



ROLEX SYDNEY HOBART YACHT RACE

NEWS RELEASE

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Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race entries open

The Cruising Yacht Club of Australia today announced the release of the Notice of Race for the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race 2016 and extends an invitation to eligible yacht owners to enter Australia's most celebrated blue water event.

This year represents the 72nd running of the 628 nautical mile race, which starts on Boxing Day, December 26 at 1pm AEDT, and takes competitors on a punishing race down the south coast of Australia.

Some owners have already telegraphed their intention to take part in 2016, including the Oatley family who own record holder Wild Oats XI, which was disappointingly retired last year when its mainsail was ripped in half.

Whether a local or foreign challenger can beat the 1 day 18 hours 23 minutes 12 seconds set by Wild Oats XI in her 2012 trifecta remains to be seen, but there will be contenders.

Such is the allure of the race, indications are that two outstanding US entries could return - 2015 line honours winner, Comanche (Jim and Kristy Hinze-Clark), and Rambler (George David), which finished third on line after a match race from Tasman Island to the finish with Syd Fischer's Ragamuffin.

"It's like no other race in the world," Comanche's skipper Ken Read commented after finishing last year's race. "It is the most action packed two days of any sailing I've ever done in my life.

"The people who do this every year, I don't know how they do it. They are better men and women than I am. This is one seriously tough race."

After docking Comanche in Hobart, an astonished Read said: "Tens of thousands of people here on the wall cheering – I'm speechless."

Kristy Hinze-Clark, who sailed her first Sydney Hobart last year, admitted the race brought out every emotion possible: "It was such an amazing experience," she recalled. "I've been through quite a few emotions over the last 48 hours, but none better than sailing into here (Hobart) tonight."

Will Oxley, an Australian a world-travelled navigator, concurred: "It catches and grabs the psyche of the Australian public. And the welcome in Hobart is better than any other you will see at any other race in the world."

Cruising Yacht Club of Australia Commodore, John Cameron, said today: “And so the fascination with the Rolex Sydney Hobart endures and continues to attract the cream of sailing in Australia and abroad. In last year’s bumper fleet of 108 yachts, there were a record 27 international entries, with a mixture of Australian and international crews aboard the remaining yachts.

“We are looking forward to welcoming our regulars and a few new faces to the race. We are expecting not just the return of some of the world’s highest profile yachts, but new entries from Asia, as a result of the first two Mainland Chinese entries making history by taking part in 2015.

“In closing, I would like to thank the Royal Yacht Club of Tasmania for their dedicated support as finishing club partner since 1945,” the Commodore ended.

The Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race is arguably the world’s toughest offshore races, which makes it one of the most enticing. Ask 2015 overall winner, Paul Clitheroe, who is set to return with his TP52, Balance.

“It’s an absolute honour to win this great race,” he said.

“The CYCA does a fantastic job of organizing the race and making sure everyone is safe. Thanks to Rolex, the Royal Yacht Club of Tasmania, all the volunteers and everyone involved – it is a mammoth exercise.”

The start of the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race will be broadcast live on the Seven Network throughout Australia.

Entry into the Rolex Sydney Hobart 2016 closes on Friday 28 October 2016 at 1700hrs AEDT. Entry and Notice of Race are now online at: <http://rolexsydneyhobart.com/competitors/notice-of-race-entry/>

By Di Pearson, RSHYR media

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Photo Captions & Credit:

Fleet after start of 2015 Rolex Sydney Hobart - credit ROLEX, Stefano Gattini
Comanche came and conquered – credit ROLEX/Kurt Arrigo,

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