veteran 38ft gaff-rigged Auckland cutter comes next. She competed without luck in the initial Tasman yacht race in 1931, won by Erling Tambs, in Teddy; and again in 1948, when Peer Gynt was the winner. On the second occasion she was long overdue and searches were organised as a result of fears for her safety.

Built over 45 years ago as a fishing vessel, Rangī has enjoyed a long career with Auckland's B-class racing fleet. Mr M. Anthony is again in charge, and expressed satisfaction with the rating allowance accorded to him on this occasion. Structural alterations were made to Rangī to improve her for the ocean crossing. She represents the Royal Akarana Yacht Club.

#### Smaller Entrants

THE remaining contestants are considerably smaller. White Squall is a 33ft cutter, owned by Mr R. N. Norgrove. She represents the Pine Island Boating Club. Extensive open water fishing experience in all weathers should stand her crew in good stead.

Sea Wolf II, a 30ft ketch, hails from Whangarei and represents the Whangarei Cruising Club. The owner, Messrs. Pope and Brierley set off for a shake-down cruise of the Kermadecs as a preliminary trial. On their return they encountered a severe storm but did not shorten sail during the blow. Her owners were more than satisfied with her performance. She is well rigged for ocean voyaging.

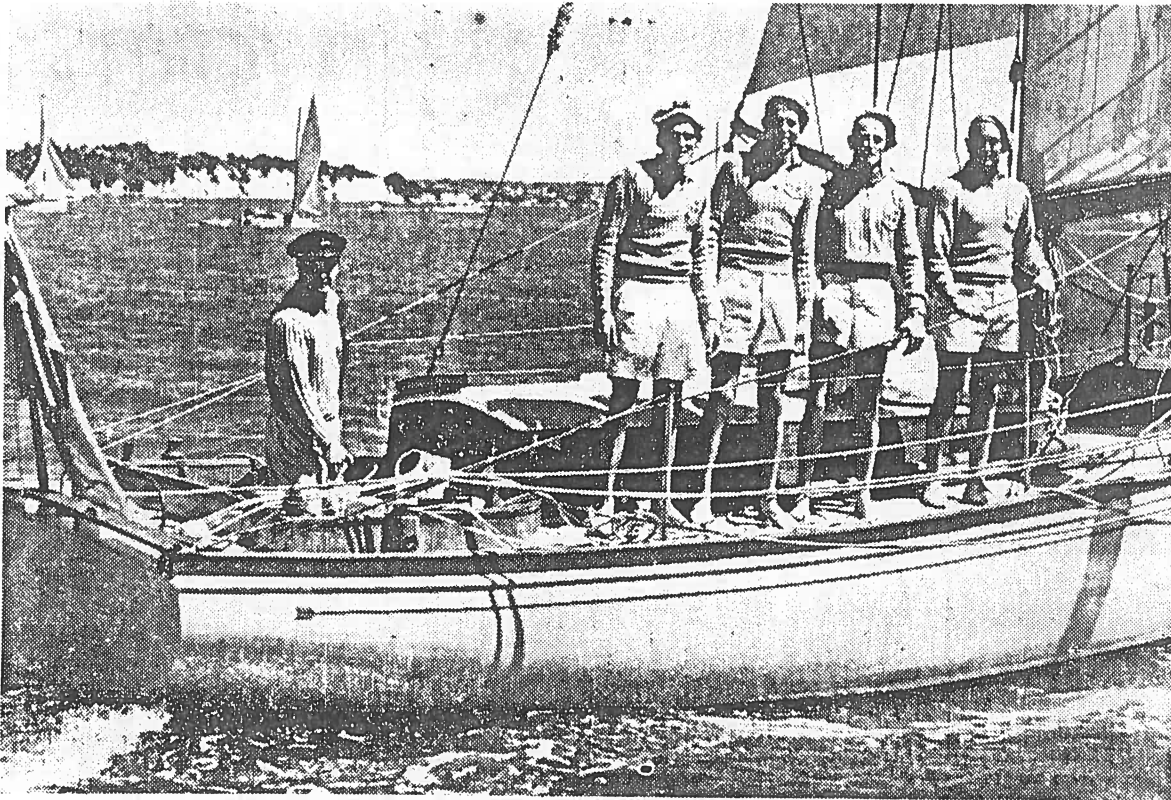
Also 30ft in length is the Woollacott-designed, short-end cruiser Hope, skippered by Mr F. Norris. Ghost, smallest entrant in the race, is another Woollacott design, very similar in appearance to Hope. This 28ft sloop, owned by Mr K. Brown, is making her second attempt to win the Tasman race. For her small size she came through the 1949 contest with flying colours, being second to Peer Gynt. But for calms off the New Zealand coast (the race was from Sydney to Auckland) she might well have been the winner.

#### Handicaps Considered

TIME allowances take into consideration all forms of hull construction, size, sail areas and the carrying of propellers. The corrective factor is worked out as a decimal fraction of the elapsed time of the race. The difference of .0100 represents approximately one hour in every 100 hours of elapsed time. Time correction factors are:—

Southern Maid	. . . . .	.7911
Leda	. . . . .	.7802
Tara	. . . . .	.7731
Rangī	. . . . .	.7081
Solveig	. . . . .	.6933
White Squall	. . . . .	.6795
Hope	. . . . .	.6791
Ghost	. . . . .	.6173
Sea Wolf II	. . . . .	.6125

In the four Tasman yacht races completed so far, the Norwegian yacht Teddy won in 1931, the German-owned Te Rapunga in 1935 and Peer Gynt, Australia, in 1948 and 1949.



The well-turned out crew of the 30-footer Hope. For approximately a fortnight, possibly longer, they will live, eat and sleep in the small cabin and tiny cockpit.