

Ichi Ban set for launch at the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia

Posted on 26 November 2013 by Valencia Sailing

[Source: Premier Composite Technologies] Next Tuesday, following the CYCA Rolex Sydney Hobart Race media launch, Matt and Lisa Allen will christen their next generation of sleek new 60' racing boat, Ichi Ban, named from the Japanese meaning first in order, importance or leading.

Built by Premier Composite Technologies (PCT), Dubai and designed by Shaun Carkeek, this C60 is a new breed of ultra-light displacement race boat, intended to win this year's Rolex Sydney Hobart Race.

The brief to PCT and Carkeek Design was for a potential Sydney-Hobart race winner, and the boat had to arrive exactly on schedule to allow Matt Allen's team, time to commission the boat and work her up ahead of the race; a process which is now underway. The whole design and build programme has taken a remarkably short seven months and the boat left Dubai five weeks ago, where she was built on time in order to meet her first deadline, today.



The brand new Ichi Ban on her maiden sail. Sydney, 25 November 2013

The decision to go with PCT may have been taken sub-consciously by Matt Allen, some years ago, as this is the third boat that PCT has built for this experienced ocean racing yachtsman. So far his choice has been vindicated by the delivery and professionalism, shown by the team.

"Seeing the factory in Dubai, is amazing," comments Matt, "All the different types of composite projects that they have on the go. The technical skills, professionalism and quality control measures that they have in place are impressive and give you confidence, that if they say they can do it, they will, and as you have seen here today, they have!"

Lead by PCT's experienced project leader, Neil Cox (formerly of Camper's), the boat came together more smoothly and efficiently than expected, given its complexity. However, with four weeks to go until the race, Ichi Ban is certainly leading the way, providing Allen's race team four weeks sailing, to work up the boat and fine tune her ahead of this demanding classic offshore race.

The Carkeek 60 is designed for long offshore races, like the Sydney Hobart, but is also designed to be fleet of foot on shorter inshore courses. The boat benefits from Carkeek's recent developments in high performance racing yachts in North America, as well as PCT's incredible facilities in Dubai.

Perhaps part of the success so far has been down to the simplicity that is at the heart of the design process, with simple appendages and a deep hull shape, providing stability and power.

The rig design is ultra-high modulus, from Southern Spars and Carkeek Design and PCT worked closely with North Sails and Southern Spars, on the rig and sail optimization to ensure synergy between the all elements.



The brand new Ichi Ban on her maiden sail. Sydney, 25 November 2013

Down below, the boat is uncluttered not least for safety considerations when offshore and in big seas. The deck layout was designed in parallel to the interior ensuring easy and quick access to all areas. Sail handling is consequently much improved, and the open nature of the structure means string drop systems for inshore racing were easily incorporated. There is a frugal two burner stove and galley, as well as ample storage aft of the saloon. The four pipe-cots in the saloon, and the two further rows of four aft, bring the total "accommodation" onboard to 12, although how much time the crew will get to spend lying down remains to be seen.

On time, built to a high standard and on the water, Ichi Ban is clearly leading the way so far. Long may that continue now, under race conditions and with the full team onboard.