

SIR BANI YAS OFFSHORE RACE KICKS OFF WITH 70 SAILING ENTHUSIASTS

The two-day nonstop race will see 11 boats race to victory from Sir Bani Yas to the Dubai Offshore Sailing Club

Abu Dhabi, April 18, 2014 – The first-ever Sir Bani Yas Offshore Race has been off to a great start as 70 sailing enthusiasts aboard 11 boats scrambled to take the lead in the exciting two-day nonstop race. They will be pitted not only against the open sea, but also against each other's experience as they sail to victory at the Dubai Offshore Sailing Club by Sunday, April 20. There, the victors will be crowned during a special celebration marking the end of this exhilarating week-long event, which is organised by Tourism Development & Investment Company (TDIC), in partnership with Anantara Hotels Resorts & Spas, Rotana Jet, Dubai Offshore Sailing Club (DOSC), and Volvo Ocean Race Abu Dhabi Stopover.

The Sir Bani Yas Offshore Race is the last of a series of races for the season by the Dubai Offshore Sailing Club. Featuring only UAE-based boats, sailors have previously raced off the shore of Abu Dhabi, Sir Abu Nair and Al Hamra. Shahrazad, one of the sailing boats participating in the race this weekend, is said to most likely be the big winner of the event.

"We're pleased to see this sailing event get off to such a spirited start. We've had the chance to sail the route and I must say, it is beautiful, challenging, and offers a great opportunity for the sailors to test their skills in a new navigational environment," said John Cole, Senior Asset Manager for Sir Bani Yas Corporate Operations at TDIC. "The significance of the race is in the fact that it opens up a new destination for sailors which had previously been unobtainable. It is a great platform to encourage more sailors to venture further than their own ports. This event has raised interest from sporting and sailing enthusiasts for Sir Bani Yas as both a location for water-based events and a leisure destination, expanding the island's reach beyond its current niche in the tourism sector," Cole added.

Sailing lovers and interested members of the public can track the progress of the boats – Omnia, Shahrazad, Feochan, Tazo Too, Andorra, Tripple Dutch, Maverick, Yours Truly, Nia Ben Aur, Lady Lucies, Bin Toak – and observe the race's drama unfold in real time through <http://www.xtra-track.com/sirbaniyastour2014>. Updates will also be provided through Sir Bani Yas' twitter account @sirbaniyasae and on Facebook Desert Islands, Abu Dhabi, and Instagram @sirbaniyasae. Furthermore, they can follow the hashtags #SirBaniYas and #SBYOffshoreRace on twitter and Instagram.

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Tourism Development & Investment Company (TDIC), established in 2006 and fully owned by Abu Dhabi Tourism & Culture Authority, is a master developer of major tourism, cultural and residential destinations in Abu Dhabi.

These include Saadiyat, a natural island ten minutes drive from downtown Abu Dhabi featuring luxury resorts, championship beachfront golf courses, sophisticated residential communities, retail destinations and cultural institutions - designed by world-renowned Pritzker Prize-winning architects - such as Zayed National Museum, Louvre Abu Dhabi and Guggenheim Abu Dhabi. TDIC is also developing Desert Islands, a heritage-based tourism destination composed of eight islands - Sir Bani Yas Island, the historical Dalma Island and the previously unexplored Discovery Islands.

TDIC has built a strong reputation among international industry players for its compelling value proposition, transparency of business approach and ability to deliver. The company has been awarded high investment grade ratings of A1, AA, and AA by three top credit rating agencies, Moody's, Standard & Poor's and Fitch Ratings, respectively. These ratings reflect TDIC's strong financial position and support the company's credit worthiness to investors, lenders and other market participants.

By creating investment partnerships and joint ventures, TDIC's developments are helping to support the Emirate's evolution into a world-class destination for tourists, businesses and residents. TDIC offers significant employment and vocational training opportunities for Emiratis keen to enhance their careers and professional qualifications.

For further information, please visit <http://www.tdic.ae>.

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