



Media release

Office: 102 North Road, Yakamia
Postal: PO Box 484, ALBANY WA 6331
Phone: (08) 9841 9333
Fax: (08) 9841 4099
Record No: REL042/MR

Date Issued: October 17 2013

Authorised by: DENNIS WELLINGTON, MAYOR

Hostage survivor names Clipper race his hardest mental and physical challenge

Australian photojournalist Nigel Brennan went through a harrowing ordeal as a hostage in Somalia for 15 months.

Now Brennan has embarked on the “hardest mental and physical challenge” he has put himself through: the 2013-14 Clipper Round the World Yacht race, due to stop in Albany late next month.

In 2008 Brennan and his journalist companion Amanda Lindhout were kidnapped by an insurgent gang near Mogadishu and held captive for 462 days.

“Even though it was pretty horrific, and especially horrific for my family, it’s made me realise that I needed to be a little more driven and more appreciative of so many things,” Brennan said.

“After what I went through in Somalia, I say to people that it’s easy to sit in your lounge chair and be safe, but life is about doing things you didn’t think you could do.”

Taking part in the Clipper race has been a serious mental and physical challenge for Brennan, but he has no regrets.

“The sailing is the easy part. It’s living with 20 other people in such close confines, mentally that’s what’s tough,” Brennan said.

“Physically it’s like torture with the sleep deprivation. You get two hours sleep, then you’re on deck for four hours.

“The Clipper doesn’t have the trauma that Somalia did for me. Somalia was incredibly traumatic. This is a bit of fun, and I’m loving what I’m doing.”

The 12 brand new Clipper yachts will sail into host port Albany in late November, before departing for Sydney on December 3.

The yachts will eventually join the 69th Rolex Sydney Hobart Yacht Race, a first for the Clipper fleet.

Albany will serve as a major crew change-over port for the Clipper race, and is set to attract some 350 international crew plus visiting friends and family.

City of Albany Mayor Dennis Wellington said hosting the Clipper Round the World Yacht Race would be the perfect lead-in to the City’s Anzac Centenary commemorations in 2014, during which significant national and international focus will be placed on Albany.

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A transcript of the City of Albany’s interview with Nigel Brennan is available upon request.

Clipper Round the World Yacht Race 2013-14

The Clipper Round the World Yacht Race is the longest in terms of distance and duration of any yacht race. Crews sail for 11 months, clock over 64,000km and race between six continents – crossing the equator twice – from September 2013 to July 2014.