



## ROLEX SYDNEY HOBART YACHT RACE

### NEWS RELEASE

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#### Was the Rolex Sydney Hobart worth It?

When Sweden's Jonas Grander decided two years ago he was going to compete in the 72<sup>nd</sup> Rolex Sydney Hobart, his friends thought he was joking - and when he realised he was going to have to buy a boat unseen to do it, they thought he was a bit crazy.

Still, crazy or not, Jonas stepped aboard his new Elliott 44 *Matador*, formerly known as *Veloce*, just 10 days before the start of the race. Now, 13 days later, he has stepped off *Matador* onto a dock in Hobart.

So was he crazy after all, or was it all worthwhile?

"This is absolutely the best way to celebrate Christmas," Grander beams. "It was far from what we expected. We expected the worst and it wasn't that bad. I think we were lucky.

"There was not as much sunshine as we hoped for, but to see dolphins coming up around the boat in the middle of the night was beautiful.

"The opening day was wonderful. We had too much sail up when the wind increased, and we were slow to get it down, but it was wonderful surfing, 20 knots or more, just surfing. We basically never had the jib up: just reaching or with the gennaker up.

"I have never experienced anything like the start. I was steering, so I was so focussed, I don't remember much, but there were so many people there," he said.

"And when we came here to the finishing line it was amazing as well. All the people cheering you. The best part of the race was going out of Sydney and coming into Hobart."

Grander's plan is to keep *Matador* and race her in a major race somewhere in the world each year. He is, fortunately, pleased with how the boat performed.

"It is a very good boat for these conditions," he said, "very good upwind and reaching. There were some failures, but it always happens with second hand boats. You fix them and eventually you have a boat that works."

Maybe we will see *Matador* again.

“These were Swedish conditions,” Grander laughs, “so we have to come back and do a proper Hobart. We can’t just do this one and go home again.

“Just to be out sailing was fantastic. We realised that we like racing, but to be out there just sailing, seeing the dolphins, the clear skies and stars, laughing with your friends; we just love sailing. If it goes fast we’re happy, if doesn’t, we’re happy anyway.”

**By Jim Gale, RSHYR media**

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

**Photos and captions:**

Matador surfing their way to Hobart – ROLEX/Daniel Forster

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