



MEDIA RELEASE

16 FEBRUARY 2007

**GEELONG MAYOR GETS UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL
WITH OFFSHORE POWERBOAT SERIES**

Geelong Mayor Cr Bruce Harwood was on hand this morning to get an up close and personal glimpse of one of this weekend's competitors at the opening round of the Australian Offshore Powerboat Series.

Class Three- 4 Litre speed machine '*Shaken Not Stirred*' rolled into Steampacket Gardens on the Corio Bay foreshore to meet Mayor Harwood this morning, before beginning preparations for a practice and testing session on Corio Bay tomorrow and race proceedings on Sunday.

"It is a beautiful looking boat, and really seems like it would have some serious speed out on the water, I can't wait to see just how quick they are come Sunday," said Cr Harwood.

And the mayor will get his chance tomorrow when many of the offshore thoroughbreds hit Corio Bay at 3:30pm to fine tune their boats in time for an all out assault at the Geelong Classic on Sunday at noon.

"It's a fantastic event and the entire city tends to enjoy the race every year, I encourage everyone to get down on Saturday and Sunday to Steampacket Gardens and see these amazing machines up close," said Cr Harwood.

"It's a brilliant venue to host a race, and a fitting place for our season opener," said '*Shaken Not Stirred*' driver Mike Beil.

"Mayor Harwood seemed quite impressed with our boat, and there will be many other teams that are just as impressive arriving today, the weekend will be full of some serious speed and action come race time on Sunday".

Shaken Not Stirred is one of a host of new teams joining the series in 2007, and Geelong's race will serve as a learning curve for the new duo of Mike Beil and Garry Smith.

"I have a fair bit of experience in an offshore powerboat, however it will be Garry's first time under race conditions so it's exciting and we need to work well together to finish the race strongly," said Mike Beil.

There is something for everyone this weekend, with the Class -1 entries set to hit speeds topping 250km/h out on the water, and the lower classes packing some impressive power as well.



“While the Class- 1 boats tend to make the most noise and definitely are monstrous in size, the lower classes really do have some very well built boats that are just as impressive out on the water,” said Race Director Russell Embleton.

“Not many people can say that they have travelled at speeds of 150km/h in a boat, and that’s what many of these guys will do this weekend under race conditions.”

“We are all looking forward to the season opener, and Geelong has turned on some great weather for us,” said Embleton.

This weekend will also see the introduction of a brand new ‘One Make’ Class, where all boats will have exactly the same specifications, ensuring results will be based around the skill of each race team.

Best viewing points for spectators will be in areas along the foreshore near Steampacket Gardens and Cunningham Pier.

Saturday 17 February

Practice and Testing

When: 3:30pm- 4:30pm

Where: Corio Bay

Sunday 18 February

Geelong Classic Offshore Powerboat Race

When: Midday- 1:30pm

Where: Corio Bay