

SIMRAD CROWNED OFFSHORE CHAMPIONS

Simrad pairing Ross Willaton and Luke Durman have taken out line honours at round five of the Australian Offshore Powerboat Series this afternoon in Mooloolaba.

Today's win sees *Simrad* take an un-assailable series lead into round six on the Gold Coast next weekend, sewing up the 2006 championship with only one round remaining.

"We were a bit over-propped today and had a lot of vibration in the boat during the first few laps, so we were happy to escape with a victory", said Luke Durman.

"It was a lot choppier than it looked out there, and we actually took a chunk out of one of the propellers.

"It's a great feeling to win the Australian Championship, and the pressure is off now, so we can just go out there and really enjoy it on the Gold Coast next week".

Maritimo's father-son duo of Bill and Tom Barry-Cotter lead the field until mechanical problems forced their retirement from the race during lap twelve.

In an action packed afternoon of offshore racing, *Simrad* were dealt a lucky hand after *Maritimo* looked to control the race until they encountered difficulties on lap twelve.

"We had some fuel pump trouble, and it's never a good sound to hear the engines winding down", explained Tom Barry-Cotter.

"It's a shame really, because we controlled the race and we were propped perfectly today, so it's really disappointing to finish like that".

The class three- six litre field was headed by the *Red Bellies* team early in proceedings and they never looked back.

Colin Craven couldn't have been happier with the effort after teaming up with Andrew Linton due to his usual partner in crime, Bruce Sanders, being unable to race this weekend.

"Today's effort was very pleasing, especially in the absence of Bruce, Andrew did a really good job today, and we can be confident that we will be able to win the class title next week".

Hogs Breath Racing made it five wins from five starts, confirming their domination of this year's series, with a convincing win again today at the Mooloolaba Classic.

After an early challenge from *Kwozzy*, the *Hogs Breath* team were able to race away with a win that hands them the Class Three- four litre title.

"It was a great day for racing, it was perfect out there," said Paul Fowlds.

“We had a good little battle with *Kwozzy* as we did last race in Sydney, but in the end we had a great win and were able to win the Class Three- four litre title in the process”.

The National A Class saw a thrilling race between defending champions *Thycon* and this year’s front runners, *Advantage Marine*.

In perhaps the most entertaining battle of the afternoon, *Advantage Marine* and *Thycon* went toe-to-toe throughout the race, until *Advantage Marine*’s Don McClymont and Nick Purvis pulled away to make in five wins on the trot and snatch the National A title from last years winners, *Thycon*.

“We had a fantastic time out their today and a great battle with Thycon,” said Don McClymont”

“*Thycon* had some oil bottle problems, as did we, so I was ahppy to eventually come away with the win”.

Grumpy Mongrel were the Production Class winners this afternoon.

OUTRIGHT ROUND RESULTS (PROVISIONAL) - MOOLOOLABA CLASSIC

1. SIMRAD	Ross Willaton/ Luke Durman	1 hour 11 mins 29 secs
2. AFT	Peter McGrath/ Steve Jellick	+ 21 secs
3. MARITIMO	Bill/Tom Barry-Cotter	11 LAPS
4. RED BELLIES	Colin Craven/Andrew Linton	11 LAPS
5. NAVMAN	Mike Beil/ Craig Purton	11 LAPS

CLASS WINNERS- MOOLOOLABA CLASSIC

Class One	SIMRAD	Ross Willaton/ Luke Durman
Class 3-6 litre	RED BELLIES	Colin Craven/ Andrew Linton
Class 3-4 litre	HOGS BREATH	Paul Gibbs/ Paul Fowlds
National ‘A’	ADVANTAGE MARINE	Don McClymont/ Nick Purvis
Production	GRUMPY MONGREL	Peter Jack/ Mark Taylor