



Green Point Stadium, Cape Town- Getty Images Sport

SAILING SOUTH AFRICA SEAS

A luxury cruise line project is offering high-end accommodation to attract a corporate market to the 2010 World Cup in South Africa. By **Matt Cutler**

DEMAND FOR ACCOMMODATION is believed to be outstripping the current supply for South Africa 2010, even a year in advance of the tournament. So for media magnate Leo Kirch, South Africa really is the land of opportunity.

Kirch, a major player in the TV sports market before and after bankruptcy in 2002, is extending his investment into the broader sports business market with a 2010 hospitality project.

The 'OneOceanClub' business initiative, owned and promoted by Moltke Promotion, majority-owned by Kirch's KF15 company, is chartering two VISTA Class Vessels from the Holland America Line cruise services to offer five-star luxury accommodation packages for South Africa 2010 aimed at the corporate market. For World Cup group matches, one of the two 285-metre length, 11 deck, 955-room vessels will be docked at Port Elizabeth with the other at Durban. When the knock-out phase begins, the two will move between Durban, Port Elizabeth and Cape Town to cover all final stage matches in the three coastal cities.

Founded in 2007, Moltke has created and promoted several properties in the sports and entertainment worlds, including the PDC Europe, an exclusive partner of the Professional Darts Corporation in England, for the whole of continental Europe. OneOceanClub was conceived in 2007 with the brand name and concept following in the autumn of 2008.

"Our product is interesting for corporate clients, but also for individuals and privately-organised groups. Corporate clients range from FIFA sponsors and partners and national football sponsors and other companies involved in the sports business industry," Werner von Moltke, Managing Director and shareholder of Moltke, told SportBusiness.

The benefits of the OneOceanClub project to the South African tourism industry are clear: passengers will not just stay on board, but will spend money on excursions and on their travels

to different destinations. Local businesses will benefit by way of provisioning for the ships, safety and security, tour guiding and shopping.

With security thoughts always front of mind, One Oceans will offer travellers a wide range of safety and security services von Moltke explains, "Ranging from a fenced harbour area, which denies non-accredited persons access, to an onboard security team, fully equipped medical centre and trained personnel which will accompany on all transfers and excursions."

The key to the success of the OneOceanClub project, says von Moltke, is that in security as in other areas, it provides an achievable solution to some of South Africa's event-hosting problems for the 2010 World Cup. Each OneOceanClub vessel has a maximum capacity of 2,200 passengers. And with travel packages being split into nine or 10 segments consisting of 2-4 nights on board, in total the project expects to accommodate about 30,000 guests on board of the two vessels over the course of the tournament.

OneOceanClub also expects the high-end service it will offer to bring people to South Africa who might otherwise not have made the trip - such as international corporations not belonging to the elite club of FIFA sponsors, or partners looking to capitalise on the opportunity of business-related meetings combined with the South African World Cup experience.

Sales of the package officially started in February this year although unofficial talks have been ongoing with "several" major clients before this date.

"The demand so far is good and the bookings are on track, although there is no doubt the overall economic climate leads to a certain reserved behaviour at present.

"The demand at present concentrates on the knock-out phase but we expect the major run to come after the final draw on 5 December, when the customers know which teams will play when and where," says von Moltke.

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