

REGION HAMBURG

CLIPPER ROUND THE WORLD RACE

In 2016, the Region Northern Germany hosted a function with representatives of Clipper Ventures Ltd. It looked as if the event was going to be a bit outside BCCG's commercial or corporate realm, involving, as it did, a sailing race circumnavigating the globe – namely, the Clipper Round the World Yacht Race.

The audience listened to an awe-inspiring report from Harry Schack, German journalist and Clipper Race crew member, who completed two legs of the 2013-14 race on board Team Partner Swiss Sailing, and a presentation on the commercial side of it all by Nigel Beacham, Clipper Ventures' Commercial Director. Even though the function might initially have appeared to be somewhat removed from traditional British Chamber activities, we quickly realised that this wasn't the case. First of all, sailing races around the world are a bit of a British invention. It all began in 1968 with the Sunday Times Golden Globe Race (non-stop around the world, single handed), which was won by Sir Robin Knox-Johnston. 1973 then saw the first Whitbread Round the World Race, which now has become the Volvo Ocean Race. Right from the beginning the crews were nearly always professional sailors and sailed on a variety of boats, classified using a handicap formula (IOR International Offshore Rules). This has now changed, somewhat. Nowadays the boats in the Volvo Ocean Race are identical high-tech brutes made from Kevlar and carbon composites, and are exclusively crewed by professionals.

Sir Robin Knox-Johnston, the first sailor to complete a non-stop circumnavigation single-handedly, established a different approach. The first Clipper Round the World Yacht Race started in 1996 with 12 identical boats specifically built for the race, but crewed by amateurs. Each crew can choose to take on the whole circumnavigation or compete in one or more of 8 individual legs, which total up to 15 races. The fleet sets off from the UK and over a period of 11 months visits every continent and numerous major cities, as it conquers some of the world's most challenging oceans. The Clipper Race attracts extensive media coverage, including over 18 thousand press articles, hours of television with the BBC as the event's media partner, and a PR return on investment (ROI) for race sponsors of 20:1. The UK Government's GREAT Britain campaign is a longstanding partner of and participant in the Clipper Race.

For corporate sponsors, regional development agencies and governments, the race presents a unique opportunity to raise the profile on a world scale and develop trade and business



interests. The Clipper Race generates media stories across multiple media platforms, creating a PR value of over 300 million Pounds, and reaches a unique global audience base of 1.83 bn people. In other words, the Clipper Race combines sport, adventure, and the involvement of NGOs such as UNICEF or the Nelson Mandela Foundation with commercial interests.

The BCCG's Northern Region thinks the Clipper Race would present a powerful opportunity for German corporations to follow suit and use the race as a platform from which to promote their business interests in target markets around the world. The Committee is also working on getting the Clipper Race fleet to make a stopover during the last leg in 2018 in a German port – Hamburg being the obvious first choice. The Hamburg Region is moving forward on this, trying to find support for the Clipper Race in business circles. A tall order, but the Regional Group Hamburg is working on it.

For those interested to join forces with the BCCG's Regional Committee Northern Germany on this front, please contact

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