



## Sydney-Hobart veteran back to keep the big boats honest

First across the line in 2004, Ludde Ingvall is back in business

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AFTER four years of watching the start of the Rolex Sydney-Hobart race from his equestrian centre on the NSW Central Coast, former line-honours winner Ludde Ingvall has dusted the cobwebs off his 90-foot maxi to have another crack at the 628 nautical-mile ocean classic.

Although giving away 10 feet to the 100-foot supermaxis such as Alfa Romeo and ICAP Leopard, Ingvall is confident his boat, now named YuuZoo, will keep the larger boats honest — particularly if the weather turns nasty, or very, very light. Ingvall built the giant sloop, which was originally designed to be 100-feet long in 2004, but had to be shortened to meet the then-existing rules. He christened it Nicorette and sailed it in a

very conservative manner through galeforce conditions to head the fleet into Hobart. Ingvall pulled the plug on his sailing career after that race when he re-



**YuuZoo helmsman David Witt with skipper Ludde Ingvall**

alised that his three daughters were growing up with an absentee dad.

"Family and children are all you've got," Ingvall said as he worked on his yacht at the CYCA in Sydney's east yesterday.

"I have three daughters and I realised I had never spent time doing what they wanted to do. I grew up on an island and loved sailing, but they choose horses."

Ingvall bought 25 hectares on the NSW Central Coast and built the Kitara Equestrian Centre as his new home.

The move was a great success. His second daughter, Dominic, 21, will be riding in the equestrian events at the London Olympics —

but for Ingvall's native Finland rather than Australia. His youngest daughter, Gabriella, 16, is a promising show jumper.

"I hope they will remember me as a father who did more than just go sailing," Ingvall said.

His daughters also prompted his return to sailing as he said his primary job for the past four years had been "shovelling horse poo".

"I have three daughters who know absolutely everything and who boss me around," he said.

"I longed to get back on a boat where I could be the boss. When I realised what a fantastic event this year's Sydney-Hobart race was going to be, with so many maxi yachts, I decided to enter."

Ingvall only made the decision 10 weeks ago after talking to some of his old crew. Once the word got around in boating circles that he was taking Tokolosh (as the yacht was then called) out of mothballs, he was swamped with 140 applications for crew positions from sailors he knew in Europe, America and Australia.

He has ended up with a crew of 20, mainly Australian sailors.

After fitting a new mast and rigging, signing up a new sponsor and renaming his yacht YuuZoo, Ingvall is confident he can keep the longer boats honest in the race.

"We are 10 tonnes lighter than

any of the 100-footers and the difference in length is not really an issue," he said.

"If you give us a big blow up the arse, we will break less things.

"In a very big sea, I'd much rather be in a boat that weighs 20 tonnes than one that weighs 30 tonnes.

"In the very light conditions often found in Storm Bay, near the finish, we will keep moving while the larger boats are becalmed."

Ingvall thinks the race is wide open and predicts that the boat that holds together the best will win.

"If you get past Bondi and you haven't broken anything, you are doing well," he said. "If you cross Bass Strait and still have 95 per cent efficiency, you have a real chance. It will be an awesome race — but to make it to Hobart first, you have to make it in good shape."

The British yacht Ran, one of the handicap favourites in the race, sailed into Sydney last night after being unloaded from a freighter in Port Kembla earlier in the week. The British supermaxi ICAP Leopard, which was also on the freighter, is due in Sydney at the weekend after the crew reassemble and fit the mast.