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Dock space at Raffles Marina is becoming scarce as the final preparations for the 17th SMU-RM Western Circuit Sailing Regatta are underway. Crafts of plenty varied shapes and sizes have arrived in anticipation of Singapore's biggest keelboat racing event which will be held there over the two coming weekends.

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SMU Sailing hoping for every race to go SMUve-ly for them - Liu Yuhong

The regatta driven by the powerful forces of the Southwest Monsoon is all set to happen on the 16th, 17th, and 23rd of August. Normally calm water and gentle breezes are already beginning to give way to rougher chop and more satisfying puffs as vessels from all over the country arrive with every intention of fighting their hardest—against each other as well as the conditions themselves.

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SB20s from all over the world crossing the starting line on Day 3 racing last year - Liu Yuhong

Following the previous year's introduction of the SMU SB20 International Cup, the SB20 fleet remains strong with 17 teams having confirmed their entries, many of whom are back for a second shot at the title. This year, in addition to the opportunity to become the second team ever to win the international prize, the SMU-RM Western Circuit Sailing Regatta's recent addition (by the Singapore Sailing Federation) to the series of events that count toward local teams' selection for the 2014 SB20 Worlds (and ultimately the 2015 Southeast Asian Games), makes good performance at this regatta especially important for local sailors aspiring to qualify.

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IRC A racing in action, spot Windshiker and Foxy Lady - Liu Yuhong

The SMU President's Cup will also once again be awarded to the winner of the long distance passage race in the combined IRC Class. Despite many of the sailors having gotten to know each other over the years, and their having forged many friendships amongst themselves, the SMU President's Cup, along with the individual prizes for each class have always been able to draw out the tough competitive spirit among the regatta's entrants, and this year will certainly be no different. With Bill Bremner's Foxy Lady VI (2013-14 Asian Yachting Grand Prix 'Yacht of the Year'), David Dimmock's Blue Note, and Sarab Singh's Windsikher all signed up, we can expect some stiff competition indeed.

With so much at stake, it's safe to say that—weather permitting—we will be treated to some of the most action-packed racing we could hope for, as all the regatta's 72 entries fight fiercely to the finish.

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Once again, we will have 11 sailors from Sailability competing in this year's regatta - Liu Yuhong

The skilled Access 2.3 sailors from Sailability Singapore will also be expected to put on a show as they pit themselves against each other in a class all their own. And besides providing an avenue for our disabled friends to share in the joys of sailing and racing competitively, the enthusiastic students from the Singapore Management University (SMU) and the hardworking professionals at Raffles Marina (RM) have worked to improve their fund-raising efforts aimed at helping Sailability Singapore. In addition to the annual charity auction which helps generate funding as well as awareness of the organisation's programmes, the regatta, this year, also boasts a charity bar designed to convert even more of the post regatta fun into support for their sailors. Despite the hefty mark of S\$37,863 raised last year, students and staff hope to better the amount all the same.