

PRESS RELEASE

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Boxing Day Treasure Hunt 2023

(For immediate release) Crisp, winter mornings in Hong Kong are a sailor's delight, especially when, under the influence of upper air disturbances, cold air from the anticyclones over central Asia, moves southward bringing dry, chilly weather to China's southern coastal areas.

Hong Kong was under the influence of these monsoonal conditions during much of December and, on Boxing Day, the 26th of December, although relatively light, winds were enough to get the six competing yachts and their fun-loving crews to the orange buoy off the Ma Lam Wat mariculture zone, at the entrance to Hebe Haven. Crews recorded their own times, and confirmed their participation in the Boxing Day Treasure Hunt 2023.

The location of the four buoys in the race was provided in the 'Instructions' as GPS co-ordinates – available from the main bar in the club. After the Ma Lam Wat buoy, the second mark was positioned off Shelter Island. Then it was a beat to the next, and third, off Cascade Bay, Kau Sai Chau. Note that at each mark a clue was given to make up a word. This word would feature in the final awards.

The fourth mark was in Rocky Harbour. This meant leaving Cascade Bay, sailing southeast and rounding Jin Island, passing Ma Tsai Pai, to a mark behind Bay Islet. Being the last of four marks, it left a crossing of Rocky Harbour to a finish off the mariculture zone on the west side of High Island. Once tied up or at anchor in the sheltered bay, it was a short ride into the famous Yau Lay Seafood Restaurant at Tung A. A long-time favourite of Hebe sailors, it is spacious, relaxed and well-stocked with fresh, local seafood. Perhaps more importantly, it has extremely tolerant management who not only know how to cope with boisterous yachties but, like manager Simon, to even join the fun. Older hands will remember the popular Loy Lam who had relatives in the UK.

Race officer and club Hon Sec, Aaron Goach, anchored the committee boat, *Hebe One*, in open water and within sight of an islet called Nam Fung Chau which he used as an ODM. Under clear skies and winds of up to 8 knots, a horn was sounded at 1130 and, over on the far side of Rocky Harbour, the leaders could be seen approaching using their engines! Quite obviously, the thought of deep fried squid, butterfly prawns, chicken with cashew nuts, scallops with spring onion, sweet & sour pork, and clams was driving them on!

First past the committee boat at 1200 was *Farfadet* followed by *Eclipse*. Last to finish, or so the RO thought, was *Adagio* at 1223. While this was happening, Yau Ley's courtesy sampan had arrived and began ferrying 'race officials' ashore.

In the restaurant, with four large tables occupied, there was some respite from the morning's 'exertions' and sailors tucked in to the dishes of deep fried squid and prawns which were arriving in quick succession.

Then came a Whatsapp from *X-Terminator* wanting to know where the fourth mark was. Oh dear, the RO had lifted the mark, not realizing the venerable X-99 was still sailing. What to do? One comment by a previous commodore was "tell Lesley we have a prize for the last boat!" while others warned they'd better hurry as the food was disappearing fast. Fortunately, at 1345, *X-Terminator's* weather-beaten crew stumbled in to the restaurant to much applause.

Dragonfly's Juliet Ashton was quiz master and one of the compères. The party had by now expanded to six tables, the atmosphere had improved and the real fun began.

First was a 'nautical' quiz with 20 questions like "How many balls does the commodore of the club have?", "Where would you put baggy wrinkles on your boat?", "Dragon boating celebrates the life of what Chinese warrior poet?" and "Name the three brightest stars in the sky". The winner was *Jelik 6*.

An award was made to *Eclipse* for best-dressed crew and then came the 'Yachties have Talent' show. Crews used their own words for popular Christmas carols. *Dragonfly's* throaty rendition of Deck the Halls, for example, won them a prize along with the sweet tones of the 'X-Terminator Grandsons'.

A favourite of the annual Boxing Day Treasure Hunt is the Best-Dressed Fender competition. This year, it was a close-run thing with 'Baby Jesus in a Manger' and a handsome Rebels Without a Clause fender jointly winning the contest.

After the happy sailors had finished their food and drank their fill, they slowly drifted back to their boats, so ending another memorable Boxing Day Treasure Hunt. Oh, and by the way, the word from the marks was 'STAR'. It didn't matter if you didn't get it right – there's always Boxing Day Treasure Hunt 2024.

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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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