

No hope of race record

Amanda Lulham

THERE will be no Sydney to Hobart race record because a southerly buster is likely to give sailors a bumpy ride.

Stan Honey, the navigator aboard *Wild Oats'* main rival for line honours, *Investec Loyal*, knows how a southerly can end a boat's chances.

The American, who *Loyal* owner Anthony Bell brought to Australia to try to end *Wild Oats'* winning run, was on round-the-world racer *ABN AMRO* when it was dismantled in the 2006 race, which featured predominantly upwind conditions.

Like *Wild Oats* counterpart Adrienne Cahalan, Honey is hoping the southerly arrives later than expected to allow the fleet's biggest yachts to get a jump on their rivals.

"This doesn't suit us particularly well," Honey said when asked if the forecast favoured *Loyal* over *Wild Oats* for line honours.

Nasty seas, which could rise to 3m, will cause plenty of discomfort for the fleet.

Cahalan predicts *Wild Oats* and the race's other front-runners will take more than two days to make it to Hobart.

That means they will be well outside *Wild Oats'* record of one day, 18 hours, 40 minutes and 10 seconds.

"I'm afraid it's out the window," Cahalan said.

Instead, she forecasts a run of around two days and seven hours.

All in the families



Fathers and sons: Rives and Walker Potts, Mike and Will Broughton, Sean and Peter Langman and Chris and Matt Percy

Picture: Phil Hillyard

Amanda Lulham

SEAN Langman has spent nearly half his life racing to be the first man to Hobart, but this year, he'll be happy if he's the last man standing.

It will be a family affair for Langman whose usual journey south involves a high-speed, full-throttle ride on one of the bigger and fastest yachts in the famed blue water classic.

But with son Peter, 18, as skipper, and daughter Nicki, 23, sharing his watch, Lang-

man plans to enjoy his family time on one of the most beautiful yachts to grace Australia's waters.

Langman will be on the 79-year-old beauty *Maluka of Kermandie*, which at 30 feet is the smallest boat in the 88-strong fleet.

"I know I've done it on the big ones but I actually prefer sailing on a little boat," said Langman who said the race could take close to five days depending on weather.

"It brings me closer to my

childhood because these are the types of boats I used to sail and to be honest, I find it more of a challenge. Five days at sea sounds much better to me than a day and a half."

While he has watched his father race on some of the biggest and most high-tech yachts in the world in the past, son Peter admits he is happy to be on the wooden *Maluka*.

"I think it's the best boat for my first Hobart," said the teenager who is one of a number of youngsters steering

yachts this year.

It will likely be a memorable trip for *Maluka*, which was first launched in 1932 and lovingly rebuilt by Langman who sailed her in the classic for the first time in 2006.

She's made out of Tasmania's famous huon pine, the slow-growing tree sought-after because of its water-resistant qualities.

Joining Langman junior as a skipper in his first Sydney to Hobart is Queenslander Chris Percy (Alacrity) who beats his

rival by five days as the youngest sailor in charge of a yacht this year and is racing to Hobart with father Matt.

There are numerous father and son combinations in the race including Reeves and Walker Potts sailing on the American boat *Carina* and Michael and Will Broughton sailing on the yachts *Jazz* and *Ella Bache Another Challenge*.

The only daughter and father combination is Hobart skipper Laura Roper sailing with dad Glenn on *Natelle Two*.

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