

RUSSELL INGALL STEPS INTO OFFSHORE RACING
AS ACME RACING TAKE LINE HONOURS

V8 Supercar ace Russell Ingall got more than he bargained for this afternoon when his offshore powerboat ride with the Maritimo race team landed him in the cockpit for actual race proceedings for round four of the ACME Australian Offshore Powerboat Series.

In what was to be a quick ride of a lifetime this morning before round four at Botany Bay, Ingall was offered the chance to step into the Maritimo cockpit with Peter 'Muddy' McGrath for a one off race and he pounced on the opportunity.

"Heading out I was just excited to actually experience what these boats can do, 250km/h on the water is just awesome and when we finally got out there I was just in awe of their capabilities the feeling was unbelievable," explained Ingall.

"Originally I was coming down for a ride with the Maritimo team before they went off to race, I ended up steering the boat during that session and somehow ended up replacing Bill Barry-Cotter in the cockpit for the race, it was an awesome opportunity.

"It was definitely an experience I won't forget, its chalk and cheese between a powerboat and a V8 Supercar so we just experimented with different racing lines throughout the race and Peter is just so experienced and was very helpful."

Peter 'Muddy' McGrath was impressed with Ingall given it was his first ever time in an offshore boat and praised the V8 champ for getting involved.

"Unfortunately we lost some power with problems with a blower belt in the starboard engine, but it was great to be racing alongside Russell he did a great job and it's great to have drivers of his calibre involved with offshore racing," said Peter McGrath.

Ingall and McGrath ended up finishing second to Acme Racing, where Steve and Andrew Searle dominated Class-1 proceedings to take out the Botany Bay Classic in style.

"We had the boat running perfectly today and to win the way we did was fantastic, we take quite a good championship lead now so we are ecstatic to say the least," said Andrew Searle.

ACME Racing now have a 700 point championship lead over both Simrad and Maritimo, putting them in a commanding position in the 2007 title race.

The Simrad and Smorgon crews had forgetful afternoons, both having to retire from race proceedings with engine failure.

Class Three- 6 litre teams Saracen and Blade Performance boats were neck and neck all afternoon, with Saracen prevailing and getting home just two seconds ahead of their main rivals.

“It was a very interesting race with the lead changing a couple of times, but it really couldn’t have got any closer, we were at each others throats all day,” said Saracen’s Simon Thomas.

“It’s more of a learning experience for us with such a new boat but it’s great to have a good result.”

Class Three- 4 litre team Ezy Does It blitzed their rivals this afternoon to take their respective field easily from second placed Shaken Not Stirred.

“We are really starting to get some rhythm and feel comfortable with the boat, we made the most have out ballast and we were able to maintain great speed so all in all it was a great day for us,” explained Graham Fraser.

The Haines/Suzuki One Make Class also went down to the wire, with all three teams finishin inside ten seconds of eachother with Team Jericho backing up for their second win in as many weeks.

Having lead for much of the race, the Pirahna team unfortunately had fuel filter problems and withdrew, gifting the Production Class win to Slick.