

PRESS RELEASE

18 November 2023
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Monsoon Winter Series 2023-24, Race 2

(For immediate release) Hong Kong, 18 November 2023 — After a brief introduction by John Ashford, race officer of the day, experienced club helmsman 'Mikey' manoeuvred the committee boat, *Hebe One*, out of the dock, through the moored yachts and into open water. Ashford had spoken of 18 knots of northeasterly-easterly at 1100, gradually fading to 6 knots later in the afternoon. Most on board had some experience of race management and, with an islands race scheduled, good winds and more than 20 competing boats, it was going to be a great afternoon for everyone.

And so it was. The RO came up with Course 43 for the faster boats and Course 44 for the cruisers. There weren't too many entries in the IRC Division so the four Sportsboats joined *Dexter II* and *Talkinghead* in their 1315 start, making a total of six. In PHS/ORC, three colourful DCS29 one-designs from Kwun Tong joined 12 cruisers, making a total of 16 sailing Course 44 and setting the stage for some keen competition on their 13-nautical-mile journey. Over the past year, some of the DCS29s have improved remarkably and race management now has enough confidence in their abilities to allow them to compete among the PHS boats. Previously, they were given their own separate division and started last.

After a long delay because of a shifting breeze, the RO got the IRC and Sportsboats away at 1115. The wind was blowing from the north-northeast so, for a change, it was a downwind start. *Dexter II* established an early lead and kept it that way, taking overall line honours at 15:31:35. The speedy A35 has performed well recently – skipper Rita Yau can be proud of her crew's dedication and hard work.

In the Sportsboat Division, first home was Patrick Pender helming *Serendipity*, but he was relegated to 2nd on handicap by *Ironman*. In 3rd place was club J/80, *Baring Asia 1*.

The second start, at 1120, saw most boats crossing at the committee boat end of the line. Simon Lynch, helming *Bucephalus*, quietly slipped over at the pin and sailed, in clean air, up the left hand side of the course. But, sadly, it didn't help in the overall tally as he could only manage a 10th on handicap.

Struggling at the start was *Happy King* which couldn't lower its kite. Getting close to Shelter Island, there was a genuine worry that it would end up on the rocks but, at the last moment, the helm managed to turn the boat around and sail off in the other direction. Phew.

Minnie the Moocher had an exciting race, finishing four seconds after *Dexter II* but, on handicap, slipping to 5th. Perhaps their 1.1138 rating needs reviewing!

Harpseal eventually prevailed in the division, taking 1st on handicap with *Ichiban* 2nd and Xiaoling Zheng's *Voyages 32* in 3rd. Mind you, a handicap of 0.8095 must surely have helped the DCS29 on its way!

Sadly, out of the 16 competitors in PHS, *Alpha Seeker*, *Coral Harbour*, *Happy King* and *Zoe* retired.

At 1525, the RO sounded two horns and shortened course at Trio, not Cascade Bay as stated in the Sailing Instructions.

Looking back up the course from the committee boat, what a magnificent sight it was. Excellent visibility with many of the finishers reaching the line with their kites up, helped by an incoming tide and an 8-knot breeze.

The next race in the Hebe Haven Yacht Club's Monsoon Winter Series 2023-24 – Race 3 – will be held on the 25th of November.

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About Hebe Haven Yacht Club

Hebe Haven Yacht Club is a private members club established in the Pak Sha Wan, Sai Kung area in 1963. The Club provides first-class yacht racing and boating facilities for members. The Club also works closely with local schools and organisations, to offer training facilities and professional instruction to develop youth sailing in Hong Kong. In addition, as a 'Caring Organisation' member, the Club proactively contributes to the local community with regularly organised events.

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