

8.6km



50th Annual

HEAD OF THE YARRA

SATURDAY NOVEMBER 29th 2008

Media Alert - (Opportunity for Vision of Yarra River Spectacle)

50th Annual Head of the Yarra - Saturday November 29th 2008

Armada of Rowing 8's take to the Yarra.

On Saturday 29th November a flotilla of rowing eights including large contingent interstate and international crews will compete on the Yarra for the title "Head of The Yarra". This year's event marks the 50th running of Australia's Rowing Classic.

Coming hot on the heels of Australia's Olympic rowing success in Beijing, this years event is set to showcase some of Australia's best male and female rowing talent right here at home on the Yarra.

The unique feature of this race is that around 200 rowing eights, with 1800 competitors including school aged right through to Olympians and Masters of both sexes, race each other and the clock for section honours and the title "Head of the Yarra".

Stretching over four kilometres end to end, the flotilla of racing eights provide a wonderful showcase and spectacle for the 1000's of spectators and supporters who follow the race along the 8.6km course from the City of Melbourne to the finish line at the Yarra Bank Reserve in Hawthorn.

Mercantile Rowing Club with Olympic Gold medallists David Crawshay and Scott Brennan (Men's Double winners in Beijing) teaming up again to lead the crew, will start as undisputable favourites for Australia's most prestigious long distance race. However only a fool would discount the depth of talent of the University of Melbourne Boat Club, who will field a rival eight filled with Olympians and World Champions in a bid to regain the title in 2008.

There is also the emergence of international and interstate interest with challenges from New Zealand, Queensland and Sydney boat clubs, who will be back to try and end the long term dominance of the two leading Victorian boat clubs.

Ends.....

Media Enquiries:

- Pat Freeland-Small Mobile: 0418 631862 Work: (03) 8344 8705
- Photo shoots and interviews with athletes and crews in training can be arranged via appointment.

Opportunities include:

- School crews, male and female,
- Elite crews from University of Melbourne and Mercantile Rowing Club (including male and female Olympians and world champions)
- Master's Crews including: Two crews average age 75, a crew of Vietnam Vets.
- Mixed, Leisure and club crews from all over Victoria, Interstate and internationally

Media Opportunities on Saturday 29th November attached.

Website: www.headoftheyarra.com

AUSTRALIA'S ROWING CLASSIC

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HEAD OF THE YARRA**SATURDAY NOVEMBER 29th 2008****2008 RACE DAY TIMETABLE & MEDIA OPPORTUNITIES**

11.00am	River closure (1 hour prior to race time) Crew Preparations & Boating to river	Crews muster at boat staging area: Rowing sheds in Melbourne – Jefferies Parade (Melways Map 2F, Ref K7). River is closed to all non-race traffic at 11am. Fabulous Photo Opportunity from Henley judges box looking west to city skyline just prior to 12.00 noon, with 40-60 rowing 8's mustering prior to race start
12.00 noon	First of 189 crews start at Henley Judges Box Crews are arranged in a Grand Prix style grid pattern across the river. Staggered time starts by Section progressively over 3 1/2 hours	First crew to start: Men's Masters H+ Course is 8.6km upstream to Bridge Rd, Hawthorn. Bicycle tracks to the north and south of the river carry 1000's spectators and on-lookers. Last crew to start: Men's Open at approximately 4pm. Photo Opportunities from Swan St Bridge, Anderson St Bridge and Alexander Ave (1 km west of Grange Rd Bridge – "Big Bend") as crews make way up the Yarra to Hawthorn. Helicopter shots from 12.30pm onwards will capture the Yarra littered with Rowing Eights (Note: 189 rowing eights end-to-end will stretch over 4kms).
12.37pm (approx)	First crew crosses Finish line at Hawthorn	The first category to start / finish will be the Men's Masters H+
3.39pm (approx)	Women's Open crews start (3hrs 39min after race time)	Women's Open Crews featuring Olympians and world champions Photo Opportunities: 1. Women's Fastest Crews, including Olympians & World Champions, finishing at Hawthorn around 4.05pm at Bridge Road Bridge, Hawthorn. 2. Best vantage point for Finish from Hawthorn Rowing Club Balcony. Contact Pat (0418 631862)
3.55pm 3.57pm (approx)	Men's Open crews start Last crew starts	Men's Open Crews featuring Olympians and world champions Photo opportunities: 1. Men's Fastest Crews, with Olympians & World Champions on board, finish at Hawthorn around 4.20 pm 2. Best vantage point for Finish from Hawthorn Rowing Club Balcony. Contact Pat (0418 631862)
4.30pm	Last crew finishes	Calculation of race times commences (should take approx 10 mins).
4.48pm – 5.18pm (approx)	Presentations of winners & trophies and announcement of "Head of the Yarra"	Yarra Bank Reserve (off Creswick St) Hawthorn. (Melways Map 2H, Ref H6) Commences 10 mins after last crew finishes (30 min duration) Photo Opportunity: Winning Crew Presentations at Yarra Bank Reserve, Hawthorn in front of crowd of 5,000 people – Open Crew's & Head of the Yarra First approx 4.50 pm
6pm	Winners press release & results posted to Website	Note: verbal results available from 4.45pm to assist TV newsrooms by phoning Pat Freeland-Small on 0418 631 862. Full results from 6.00pm: www.headoftheyarra.com

Media Contact: Pat Freeland-Small, M: 0418 63 1862

Race Commentator: Peter Landy, M: 0418 55 3840

From 10.30am – 12.30pm: Race Start Area – Henley Staging Melbourne

(Melways Map 2F, Ref K7)

From 1.00pm – 6.00pm:

Race Finish Area – Hawthorn Rowing Club

(Melways Map 2H, Ref H6)

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