

PRESS RELEASE

8 December 2023
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Monsoon Winter Series 2023, Race 5

(For immediate release) As the committee boat, *Hebe One*, searched for a place to drop anchor, conditions out in Port Shelter could best have been described as gloomy. Grey skies, flat seas and not a lot of wind. But, hey, this is yacht racing and a 5- to 7-knot northeasterly is good enough to get three divisions and a class over the line and out into Hong Kong's eastern approaches. From then on, sailing skills, teamwork and tactical knowledge are what is needed!

At 1200, race officer of the day, Queenie Ho, and her assistant, Arthur Yip, discussed courses for the 20 boats that were expected to turn up for Race 5 of the Monsoon Winter Series 2023. An islands course was scheduled and an islands course it was – number 92.

From a short line that promised some lively starts among the more competitive boats, the fleet would leave Table Island to port, Bluff to starboard, a Port Shelter Mark to starboard, Ma Tsai Pai Mark to port, Table (s) again, and a finish off Little Palm Beach. A distance of approximately 11 nautical miles. Only difference from page 32 of the club's *Sailing Standard Instructions* (June 2021) was that there would be no windward mark.

The wind was blowing from the east but, as the scheduled start time of 1300 approached, it swung to the south and the AP was raised. But not for long.

At 1310, the horns were sounded for IRC and Sportboats and, at 1311, the P flag was lowered. At 1315, with the wind coming from 145 degrees, two IRC entries and six Sportsboats crossed the line and headed out of Port Shelter. *Dexter II* led the way.

At 1320, the PHS division made up of three RHKYC entries, seven HHYC keelboats and two DC29s from Kwun Tong, started with a bit of jostling between *X-Terminator* and *Ichiban* – a protest flag was raised by the X-99. High-performing, *Harpseal*, led the way from start, to finish.

But, getting ready for the third start for the Shelter Cove Dragons, the RO noticed that the bulk of this seven-strong one-design contingent were still at the mouth of Hebe Haven, struggling against an incoming tide. Support boats were sent to tow the unfortunate ones the last few hundred metres and, at 1350, all seven started in 5 knots of breeze. Abraham van Olphen's *Dragonfly* led the way. The Dragons also sailed Course 92.

Progress for everyone was slow and, after rounding Table Island and sailing into Rocky Harbour, it became obvious that the RO was going to have to shorten course.

Hebe One dropped anchor in the pass between Town and Bluff Islands and announced the shortening at 1520. The S flag was raised, two horns sounded, while the volunteers prepared themselves for recording times and positions.

Dexter II finished at 15:39:36 to claim line honours. The quick, 35-foot Archambault, with Lowell Chang helming, also took handicap honours, ahead of Joe Leung's *Talkinghead*.

The Sportsboats were won by the J/80, *Jive*, with *Baring Asia 1* in 2nd and *Catch 22* in 3rd.

The happy crew of *Harpseal* sealed victory in the PHS Division, also claiming divisional line honours. Bob Vart and his senior team on *X-Terminator* took a deserved 2nd slot, followed in 3rd by Robert Cook's *Ichiban*.

The Dragon class was won, on handicap, by *Dragonfly*. *Mei Fei* filled 2nd place and *Minion*, 3rd.

Last boat home – as the sun was going down – was PHS entry, *Marmalade*, at 17:13:23. Well done Felix and Michael for your perseverance.

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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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