

FORMULA 1 ON THE WATER HITS MELBOURNE!

Offshore powerboating is making a splash in Melbourne, when the Australian Offshore Powerboat Series kicks off in Hobsons Bay this weekend.

All teams and competitors are champing at the bit to get out on the water and finally start contesting the 2006 series.

Teams have had a long off-season to prepare and fine-tune their boats, and all competitors will be looking to kick off the year with a winning start in an effort to lead the field.

Melbourne's Hobsons Bay will host to the opening round of the series, with the race between Port Melbourne and Brighton on Sunday January 29.

Best vantage points for spectators will be beachfront areas between station pier and the St. Kilda Marina.

Hobsons Bay is renowned for dishing up some difficult and changing sea conditions, which is sure to make for some interesting viewing for spectators.

With Class 1 vessels expected to reach speeds in excess of 200km/h, teams will have to be switched on to gain an advantage.

Competitors begin arriving in Melbourne on Australia Day, and racing isn't all that's on offer for spectators and fans!

The Australian Offshore Powerboats will be on public display at Docklands on Saturday the 28th. Fans are encouraged to come along and get an up close and view the high-speed, high-tech offshore powerboats.

"This is the only time these machines are on display in Melbourne this year," series secretary Antony De Fina said.

"Some of the boats competing in this year's series are absolute world class machines that have competed overseas in offshore events, and some are worth well over \$600, 000, so it's certainly worth a trip to Docklands."

Saturday January 28

What: All boats on display

Where: Waterfront City, Docklands

Time: All day

Sunday January 29

What: Hobsons Bay Classic

Where: Port Melbourne to Brighton

Time: Racing from 11.30am

