



ROLEX SYDNEY HOBART YACHT RACE

NEWS RELEASE

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Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race: Wild Oats leads – multiple boats ahead of record

This morning Wild Oats XI continued to lead the 2016 Rolex Sydney Hobart, but the race is far from over, with Perpetual LOYAL, Black Jack, Scallywag and Giacomo within striking distance as they continue their quick march down the south coast of NSW – and incredibly at least 24 boats are ahead of the race record – or on record pace.

Wild Oats XI, skippered by Mark Richards, is just 64 nautical miles south-east of Gabo Island, sailing east of the rhumbline, well ahead of the record race time she set in 2012, when she was almost abeam of Eden.

The top nine boats are sailing in an easterly breeze, Scallywag the furthest to sea, to take advantage of the easterly, keeping plenty of room between them and the coast, all sailing at around 13 knots. The rest are in a north-easterly, still enjoying a spinnaker run.

Conditions are perfect for the Volvo 70's in the race, which is being proven by the positions of the three: Black Jack, Giacomo and Maserati, with the 80 foot Beau Geste squeezing between the latter two. Black Jack is only half a mile behind Perpetual LOYAL, which in turn is 7 miles behind the race leader.

Wild Oats XI is almost into Bass Strait, where strong easterlies are expected throughout the afternoon, which will help push the frontrunners quickly towards their quest of breaking the record of one day 18hrs 23mins 12secs. It means Wild Oats and her contemporaries need to finish by 7.23am tomorrow morning to achieve their goal.

Meanwhile, one of the race favourites, Robbo Robertson's Beneteau 40, Bravo, leads the race overall. Queenslander Robertson returned to sailing at 77 years of age. Behind her is a bizarre Chinese menage, with the Chinese TP52, UBOX (carrying a mix of Chinese and well known French crew), Rupert Henry's Chinese Whisper and Travis Read's China Easyway, which also has some Chinese crew aboard.

By Di Pearson, RSHYR media

*****ENDS*****

Photo Captions & Credit:

The super maxi chase is on - credit ROLEX/Kurt Arrigo

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For further media information please contact:

Di Pearson, Rolex Sydney Hobart Media Director on +61 (0) 410 792 131

Olivia Price, 0427 692 587