General Information

The 283 nm Darwin - Saumlaki Yacht Race, starting at 1000 Hrs on Saturday 26th September will provide an opportunity to race to the beautiful Tanimbar Islands of Indonesia, located due north of Darwin. Saumlaki is the chief town with a population of about 15,000 people located on the south end of Yamdena in a natural harbour and is the location of the finish line for the race.

The Tanimbar Islands, also called Timur Laut, are a group of about 65 islands in the Maluku province of Indonesia, including Fordata, Larat, Maru, Molu, Nuswotar, Selaru, Selu, Seira, Wotap, Wuliaru and Yamdena. The Indonesian phrase timur laut means "east of the sea" or "northeast"...

The Islands, have a distinct culture and remain a major centre for the production of traditional crafts like ikat cloth and carved wooden statues in Maluku, and also have their own forms of music and dance. Cultural attractions apart, the Tanimbars also have their own distinct fauna, including 8 species of birds endemic to the archipelago, and fine beaches and great areas for snorkelling and diving. Most of the above attractions can be found on the main island of Yamdena. This is the most accessible of the islands, and the main focus of most visits. Of the other islands, Larat in the north, with its town of the same name is the most accessible one, and the only one to offer any facilities. The local people are very friendly with children being very inquisitive. The main industries apart from carving and weaving are fishing and farming. In Saumlaki the population is about 95% Christian and 5% Muslim.

Saumlaki provides for provisioning of most items with supermarkets, open markets, general stores, and fuel and water facilities available. Fuel will need to be obtained in jerry cans and drinking water is available in 15 litre bottles (bottles are to be returned to the point of supply). While ATM’s and credit card facilities are available it can be difficult to get internet connections at times and it is recommended that Indonesian currency is obtained prior to leaving Darwin. Emails can be difficult to send and receive.

The race is supported by the local and regional governments in Indonesia. A tour of some of the key areas will be provided for race participants at no cost by the Ministry of Tourism. On arrival, Quarantine, Customs and Immigration formalities have been prearranged with some Indonesian agency staff travelling to Saumlaki specifically for the event. The time allowance for the race reflects this. A free 30 day visa is available on arrival and anyone wishing to stay longer will need to obtain an Indonesian visa before departure. For a longer stay a visa application will need to be made at least 10 days prior to departure from Darwin to provide sufficient time for processing.

Departure clearances from Darwin will be obtainable on Friday the 25th of September at the Darwin Sailing Club between 0900 and 1200 hours. All crew members for each boat participating will need to be present as a group and have available current passports with a minimum of 6 months validity remaining. All boats leaving Australian waters require national registration.

A permit for each boat to sail in Indonesian waters is to be obtained prior to departure from Darwin. The application is obtainable online but can be a slow process and should be obtained several weeks prior to allow for any possible delays in processing.

Skippers will need to ensure they have enough chain to anchor in 20m in a mud seabed with generally NE offshore prevailing winds. The anchoring area is adjacent to a roll on roll off wharf and is some
distance from the shoreline. Direct access to the shore is not possible during low tides as there is a considerable area of tidal flats to cross that dry out.

It could be worthwhile to carry a few small gifts when visiting some of the outer areas. The villagers and fishermen really appreciate the following items:
- Reading glasses and sunglasses;
- Swim goggles;
- Fishing gear like traces, good hooks;
- Old/odd tools that you may have had lying around for years
- Caps for the kids;
- Basic first aid gear;
- Womans Weekly type magazines for the ladies;
- Maybe some stuff for the schools;
- Indo-English dictionaries;
- Colouring books and pencils/crayons;
- This is not compulsory nor do you need to provide all or any of the items on this list.

A race presentation ceremony, will take place in Saumlaki, at noon on Thursday 1st October. Early entry is recommended. ENTRIES CLOSE 24th August 2020.