



HEBE HAVEN YACHT CLUB
白沙灣遊艇會

PRESS RELEASE

1 June 2025

Leo Wealth Hong Kong Open Ladies' /Girls' Champs Regatta 2025

This year's World Sailing Steering the Course Women's Sailing Festival began at Hebe Haven Yacht Club on Saturday, the 24th of May. After seven days of events and activities designed to promote the participation of women and girls in watersports and sailing, the festival ended on Sunday, the 1st of June, with the Hong Kong Open Ladies'/Girls' Champs Regatta 2025.

Sponsored again by wealth managers, Leo Wealth, the three-race regatta attracted seven keelboats, six club J/80s and three DC29s from Kwun Tong, all with female crews and all competing under the Performance Handicap System (PHS). Course location – between Tiu Chung Chau (Jin Island) and Shelter Island just outside Port Shelter. Clubs represented – Hebe Haven Yacht Club, the Royal Hong Kong Yacht Club, Aberdeen Boat Club, Cruiser Owners Association, Voyages Club and a guest team from Shenzhen called the 'Invincible Ladies'.

The Observatory's forecast for Sunday, the 1st of June, was for sunny periods, showers and a Force 4-5 easterly, swinging to the south later. The real conditions, however, became apparent when the committee boat, *Hebe One*, left the confines of Hebe Haven. "More like Force 1," said one official in the management team. Oh dear. It was obvious that a support boat would have to be sent ahead to search for better conditions.

Over the VHF, Elberti Uiterwaal-Postma, race officer for the day, learned that there were an encouraging 5-6 knots, gusting 10, closer to Table Island. So, *Hebe One* continued its southeasterly course, eventually coming to a rest at the outer entrance to Port Shelter. The management team then swung into action, laying marks for a geometric course, with the help of BuoyZone. This app was developed in New Zealand six years ago and has now become an essential tool among the club's race officials.





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Racing got underway at 1100 with the three Voyages DC29s crossing the line, two with Mainland crews and one skippered by event chairwoman, Juliet Ashton. Next away at 1105 were the PHS boats, heading off on two laps of their windward/leeward course. Five minutes later, the lively J/80 fleet, featuring two Mainland crews, set off in 'hot pursuit'. Well, not really 'hot', but as fast as they could in the prevailing conditions.

This worked well for two races as most boats made it home in the planned 45-minute time frame. But, sadly, at around 1300 the wind began to die. And die. Eventually, the RO raised the N over A flags and, with three blasts of the horn, confirmed on Ch.72 that there would be no more racing for the day. Race 3 had been abandoned.

The boats all made their way back to the Garden Bar in the Club where the crews were 'rewarded' with bottles of Prosecco and a tasty buffet. The prize-giving commenced with everyone in great spirits, tirelessly posing for the 'scrum' of photographers in front of the stage.

In the DC29 division, *Voyages 53*, skippered by Chen Pei Na, took the honours, followed by Lo Sze Shuen's *Voyages 65* and, in 3rd place, Juliet Ashton's *Voyages 68*.

The J/80s were won by Vivio Chan, Seas the Day (*Jive*), with Eliza Yeung's *Baring Asia 1* in 2nd and Frances Hurley's *Baring Asia 2*, 3rd.



FRAGRANT HARBOUR



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Manbude claimed 1st in the PHS division, with the Club's rear commodore sailing, Bridget Chan and her well-practiced crew in *Minnie the Moocher*, taking 2nd. In 3rd place was another well-known club boat, *Jibulai*.

For the first time, Sailability Hong Kong's *MoHan*, a 40-foot Solaris sailing boat adapted to suit the needs of disabled sailors, joined the regatta with an all-female crew. Interestingly, both Solaris entries, *MoHan* and *Saphira*, finished neck and neck in Race 2.

By the way, this year's festival started with an introduction to dinghy sailing, specifically the Club's J/80 one-designs and the operation of Sailability Hong Kong. A speakers' event, Accelerate Action, was held on Tuesday, the 27th of May and, on Thursday, the 29th of May, a race management seminar preceded on-water practice starts for the J/80s. Then there was the Girls Night which attracted 24 girls. Friday, the 30th, was Crazy Friday while Steering the Music included performances by five girl bands, taking the event to a new cultural level. The grand finale was the regatta on Sunday, the 1st of June 2025.

Steering the Course Women's Sailing Festival is a World Sailing initiative, supported by the IOC Development Fund, launched in 2021. The aim is to increase participation of women and girls worldwide in the sport of sailing and to encourage alternative pathways for those women already enjoying the sport. Five years on, it has become a fixture on the local sailing calendar.

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About Hebe Haven Yacht Club

Hebe Haven Yacht Club is a private member's club established in the Pak Sha Wan, Sai Kung in 1963. The Club provides first class yacht racing and boating facility for members, and works closely with local schools and organisations to develop youth sailing in Hong Kong. As a 'Caring Organisation' member, the Club proactively contributes to the community with regular events.

www.hhyc.org.hk @hebehaven @hhyc_official

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