

offshore

YACHTING

WILD RIDE

A FAMILY AFFAIR AS *WILD ROSE* DECLARED OVERALL WINNER AND *WILD OATS XI* CLAIMS A RECORD EIGHTH LINE HONOURS TRIUMPH IN THE 70th SYDNEY HOBART RACE

70th
**ROLEX SYDNEY
HOBART 2014**

FULL REPORT OF THE
GREAT RACE SOUTH



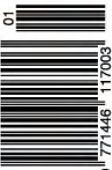
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FEB/MAR 2015

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OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE CRUISING YACHT CLUB OF AUSTRALIA

**SYDNEY
SPECTACLE**
Competitors race
for the heads
after the start of
the 70th Sydney
to Hobart race,
with *Comanche*
in the lead.



CLOSE QUARTERS
The biggest of competitors race out of Sydney Harbour after the 1pm start on Boxing Day, flanked by spectator boats.





ROLEX / CARLO BOZZO

Australian Bob Oatley was over the moon when his *Wild Oats XI* sailed off with a record eighth line honours and his former boat *Wild Rose* won the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race overall.

Oatley was among the first to call and congratulate Roger Hickman, who claimed the overall honours for a second time with his 29-year-old Farr 43.

In 2014, the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia celebrated its 70th anniversary and the 70th edition of the world famous 628 nautical mile race, so it was always going to be a special year for the bluewater classic.

It was especially memorable for the Oatley-owned, Mark Richards-skipped *Wild Oats XI*, now the most winning boat in history, and *Wild Rose*, which delivered Hickman his third overall victory (his first was with *Wild Rose* in 1993, the second as sailing master aboard *SAP Ausmaid* in 2000).

The fleet boasted yachts from the USA, UK, Cayman Islands, Poland, Germany and New Zealand, the oldest sailor in history in 87-year-old Syd Fischer, the most capped sailor in Tony Cable for his 49th race, the most capped boat with *Bacardi* attaining 29 races, four female skippers, along with at least eleven 18-year-olds, among them recent graduates from the CYCA Youth Sailing Academy.

And returning after a long break from the race were Peter Riddell's *Southern Myth* and Michael Strong's *Landfall*. Built in 1953, the Laurent Giles-designed *Southern Myth* contested the race from 1954-1965, only missing 1964, with a best result of third overall in 1958.

Landfall was the oldest former Hobart competitor. An S&S built in Tasmania in 1935, she finished seventh overall in the 1952 Hobart, returning to race in 1976, and celebrated her 80th by competing in the 70th Rolex Sydney Hobart.

Well prior to the start, the race received enormous attention with the line honours contenders – five 100-foot super maxis, two V70's and a Reichel/Pugh 66 – which took much of the limelight early on.

The newly launched *Comanche*, owned by Jim Clark and Kristy Hinze-Clark, skippered by Ken Read and dubbed the 'aircraft carrier', commanded numerous headlines, with many tipping her the boat to beat *Wild Oats*.

Along with the newly hulled *Ragamuffin 100*, which Syd Fischer

nicknamed his 'surfboard', and the lengthened and extensively modified *RIO 100* owned by Manouch Moshayedi (USA), *Comanche* was an unknown quantity to both the *Wild Oats XI* crew and to those on Anthony Bell's *Perpetual Loyal*.

Comanche gave an early indication of her true potential with the fastest ever getaway from Sydney Harbour when the starting canon fired on Boxing Day sending the 117-strong fleet off three start lines. Her extraordinary speed shocked even Richards who, miked up for Channel 7, blurted: "She's smoking – look at that thing go."

Witnessed by the largest spectator fleet in recent memory, and in a building 15-20 south-easterly, *Comanche* powered towards Sydney Heads, leaving all in her wake in an unofficial fastest time of around five minutes.

For only the second time since her debut in 2005, Oatley's yacht had to chase another boat out of Sydney Heads. The first instance was 2009

"She's smoking – look at that thing go!"

MARK RICHARDS
Wild Oats XI



when *Alfa Romeo* was first out and first to Hobart.

Once her spinnaker came down at the clearing mark, *Wild Oats XI* and the other big boats were able to reduce their deficit on *Comanche*. However, the American yacht held off all comers until her race hopes were killed by unusually light airs in Bass Strait on day two of the race.

While the front runners made a fast start, strong southerly headwinds and a nasty seaway ended the hopes of seven yachts in quick succession. Less than eight hours into the race the fleet was reduced to 110. Casualties included Victorian hopeful *Tina of Melbourne*, taking water through a seam near the bow, *Bear Necessity* with rudder damage and 1997 line honours winner, *Brindabella*, had a rudder bearing problem.

By first light the next morning *Perpetual Loyal*, with a crew including world champion boxer Danny Green and surfer Sally Fitzgibbons, was out with hull damage.



Twenty hours into the race, *Comanche* was still in front around 39 nautical miles east of Green Cape, with *Wild Oats* trailing by under a mile in lightening winds. *Ragamuffin 100* and Peter Harburg's *Black Jack*, skippered by Mark Bradford, three and a half miles apart, were 16 nautical miles behind them.

New Zealand's *Giacomo* (Jim Delegat), *Alive* (Phillip Turner) from Tasmania, and *RIO 100* were within 5 nautical miles of each other, seven miles astern of the leader.

Around 10am on December 27, *Wild Oats* finally overtook the foreign boat in the defining move of the race. From here, Bob Oatley's boat maintained a speed of 12 to 15 knots; twice that of her rival, eventually opening up a 40 nautical mile lead.

But *Comanche* rallied in increasing winds early on December 28 to stage

SUPER SIZE
Left: The super maxi *Comanche*, owned by Jim Clark and Kristy Hinze-Clark took off with a roaring start in its first ever Hobart. Above: Syd Fischer's new *Ragamuffin 100*.

E1 E3 E4 E5 E6
S1 S3 S4 S5

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GLORY DAYS

Comanche passing the famous Organ Pipes in Tasmania. Below: *Titania's* crew hard at work. Right: *Simply Fun* from Sandringham Yacht Club in Victoria.



an impressive comeback. By 8am, *Comanche*, still in good breeze, reduced the margin to just 16 miles and then finally to 10 miles.

"We're sure going to put on a show for you guys, we pushed the guys hard this morning, but we need a little luck for sure, to beat *Wild Oats*. It's going to get a little tricky on approach to Tasmania," crew Kimo Worthington said from *Comanche* that morning.

"We didn't like Bass Strait very much (he said referring to the light air), but we're pretty happy with the performance of the boat. We haven't had anything to race against before, so this is our first test, and we're happy."

However, *Comanche* ran out of runway. *Wild Oats XI* steamed up the Derwent River under spinnaker, finishing at 3.03.26 to claim an historic eighth fastest time win. *Comanche* finished less than 50 minutes later.

"Cheers Hobart," yelled Richards as he hoisted the Illingworth Trophy aloft and took a swig of champagne from the silver mug after *Wild Oats'* win.

"It all went really well, and it was so exciting. To win a Hobart is such a great honour – and to win an eighth

ROLEX / DANIEL FORSTER

Hobart – I just can't believe it; it is just wonderful".

"This is the sweetest victory by far, and Bob and myself and everyone are so proud to be part of it," he said.

"You don't get to rewrite a bit of sailing history every day of the week, so it is wonderful to get the record."

Bob Oatley, meanwhile, was deciding which member of his family would receive the 11th Rolex timepiece that has come his way since his first triple victory in 2014.

Back on the racetrack, the middle to smaller sized yachts were enjoying hard running and reaching conditions, setting up a thrilling battle for the overall win.

The likes of Bruce Taylor's Caprice 40 *Chutzpah* (Vic), *Ariel*, the Beneteau First 40 of Ron Forster/Phil Damp, Sean Langman's *Maluka of Kermandie* (Tas), Hickman's *Wild Rose*, Simon Kurts' *Love & War*, John Willoughby's *Enchantress* (SA) and Shane Kearns' refurbished S&S34, *Quikstep Azzurro*, were all in the running for the ultimate prize of the Tattersall's Cup and a Rolex timepiece as time ran down.

Three-time overall winner *Love & War* was one of seven yachts to go to



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“To win with my sister and brother, is a bizarre but wonderful experience. Imagine winning the Hobart on your first try.”

Roger Hickman
Wild Rose

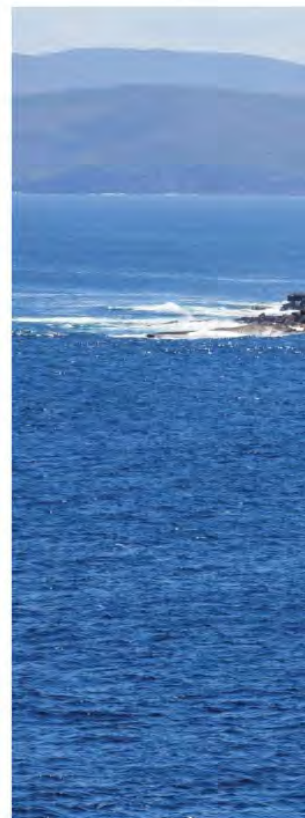
the assistance of a light plane which tragically went down near Cape Raoul during the race, resulting in the loss of the lives of its pilot and photographer. Along with the others, she was awarded redress, but it was not enough to overhaul *Wild Rose*.

Hickman, sailing with Hobart debutants, his brother Andrew, sister Lisa and 18-year-old Sam Scott, along with an experienced crew including navigator Jen Wells and veteran Peter Inchbold, overcame two dramas at sea to win.

“To win with my sister and brother, is a bizarre but wonderful experience. Imagine winning the Hobart on your first try,” said Hickman whose mother died just prior to Christmas.

“Usually when you win, you ring a member of your family to share it with, well with my mum gone, and Lisa and Andrew with me, I had nobody to tell.”

On his 38th Hobart, ‘Hicko and his crew survived a broach when hit by a 37-knot gust near Tasman Island and a Chinese gybe en route to their overall win, resulting in their loss of steering. Staying calm, they employed the emergency steering before refixing the



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IN TO WIN
Clockwise from above: A clean stretch for Caro; Spirit of Koomooloo is crewed by a devoted and amateur crew; overall winner Wild Rose.

cable to the steering quadrant.

"It is a dream at the end of really what was one of my toughest ever races with awful upwind sailing, some drifting, gale force winds, nasty seas, the broach, the Chinese gybe – my first in nearly 50 years of sailing," Hickman said.

Even the finishing straight of the race proved far from straightforward, as the fatigued crew had to make around 40 sail changes on the Derwent River.

Hickman was overwhelmed with his win on a yacht he says he loved from his first sail on her: "I feel lucky and privileged to have Bob Oatley's boat," he said.

"I sailed with Bob Oatley on this boat and with Hugh Treharne (America's Cup winner 1983) and Rodney Pattison (English double Olympic gold medallist). I did three Hobarts with Bob on this boat. When I bought the boat from him in 1991, he almost gave it to me.

"I was a young merchant navy officer then. I was honoured and privileged to sail with him and the others. Six years later when I went to buy the boat, I only had half the money, so I asked Bob if he could wait while I tried to raise the rest. He said to me, 'Roger, you were the only



guy to ever go to the bar and buy me a drink, don't worry about the rest'.

"He was so gracious and I wouldn't have been able to get involved in that boat at all without that generous offer.

"Bob Oatley has helped me and Ricko (Oats' skipper Mark Richards) and so many others get where we are today.

"So now we have *Wild Oats XI* and *Wild Rose* in the winner's circle – the Ricko and Hicko show."

The last yacht into Hobart was *Southern Myth* with the entire fleet safely moored at Constitution Dock by December 30 – an unusual feat.

"It demonstrated to me what real sailing's about. I'm not interested in the money and the glitz and the rest of it," said *Southern Myth*'s South Australian skipper Peter Riddell at the end of the race.

"It's about teamwork and we had a fantastic team, a group of people who hadn't sailed together before and were able to bring themselves and start working as a team."

Not all got to Hobart in the shape they hoped. *Giacomo* was dismantled late afternoon on December 28,

sailing in north-east winds gusting up to 35 knots, 21 nautical miles north-east of Cape Sonnerat at approximately 5.45pm.

A short time later, Bill Wild's *Wedgetail* (Qld), in *Giacomo*'s near vicinity, suffered the same fate as last year, when the Reichel/Pugh 55 lost most her mast. In all, 103 yachts finished from 117 starters.

In keeping with tradition, brothers Trygve and Magnus Halvorsen were invited to start the race which also celebrated the 50th birthday of their winning their third consecutive race with *Freya*. Sadly, Trygve died in November aged 94 and Magnus, 96, was unable to accept the invitation, so his son Niel represented both and Trygve's daughters Nina and Erica looked on.

The trio also attended the Skippers Party and Ocean Racer of the Year awards, presenting the CYCA with the three Iron Pot trophies won by their parents with *Freya*, and donated to the Club to celebrate its 70th Anniversary and 70th edition of the race. <http://rolexsydneyhobart.com/>

THE RICKO & HICKO SHOW
Winning skippers, Mark Richards and Roger Hickman.

Southern Cross Cup

Three teams contested the Southern Cross Cup, decided between December's Bird Island Race, the CYCA Trophy and the non-droppable Rolex Sydney Hobart, the Southern Cross Cup. The CYCA Gold team of *St George Midnight Rambler* (Ed Psaltis/Bob Thomas/Michael Bencsik), *ADA Celestial* (Sam Haynes) and *Balance* (Paul Clitheroe) were the winners. Navigator of the top scoring yacht went to *St George Midnight Rambler's* Tom Barker.

Corinthian Division

From 35 entries, *She's the Culprit*, from Newcastle/Lake Macquarie, is the first name carved on the Corinthian trophy donated by CYCA stalwarts Michael and Jeannette York. The Inglis/Jones/Hart 39 is owned by *the Culprit* syndicate. Skipper Glen Picasso and crew were thrilled to be inaugural winners of this trophy, dedicated to amateur and traditionalist crews. To be eligible, entrants also had to be entered in IRC, ORCi or PHS classes.

Parade of Sail

In tribute to those yachts and crews involved in the evolution of the Sydney Hobart, from its modest start of nine boats in 1945, the CYCA held a Parade of Sail prior to the main event, in recognition of the 70th year. Bringing back memories of yesteryear, it stirred even the modernists. Competitors from 1945, *Kathleen* (first owned by Jack Earl), *Wayfarer* and *Archina*, were led out by HMAS *Advance*. The fleet of 36 was a blaze of colourful flags, their crews dressed for the occasion, including the 1958 built *Maris*. A previous Sydney Hobart competitor, *Maris* is owned by Tiare Tomaszewski, the granddaughter of original owner Jack Earl. She was crewed on the day by family members. Aboard HMAS *Advance* were two competitors from the 1945 race; Geoff Ruggles (*Wayfarer*), now 90 and John Gordon (*Winston Churchill*) 88. The well-preserved pair captivated all with their vivid recollections of that race.

Meritorious Awards

Past CYCA Commodore Martin James and past RYCT Commodore Robert 'Biddy' Badenach were honoured with Meritorious Awards. James has made a continuous and substantial contribution to and planning of the race since 1999. Badenach has played a major part in the race since 1991, known to all through his various roles at RYCT, including orchestrating the race finish. A special trophy was awarded to *JBW* John Winning. The half model of *JBW* mounted on a Huon pine plaque handcrafted by Tasmanian, Ron Bugg, is a reminder of Winning's generosity in loaning *JBW* for the purpose of the Radio Relay vessel for the past 10 years.