

Media Release

Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

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University sets fast course toward milestone 125th anniversary

The University of Tasmania today announced sponsorship of a Sydney-to-Hobart entry – an exciting initiative to celebrate the institution’s 125th year.

Cougar II is owned and skippered by Dr Tony Lyall, a University alumnus. Members of its crew also have strong ties.

Cougar II is a TP52 and while it may will not mix it with the maxis for line honours, its crew will be eyeing a podium finish in the handicap stakes. It has previously ranked as the best Tasmanian entry.

University Vice-Chancellor Professor Peter Rathjen said it would set the tone for a milestone year.

“This race is iconic to Tasmania,” he said. “It is full of spirit, life, colour and passion.

“From that perspective, we saw very strong parallels between this race and our university, which is imbued with those same qualities.

“The finish of the Sydney-to-Hobart in many ways signals the start of a New Year in our city, so what better way to start our 125th celebrations?”

Her Royal Highness Crown Princess Mary of Denmark, a graduate of the University, has previously been announced as patron to the 125th celebrations, which will span 2015.

The year will include special functions, community celebrations, as well as a milestone written history project, *125 stories*.

Chair of the 125th organising committee, Professor David Rich, said the year would serve to meet three goals.

“We want to celebrate an enormously rich history in terms of the University’s contribution and impact to Tasmania, the nation, and the world,” he said. “But we are also intent on looking to the future.

“Finally, we are very focussed on making sure that there is some valuable and lasting legacy from the year.”

This will be the 13th year Dr Lyall has skippered in the Sydney to Hobart.

“From a sailing perspective the Rolex Sydney-to-Hobart represents somewhat of a grail,” Dr Lyall said. “I can think of no better symbol to chasing that grail under than the University’s heraldic lion.

“It is a wonderful institution, it has had such a profound impact.

“We’ll be very happy to carrying that spirit with us as Hobart comes into sight on finish day.”

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