

FEBRUARY / MARCH 2019

OFFSHORE

THE MAGAZINE OF THE CRUISING YACHT CLUB OF AUSTRALIA

ALIVE & SWELL!

TASMANIANS TRIUMPH IN THE 2018 ROLEX SYDNEY HOBART

75TH BIRTHDAY

Year-long party starts

OUR NEW CEO

Introducing Eddie Moore

WENDY TUCK

Joining CYCA elite

THE 74TH ROLEX SYDNEY HOBART YACHT RACE

ONE FOR THE HISTORY BOOKS

The 74th Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race had a little bit of everything - and the 75th looks equally exciting writes
RUPERT GUINNESS



The sweetest thing! Alive celebrate their epic triumph

The 75th Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race will be a deservedly celebrated affair for a historical benchmark reached. But after a nail-biting battle for line honours and overall victory in 2018, a fever of high expectation should resonate in the lead-up to this iconic event.

The 2018 Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race was memorable for so many reasons, from the performances of boats and their crews, from front to back of the fleet. It was a contest that also showcased the increasing impact of women in the race of which more than 80 were in various crews.

A race as open as the 74th Rolex Sydney Hobart should encourage many boats to return, and likewise inspire new campaigns to be launched; no matter the inevitable role that weather conditions can play.

Sure, conditions can be the bane of any crew and boat; but likewise

they can also reward - no matter the size or class of boat.

In the 2018 Rolex Sydney Hobart, conditions were idyllic for the super maxis and mid-sized boats that savoured 'champagne sailing' after leaving Sydney Harbour following the Boxing Day start, and were catapulted south by a north to nor'easterly breeze.

It was the smaller boats towards the back of the fleet that were given a taste of trademark 'on the nose' punishment as those winds turned to westerlies and increased as they neared the finish.

The one common challenge that all boats faced was the array

of transitions which forced crews to chase pockets of winds as others petered out, turning the race into a tactical tussle for all.

Conditions were in stark contrast to the storm-stricken 1998 race when six lives were lost - and many more were rescued - in a horrific storm and high seas. All were grateful for that, on the 20th anniversary of the tragedy, officially commemorated at sea on day two of the race - at 1700hrs on December 27 - when David Kellett AM, who sailed in the 1998 race and is now head of the Radio Relay Vessel, read out to the fleet on radio the words originally spoken by then Cruising Yacht Club of Australia Commodore, Hugo Van Kretschmar, at the 1998 memorial service at Constitution Dock. Referring to the lost six sailors, the message read:

Mike Bannister, John Dean, Jim Lawler, Glyn Charles, Bruce Guy, Phil Skeggs...

May the everlasting voyage you have now embarked on be blessed with calm seas and gentle breezes.

May you never have to reef or change a headsail at night.

May your bunk be always warm and dry.

This is not to say the 2018 race was spared of any challenge. It was certainly not smooth sailing for all in the 85-strong fleet that lined up for the start. Three waves of yachts with a huge spectator fleet following and thousands of others lining the Harbour shore and its various vantage points.

The race saw six yachts retire, leaving 79 to reach the finish; but in the racing conditions, it turned into a veritable test of open sea smarts, tactical cunning and precise decision making.



Tasmanian boat Alive claimed the Tattersall Cup in an outstanding performance.

WHAT A RACE ... FOUR-WAY FIGHT FOR LINE HONOURS

The race for line honours was astonishingly close. It was highlighted on a Friday morning near the end of day two and the unprecedented sight of all four super-maxis racing up the Derwent River, with *Wild Oats XI* leading after making its winning move at Tasman Light shortly before dawn to pass the race leader, *Comanche*.

From there, *Wild Oats XI*, owned by the Oatley family, sailed up the Derwent River under glorious morning sunshine with a vast spectator fleet in tow following her every move, gybing to port and starboard much of the way up the river before making a final straight line to the finish.

That line she crossed at 0807hrs, ending her 628-nautical-mile journey

in an official time of 1 day 19 hours 7 minutes 21 seconds.

In second place was Peter Harburg's *Black Jack* in 1d 19hrs 35m 6s, followed by the Jim Cooney and Samantha Grant-owned *Comanche* in 1d 19hrs 36m 9s and then *InfoTrack*, owned by Christian Beck, in 1d 19hrs 49m 31s. Incredibly, only 42 minutes separated them all.

“
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 ”

”

After such a close tussle, the prospect of the 75th Rolex Sydney Hobart being celebrated with an “encore” performance is now very real.

It is hard to believe Mark Richards, the skipper of *Wild Oats XI* and her owners, the Oatley family, will not want to return. After receiving the John H. Illingworth Challenge Cup for line-honours victory, Richards teased the media when asked if the 14-year-old 100-footer would take on her younger challengers again, saying: “Don’t rip up your tickets ... I gotta give you something to talk about later.”

But why would *Wild Oats XI* not race again, knowing one more line-honours title would etch her name as a 10-time winner – officially, that is?

It was not lost on anyone who heard Richards after her latest win, that



CREDIT - © Rolex_Studio Borlenghi

Duende laps up the scenery as she nears the end of her 2018 Rolex Sydney Hobart journey



CREDIT - © Rolex_Studio Borlenghi

Unprecedented media interest followed the 2018 Rolex Sydney Hobart, with more television viewers for the start than ever before

he still regards her in such reckoning. Referring to the 2017 race when she crossed the line first, but fell to second place after being penalised one hour for an incident with *Comanche* shortly after the start. Richards, who labelled the 2018 win as “redemption,” said: “Today was *Wild Oats*’ 10th time over the line first, regardless what anyone else says.

“This is one of the best yachting wins of my life ... not just for myself, but for the whole team (and) the Oatley family. After an event like last year, to come through and redeem yourself, today is a wonderful, wonderful feeling. Money can’t buy that sort of stuff.”

Richards lauded the ageing but “skinny” *Wild Oats XI*, saying: “There are only six grand prix hundred footers in the world. They (the five entries, including *Sun Hung Kai/Scallywag* that retired soon after the race start with a broken bowsprit) are the best 100 footers in the world and to have a boat this old still showing the way is pretty impressive. She is a remarkable machine. She is the Phar Lap of yachting.”

As Richards spoke, he had no idea that a veil of uncertainty was about to fall on the result due to reports from *Black Jack* that inferred *Wild Oats XI* may have breached Special Regulation 4.09 (a) in

Rule 11.4 of the Sailing Instructions that: “An AIS Transponder shall be carried and be switched on, such that it is receiving and transmitting.” But that cloud abated when the Race Committee’s lodged protest was declared invalid by the international Race Jury.

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 ”

Wild Oats XI’s future in the Rolex Sydney Hobart aside, it would seem that the owners and crews of *Black Jack*, *Comanche* and *InfoTrack* would want to have another crack at upsetting her grip on the title. Similarly, for the Hong Kong entrant, *Sun Hung Kai/Scallywag* skippered by David Witt that was rated a serious challenger leading up to the race and soon after the Boxing Day start until the moment she retired.



The Winning Appliances crew sailed in memory of those lost in the 1998 race.

We will never know what imprint *Sun Hung Kai/Scallywag* would have left on the 2018 race, but many will be keen to see what she can do this year; and one would think Witt and the owners of *Sun Hung Kai/Scallywag* would be too.

ALIVE AND WELL ... THE RACE FOR OVERALL VICTORY

Much can be said or asked of the rest of the 2018 fleet.

As the sailing fraternity appreciates, the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race is not just about who can – and does – win line honours. It is also about the battle for the Tattersall Cup as the overall winner.

For many, that contest is what matters most. And 2018 did not disappoint in providing an enthralling battle for the Cup. It should have triggered the interest of many boat owners for this year's race.

The race on handicap in 2018 saw a constant change on the leader-board from the moment *Black Jack* led the

fleet out from Sydney Harbour. But finally, Phillip Turner's *Alive*, a Reichel/Pugh 66, was declared the winner. The last Tasmanian winner was Bob Cumming's *Screw Loose* in 1979. The previous two were G.D. Gibson's *Westward* in 1947 and 1948. *Alive* now becomes the fourth ever Tasmanian entry to win, just the third boat from the Apple Isle.

Alive, also the fifth boat to finish in 2 days 1 hour 40 minutes 36 seconds, won overall with a corrected time of 3 days 6 hours 41 minutes 16 seconds. Second in a corrected time of 3d 7h 55m 11s was the NSW entry *Wild Oats X* also owned by the Oatley family and skippered by Stacey Jackson with an all-female professional crew – as well as former Foreign Affairs Minister Julie Bishop MP as a supporter of the crew's campaign to promote ocean sustainability until she disembarked by jumping off as *Wild Oats X* neared Bondi Beach. In third place was Hugh Ellis' *Voodoo* from Victoria in 3d 8h 44m 20s.

The historical significance of *Alive's* win was not lost on Turner, a retired

professional gambler whose love of the race dates back to his days as a tacker raised in Hobart when his father would take him down to Constitution Dock see the race fleet finish one by one.

"It's great for Tasmania," said Turner who bought *Alive*, formerly named *Black Jack*, in 2014, with the "intention" of winning the race.

"I looked at what was available. I got (Australian boat designer) Fred Barrett to help me and basically we kept coming back to this boat."

Turner was quickly repaid for his investment into the canting keeler. She accrued a number of wins in Australian east coast races leading up to her last Rolex Sydney Hobart start before her 2018 win – that being, in 2016 with eighth place on line honours and 17th overall. In 2017 she went to the south-east Asia circuit. On her return home, in the 2017 Brisbane to Gladstone Yacht Race she was second over the line, third overall and won ORCi, then third on line in



The Wild Oats XI crew claimed the John H Illingworth Challenge Cup



Ichi Ban had another fine performance but fell short of their 2017 Tattersall Cup triumph



Alive and well! Duncan Hine with the coveted Tattersall Cup and the Rolex Timepiece, alongside General Manager Rolex Australia Patrick Boutellier

“ I looked at what was available. I got (Australian boat designer) Fred Barrett to help me and basically we kept coming back to this boat.

Phillip Turner owner of *Alive*

”

the Club Marine Brisbane to Keppel Tropical Yacht Race.

THE 75TH DAWNS

The contest between *Alive* and *Wild Oats X* in the 2018 Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race certainly brought the best out of both boats and crews.

However, *Wild Oats X*'s finish that saw Jackson win the Jane Tate Memorial Trophy as the first female skipper to finish the race, also showcased the increasing influence of women in the Sydney Hobart Yacht Race

throughout the fleet, in boats both big and small, and varying class.

Examples were Adrienne Cahalan, in her 27th start, navigating *Voodoo* to eighth on line honours and third overall to win Division 1; Zoe Taylor's *Cookson 12*, *Grace O'Malley*, winning Division 3 and placing ninth on IRC with a crew including Clipper Round the World-winning skipper Wendy Tuck in her 12th start and on bow, former CYCA Youth Sailing Academy sailor Emma May in her fifth; *Wax Lyrical* winning PHS

overall and placing third in the Corinthian division with a crew including four women; and *Audere*, who represented Royal Brighton Yacht Club in Victoria and finished 67th overall, having in its crew of 10 skipper John Cain's wife Jenny Wright and their two daughters, Beth and Milly Cain in an experience that for the mother-and-sister trio was their first Rolex Sydney Hobart.

How this will all impact the role of women in the 75th Rolex Sydney Hobart remains to be seen, but in



Constitution Dock is bustling with spectators and sailors throughout the race



New Year celebrations at Constitution Dock

light of the close race between *Alive* and *Wild Oats X* for the Tattersall Cup, there is sound reason to believe in the prospect of an all-female crew one day winning the race overall.

That is already understood by the crew of *Alive* on which attention will focus on her chances of defending her Tattersall Cup title. History shows how hard a challenge that is, as Matt Allen, the owner-skipper of the 2017 winner *Ichi Ban* was reminded of last year.

No boat has won the race overall two years in a row since *Freya* between

1963-65, and going into the 2018 race, Allen's TP52 was highly regarded as an entry that could add to that chapter of history.

Ichi Ban won almost every race she started last year. The Royal Ocean Racing Club in the UK even named her 'Yacht of the Year'.

But in the Sydney Hobart, the goal of claiming back-to-back wins eluded her, due mostly to conditions slowing her in Storm Bay.

"We never underestimated how challenging it is," Allen said dockside

in Hobart after finishing at 2330hrs 28 December, outside the time needed to have any chance of winning again. "You can be in really good shape but you have to get everything right. The moons have to be aligned.

"That's what makes it such a huge challenge to win this race."

That should also inspire many to believe in their prospects in this year's Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race amid the celebrations building for its next momentous milestone – that being, the diamond age of 75. 🏆