



'ROO' SAILS INTO THE SUNSET

MARK RICCIUTO can "walk on water", according to Adelaide football fans, and now he will sail on it – aboard Skandia in the 59th Lexus of Adelaide Bluewater Classic from Adelaide to Port Lincoln next Friday and Saturday.

Ricciuto will be following in the footsteps of good friend and retired Collingwood captain Nathan Buckley, who recently crewed aboard Hugo Boss in this year's Sydney to Hobart race.

"Roo" is being schooled in the art of sailing before joining some of the state's most respected sailors as crew on board Grant Wharington's 98-foot yacht, Skandia, which won line honours in the 2003 Rolex Sydney to Hobart.

Skandia returns to the water for its first major offshore race after being badly damaged during the Sydney to Hobart early last month. The super-maxi lost the top section of her mast on her way to Hobart but still managed to finish the race under a "jury rig".

More than 80 yachts will compete in the 156-nautical-mile race, one of Australia's oldest yachting events and with iconic status

on the national yachting calendar, attracting racing and cruising yachts from around Australia, including a multi-hull fleet.

The race is the lead-up to the Lincoln Week Regatta, sailed on the picturesque waters of Boston Bay, arguably some of the best sailing waters in the world.

The course takes the fleet through some of South Australia's most notorious sailing waters. The fleet sails through Investigator Strait and skirts the treacherous Southern Ocean before heading northwest to Dangerous Reef. The final leg from Donnington lighthouse to the finish line in Port Lincoln can see the race results change many times as tired crews try to pick the many wind shifts and gusts in picturesque Boston Bay.

Lexus Lincoln Week follows in and around the biggest natural harbour, Boston Bay, in Australia. The 33rd Lincoln Week Regatta is an absolute must-do for anyone with a boat in the area at the time.

Lexus of Adelaide Bluewater Classic chairman Ben Kelsey said: "The news that Skandia will take part is great as she's a major drawcard and crowd favourite. With

'Roo' onboard, it will add another dimension to the event, which in recent years has continued to grow in popularity.

"Roo's connection to Port Lincoln is widely known with the establishment of his new hotel, the Port Lincoln Hotel, that opened in December and we are hoping that other high-profile South Australians will take his lead and challenge themselves by sailing in our great event."

The race starts at the Royal South Australian Yacht Squadron (RSAYS) at 3pm next Friday and finishes the next day in Port Lincoln's Boston Bay.

The five racing divisions in the Lexus of Adelaide Bluewater Classic are IRC, Arbitrary Handicap, Multi-hull, Sydney 32 and Cruising.

Lexus Lincoln Week follows, with racing in and around Boston Bay from Monday week (February 25) and, as with the Lexus of Adelaide Bluewater Classic, it's open to yachties across Australia.

To register for the Lexus of Adelaide Bluewater Classic and the Lexus Lincoln Week, visit www.plyc.com.au



AFL retiree Mark Ricciuto (inset) will be a crew member aboard Skandia, which goes up against Ocean Mentor (above) in next week's Bluewater Classic.