

MEDIA RELEASE
18 April 2014



**Wounded Defence mates conjure the 'Spirit of Mateship'
for the Brisbane to Gladstone**

Following a successful debut in last year's Rolex Sydney Hobart, the Volvo 60 "Spirit of Mateship" will be back on the water for the 66th QantasLink Brisbane to Gladstone Yacht Race.

Skipper Russell McCart and crew will be joined by eight first-timers when the race gets underway on Good Friday (18 April).

Mates4Mates Chief Operating Officer Michael Quinn said it's an amazing opportunity for the Brave Mates who had been selected as part of Mates4Mates' rehabilitation programs.

"Our Brave Mates are current and former ADF personnel who have been through tough times mentally and physically, and taking part in the Brisbane to Gladstone Yacht Race is part of the healing process," Mr Quinn said.

"The sailing challenge is designed to stretch them to their limits in a positive environment by providing motivation, hardship, uncertainty and by building trust with fellow mates."

35-year-old James Prascevic, from Victoria, is among those taking part. The former infantry soldier struggled with PTSD after his 10 year service with deployments to Timor, Iraq and Afghanistan.

"What I like about Mates4Mates is that as part of your recovery you might be out of your comfort zone but you're in a safe environment and with people who understand what you have been through," Mr Prascevic said.

"I wanted to be involved in the Sydney to Hobart last year but I wasn't mentally ready for the challenge; I am now," Mr Prascevic said.

"This will go towards my yacht master's course which I am doing as part of rehabilitation back into the workforce."

Former Lieutenant Colonel David Phillips, 64, said he signed up for the Brisbane to Gladstone because he misses the camaraderie and mateship from 28 years in Army.

"Hopefully I'll be able to offer some support and guidance as a mentor for the younger generations," Mr Phillips said.

Mates4Mates is a national charitable organisation set up by RSL (Queensland Branch) to provide services, welfare and treatment programs to help rehabilitate wounded, injured and ill current and former ADF personnel and their families.

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FAST FACTS - Spirit of Mateship

Make - Volvo Ocean 60
Designer – Laurie Davidson
Builder – Cooksons, NZ
Construction – Kevlar composite
LOA - 19.46 mt. (65 ft.)
Beam - 5.25
Draft - 3.96



- Built using SP unidirectional reinforcements and a wet-preg process, where resins are at an unprecedented level of accuracy in the construction i.e. almost no fairing compound needs to be used.
- Formerly known as Djouce Dragons.
- Competed in the 2001-02 Volvo Ocean Race under the Norwegian flag.
- Bought in 2012 by yachtsman Andrew Wenham, relocated to Australia and renamed Southern Excellence.
- Extensively refurbished and had significant success in a number of bluewater classics including the 2012 Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race.
- Bought by RSL (Queensland Branch) in 2013 and renamed Spirit of Mateship.
- 22nd in line honours and first in PHS Division 1 in 2013 Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race.

Website – www.mates4mates.org

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