



## **ROLEX SYDNEY HOBART YACHT RACE**

### **NEWS RELEASE**

**23 December, 2016**

#### **Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race: Different strokes for different folks**

Most parents who have a child taking part in the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race are proud, nervous and concerned – in equal amounts, but this is not the case in the Cameron household where Erin and her younger sister Heather were blooded into sailing from birth and lived aboard a yacht for a time.

So it comes as no surprise that dad, Doug, who will be aboard the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia's Radio Relay Vessel, the JBW, has no concerns, nor does he feel particular pride.

"What makes me nervous," says Cameron, is the fact that Erin and Shaun (McKnight), her husband, are sailing together on the same small boat. I know what can happen when husbands and wives sail together, so I wasn't keen on her going....

"I feel quite smug – there she'll be in wet weather gear, copping waves and thrown around in the sea, while I'll be in my dressing gown and slippers being served a nice roast," Cameron, a former 12 and 18ft skiff sailor and yacht racer says.

"My biggest concern isn't Erin; it's whether Steak (Andrew Copley) remembers to bring the apple sauce. He forgot it last year and it ruined my dinner," he says laughing.

"We'll beat Maluka to Hobart too – we point higher and sail consistently at 9 knots. If Erry (Erin) wants to do it the hard way, she's welcome to it."

Erin, 34, is sailing on the smallest and oldest boat in the fleet, Sean Langman's Maluka of Kermandie. The Ranger design is only 9 metres (or 30ft) long and was built in 1932. This will be the mother of two's fourth Sydney Hobart. Her last was in 2012 aboard Maluka, so she knows what she's in for.

"I was going, then I wasn't, then a crew broke his elbow, so I am back on at the last minute. It's been a bit hectic, organising - the kids (Cooper and Bronte), wet weather gear, and getting into the right state of mind. But I feel like one of the 'rock stars' – I'll just be stepping aboard without having to contribute any work to the boat," she says giggling.

"I heard there was going to be a southerly at the start, and my stomach started churning – I thought 'I don't want to go'. I just have to not think about the weather and all it brings.

Part of Erin's preparation was to undertake the Safety and Survival at Sea course, where she found herself paired with celebrity chef, Donna Hay.

"She was lovely. When I realised who she was, I asked for some tips for meals at sea, and she was very helpful, so I think we'll be eating well and keeping our energy up," she said.

"It'll be nice having Dad on the Radio Relay Vessel and to chat with him at sked time," she says. "But I can imagine what he said about me going," she added laughing, well aware of her father's rather droll sense of humour.

Erin understands family sailing dynamics only too well, helped by the fact that Maluka of Kermandie's owner, Sean Langman, will have his son, Pete aboard again. The 23 year-old skippered his father's boat in the 2011 Rolex Sydney Hobart – and in this instance, the proud father crewed for his then 18 year-old son.

"Pete and I have done a few Hobarts together now – on Maluka of Kermandie and Wild Thing in between. We also sailed the 18 footer. Then I thought it best he go and sail without me, so he went on TSA Management (Tony Levett's Sydney 38) in last year's race," Sean says.

"I've never been more proud than when I went to meet him at the dock in Hobart and heard he had steered through the storm. That was a big moment for me," confesses Sean, the head of Noakes.

Sean will have another big moment this year. "I feel quite emotional. We're taking some of Sally Gordon's (Sally and Andrew Short lost their lives in the 2009 Flinders Islet Race) ashes and also Nick Banfield's," he says of one his former Noakes employees and friend who lost his life aboard a boat when he was consumed by gas fumes.

"We're taking him back to Tasmania where he's from and into Customs House for a drink when we arrive," Langman says.

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

**By Di Pearson, RSHYR media**

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

**Photos and captions:**

Erin and Sean McKnight competing in the CYCA's Land Rover Winter Series - David Brogan  
Oldstar and youngster - Doug Cameron and daughter Erin McKnight - Courtesy Erin McKnight  
Peter and Sean Langman – credit ROLEX/Kurt Arrigo

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