



ROLEX SYDNEY HOBART YACHT RACE

NEWS RELEASE

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Family ties in Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race

It's been said before that sailing with your family is a great way of bonding – a leveller - and so it is for at least 34 boats taking part in this year's Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race, including New Zealander, Jim Delegat, who has two sons joining him for the blue water classic.

Jim, a pioneer in New Zealand's burgeoning wine industry, owns the Volvo 70, Giacomo. This is the third time Giacomo has sailed across the paddock to compete in the 628 nautical mile race. The last time was 2014 when the elder of his two boys, Nikolas, who turned 20 in November, joined him as an 18 year-old.

Now younger son, 18 year-old James, will join his older brother and Dad for his first attempt at the race billed 'the hardest yacht race in the world'. James also represents the youngest competitor this year, having turned 18 on 11 December.

Jim says: "I know that Nikolas and James can crew well on Giacomo, but it is more the occasion and being in the company of a high performance team that makes it very special for them and me.

"That said, both Nikolas and James have always been on Giacomo with me. Try keeping them off it. They have done the Coastal Classic, Auckland Fiji and inshore series."

Both sons grew up learning to sail as toddlers at Kohimarama Yacht Club. Initially they sailed Optimists in the 'learn to sail' program.

James moved on to the Royal New Zealand Yacht Squadron and has spent two years in their Youth Academy program. He has currently taken a year out, as Giacomo has been based in Sydney for the Blue Water Pointscore which ends with the Rolex Sydney Hobart.

"In the last two years he and his team (Southern Cross Racing) have sailed in the China Cup regatta, where they won the Far East 28 R division in 2015 and 2016," Jim says. "You could say they're both of a very competitive nature and yachting has, for the most part, been in their lives."

“I’ve been delivering Giacomo from Hobart and Sydney since I was 14,” says James. “I’ve sailed a 100 foot superyacht in the Millennium Cup 2015 and competed at match racing events, such as the Musto Youth International Match Racing Regatta,” adds James.

So while the Sydney Hobart is a big deal, James is not daunted by what lies ahead. Like his father, he is just hoping to finish the race, as last time Giacomo contested the race, 2014, she was dismantled off the Tasmanian coast. A better result was sixth over the line in 2013.

Nikolas comments: “I was on board for the 2014 Rolex Sydney Hobart, but we didn’t finish (the mast came tumbling down on the Tasmanian Coast), so this is a matter of unfinished business. I’m very keen to get back out there this year.”

Meanwhile, spare a thought for the wife and mother of the three, Kate Delegat, the chief organiser behind the scenes. She manages the administration, race entry and crew welfare, but every now and again, jumps aboard for a sail when the busy schedule spares her.

Others with family connections in the race include the Volvo Open 70, where coincidentally Maserati, also has an owner Jim (Cooney) a son James (18) also doing his first Hobart, and a 20 year-old daughter Julia, doing her second. The parallels with Giacomo are unusual.

There are also brothers Derek and Martin Sheppard (co-owners of Black Sheep) and Mark and Greg Tobin (After Midnight), and wife and husband duo Stephanie and Steve Kerin (she owns Dekadence).

In other cases, brothers are being pitted against each other, such as Mitch White on Giacomo, while younger brother Morgan is on the super maxi CQS – and Holger Streckenbach and son Felix (who turns 25 on 28 December) are racing on Patrice Six, while younger son/brother, Theodor (21) is on Hollywood Boulevard.

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:

Family ties - Nikolas, Jim and James Delegat on Sydney Harbour – Credit Andrea Francolini

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