

MEDIA RELEASE

16 OCTOBER 2013

## Big Bird hunting

With spray flying and one hull lifted skyward, Sean Langman's giant trimaran Team Australia sped through Sydney Heads at 12:09:58 this afternoon bound for Auckland, New Zealand, and the record books.

News helicopters buzzed overhead as the 60-footer began the chase to set the fastest logged time for the 1,260 nautical miles across the Tasman Sea.

Commissioner of record Brian Hayden officially set the timer at 1:09:58 UTC as Team Australia hit the imaginary line between North Head and Hornby Lighthouse on South Head at pace.

Not long into the attempt the crew spotted and avoided a whale, a speed bump the six man crew don't want to hit travelling at 20 knots. By leaving just after midday there should be sufficient daylight to safely transverse the southern path of the whale migration.

Tough conditions are expected overnight, Roger 'Clouds' Badham warning of NW winds gusting up to 40 knots and waves up to 6 metres.

"The breeze will increase as they get away with more wind offshore and building over time," said the weather guru, not long back from San Francisco and his stint as Team New Zealand's America's Cup meteorologist.

"It will be important not to get pushed too far south, so keep an eye on the heading tonight in the heavier breeze – so as not to get much south of 36°S when mid Tasman else there are more miles in the lighter breeze getting back to Cape Reinga," he told the crew this morning.

The ORMA 60's moniker might be Team Australia but there is an amiable Anzac spirit on board. Kiwi boat captain and navigator Josh Alexander is happy to be pointing towards home this afternoon; he's even wearing his red socks for the voyage – the foot attire of NZ's America's Cup challenges.

Nicknamed 'Big Bird', the trimaran is currently due east of Sydney and steaming along at 22 knots on a dazzling spring afternoon that will give way to nightfall and a sharp increase in the wind strength and sea state.

Langman is hoping to complete the passage inside three days, giving Team Australia the world mark.

Team Australia's sprint to Auckland can be tracked via the website <http://teamaus.net.au/>

Updates posted regularly on the official [Facebook page](#)

by Lisa Ratcliff/Team Australia media

**Further media information:**

Lisa Ratcliff

On Course Communications

m. 0418 428 511

e. [lisa@occ.net.au](mailto:lisa@occ.net.au)