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ROLEX China Sea Race 2016

starts Wednesday 23 March

Of the 34 boats currently entered into the 2016 Rolex China Sea Race, eight hail from as far afield as Japan, Russia, Philippines and Australia, representing one of the strongest overseas showings for many years and underlining the appeal of this biennial blue water classic, first contested in 1962.

Chinese entry *Seawolf* led the way as the first all-Chinese competitor to enter this 565nm offshore race in 2014. For the 2016 edition, she is joined by another Chinese entry, *UBOX*, a Swan 82 owned by Wang Bin and based in Shanghai.

While *Seawolf* is intent on bettering her 2014 result, with the team citing *“… the different challenges not encountered during inshore racing”* as one of the major reasons for their return, 2016 will mark *UBOX*’s first Rolex China Sea Race.

The core of the 16-strong crew has been competing as a unit for almost four years and, having completing a series of coastal and short offshore races in that time, sees the 565nm Category 1 offshore race as *“… the premier offshore regatta in the region [which] always attracts the premier sailors and teams around the world.”* For *UBOX*, the race marks *“the start of a full year commitment towards the Rolex Sydney Hobart in the end of 2016 [and] another step in the long term development of our team and crew members.”*

Representing Japan on her way back from the 2015 Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race is Humphreys 54 *KLC Bengal 7* owned and skippered by Yoshihiko Murase while 2012 IRC Overall winner *Zanzibar*, a Humphreys 42, hails from Singapore. Ernesto Echauz (IRC Overall 1998 and 2008) will also return, campaigning TP52 *Standard Insurance Centennial* under the flag of the Philippines.

Fresh from Phuket King’s Cup with a stated aim of completing the stable of Rolex classic offshore races is Russian entry *Megazip*, a Cookson 12M owned by Sergey Khramtsov and skippered by Vladimir Chirkov, a veteran of nine Rolex offshore races including the Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race, the Giraglia Rolex Cup, the Rolex Middle Sea Race and the Rolex Fastnet Race.

Team Manager Alexander Vodovatov expanded on his ambitions, explaining *“the dream to attract Russian yachtsmen to these Rolex races, to popularize them. The dream of every team in Rolex races is to win a Rolex Yachsmaster -  these watches are pieces of art! …I would love that in our country a 600nm Rolex Race will appear one day.”*

Run under the auspices of RORC, Rolex China Sea Race will start on 23 March 2016 in front of Royal Hong Kong Yacht Club’s Kellett Island headquarters in Hong Kong’s spectacular Victoria Harbour and will finish in Subic Bay, Philippines, hosted by Subic Bay Yacht Club. Race action will be tracked by Yellowbrick Tracking and will be shown live at [www.rolexchinasearace.com](http://www.rolexchinasearace.com).

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**About Royal Hong Kong Yacht Club**   
Royal Hong Kong Yacht Club (RHKYC) is one of the oldest sports clubs in Hong Kong and is proud of its rich, colourful history, which stretches back over 160 years of social and competitive sailing and rowing. RHKYC organises a full calendar of local and international racing for both keel boats and dinghies, ranging from round-the-cans to Category 1 offshore races. The Club also provides sailing courses for members and non-members at various levels to nurture the development of sailing.

**About Rolex**

Leading brand of the Swiss watch industry, Rolex, headquartered in Geneva, enjoys an unrivalled reputation for quality and expertise the world over. Its Oyster watches, all certified as chronometers for their precision, are symbols of excellence, performance and prestige. Pioneer in the development of the wristwatch as early as 1905, the brand is at the origin of numerous major watchmaking innovations, such as the Oyster, the first waterproof wristwatch, launched in 1926, and the Perpetual rotor self-winding mechanism introduced in 1931. Rolex has registered over 400 patents in the course of its history. A truly integrated and independent manu­facturing company, Rolex designs, develops and produces in-house all the essential components of its watches, from the casting of the gold alloys to the machining, crafting, assembly and finishing of the movement, case, dial and bracelet. Rolex is also actively involved in supporting the arts, sports, exploration, the spirit of enterprise, and the environment through a broad palette of sponsoring activities, as well as philanthropic programmes.

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