

**NEW FACES ADD EXCITEMENT
TO OFFSHORE POWERBOAT SERIES**

The Maritimo Racing Team today announced Tom Barry-Cotter will race alongside his father, Australian Class 1 titleholder Bill Barry-Cotter, at round 3 of the ACME Fibreglass Supplies Australian Offshore Powerboat Series in Newcastle.

It will be Tom's first race at a Class 1 Offshore event, and what better partner to have than his father, who has an abundance of offshore racing experience, and is the current defending Australian Champion.

Bill Barry-Cotter has seven Australian Offshore Titles to his name, as well as a wealth of international experience racing in offshore events all around the world.

Newcastle's Offshore challenge will be the first time the father-son combination have shared racing duties, and the tough Class 1 field that has been assembled for this years series will test the newly formed father-son duo.

Tom will be keen to show off his talent at the Newcastle Challenge in an effort to get the AUS1 Maritimo vessel over the line for its first official win of the 2006 season.

"I really can't wait to get out there at Newcastle and race, I just turned eighteen at the end of March, so I am finally allowed to jump in a boat and officially race in the series", explains Tom Barry-Cotter.

"Dad has been so involved with the powerboats, so I have grown up around it and I'm just itching to get in the seat next to Dad in Newcastle.

"I've been out practising with Muddy (Peter Mc Grath) and Ross Willaton, so I will be well prepared come race day on May 7."

Thycon racing will also make a change in round three in the National A category, with Nigel Craven stepping in to fill the shoes of Antony De Fina in Newcastle.

"It was a big surprise to get the call from Antony to step in for a race with Thycon, I've raced against him on many occasions so to get the call was a pleasant surprise", said Nigel Craven.

"I didn't get the chance to compete in the series last year, and ever since Antony called me I've been itching to get back in a boat to race.

"We will definitely be out there to win the National A category in Newcastle, I don't like coming second so we are going to try and win it!"

Nigel has a wealth of offshore racing experience, having won the National A Championship three times. A fierce and experienced driver, Nigel should serve the Thycon team well in the one-off absence of Antony De Fina.

“Nigel is an excellent racer, and I have every confidence he will step in and do a fantastic job with David Slicer in the Thycon boat”, said Antony De Fina.

“The aim is for them to finish the race, but I expect Nigel and David to go for the win if the circumstances allow.”

The Class 3-six litre field will have a new entrant in Round three, with the Red Australia team gearing up to take on Red Bellies and Navman at the Newcastle Challenge.

Jason Ryder will control the throttle for Red Australia, accompanied by Steve King who will drive at Newcastle. Red Australia has a brand new boat for the 2006 series that will be completed and ready for racing in time for the Newcastle Challenge.

Complete with a fully enclosed cockpit, the sleek new Red Australia vessel will be a welcome addition to the Class 3-six litre category.

“We are really looking forward to racing at Newcastle and getting out on the water and mixing it with the rest of the field”, said Jason Ryder of Red Australia.

Joining Class 3-four litre is the Ezy Does It Racing team of Ian Harris and Graham Fraser. Sponsored by Video Ezy, Ezy Does It will have their work cut out for them going up against Hogs Breath and Kwozzy Racing, in what will be their first race in offshore powerboat competition.

“It will be the first time Graham and I have raced in an offshore event, so we are both looking forward to the thrill of competitive racing”, said Ian Harris of Ezy Does It.

“My father raced for many years in the offshore series, but I have only ever been involved in circuit racing, so this is a new challenge for myself and for Graham.”

The ACME Fibreglass Supplies Australian Offshore Powerboat series will re-commence on 6 and 7 May in Newcastle before moving to Botany Bay in Sydney the Following week 13 and 14 May.

ACME Fibreglass Supplies are the official sponsor of the 2006 series with terrific support from both Australian Futures Trading and Nautilus Marine Insurance Agency.

Visit these websites:

www.aopc.com.au