

The Daily Telegraph

Ahoy Danny, get back to boxing

- By **Amanda Lulham** in Hobart
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Reunited ... Danny Green greets his wife Nina. Photograph: Brett Costello

Source: The Daily Telegraph

STARING up at her husband's sunburnt face and red, fatigued eyes at the end of his maiden Sydney to Hobart race, Nina Green had some advice to give yesterday.

"I think you need to get back to boxing. That only takes a minute or two - not two or three days," she said as Danny Green stood beside his crewmates at the end of a roller-coaster ride that both terrified and electrified him.

It was a sporting challenge to raise money for charity that lasted two days, 16 hours and 44 minutes longer than it took him to become a world champion earlier this month.

But the popular Aussie boxer couldn't wipe the smile off his face in between quick bites of meat pie, his first solid food in hours, after a race he described as "exhilaratingly frightening" aboard the supermaxi Investec Loyal.

"I don't even remember when I last ate. We were so tired and shattered. This pie is about to get smashed." said Green, whose next priorities included brushing his teeth, a shower and a stubbie.

"In the ring I'm in control but this was way out of my control.

"One of the reasons I wanted to do it, apart from raising money for charity, was the fact it took me out of my comfort zone.

"But the conditions weren't as rough as they could have been so I think Mother Nature let me off rather nicely."

It was still an adventure of high emotion and high drama with the 100-footer Investec Loyal having to overcome a series of obstacles to make it to Hobart.

The inventory of damage and mishap included three ripped sails, a canting keel locked on to port, steering issues and, just after she finished the race, a mainsail that required crewmen to climb the mast to help lower it.

While they all had aspirations of making the podium, the Sean Langman-skippered supermaxi did well to finish fourth behind New Zealand yacht Alfa Romeo - less than nine hours behind the winner.

Triple Olympic 1500m gold medallist Grant Hackett said he never expected to enjoy the race renowned worldwide for its testing conditions so much - or to have worked anywhere near as hard.

With 25 sail changes made during just one 18-hour period at sea, Hackett found himself flat out on the yacht's grinders.

"It was just fantastic. I really loved it. I approached it like a 1500m race, prepared to hurt and do the best I could until the end," Hackett said.

"It was very confronting. I can't say it was totally terrifying. I more embraced it and enjoyed it and loved getting into it.

"The more you are out there in the extreme conditions, the more you get used to it.

"It was tough and you get very fatigued. I've had four hours sleep in the last 65 hours and that was lying on sails.

"And you have to keep your wits about you or you just pop off the side in the middle of nowhere."

While Langman and his crew were last night celebrating their top-four finish in the race with the customary jugs of rum and coke and scallop pies, more than half the fleet in the race were still at sea.

The British yacht RAN was in the box seat to claim the coveted overall honours but faces a nervous wait with all of her rivals for the title still racing hard to Hobart.

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