

SPORT

Rupert Murdoch enters Sydney-to-Hobart race

Media tycoon Rupert Murdoch has signed on as crew for one of the world's toughest ocean yacht races, the 630 nautical mile Sydney-to-Hobart starting December 26, race organisers said yesterday.

Murdoch will be aboard the 23.7 metre carbon-fibre sloop *Sayonara*, owned by his friend Larry Ellison, chief executive of Oracle Computers of the United States.

Sayonara is joint race favourite with Australian maxi yacht *Brindabella*.

But The News Corporation chairman is no land-lubber, having skippered his own yacht, the timber ketch *Iliana*, four times in the race in the 1960s, finishing second across the line in 1964.

Murdoch has also sailed in several Sydney-to-Brisbane and Brisbane-to-Gladstone races along the eastern coast of Australia and cruised the Whitsunday Islands on the southern tip of The Great Barrier Reef.

Sayonara and *Brindabella* will be chasing not only line honours in the 51-year-old race, but also the elusive race record of two days 14 hours 36 minutes and 56 seconds set by US maxi *Kialoa* in 1975.

The Sydney-to-Hobart is tagged "Hell on High Water", but only two sailors have died in the race's 50-year history.



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MALTA

MARTIAL ARTS

Ritchie's team wins at Gharghur gym

A kickboxing competition was held recently at the Bertu's Gym and Sport Centre in Gharghur.

This sporting event was organised by 2nd Dan Julian Lee Ritchie of Freestyle Kickboxing Association, Paola and 1st Dan Silvio Camilleri of Wu Shu Ky Kickboxing Club, Gharghur. The competition consisted of five kickboxing bouts on a 2x2 minute rounds.

Taking part were five kickboxers of one club competing against five fighters representing the opposing club; these bouts were matched according to each contestant's weight division.

The well-known ex-boxer Bertu Camilleri was appointed judge as agreed by the two club instructors involved, who thanked him for making this event possible by offering the boxing ring hall as a

venue. A good number of martial arts enthusiasts filled the boxing ring hall, witnessing a good exhibition of some of our local kickboxers' talents, who demonstrated good kicking techniques, punch-kick combination and discipline, to the satisfaction of both instructors.

The five kickboxing bouts were well contested by both teams, the final winners being Freestyle Kick Boxing team, who finished unbeaten, gaining three wins and two draws. The winning team was composed of Nicolai Balzan, Kevin Mallia, Melvin Castagna, Marvin Schembri and Noel Mercieca.

This event augurs well for further competitions, involving other clubs which hopefully will lead to the organisation of a much awaited Malta national kickboxing competition in the near future.

Ninjutsu black belt visits Maltese Ninja group

Recently the Maltese Ninja group, which is temporarily part of the Bujinkan Brian (BBD) London branch, was paid an unexpected visit by First Dan black belt André Cambarwel Ballcomb. The latter is a student of Brian McCarthy, who is one of the world's leading exponents in the ancient arts of Ninjutsu.

André was sent to examine the stamina, discipline and technical status of the Maltese group led by Mr Alfred Galea. The reason for this visit was in preparation to the grad-

ing which will be held next March.

André, who teaches martial arts to the British marines, brought wisdom and enlightenment to the group. At the end of the training session, André said that he was very impressed by the good work that has been done. He said officials in London must be proud of having another strong group under the Bujinkan Brian Dojo (BBD) banner.

Anyone interested in joining the group can contact Mr Alfred Galea on 071 4444 (1003).



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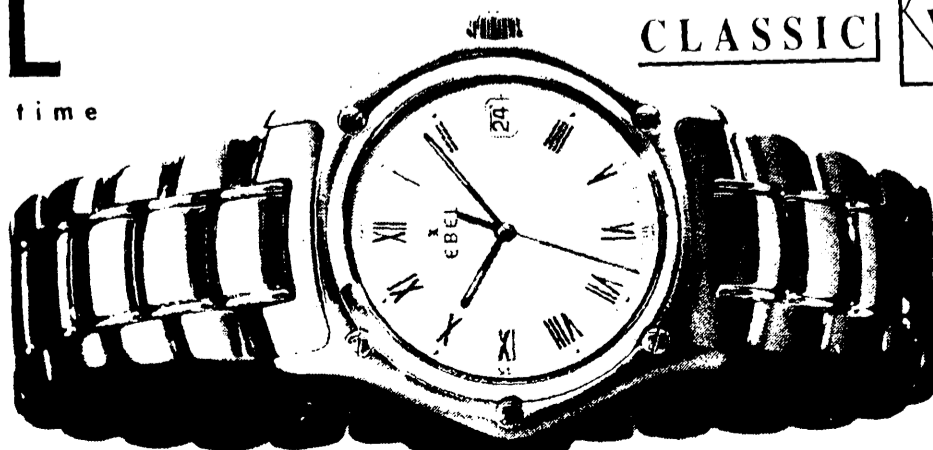
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