

ROLEX SYDNEY TO HOBART YACHT RACE 2024
SPEECH BY
HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA BAKER AC,
GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA
HOTEL GRAND CHANCELLOR, HOBART
TUESDAY 31 DECEMBER 2024

Thank you, Gordon, and good afternoon to you all.

May I acknowledge the Muwinina people upon whose land we gather and today's Tasmanian Aboriginal community as ongoing custodians of Country. I recognize their enduring culture and deep connection to land, sea, sky, and waters.

It is a great pleasure to be involved in the presentation of this 79th Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race. This Race has again demonstrated that it is a testament not only to endurance, skill, and the spirit of adventure but also to the dangerous and dynamic environment of the sea. Since its inception in 1945, this Race has stood as an international symbol of sailing excellence and the connection between our two great cities, Sydney and Hobart.

May I acknowledge South Australian, Nick Smith (aboard *Bowline*) and West Australian, Roy Quaden (aboard *Flying Fish Arctos*), who tragically lost their lives during the race.

We extend our condolences to their families, friends, and crewmates.

In the face of this tragedy, the sailing community has shown solidarity. The decision by *LawConnect's* crew to hold private celebrations out of respect for their sailing comrades exemplifies the camaraderie and respect that define your sport.¹

¹ <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2024-12-28/lawconnect-line-honours-2024-sydney-to-hobart-yacht-race/104759776> accessed 29 Dec 24

Congratulations to skipper Sam Haynes and the crew of *Celestial V70*, as provisional overall winner.

LawConnect, the Line Honours winner, arrived in Hobart at 2.35 am on 28 December, with a race time of one day, 13 hours, 35 minutes and 13 seconds. The crew celebrate their second successive, and third in total, Line Honours victory.² This year *Law Connect* finished some two and a half hours ahead of the competition, a less challenging final dash up the Derwent than last year's 51- second victory.

Second across the line was *Celestial V70*, and *Wild Thing 100* in third. Congratulations to the Line Honours winners and runners-up.

Of 104 yachts that started the race, almost 30% retired. Commiserations to those yachts. Whether you crossed the finish line or made the difficult decision to retire, your commitment to our Sydney Hobart Race is acknowledged and thank you for your participation.

As we celebrate the achievements of this year's race, let us again remember Nick Smith and Roy Quaden. The race lies not only in competition but reminds us of the respect for the powerful and unpredictable nature of the sea.

On behalf of everyone involved, I thank the organisers, volunteers, and staff, who have again put in a great effort for this year's race.

Thank you, Rolex, for your continued sponsorship of the Race since 2002. Your support has maintained this blue water classic as one of the world's most challenging ocean races.

Thank you.

² <https://rolexsydneyhobart.com/news/2024/day-3/lawconnect-clear-line-honours-victor/> accessed 29 Dec 24