

## SOUTH EAST ASIA IRC REPORT 2020

Apologies for the delay in this report as things are very much in flux throughout our region due to CORVID 19 Restrictions.

Unfortunately, the SEA region is split into two distinct sailing seasons. As a result of the arrival of Corvid in Feb/March we saw a cancellation of all events in the Gulf of Thailand for the 2019/2020 season. Which lead to 2019/2020 drop of approximately 20 valid certs, as most boats in the east coast region do not revalidate until Feb/March when their racing season commences due to arrival of new sails etc. from outside the region.

For the 2020/21 season, the sailing situation is changing daily. Currently, the only keelboat racing taking place is being held in **Singapore** by Changi Sailing Club, with a restriction of max 5 crew members onboard at any one time. Our measurement team in Changi are doing a great job policing the IRC Rule and encouraging the development of the Rule in Singapore.

**Malaysia** had started sailing in September, however new lock-down rules were imposed this week, restricting all Sailing and leading to the cancellation of Malaysia's Premier Regatta **The Royal Selengor Raja Muda International Regatta** until 2021. In addition, Malaysia has imposed a ban on all Foreigners arriving or leaving the country until the end of December, which means that the transient fleet of racing boats including the TP52's based in Langkawi cannot be accessed by their owners or crews until after the new year.

While sailing is permitted in **Thailand**, Sea Ports are not officially open to Boats. The only option is inshore racing within Port boundaries, which is usually too restrictive for keelboats due to depth restrictions. Dinghy sailing is functioning with a few regattas and the Multihull fleets are holding some events.

Thailand Airports and Sea Ports are currently closed to Tourists, so overseas crews cannot arrive to race at present. Those who do manage to get in with special arrangement visas will be subject to a limited 30 days Transit visa with 14 days paid quarantine (Min 2,000US\$) on arrival and must hold insurance to the value of 100,000 US\$ against COVID19. They most likely will be subject to the same quarantine restrictions and costs when they return to their home countries such as Australia. This is impractical for visiting sailors and will have a substantial effect on the **Phuket King's Cup Regatta**, which is due in December.

We currently have permission to hold "**The Bay Regatta**" [www.bayregatta.com](http://www.bayregatta.com), which sails within the port boundaries of Phuket-PhangNga-Krabi provinces in February and hope to have permission to host the **Koh Samui Regatta** [www.samuiregatta.com](http://www.samuiregatta.com) on the East Coast of Thailand at the end of May, with provision for the Hong Kong based fleet to attend under special arrangement with the Tourism Authority of Thailand.

With the loss of many jobs in the region, we are seeing a substantial number of IRC Rated yachts for sale in the region. With a number of owners now looking at both double handed designs and considering one-design options, which could have a major effect in IRC numbers for the coming years.

As a region, NHC is no longer a favoured system, but there is a reluctance for clubs and locals to use IRC due to "cost".

It has been suggested by the local Sailing Clubs that we should try to create a 'Club Membership Rating', to encourage the use of IRC as a Club Rating.

An example would be providing a (Fixed) number of ratings for their Club racing only, charged at a "special fee paid by the club", Owners can then upgrade to a full rating cert if they want to take part in major events. – Comments/input from other Countries are most welcome.

I myself have also been locked out of the region for 8 months after arriving in the UK for a meeting in March and have just been allocated a repatriation flight on Mid-day Saturday (17th) so will not be able to join you all for the Zoom Congress Meeting this weekend. I wish you a good meeting and look forward to seeing you all on the racetrack in 2021.

Simon James

IRC South East Asia – Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore.