



## ROLEX SYDNEY HOBART YACHT RACE

### NEWS RELEASE

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#### **Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race: Tilse goes back-to-back in Harken Grinder Challenge**

Former NSW Waratahs player Jeremy Tilse has won the second annual Harken Grinder Challenge, a fun lead up event to the Rolex Sydney Hobart, just five days out from the start of the 72<sup>nd</sup> Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race.

Taking part in this year's event alongside Tilse, was Rio Olympic gold medal winning swimmer Mack Horton, Olympic water polo player Isobel Bishop, female Rolex Sydney Hobart skipper Sibby Ilzhofer (*Dare Devil*), and crew members Cecilia Jansson (*Dare Devil*) and Gleb Shatkov (*Simplesail Malaga*).

Just 12 months ago Tilse was a newcomer on the Rolex Sydney Hobart scene, joining the *Brindabella* team alongside skipper Jim Cooney. Unfortunately for the rugby player turned sailor, his inaugural race ended in retirement.

Hoping to rectify that result Tilse has again linked with Cooney, who will this year campaign the V70, *Maserati*.

The maxi has form following a fourth place finish in the 2015 Rolex Sydney Hobart at the hands of feted Italian single-handed skipper Giovanni Soldini. Since purchasing the vessel, Cooney has skippered her to line honours at the 2016 Botany Bay, Port Hacking and Cabbage Tree Island races.

While the yacht may have changed for Tilse in 2016, the result of the Harken Grinder Challenge didn't. He initially registered the second quickest time behind the powerful Shatkov, but at the beckoning of commentator James Spithill, the pair faced off in a showdown, the rugby player finding the edge when it mattered most.

Of the women that took part in the challenge it was Rio Olympian Bishop who was fastest, cleaning up with a time of 9.15 to see off Jansson (9.31) and Ilzhofer (9.87).

Earning the interest of media in attendance was Horton, a keen sailor from his childhood, who said the Harken Grinder Challenge was a tough ask for a middle distance swimmer to contend for the win.

“That was a bit of fun, I’ve never been on a grinder before and it was a good little challenge,” enthused Horton.

“It was good to be kind of close to the other guys, obviously they do it a bit because they’re competing [in the 2016 Rolex Sydney Hobart].

“But yeh, I managed to do it in 7 seconds, which is approximately 15 metres of swimming in the pool, and I swim 400 and 1500 metres! So sprinting and competing in that amount of time isn’t really in my favour, but I think I did alright.”

### **Final results – Harken Grinder Challenge**

<b>MEN</b>	<b>Time</b>
1. Jeremy Tilse	– 6.65
2. Gleb Shatkov	– 6.95
3. Mack Horton	– 7.34

<b>WOMEN</b>	<b>Time</b>
1. Isobel Bishop	– 9.15
2. Cecilia Jansson	– 9.31
3. Sibby Ilzhofer	– 9.87

\*You can see a replay of the Harken Grinder Challenge in the video below.

**By Andrew Musgrove, RSHYR media**

**\*\*\*Ends\*\*\***

**Photos and captions:**

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