

**POWERBOAT ADRENALINE RUSH HITS**  
**NEWCASTLE HARBOUR**

Newcastle Harbour will play host to the roaring sounds of the fastest powerboats in Australia this weekend, when the ACME Fibreglass Supplies Australian Offshore Powerboat Series kicks off round 3 on Sunday 7 May.

Class One entries are capable of speeds higher than 200km/h out on the water, and this weekend's action is sure to attract thousands of locals to the power packed adrenaline rush that is Offshore Racing.

The Newcastle Challenge begins at noon on Sunday 7 May, where teams will battle it out in what may prove to be the most crucial round of the series this year.

All teams will have to be on their toes for round three, after both the opening rounds in Victoria were held in near perfect conditions. Newcastle often serves up unpredictable weather, and anything could happen this weekend, having a direct effect on how the teams go about their race.

Local competitor Red Bellies has had an indifferent start to this year's series, but has invested in two brand new engines for the Newcastle round in an effort to get back on track in their home state.

Bruce Sanders and his partner Colin Craven from Red Bellies are the current Class Three (6 litre) defending champions but have been upstaged at the opening two events by new team Navman.

"We have been out testing and making sure the boat is ready to go for the Newcastle Challenge", explains Bruce Sanders from Red Bellies.

"We've been working hard to get the boat right, and the two new engines will give us some added speed, and that will go a long way to putting us back into a winning position."

Craig Purton will step into the throttleman position to partner Mat Humphrey in the Navman boat for Newcastle, with Wayne Jones unable to take part in round three proceedings.

"We have had a dream start to this year's series having won the opening two rounds," explains Mat Humphrey of Navman.

The Class One field will be hot on the heels of Simrad pairing Ross Willaton and Luke Durman in Newcastle in an effort to peg back the winning team from the opening two rounds.

Durman and Willaton of Simrad have been the surprise packet in 2006, and nearing the half way stage of the series will look to extend their lead even further.

AFT pairing Peter 'Muddy' McGrath and Chris Rosch had a solid race in Geelong finishing in third position and both will be looking to push their boat to its limits to finish further up the podium in Newcastle.

Tom Barry-Cotter will make his debut along side his father Bill at Newcastle for the Maritimo team. Tom recently turned eighteen years old, and what better experience to have along side you in your first race than your father and defending Class One Champion.

Smorgon Steel has had a disappointing start to this year's series with mechanical failure forcing them out of the opening two rounds. Tony Low and Simon Isherwood are looking to make amends in Newcastle and ensure they stay in the hunt for a place in this year's championship.

"We had a few glitches in Melbourne and Geelong, but the boat is race ready for Newcastle and we are ready to go", said Tony Low of the Smorgon Team.

"Newcastle is quite an unpredictable course, but we hope to test on Saturday and be ready for racing on Sunday."

Brothers Steve and Andrew Searle have made some changes to their ACME team boat and will again push hard for a strong finish at Newcastle.

ACME had two great starts in Melbourne and Geelong but was unable to capitalise and finish with a win. Newcastle poses a new round for the Searle brothers to show what they are made of.

Class Three (4 litre) entry, Kwozzy are looking to better their standing in the series having bowed out of the opening round in Melbourne and just managing to finish in Geelong.

"With a lot of help from some of the boys we have bolted on 2 brand motors, so there won't be any excuses in Newcastle," said Adam Nicolls from Kwozzy.

"We hope to give Hogs Breath a good run in Newcastle and it should make for some good racing, we are just hanging out to get down there."

Advantage Marine duo Don McClymont and Nick Purvis hold a healthy lead in the National A Class, and both the Thycon and Piranha teams will be pushing hard to reel in the Advantage Marine pairing.

The battle of the weekend warriors continues in Production Class with Cyclone 1900 to do battle with Grumpy Mongrel at Newcastle.

### **Saturday May 6**

**What:** Testing & Practice  
**Where:** Newcastle Harbour- Best viewing from Queens Wharf in Newcastle  
**Time:** 3.30- 4.30pm

### **Sunday May 7**

**What:** Newcastle Challenge Offshore Powerboat race  
**Where:** Newcastle Harbour  
**Time:** Racing from 12.00pm- Best viewing from Queens Wharf in Newcastle