

Team Australia's direct flight to Auckland

After spending the winter in the operating theatre at the hands of a skilled team of Noakes' surgeons, Sean Langman's Orma 60 trimaran has been re-launched ahead of a busy summer.

The crew of Team Australia has just one week to test its new lifting prop, new rig and trimmer shape before six men, most of the same crew from the trimaran's express run to Hobart back in February, will attempt to set an official Trans-Tasman speed record from Sydney to Auckland.

Renowned yachting forecaster Roger 'Clouds' Badham is suggesting there will be two suitable weather windows next week, one on Tuesday 15th October in south west winds and the second on Thursday 17th in a north westerly flow.

Based on the long range outlook Langman is expecting 'Big Bird' - the boat's nickname due to its arched beams and outrigger hulls and the fact it resembles a large bird in full flight - to average 17-19 knots, which would have them arriving into Auckland in three days.

At 5.6 ton, Team Australia is now 150 kilos lighter than pre-op and with less drag, thanks to the new lifting prop. The extra horsepower generated by these changes will be gauged during the record attempt, and when the tri comes up against Simon Hull's near identical Orma 60, TeamVodafone in race mode. History has favoured the Aussie boat, most recently when the pair went head-to-head at Audi Hamilton Island Race Week last year.

The WSSRC's Australian commissioner of record, Brian Hayden, will be on a support vessel between North Head and Hornby Lighthouse on South Head to verify the start of the record attempt.

Melanie Benton will be the New Zealand rep at the finish, between the southern edge of North Head and the front light beacon of the Rangitoto Channel leading lights. A GPS recording box installed on the boat will track the run, allowing the WSSRC to confirm the numbers.

The 1,260 nautical mile stretch across the Tasman Sea or "ditch" as it's commonly known, is missing from the World Sailing Speed Council's list of ocean passage records. The best unofficial time for the Trans-Tasman crossing is thought to be five days.

Skipper Sean Langman saw an opportunity to pick up another WSSRC record on his way to contest the PIC Insurance Brokers Coastal Classic, which starts Friday October 25th from Auckland to Russell in the Bay of Islands.

In this event, Hull's TeamVodafone has enjoyed a clear run to line honours and the race record, but it won't be the case this year when Team Australia and the VOR 70 Giacomo, formally Groupama 4,

swoop into town.

Hull suffered a major mishap this year when his mighty multihull was dismantled on the opening day of the Auckland Regatta back in March. He has since upgraded the rig and modified the boat including adding foils, the technology adopted for the most recent America's Cup.

Langman has decided not to go down the path of foils until he sees how the latest round of changes improves overall performance.

"As we have both had mods done we are keen to see where we're at with speed," said Langman.

Team Australia was re-launched late last week and the new rig embedded early this week. Testing of the changes has commenced and will continue until 'Clouds' gives the green light for the crew to scramble for their departure from Sydney Heads.

Team Australia will carry a crew of six for the record attempt – Sean (skipper), son Peter Langman (trimmer/bowman), Josh Alexander (navigator), James Ogilvy (main/helm), Andrew Woodward (grinder) and one crewmember who is yet to be named.

Once in Auckland, Team Australia will shift gears when it takes on an entire wardrobe of new Doyle New Zealand sails as well as professional yachtsman and winning Volvo Ocean Race skipper Mike Sanderson and his wife Emma, also a round-the-world sailor. Adrienne Cahalan, one of Australia's most esteemed navigators will add her nous and experience to Team Australia's Coastal Classic crew line-up.

Currently Team Australia holds the Brisbane to Gladstone race record and the fastest ratified time of 29 hours 52 minutes and 23 seconds for the 630 nautical mile passage from Sydney to Hobart.

The former French-owned trimaran and crew are more than capable of withstanding the rigours of next week's Trans-Tasman crossing, having smashed the previous passage record to Hobart ahead of a strong nor'easter that saw the tri reach a top speed just shy of 40 knots.

In her former life as Banque Populaire V, the giant trimaran was raced hard repeatedly across the North Atlantic, won the double-handed Transat Jacques Vabre from northern France to Brazil and set a number of WSSRC records, which still [stand](#).

Depending on sponsorship, once back in Sydney Langman is considering a crack at the around Australia record plus Team Australia has been invited to contest the Club Marine Pittwater to Coffs yacht race, which is now open to multihulls, the Festival of Sails at Geelong in January and the Adelaide to Port Lincoln ocean classic.

"Most of the major yacht clubs are now catering for multihulls within their key events, which is a very exciting development for the sport," added Langman.

Team Australia's sprint to Auckland can be tracked via a dedicated website which is in the final stages of development. The URL will be available shortly.

by Lisa Ratcliff/Team Australia media

[Facebook page](#)

Media boat

If media are interested in covering the start from Sydney Harbour by media boat please contact Lisa Ratcliff on 0418 428 511 or email lisa@occ.net.au. For news stations planning to cover by helicopter please advise so you can be kept updated on the departure date & time. Professional copyright free images will be available after the start.

On board communications

After the last run we know that communication with the boat once at sea is near impossible. For updates please check the Facebook page and follow the boat via the website.

Further media information:

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