



ROLEX SYDNEY HOBART YACHT RACE

NEWS RELEASE

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Sulky Derwent can't dampen a great 2016 Rolex Sydney Hobart

Four hours drifting in the Derwent River was not how Jim Cooney, the skipper of the Volvo Open 70 Maserati, planned to finish the 2016 Rolex Sydney Hobart - earlier this morning he had expected to cross the line around 6am, inside Wild Oats XI's 2012 record time – that was before the wind died on the river.

Maserati finally fell past the big yellow Rolex Buoy for the finish off Kings Pier at 10:04am. But Cooney is still happy. He and his crew have had a ball for the last two days in the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia's annual race.

"This race was written for the V70s," a relaxed Cooney said dockside. "Maserati behaved like a dinghy out there. We were picking the waves and throwing it around. It was an absolute joy.

"It's (fast reaching and running in strong north-easterly and easterlies) is what these boats were built for and what they excel at. No boat has been built, though, for the last four hours. It was a shame to end it like that after such a blistering race."

Cooney admits that even he was surprised at how well the V70s went this year. "They were setting the pace. We were beside Scallywag until about midnight, and they couldn't even catch Giacomo.

"The crews on these boats know how hard you can push them. They drive them harder than you would yourself. It's like a car. Most of us are too timid to push our cars to the limit, but cornering and braking they have lots of reserves. The same is true of the V70s.

"One of our guys did a Volvo race on this boat. He was all over it. He knew just how hard to go push and plough through waves and still come out at 23 knots on the other side.

"It is very exciting. I know now that these boats are very hard to break."

Just as long as you don't make any mistakes, that is. Like the super maxis, the V70s are strictly the realm of professional sailors. They are dangerous beasts, putting immense strains on rig and hull.

“My previous boat (the perennial maxi) Brindabella was a lot more forgiving. You make a mistake, she sort of groans and leans over, and lets you get away with it. These boats don't.”

Nevertheless, Cooney says the race was pretty much incident free on Maserati.

“The worst thing was that Waratah rugby prop forward Jeremy Tilse fell out of his bunk and onto me. It had to be the biggest bloke on the boat!”

By Jim Gale, RSHYR media

*****Ends*****

Photos and captions:

Maserati – an exciting ride – credit ROLEX/Kurt Arrigo

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