

OFFSHORE POWERBOATS READY FOR RACING IN GEELONG

Australia's Offshore Powerboat Series starts its 2007 season in Geelong this weekend, and the local punters have flocked to Steampacket Gardens today to get an up-close and personal glimpse of the impressive offshore thoroughbreds.

Race teams and their million dollar speed machines began arriving yesterday, and the race village has brought Steampacket Gardens to life this afternoon.

Teams will hit Corio Bay this afternoon for a practice and testing session beginning at 3:30pm before thrashing around the Corio Bay Course for the Geelong Classic kicking off at midday tomorrow, Sunday 18 February.

Reaching speeds of up to 250km/h, tomorrow's race is set to thrill a huge Geelong crowd with best spectator points along the foreshore at Steampacket Gardens and near Cunningham pier.

Simrad pairing Luke Durman and Ross Willaton, last year's champions and winners of the Geelong Classic will make the switch from a diesel powered boat used in 2006 to twin Lamborghini V12 engines tomorrow, each with 920 horsepower.

"This afternoon's practice session will be my first time in the new boat; it will be a little different to last year but Ross and I are quite confident of a good result tomorrow," said Simrad driver Luke Durman.

A large Class Three field has been assembled for the 2007 series, with many new teams set to test their skill against Hogs Breath racing, last years four litre champion.

"It will be very interesting tomorrow with the field almost doubling from last year," said Kwozzy racings Adam Nicolls.

"Last year was a learning year for us, and we are ready to start pushing hard towards winning Races," said Nicolls.

Boats will be launched at 10:00am tomorrow morning before racing begins at noon, all spectators are encouraged to get down to Steampacket Gardens as racers prepare their boats before an all out assault out on Corio Bay.