

AUSTRALIAN OFFSHORE POWERBOATS
ROAR INTO MOOLOOLABA!

The ACME Fibreglass Supplies Australian Offshore Powerboat Series will roar into Queensland this weekend for round five of this year's series.

Reaching speeds in excess of 200km/h, the million dollar Class One boats will be out in force on Sunday 2 July in a last ditch effort to challenge for the title next weekend at the final round on the Gold Coast.

With only two rounds remaining in 2006, *Simrad* pairing Ross Willaton and Luke Durman hold a 350 point lead over the current Australian champion, Bill Barry-Cotter who will pair with his son Tom for the Mooloolaba Classic on Sunday 2 July.

The series also hopes to welcome back fierce competitors, Steve and Andrew Searle of *Acme Racing* to the Class One field in Mooloolaba.

The Searle brothers spectacularly flipped their boat during Round Three at Newcastle, and after some long hard hours in the workshop, they are hoping to have the boat race-ready for Mooloolaba.

"We are still waiting on some parts, but we hope to be ready in time for this weekend, it has been quite an effort to try and repair the boat before Round Five", said Steve Searle.

"We have made a few changes to our boat; it's been painted red and it will be a little lighter due to the fact we have changed our hatches.

"We will do our best to start the race in Mooloolaba, we don't miss many rounds, and we both really want to be out there for the first Queensland race."

Round Five looms as one of the most important rounds of the 2006 series to date, with many teams needing a victory to stay in the race for their respective class titles.

After taking out first place in the opening two rounds, the *Navman* team needs a win this weekend to stay in touch with *Red Bellies Racing* in the battle for the Class 3, six litre crown.

Red Bellies were able to take out first position in their respective class in both round three and four and find themselves 300 points clear of *Navman* going into the Mooloolaba Classic.

Both teams have made driver changes for Sunday's race. *Navman* will welcome Mike Beil into the cockpit to replace Mat Humphrey, while Andrew Linton will partner Colin Craven for *Red Bellies*, with Bruce Sanders unable to race this weekend.

Seasoned racers Paul Gibbs and Paul Fowlds of *Hogs Breath Racing* are heading toward their fourth consecutive Class 3- four litre title. Gibbs and Fowlds have been super-impressive this year winning the opening four rounds and holding a 700 point lead over *Kwozzy Racing*.

Hogs Breath will lock horns with *Kwozzy* again in Mooloolaba after a tough and entertaining Class 3-four litre race in Sydney, where the experience in the *Hogs Breath* cockpit proved the difference.

Advantage Marine have been unstoppable this year managing to notch up four wins in a row, putting them in a commanding position to snatch the title from defending National A champions, *Thycon*.

Testing and practice will take place between 3:30pm and 4:30pm this Saturday, with boats to be launched from the boat ramp car park at Mooloolaba Yacht Club, Parkyn Parade, Mooloolaba.

Racing will kick off at noon on Sunday and spectators are encouraged to visit the pit areas all weekend at Parkyn Parade, Mooloolaba, to get an up-close view of these impressive offshore race boats.

Best viewing points for Sunday's race are from the "Loo with a view" on the beach at Mooloolaba Esplanade, or the headland on Alexandra Parade.

ACME Fibreglass Supplies are the proud sponsors of this year's series with good support from Nautilus Marine Insurance Agency and Walker Property Development.

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