

**OFFSHORE POWERBOATS READY
FOR RACING IN GEELONG!**

The Australian Offshore Powerboat Series moves to Geelong this weekend, with competitors anxious to get out there and wow the Geelong locals with some fierce racing.

Geelong mayor Peter McMullin was on hand yesterday at Geelong's Steampacket Gardens to get an up close and personal view of class one entry ACME Racing.

"I can't believe how big these boats are, they are bound to make a big splash this weekend. This event creates a lot of interest among the local residents in Geelong, and it's a great place to stage the race," said Geelong Mayor Peter McMullin.

Andrew Searle from the ACME racing team was also in Geelong yesterday, preparing his boat for battle on the weekend.

"Its great to get some support for the event from the Geelong mayor, and the public love it down here. Our boat went really well in Melbourne, and this Geelong course will really allow us to hit full throttle this weekend," said Andrew Searle from ACME racing.

With a two-week break in between rounds one and two, the Offshore Powerboat Series heats up this week, with many drivers keen to get back on the water and hit top speed.

Round one was full of action and drama, with some teams having to withdraw due to mechanical difficulties during the race. Geelong offers the chance for teams to make amends and get back on the winners board.

"We had a steering arm cause us some trouble in round one. It broke off and ended up taking out the side of the boat as well as damaging the gear boxes and propellers," explained Bruce Sanders from Red Bellies Racing, a Class Three competitor.

"It will be a different story this round. We have repaired our boat and we are ready and raring to go. We are hoping our new propellers will add an extra five mile an hour to our top speed."

Steampacket Gardens offers a great viewing area for spectators this weekend. The foreshore is close by and all teams will be based at Steampacket Gardens on Saturday during testing and on Sunday for the race.

Testing will take place on Saturday afternoon between 3:30pm and 4:30pm with the powerboats going head to head for championship points at midday on Sunday.

The Geelong round was well supported during the 2005 series, and a big crowd is expected to gather to catch a glimpse of these impressive machines doing battle out on the water.

Class one Offshore Powerboats cost up to one million dollars and travel in excess of 200km/h.

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

ACME fibreglass supplies are the proud sponsors of the 2006 Australian Offshore Powerboat Series with good support from associate sponsors Australian Futures Trading and Nautilus Marine.

Saturday February 11th

What: Testing & Practice
Where: Corio Bay, Geelong
Time: 3.30- 4.30pm

Sunday February 12th

What: Geelong Classic Offshore Powerboat race
Where: Corio Bay
Time: Racing from 12.00pm

