

Media Release

Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

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Sydney to Hobart finish sets the scene for a wonderful 125th year

There could not have been a better way to set the scene for the University of Tasmania's milestone 125th year than occurred on the Derwent River this morning.

Acting Vice-Chancellor Professor Mike Calford said the sight of the Cougar II heading to the Rolex Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race finish line under the University's proud, heraldic lion was quite literally a vision splendid.

The Cougar II, a Transpac 52 (TP52) class boat skippered by University alumni Dr Tony Lyall, crossed the finish line at Battery Point in 13th position, with a race time of 2 days, 17 hours, 52 minutes and 50 seconds.

"We are proud of the efforts of Tony and his crew – several of whom are alumni of the University's Australian Maritime College (AMC)," Professor Calford said.

"This is an outstanding arrangement to mark the start of our 125th year, but the association and symbolism through our relationship to the Cougar II is more meaningful than sponsorship alone.

"The Sydney to Hobart is an iconic event which plays out before the eyes of the world; the leverage we have created in terms of audience is hard to quantify. But this also is an iconic event in which people work together to achieve the extraordinary and we consider that speaks strongly to the nature of our institution.

"Finally, the TP52s are a developmental class boat, meaning a high level of research and innovation are used in their race-tuning.

"There also is a very direct intersection between ocean science and race performance. So it is fitting then the finish line is so close to the Institute for Marine and Antarctic Science, where we have global credential in this research theme.

"Without doubt this a race, but its outcome is determined by both deep science and serious smarts."

The University has prepared a range of activities across 2015 to mark its milestone year.

This includes community events throughout Tasmania, but also alumni gatherings in every Australian capital city and key regions across the world.

Special initiatives during the year will include *125 stories*, an innovative digital history of the University.

The University's most globally recognisable alumna, Her Royal Highness Crown Princess Mary of Denmark, is official patron for the year.

"This is a once-in-a-generation chance to celebrate the deeply positive impact of the University both within Tasmania and upon the world," Professor Calford said.

"It is an opportunity to reflect upon our contribution and also contemplate the future. Importantly, we will be focussed on activities which provide some legacy for Tasmania and provide stimulus to the island, socially, culturally and intellectually."

The calendar of events for the 125th celebrations will be launched at a gala function on January 10.

The website for the year is utas.edu.au/125.

Information released by:

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