

Skandia Geelong Week: A Big, Bold and Old event!

Skandia Geelong Week in 2009 will be bigger, bolder and older as host club the Royal Geelong Yacht Club celebrates its 150th birthday.

The multi award winning event is the largest sailing regatta in Australia and one of the largest of its kind in the world. Royal Geelong Yacht Club Commodore, Graeme Ritchie today described the event as “bigger, bolder and older”, announcing details today aboard luxury super yacht, ‘Platinum’, which will be available to host corporate guests during Skandia Geelong Week.

Mr Ritchie said, “Despite the world economic climate, we are expecting a record fleet and record visitation. To the sailing community this is the gala event of the year.”

Both the Invitational and Geelong Week will showcase the world’s best sailors over a week of competition on Port Phillip and Corio Bay. “Our Melbourne end continues to grow with a high quality fleet set for the Skandia Docklands Invitational, which is a prelude to the main event, Skandia Geelong Week. The Docklands will host representatives from six states and one of the most competitive IRC fleets assembled anywhere in the world,” Mr Ritchie said.

Launching the events at Docklands, Sport and Recreation Minister, James Merlino, said Skandia Geelong Week and Skandia Docklands Invitational will deliver strong economic and promotional benefits to the state.

“Hosting Skandia Geelong Week and Skandia Docklands Invitational will again reinforce Melbourne and Victoria’s reputation as the sporting capital of the world,” Mr Merlino said.

“Skandia Geelong Week will see in excess of 400 yachts of varying classes, 4500 national and international sailors, along with support crew, spectators, and international media converge on Victoria providing the perfect opportunity to showcase our cities, towns and fantastic regions surrounding Port Phillip Bay.

“Victoria is one of the world’s great

sporting states and the Brumby Government understands that supporting grassroots and elite sport is one of the keys to building stronger and more liveable communities across Victoria,” he said.

Skandia Geelong Week is open to the general public and offers free entertainment including live music, free ‘Come Try Sailing’ activity, art & craft market stalls, kids’ entertainment, art exhibition, Royal Geelong Yacht Club’s 150th Jubilee museum, beach volleyball, K-Rock Starshow, aerobatic performances and much more.

Among the other announcements at today’s launch were:

- Skandia Geelong Week will continue with the theme of ‘Above and beyond sailing’. The regatta has been successfully transformed into a major sporting and cultural event that regularly attracts in excess of 100,000 people.
- Skandia Geelong Week will host four National Championships in 2009, with the International Moths part of the event for the first time.
- The King of the Docklands – an event that brings sailing into the heart of the city - has an exciting new format which will see the winners of all Skandia Geelong Week divisions in 2008 take part in a winner take all event.
- A diverse mix of free entertainment, with themes of World Music, Live & Local and ‘Australiana’ and the reintroduction of a stage in Fairnie Park bringing the total to three stages across the event precinct.

Skandia Geelong Week and Skandia Docklands Invitational are proudly supported by Skandia, the Victorian State Government, City of Greater Geelong, City of Melbourne, and Audi.

Skandia Docklands Invitational will be held on Wednesday 21 and the Thursday 22 January. Skandia Geelong Week starts on Friday, January 23, in Williamstown and culminates in Geelong on Monday, January 26.



Ben O'Brien, Brendan Garner and Sponsor



Commodore Ritchie addresses the media & official guests



Official Guests



The luxurious Super Yacht Platinum