



2011/08

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HORIZONS

THE MAGAZINE OF THE ABERDEEN BOAT CLUB

Shooting on the Water

Take better race photos

Get Tactical

Keelboat racing tips and tricks

The Great Escape

Charter holidays just a short hop from Hong Kong



Grand Marine Ctr

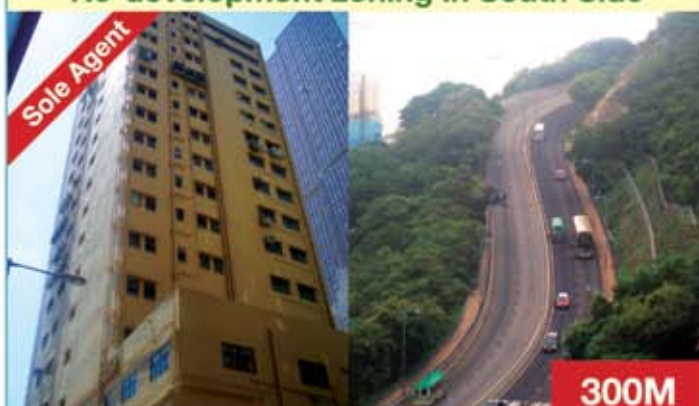


@3,200 up

3,815'-7,600'

With its high efficiency rate 80% loft ideal comfortably accommodates three sides harbour and mountain view

Re-development zoning in South Side



300M

63,300'

Centrally located in Tin Wan, Aberdeen on Hong Kong Island South, set in a tranquil residential district with convenient amenities nearby, offers a panoramic mountain view and easily accessible by public transport

E. On Factory Bldg

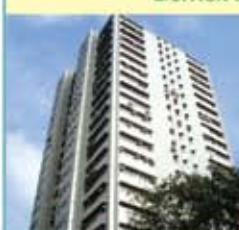


3,670'

- Prime location close to the coming MTR station
- Greenery
- Vacant Possession

@3800 / @7

Derrick Ind. Bldg

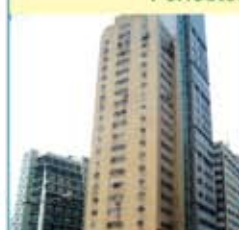


2,200'

- Prime location
- Quiet and green surroundings
- Practical layout
- Plus private roof

12M

Perfectech Centre



77,438'

The property is well positioned to capture all day sun and enjoy stretching Southside sea and Ocean Park views while being mere minutes from Central

500M

Harbour Ind Ctr



742'-3,500'

- Dream of a quiet and spacious loft ideal
- Well management
- High Ceiling

3-16M

Aberdeen Ind Bldg



3,150'

- High ceiling
- Whole Floor with 3 sides windows
- Excellent location and transport

10M

Tin Fung Ind Mansion



7,877'-17,587'

- Ocean Park View
- Very Spacious
- Potential Redevelopment Project

@3,280 up

Sungib Ind Ctr



1,200'-6,009'

- In Wong Chuk Hang
- Whole Floor
- Privileged location in new hotel project

@4,250 up

Southmark



874'-11,000'

- Efficient commercial space with unobstructed seaview
- Free Shuttle bus and swimming pool facility

@5,000

United Ind Bld



4,000'-10,000'

- Potential Redevelopment Project
- Widespread views of city and greenery
- Plus carpark

19M up

Wong Chuk Hang Ind. Bldg



5,750'

- Plus private roof
- Nearly MTR
- Mountain view

25.98M

Regency Ctr



700'-4000'

- Decorated lobby
- Car park available
- Well management

@9

Wong Chuk Hang Ind. Bldg



2,500'-7,500'

- Plus private roof
- Nearly MTR
- Corner unit

12M up

HORIZONS ISSUE 2011/08

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Editorial Contact:
Peter Wheeler,
peter.wheeler@ppp.com.hk

Advertising Sales Contact:
Jo Allum, jo.allum@ppp.com.hk

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Aberdeen Boat Club
20 Shum Wan Road
Aberdeen, Hong Kong
香港仔遊艇會
香港仔深灣道二十號
www.abclubhk.com
Fax no: 2873 2945
General Line : 2552 8182

Flag Officers

Barry Hill • Commodore
David Tait • Vice Commodore
Bruce Perkins • Rear Commodore
Richard Walker • Rear Commodore
Yann Sandt • Hon. Treasurer
Nick Horvath • Hon. Gen. Secretary

Management & Staff

General Manager
Philippe de Manny
Tel: 2553 3231
genman@abclubhk.com

Marketing and Event Manager

Karen Castilho
Tel: 2552 8182 Ext 812
gmsec@abclubhk.com

Membership Service Manager

Cobo Liu
Tel: 2553 3032
mbs@abclubhk.com

Financial Controller

Leslie Chan
Tel: 2552 5220
fin@abclubhk.com

House Manager

Steven Ng
Tel: 2552 8182 Ext 835
hsp@abclubhk.com

Marine Manager

Ah Kee
Tel: 2552 8182 Ext 834
marine@abclubhk.com

Food and Beverage Manager

Terry Mung
Tel: 2552 8182
fmb@abclubhk.com

Dinghy Sailing Manager

Kevin Lewis
Tel: 2552 8182 Ext 833
dinghysailing@abclubhk.com

General Enquiries

The Galley
Tel: 2554 9494

Four Peaks Restaurant

Tel: 2553 3422

CONGRATULATIONS PHILIPPE

The management and efficient running of the Aberdeen Boat Club, such that it continuously provides a wide variety of services, functions and entertainment to 1,000 members is a demanding undertaking. There are many reasons why I consider we generally fulfil the expectations of members but here I would just like to highlight the dedication of our staff. Our operations require a staffing level of 70. It may fluctuate a little from time to time but it is of this order. The day to day running of the Club and the staff is the responsibility of the General Manager and I am very pleased to advise that Philippe de Manny has accepted a new contract and will be continuing his good work for the Club over the next few years. In addition to his club management and food and beverage skills, Philippe has fully embraced the boating ethos

of the Club and has introduced events such as the unique Classic Yacht Rally into the annual calendar. Philippe is very active with the Club Managers Association of Hong Kong and uses this knowledge and experience to further the interests of the ABC. The next few years promise to be an exciting but challenging time for the Club and we are fortunate to have Philippe at the helm for this period.

Last month I was invited by the Editor of Horizons to pen an article on photographing sailing boats which is included in this issue. It is only when you take a few minutes to reflect on where we live that you begin to appreciate the mountainous scenery, rugged coastline and beautiful beaches that this great city has to offer. Many of the beaches can only be accessed by boat, and on summer weekends very large fleets of junks,



motor vessels and sailing boats can be seen lying at anchor in some of the favourite haunts. Add to this, a very full and comprehensive annual sailing programme and you have all the ingredients for great photography.

Summer has arrived with the onset of beautiful, hot, clear days being interspersed with stormy weather. The Summer Series is in full swing but I can report that the Sailing and Marine Committee are well advanced with their preparations for the ABC Opening Regatta on 3 and 4 September.

Barry Hill
Commodore

RIDERS ON THE STORM

With the Typhoon season now upon us, it is sensible to reflect on a few simple actions that boats on moorings should consider and also remind members on the club policy for the closing and opening of the operation.

TROPICAL STORM WARNINGS (extract from the Club Bye Laws)

Members within the Club premises will be kept informed of tropical storm signals either by the posting of notices or by announcement. When Signal Number 8 is hoisted, Club operations will cease and all staff, members and guests, with the exception of caretaker staff, will be required to vacate the Club premises. In the event of members or guests being unable to leave the Club premises owing to lack of transport or other circumstance the public rooms will remain open for use but very limited food, drink or service of

any kind will be available.

MOORING – TYPHOON ADVICE (from professional mariners)

The first thing to consider checking when the typhoon season is approaching is if your insurance and licence are up-date; an expired licence would automatically invalidate your insurance.

It is also a good time to check if your bilge pump and electrical system are in good working condition. Make sure that all hatches and lockers are securely closed. Please make sure that your decks are free from any potential flying objects and that your sails are either removed and stowed below decks or secured properly on the mast.

If your boat is fitted with a bow anchor, ensure that the mooring lines do not rub against it as they may be cut during heavy wind.

Fitting a second set of mooring



lines as a back up is a good precaution as long as it is fitted with a bit of slack compared to the working lines. Never secure a mooring line to the mast or to any standard rigging, but consider using the primary winches.

Some boats may require our staff to secure them to one another to avoid them bashing against each other. You can trust our team; they have done this for 40 years and our record is the best in Hong Kong when it comes to safety under typhoon conditions.

Philippe de Manny
General Manager

CAPTURE THE DREAM.



— 70 —

Private Suite

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 **SIMPSON**
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www.simpsonmarine.com

Unit 6, G/F Aberdeen Marina Tower,
8 Shum Wan Road, Aberdeen, HONG KONG
Tel +852 2555 8377 **Fax** +852 2873 4014
Email hongkong@simpsonmarine.com



HONG KONG • SINGAPORE • PORT DICKSON • PATTAYA • PHUKET • SHENZHEN • HAINAN • TAIPEI
+852 2555 8377 +65 6274 3359 +60 6647 6868 +66 38 237 306 +66 76 239768 +86 755 3304 3142 +86 896 88595593 +886 2 2618 8342

FLAG OFFICER'S REPORT

So the wind may have deserted us for the summer and the rainy season has well and truly set in, but that doesn't mean boating at ABC has come to a stop. Dinghy activity is in full flow with a packed calendar of courses to suit all ages and experience, including supervised sailing at the weekends and tip top race coaching for our up and coming sailors of the future. For the bigger boats, as I write, we are midway through our Summer Series, or Restaurant Series as it is fondly known. As the name implies, most of the race courses are designed to end near one of Hong Kong's famous seafood restaurants with an almost guaranteed visit to Po Toi at least once in the series. If you haven't joined the fleet yet, be sure to catch one of the last few races and if you don't have access to your own boat, why not consider hiring one of the Club J/80's for the day?

Not qualified yet for the J/80's? If you're an experienced sailor, get yourself on one of the assessment courses so that you can be signed off as a named skipper for the boats. Alternatively, if you need a bit more instruction, why not consider the competent crew or day skipper courses that are being run throughout the summer? All details are available on the club website, or ask any member of the sailing team for further details. Once qualified, you are entitled to take out the boats mid-week, weekends and all major Regattas. Why not plan now for the Opening Regatta or consider joining in with the class racing held south of Middle Island on most Saturdays?

Planning for the start of the season? We are now only two months away from our main sailing event of the year, 'The ABC Sunseeker Opening Regatta'. As the name implies, we are once again fortunate enough to be sponsored

by Sunseeker and our sincere thanks go to Gordon Hui for his continued support of the Club and our flagship event. This year the event will be held over the weekend of Saturday 3rd and Sunday 4th September. Racing will be held for both dinghies and yachts and with a hopeful entry list of over 120 boats, it is sure to be a spectacle for both competitors and spectators alike. If you have a boat or you want to sail, I urge you to get out on the water and join in this event. Alternatively if you want to get involved in the Regatta but not race, then please don't hesitate to get your name into the sailing office as a potential volunteer. It takes an

“Not qualified yet for the J/80's? If you're an experienced sailor, get yourself on one of the assessment courses...”

army of people to successfully run an event of this size and if you feel you can add your support, it would be very welcome. We are always looking for volunteers!

Of course our Opening Regatta is only the start of the traditional sailing season in Hong Kong and the months between September and February are packed with some great events from ABC and our neighbouring clubs. Some classic events that shouldn't be missed are China Coast Week, South Side Regatta, China Cup, The Waglan Series and of course the iconic Four Peaks Race. Start planning your calendar now and make the most of the great



winds, weather and events that the Hong Kong sailing community offers. We'll be joining most of the events and I look forward to seeing a strong ABC contingent out on the water.

Happy Boating

Bruce Perkins
SailCom

Club and Boating Biography

Bruce Perkins grew up sailing at Chichester Yacht Club in the UK and spent his youth racing dinghies and yachts along the south coast of England. Moving to Hong Kong in 1996, he joined the HK Hobie Club and took up catamaran sailing, serving as social secretary. He also owned and raced several Hobie 16's for over 10 years with varied success. First sailing at ABC in 1997 he became a regular crew on some ABC classics such as *Mystique* and *Sita*. Officially 'joining' ABC in 2004, Bruce joined the General Committee in 2005 and has been Rear Commodore of Sailing and Marine since 2009. He currently owns and sails the J/80 *Jelignite*.

Aon Yacht Insurance

Sailing with Assurance and Pleasure...

At Aon, we provide first class personal services, whether you are owners of small sailing boats or super yachts. We take time to explain all aspects of the covers we are offering from the various insurers and find the best insurance programme which suits your needs.

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Tommy Ho

Tel: +852 2862 4241

Fax: +852 2243 8861

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Tel : +852 2904 6215 Fax : +852 2904 6235 E-mail : info@eme.com.hk

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All photos by Nicolas Claris



SIMPSON SIGNS LARGEST EVER CHINA YACHT ORDER


Simpson Marine has announced the signing of a contract to supply 33 Lagoon sailing catamarans to a customer in China. The fleet will comprise a mix of Lagoons ranging in size from 40 to 62ft and will be used by the buyer, Guangzhou based luxury members club, Tiger Club World, to introduce its high net worth members to the pleasures of yachting.

"This is the largest ever single order of yachts for delivery into the growing China market, eclipsing the order for 30 Beneteau First 40.7s for the China Cup five years ago" said Mike Simpson, Managing Director of Simpson Marine after the signing ceremony in Guangzhou. "Simpson Marine is uniquely able to complete this type and size of deal. We have been active in the China market for many years and now have a network of offices and service centres covering the South China coast. We have the local knowledge and project management expertise to make our client's dream come true"





"We may decide to take first delivery of some of the yachts in France so that my members can have their first sailing experience in the Mediterranean" added Tiger Wu, Founder and CEO of Tiger Club World. "Then we will ship the boats to Hong Kong, re-commission them at Simpson's service centre and deliver them to Guangzhou. This project has been a dream of mine for many years and I am thrilled to be able to embark on it with such valued partners as Simpson Marine and the Beneteau Group."

The 33 yacht fleet will begin construction within the next few months and will be delivered from late 2011 through 2012. Simpson Marine will manage all aspects of the project from specification through build supervision to commissioning and provision of crew for the entire fleet, as well as providing the high level of after sales care for which Simpson Marine is well known throughout Asia. 



2011 SUMMER SERIES RACE RESULTS

IRC

• Race 1

- 1 The Farr Side
- 2 Intrigue
- 3 -

• Race 2

- 1 Red Kite 2
- 2 JeNa PaBe
- 3 The Farr Side

• Race 3

- 1 JeNa PaBe
- 2 The Farr Side
- 3 -

HKPN

- 1 Ahyoka
- 2 Xiphias
- 3 Thea

- 1 May-13
- 2 Boadicea
- 3 JeNa PaBe

- 1 Thea
- 2 JeNa PaBe
- 3 Ahyoka



SIMPSON MARINE OPENS NEW OFFICE IN PHILIPPINES

Simpson Marine has opened an office in Manila, Philippines. The office will focus on new yacht sales, brokerage, service and charter opportunities for the growing leisure yacht market and strengthening Simpson Marine's presence in the Asia-Pacific region.

The Philippines office compliments Simpson Marine's other offices in Hong Kong, China, Malaysia, Singapore, Taipei

and Thailand. Simpson Marine Philippines is being led by Robin Wyatt as Country Manager with many years as a senior broker working at Simpson's head office in Hong Kong. Robin has wide-ranging experience complemented by his extensive technical knowledge which stems from a degree in naval architecture and personal interest in sailing and love of ocean racing making him a well-known figure in the Asia yachting scene.

Azimut S72 from Simpson Marine



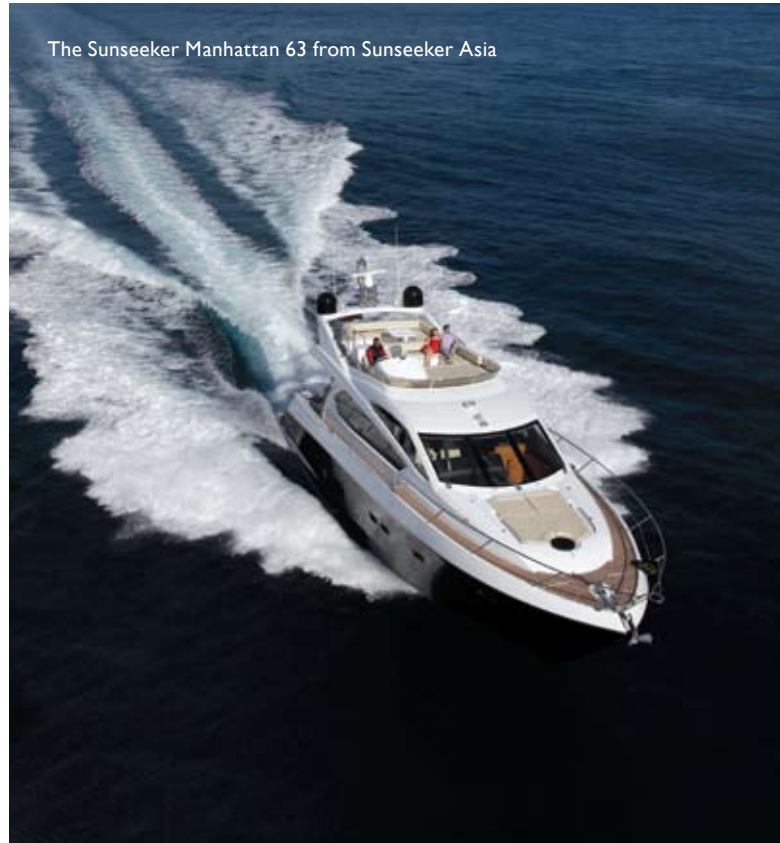
SUNSEEKER'S FULL HOUSE

Busy times lie ahead for Sunseeker Asia as a plethora of new build yachts are due to arrive in Hong Kong over the coming months. According to Sunseeker top man Gordon Hui, "There are Sunseeker Predator 115s and 130s coming, as well as the smaller Manhattan 53s, 63s, 73s and a Predator 74 as well."

The successful Predator range from Sunseeker features the new 130, a 39.1m performance motoryacht that has a range of 1,500nm and a top speed of 30kts. The Manhattan 63 can accommodate eight guests along with a crew of two.

Hui added, "We are also pretty close to finalizing a 40m Yacht as well as a 46m Yacht. Also [we are] possibly building the first 50m Sports Yacht for an Asian client who has been our loyal customer for the last eight years. The Yacht 46m and Sports Yacht 50m projects were previously known as Zeus 46m and 50m."

The Sunseeker Manhattan 63 from Sunseeker Asia



HOME WINE DELIVERY AUGUST 2011

White, Rose & Red Wine	Price (\$)	Quantity	Amount (\$)
Penfolds Private Release Chardonnay 2009/10 – Australia Pale straw. Lifted aromas of rock melon meld with notes of freshly peeled yellow peach. An instantly approachable wine. The creamy mid-palate is supported by a tropical fruit core resulting in a wine that is structured to please.	\$95		
Deinhard Green Label Riesling 2009 – Germany This wine displays an ideal balance of fruit and a crisp finish. It goes particularly well with light and easy food, like veal, fish, fowl and seafood.	\$98		
Simi Sauvignon Blanc Sonoma County 2008 California – USA Citrus blend of lemon, lime, mandarin and grapefruit, sweetened with green apple and fig, layered with minerals and a crisp, clean finish.	\$145		
Baron Philippe de Rothschild Escudo Rojo Chardonnay 2008 Maipo – Chile The lush and creamily smooth mid-palate displays perfect balance between fresh tropical fruit and toasty, spicy notes.	\$128		
Penfolds Private Release Shiraz Cabernet 2009/10 – Australia Dark red. This wine displays generous sweet flavours of raspberry, spice, green olive and truffle that develop to a finish characterized by creamy coconut oak and soft lingering tannin.	\$95		
Flechas de Los Andes Aguaribay Malbec 2007 – Argentina Its intense aromas resemble ripe cherries and raspberries that, combined with the slight vanilla, give elegance and fineness to this wine. In the mouth it appears soft and silky, with round tannins.	\$95		
Simi Merlot Sonoma County 2007 California – USA Expressive cherry and blackberry with soft tannins and good weight on the palate.	\$145		
Baron Philippe de Rothschild Escudo Rojo 2008 Maipo – Chile The mid-palate expresses a perfect marriage of ripe black fruit and roasted, toasted, liquorice flavours.	\$128		

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Delivery Date: _____ Member Signature: : _____

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Contact the Food & Beverage Department at 25556216 or Fax: 28732945

Free Delivery. Please allow 3 working days for delivery.

All wines are subject to availability



ABC SUMMER 2011 YOUTH SAILING PROGRAMME

July was our busiest month of the year for Dinghy Sailing, with a healthy increase in student numbers from last year. Not only were we busy with weekday youth courses, but adult courses and activities at weekends also showed an increase in participation. Our Youth programme continues until the end of August, including courses scheduled for the last two weeks of the summer for students at French International and some other local schools whose holiday ends later. Many courses in mid-August are now nearly full, so if interested, students should apply very soon. Details and all application forms are available on our website, www.abclubhk.com. For further enquiries please contact Angela Ho at SailingSecretary@abclubhk.com.

August	Course	Eligibility	Member	Non-member
Mon 1 – Fri 5 Aug	Optimist Race Course & Team Training*	Age 7 – 14, hold Optimist Stage 3	1,600	2,128
Mon 8 – Fri 12 Aug AM	Optimist Stage 1*	Age 7 – 11	800	1,064
Mon 8 – Fri 12 Aug PM	Optimist Stage 2*	Age 7 – 11, hold Optimist Stage 1	800	1,064
Mon 8 – Fri 12 Aug	Beginners HKSF Lev 1&2	Age 11 – 18	2,400	3,200
Mon 15 – Fri 19 Aug AM	Optimist Stage 1*	Age 7 – 11	800	1,064
Mon 15 – Fri 19 Aug PM	Optimist Stage 3*	Age 7 – 12, hold Optimist Stage 2	800	1,064
Mon 15 – Wed 17 Aug	RS Feva Introduction	Age 12 – 18, hold HKSF L2 plus some additional sailing experience	1,440	1,920
Mon 15 – Wed 17 Aug	Laser Intro Course	Youth & Adult, pass HKSF L2	1,440	1,920
Thur 18 – Fri 19 Aug	2 Day Supervised Practice Topper Pico RS Feva	Age 12 – 18, hold HKSF L2	960	1,280
Thur 18 – Fri 19 Aug	RS Feva Gennaker Intro Course	Age 12 – 18, pass RS Feva Intro course	960	1,280
Mon 22 – Fri 26 Aug AM	Optimist Stage 1*	Age 7 – 12	800	1,064
Mon 22 – Fri 26 Aug PM	Optimist Stage 2*	Age 7 – 13, hold Optimist Stage 1	800	1,064
Sat 27 – Wed 31 Aug AM	Optimist Stage 1*	Age 7 – 11	800	1,064
Sat 27 – Wed 31 Aug PM	Optimist Stage 3*	Age 7 – 12, hold Optimist Stage 2	800	1,064
Sat 27 – Wed 31 Aug	Beginners HKSF Lev 1&2	Age 11 – 18	2,400	3,200
Sat 27 – Wed 31 Aug	Improvers HKSF Lev 3	Age 12 – 18 Hold HKSF L2 for at least 1 year	2,400	3,200
Mon 29 – Wed 31 Aug	3 Day Supervised Practice Topper Pico RS Feva	Age 12 – 18, hold HKSF L2	1,440	1,920

* Junior Course

All prices listed in HK\$

ABC OCTOBER 2011 YOUTH SAILING PROGRAMME

With an increase in demand for sailing courses and activities at ABC, we would like to give members advance notice of the schedule for October. With only a one or two week holiday, spaces will be limited and so advance application is highly recommended. Details will be available on our website soon, www.abclubhk.com. For further enquiries please contact Angela Ho at SailingSecretary@abclubhk.com.

October	Course	Eligibility	Member	Non-member
Sat 15 Oct (AM)	Optimist Supervised Sailing*	Age 7 – 12, hold Optimist Stage 3	240	320
Sat 15 Oct (PM)	Youth & Adult Supervised Sailing	Age 12 - Adult hold HKSF L2 plus some additional sailing experience	240 / 280	275 / 320
Mon 17 – Fri 21 Oct (AM)	Optimist Stage 1*	Age 7 – 11	800	1,064
Mon 17 – Fri 21 Oct (PM)	Optimist Stage 2* (6 spaces)	Age 7 – 11, hold Optimist Stage 1	800	1,064
Mon 17 – Fri 21 Oct (PM)	Optimist Stage 3* (6 spaces)	Age 7 – 12, hold Optimist Stage 2	800	1,064
Mon 17 – Fri 21 Oct	Beginners HKSF Lev 1&2	Age 11 – 18	2,400	3,200
Fri 21 – Sun 23 Oct	Laser Intro Course*	Youth & Adult, Pass HKSF L2	1,440	1,920
Sat 22 – Sun 23 Oct	RS Feva Gennaker Intro Course	Age 12 – 18, pass RS Feva Intro course	960	1,280
Sat 22 – Sun 23 Oct	Optimist Race Training Clinic	Age 12 – 18, hold Optimist Race Intro	640	850

* Junior Course

All prices listed in HK\$

CRUISER & KEELBOAT SAILING DIARY

Sept 3 & 4	ABC Opening Regatta
Sept 25	ABC Ladies Race
Sept 24 & 25	HHYC Port Shelter Regatta

DINGHY SAILING DIARY

Aug 7	Summer Dinghy Races Day 5
Aug 21	Summer Dinghy Races Day 6
Sept 3 & 4	ABC Opening Regatta
Sept 10, 11, 13	HKSF International Regatta
Sept 10, 17 & 24	Laser 2000 Course
Sept 17	ABC & RHKYC Joint Dinghy Races Autumn 1 & 2
Sept 10, 11, 17, 18, 25	Adult Beginner Dinghy Course
Sept 24	ABC & RHKYC Joint Dinghy Races Autumn 3 & 4
Sept 24 & 25	HHYC Port Shelter Regatta

SUPERVISED DINGHY SAILING SESSIONS

Our schedule of supervised dinghy sailing sessions continues most Saturdays. These sessions are offered for sailors who may need a refresher, perhaps after attending their first course or having not sailed in some time. Saturday mornings are organised for younger Optimist Sailors, while afternoons run for teenagers and adults. These sessions are also a great opportunity for families to sail together.

Aug 7, 13, 20 & 27	Supervised Dinghy Sailing
Sept 10, 17, 24	Supervised Dinghy Sailing



Shooting on the Water

Barry Hill shares his thoughts on photographing sailing races

Words and photos by Barry Hill



There are many great photographers who have captured the power and the beauty of the sea. Probably one of the most enduring names in the world of sailing photography is Beken of Cowes on the Isle of Wight in the UK. The Beken family originally had a pharmacy in Cowes in 1888 but were so impressed by the classic yachts sailing in the Solent that they wanted to capture the action and initiated the Beken Marine Photography Archive. Each subsequent generation of the family became a Fellow of the Royal Photographic Society and the company holds three Royal Warrants for excellence. Beken have now digitised the complete archive and continue to operate two 40 knot Boston Whalers in all weathers to add about 50,000 new images to the archive each year.

My favourite sailing photographer is Rick Tomlinson who also operates out of Cowes and is best known for capturing the Southern Ocean at its

most treacherous from the decks of various yachts in the Whitbread Round the World Race. He crewed with Simon Le Bon of Duran Duran and was aboard *Drum* in the 1985 Fastnet Race when the keel broke away resulting in a near fatal roll. He is always on the lookout for that unique angle and his sailing and expedition photography is inspirational.

Equipment

Photography has been a passion of mine since I was a teenager. My first camera was a Zenith E single lens reflex, to which I added a telephoto lens as soon as I could afford it. I still consider that some of my best shots were taken when I was a student in the English city of Leicester in the seventies. The city had and still has one of the best outdoor markets in the country and provided a great range of street life subjects. In addition to this, the run down district of Highfields, where I shared a rented house with my fellow

students, was a treasure trove for an eagle eye with a camera.

I took a lot of black and white photographs and have thousands of negatives which still need to be digitised. Working in the darkroom and producing your own work from start to finish was a very satisfying experience. In effect, the digital darkroom does the same and more but without the mystique of the image slowly appearing in the developing tray.

Over the years I have owned many cameras but the full frame, Canon EOS 5D single lens reflex is a superb camera, although somewhat bulky and heavy when fitted with the optional battery pack grip. Full frame means the digital sensor is equivalent to a 35mm film frame which has certain advantages over cameras with smaller sensors in terms of wide angle lens performance, optical quality considerations and pixel size.

The G12 is the latest in a well established compact range from Canon



The professional version has an amazing array of tools with which you can turn that dreary shot of The Great Wall into an artistic masterpiece. Even the much more reasonably priced Elements version has more tools than budding amateurs will need for everyday enhancements.

My philosophy is to try and get the shot right first time in the camera. However with such powerful tools available for post camera processing it is inevitable that you can get seduced into some tinkering. That is if you have the time, because getting to know the software can be a long and winding road.

For my work I generally only use the basic tools to optimize composition, adjust lighting and exposure and refine colours. I used to use Photoshop Elements but these days I use ACDSee Pro 3 for all my image management and processing. This is a fast, high quality software package with all the tools needed to manage, view, process and publish images in a single application.

Technique

Enough of the technical stuff. It has always been true that you do not need expensive kit to take good shots but you do need patience, enthusiasm and some luck to capture the image which has that added wow factor. Shooting on or around water immediately brings another perspective which adds to your photography portfolio. In Hong Kong we are fortunate to have a beautifully rugged coast line and a constant programme of water borne sporting activities at which to turn your lens. As one of the objectives of this article is to discuss the issues of photographing racing boats I have included a selection of photographs, most of which have been taken at ABC events.

Here are a few thoughts on how to approach the subject:

- The first thing to be wary of is the very environment you are working in. Sea water and cameras don't mix so some form of protection is necessary. You can buy sophisticated underwater cases but careful use of plastic bags generally does the trick unless you are in very rough water.

and complements the 5D perfectly for when you want to travel light and have the convenience of a built in flash. The sturdy body provides control of all the major parameters and the menu serves up a whole range of colour options and custom functions.

The zoom lenses are fast. That is, they have a large aperture at F2.8 which for a given light level allows a faster shutter speed. This is useful when you are shooting in low light or photographing moving objects. The trade off is that they tend to be quite heavy because of the need for larger optics.

Image Management & Processing

The origin of digital photography can be traced back to the fifties but it is only in the last ten years that the technology has become commonplace. Nikon and Canon ceased to manufacture film cameras in 2006. The digital revolution has resulted in a massive increase in the number of

images produced. In the good old days of film, a roll comprised 36 shots and photographers and snappers alike were much more particular about how many shots of a given subject or scene they would take. This was due to cost and the bulk of carrying around a basketful of film containers. Not so anymore. We can all snap happily away and not get anywhere near the capacity of a 4GB card. Consequently, for those of us who do take a lot of shots, image management is a crucial part of the process. It is essential that you use a systematic process for filing your images otherwise things can very quickly get out of control and that classic shot of Johnny with a finger up his nose will be lost forever.

Photoshop has been the industry standard for processing software since the beginning of the digital era. It has two versions, both of which are subject to frequent updates and is the benchmark against which other pretenders are judged.



- Choose your event for maximum scope. The first day of the ABC Opening Regatta is two windward/leeward races so you do not need to go far to have a continuous stream of action. Our cruiser racing will provide spectacular back drops, particularly around Beaufort and Po Toi and will add reference points to the shot. Dinghy racing takes place over a much smaller area with lots of competitors so you can quickly move to different marks of the course depending on the light and the angles that work best.
 - Quite often, good shots can be obtained from the comfort of the Committee Boat but more opportunities arise if you are on a small motor boat to follow the fleet. A good driver is essential as the last place you want to be is in the way with a pumped up racing crew bearing down on you.
 - The 70-200 mm zoom is my lens of choice as you can get in close but also go wider as the subject closes. The telephoto at 200 mm also bunches the perspective so a line of racing boats approaching the mark looks very dramatic.
 - The chances are it will be bright so there should not be a problem with camera motion. Bear in mind you will be pitching in your boat so a fast shutter speed will be required.
 - If I could give only one tip for photography in general, it would be 'get in close'. In yacht racing this would be a detail of the boat but more importantly the crew. The shots become alive when you can see the whites of the crews' eyes and of course they do not get too many shots of themselves from outside the boat.
 - Apart from getting in close, the shots that work best for me are of the stern quarter or looking towards the bow. Shots perpendicular to the yacht may show everything in true perspective but not so dramatically.
 - Hong Kong weather patterns quite often throw up dull days but if you are lucky enough to get a ray of sunshine to bring out the colour of the sails the overall contrast will be increased to great effect. In this situation shoot at will.
 - Use every opportunity to get colour in your shots. Spinnakers provide great colour in yacht racing. Position yourself outboard of the leeward mark and you will be rewarded with full on spinnakers followed by the drop sequence and finally the rounding up to wind.
 - The agility and balance of dinghy sailors in strong conditions is always impressive. Watch for a while to work out the best angles and get them next time round.
 - Do not forget to capture the whole scene to put the racing game into perspective. A general picture of the start is always good for this or just a mass of sails filling the frame.
 - In a lot of the pictures taken on the water the horizon will be evident. If you do nothing else in post processing, do make your horizons horizontal.
- I hope this article has helped your photography in some small way. ➡





the great escape

Charter Holidays in Asia

Asian yacht charter holidays aren't just for frostbitten Europeans anymore. There are many compelling reasons for Hong Kong-based sailors to pack lightly and go sailing further afield. Endless coastlines, abundant untouched islands, vast offshore waters and tourist friendly locals and officials make Southeast Asian sailing holidays ever more attractive for those looking to stretch their sea legs.

Throughout SE Asia, yacht charter companies are booming as people from all over the world discover the sailors' playground right on Hong Kong's doorstep. Established global charter companies bring their experience and business acumen and local enterprises add their own brand of passion, local knowledge and fun to an industry that is reviving tourist numbers and boosting economies across the region.

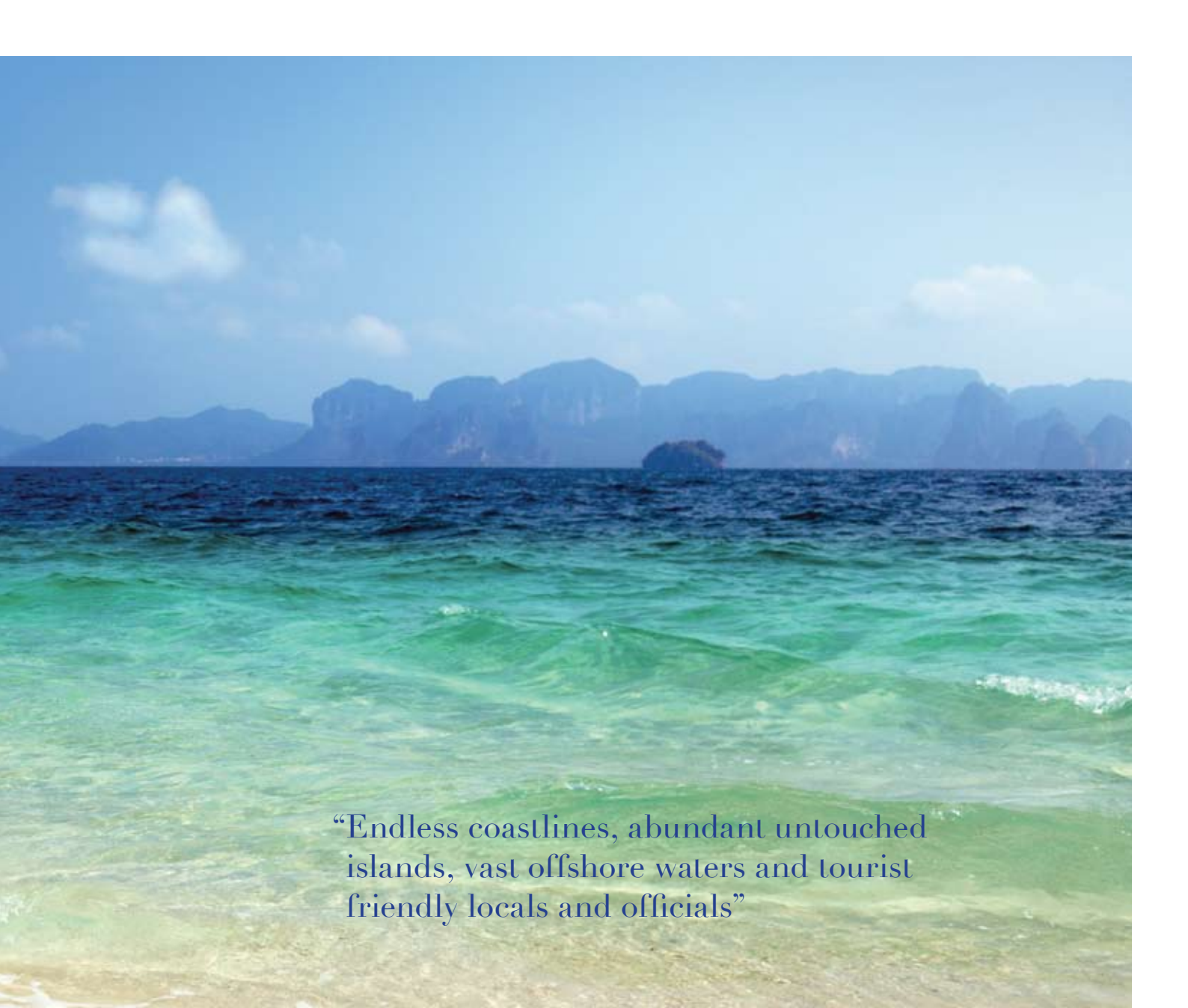
Where, Why and Who

With new sailing grounds opening up every season there is something for everyone within a short flying radius of Hong Kong. In this article we look at the 'Golden Triangle' formed between Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore and Vietnam. Within the

boundary of these four countries, charter holidaymakers can find any type of boat or cruising experience imaginable. From traditional wooden sailing junks to modern, high performance catamarans and monohulls and luxury motor vessels, there is something to suit all tastes and budgets.

While some SE Asian governments have been a little slow to realise the potential of recreational boating to bring in tourist dollars, most have now embraced, if not fully understood, the potential windfall. Licensing restrictions are significantly more relaxed throughout SE Asia when compared to Hong Kong's constrictive requirements, and often an RYA Day Skipper certificate or equivalent is enough to allow someone to take the wheel and go exploring. Other major draw cards include the countless welcoming villages and inviting resorts that dot the coastlines, and the scenery which ranges from Singapore's dazzling skyline to spectacular islands, geological features, and the ubiquitous white sand beaches.

The following list is by no means comprehensive but serves as a place to start for those looking to plan or book their ideal boating break.



“Endless coastlines, abundant untouched islands, vast offshore waters and tourist friendly locals and officials”

Thailand

A yacht charter really does allow you to discover the real Thailand, as it has been for thousands of years.

Thai beaches are world famous for luxurious sands, the inviting ocean waters and the stunning scenery that frames it all. With thousands of miles of beaches, some offering lively parties and others remote tranquillity, clients can enjoy their sailing holiday at their own pace.

Gulf Charters

www.yachtcharterthailand.com

Fleet: sailing monohulls and catamarans

Gulf Charters Thailand takes customers to cruising grounds that have not yet become 'mainstream' yacht charter destinations. Clients can anchor in total solitude and be the first to set foot on a long, white powder sand beach, visit hidden waterfalls, swim amongst the thousands of tropical fish living on the coral reefs or just stop at an empty bay and dine ashore in a fine resort.

The company is run by its owners, who can also assist with hotel bookings, advice on pre or post charter trips in the region,

transport, etc. All of their yachts are kept in tip top condition and are equipped with all the safety equipment you would find on a coastal cruiser.

Sunsail Thailand

www.sunsailasia.com

Fleet: sailing monohulls and multihulls

A Thailand yacht charter from one of Sunsail's three bases, Koh Chang, Koh Samui or Phuket, opens up a world of adventure on the water. You can sail through giant limestone islands, anchor off deserted beaches and moor up in tranquil fishing villages, all untouched and undeveloped.

Singapore

Lloyd Marine

www.lloydmarine.com.sg

Fleet: sailing monohulls and catamarans

Lloyd Marine offers luxury yacht cruises around Singapore, and island hopping adventures to the Riau Islands as well as the islands off Malaysia and Thailand. Their Singapore-based luxury

charter yachts *Asha*, *Tahnee* and *Elysium* are perfect for large groups and can accommodate up to 20 guests.

The company can arrange a sailing adventure on one of their luxury catamarans where clients can discover exotic islands, untouched beaches and sparkling turquoise waters. Sailors can enjoy swimming, sunbathing, diving, fishing, snorkelling or kayaking in pristine, secluded bays or simply sip champagne as they dine in style on the open seas.

Boatbookings.com

www.boatbookings.com

Fleet: sailing multihulls and motoryachts

Boatbookings.com mostly arranges short yacht chartering breaks, although it does also provide bareboat charters for those keen to explore the Singapore coastline or strike out to the islands on their own. Singapore is ideal for short sailing trips, either day charters around the southern islands, viewing the city skyline, or long weekends to Malaysia and Indonesia.

Focusing on luxury motoryachts, boatbookings.com allows its clients to experience luxury, high end motorboating on a charter basis. Their fleet includes vessels from world renowned brands such as Sunseeker, Azimut, Princess, Lagoon and Broward.



Photo by Nicolas Claris, supplied by Lloyd Marine

Malaysia

Dream Yacht Charter

www.dreamyachtcharter.com

Fleet: sailing monohulls and catamarans, power catamarans

Established in 2001, Dream Yacht Charter offers charter boats and cruises in Thailand as well as the Seychelles, Caribbean, Madagascar, Malaysia and throughout the Mediterranean. Their fleet is comprised mostly of sailing catamarans ranging from 38ft to 82ft, with a selection of monohulls and powered catamarans as well. Dream Yacht Charter is the exclusive partner for the Harmony boat range, and is also a partner for Catana.

Orient Charters

www.orientcharters.com

Fleet: sailing monohulls and catamarans

Orient Charters offers crewed yacht sailing holidays and charters in Langkawi (Malaysia), Thailand, Indonesia, Singapore and Merguie in Myanmar. Their range of yachts has been carefully selected to offer something different to each of their charter clients.

The fleet's flagship is the *Lady Anita*, a 89ft wooden ketch offering everything from water sports equipment to therapeutic Thai massage.

Vietnam

Windward Islands


www.windward-islands.net

Fleet: traditional monohulls, motoryachts, sailing catamaran

From their sailing base in Nha Trang, just a 40 minute flight from Ho Chi Minh City, Windward Islands operates traditional wooden Vietnamese sailing junks, modern luxury motoryachts and a sailing catamaran.

With superb sailing conditions, beautiful beaches and famous off-lying islands like Hon Tre, Hon Yen and Hon Rua, Nha Trang will not disappoint those looking for their next great sailing holiday. Surrounded by green hills, its deep-blue bay is fringed with a pristine golden-white sand beach. The best sailing period is from May to September.

The yacht charter industry in Asia has a way to go before it reaches European levels of market saturation and sophistication. Some countries lack the regulatory framework to even identify recreational yachts at all, and all vessels are simply classified as ships. Others exist in disputed or jealously protected waters. But despite its immaturity, the charter market in Asia is thriving, due in no small part to companies like those listed above, and the many more we haven't identified here.

And in the end isn't that part of the fun? Being among the first to sail the crystal waters and discover the virgin beaches. Escaping the crowded marinas and cynical tourist traps to lose yourself in the naïve, selfless charm of an undiscovered tropical paradise? What are you waiting for? it's all just a few hours away. 



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Photo by Rolex and Daniel Forster



get tactical

An introduction to keelboat racing tactics

Yacht racing is a collection of different disciplines, each of which must be mastered and constantly honed to produce race-winning results. In this article we will look at three key aspects – Starting, Steering and Crew Management.

On your marks...

Start line tactics begin well before the race, and don't just involve determining where to cross the line and how to stop others from claiming your perfect spot.

The start line consists of the committee boat and an Outer Distance Marker, or ODM. These can be set at right angles to the wind, or with the ODM offset either towards or away from the wind. When the start line is offset it is said to have a 'bias'. This means that one end is closer to the Windward Mark (WM), which cuts down the distance and therefore the time spent sailing to the WM (Figure 1).

The distance between the committee boat and the ODM is set by the Race Officer (RO). A shorter line reduces the effect of Start Line Bias and a longer one increases it, as well as either bunching the boats together for a more technical, dogfight of a start, or spreading them out for a faster, more open start (Figures 2A & 2B).

The easiest way to find the Start Line Bias is to point your boat into the wind somewhere along the start line and, with your headsail flapping on the centreline, whichever marker your boat is pointing towards is the favoured end (Figure 3).

Your number one priority is to arrive on the start line as (or slightly after) the gun fires, carrying as much speed as possible. In order to do this, you need to know exactly where the start line is. This comes from sailing up and down it a few times before the race. Take rough bearings as you approach the line to give you an indication of distances and your own speed. The ability to judge distances is critical to getting a good start.



The best way to find an open space on the start line is a port-tack approach. On a port tack you're sailing against the grain because the majority of boats will be on a starboard tack before the start. On this path you can observe the entire line, not just your immediate area, looking for open spaces. By sailing against the fleet on a port tack, more spaces will become available as you are not caught in a starboard-tack traffic jam (Figure 4).

On this approach, spot your gap and move into the space, tacking underneath a starboard tack vessel and briefly luffing to develop more space to leeward. This will be your wind hole, allowing you to accelerate when the time comes. If nearby boats try to poach your hole, you must fight to protect it. Typically, boats try to steal your hole in one of two ways: They come from behind on starboard, or use the above port-tack approach.

It's easy to get involved with the boat to windward and lose sight of others approaching, but you have to keep a vigilant watch and be aware of your surroundings. If time is running down and no one is coming to steal your hole, it's now just a matter of accelerating and having a clear idea of the countdown time and distance to the start line.

Once you are happy with your timing and distance judgement in relation to where the line is, getting a good start is really about finding and defending a position that allows you to execute your skills.

Get Set...

The rules controlling marker roundings are many and complicated, and there are often many factors at play. Mastering this perennial source of collisions and protests can seem daunting, but once achieved will open up a whole new world of strategic sailing.

Skippers must know the rules regarding behaviour at course markers. The International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea, or ColRegs, trump any other instructions. During a race there are times when boats will converge onto a very small piece of the ocean, i.e. start and finish lines and marker roundings. You must always be aware of the boats around you and who has Right of Way, especially as boats change positions, overlap each other and change tacks.

As for actual roundings, the idea is to go into the turn wide and come out of it tight, on the optimum heading for the next leg of the race. This is easily remembered as Wide In, Tight Out or WITO. Aim for a point about a boat length off the mark and then tighten up around the mark, coming as close as possible without hitting it (a 360 penalty turn will negate any benefit from a slick approach).

Go!

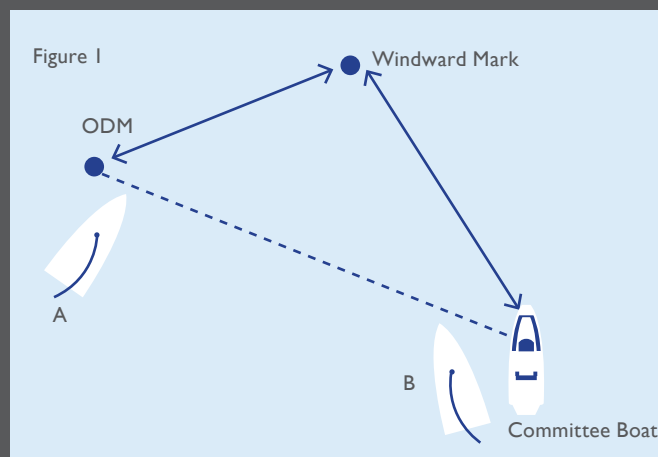
The smooth operation of your boat is essential to good performance, and having each crew member know their role on



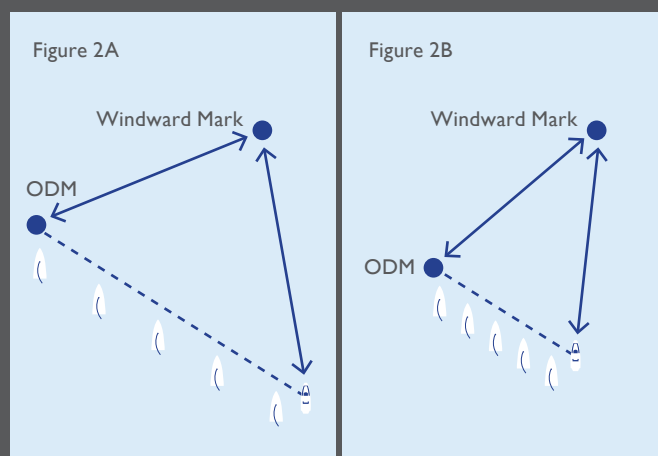
board is vital. A quick rundown of the traditional roles in a race crew will serve as a starting point for assessing your own crew.

On larger boats there will be more crew and more specialised positions or roles, however, the following is a good start for most small- to mid-sized race boats. For the gender sensitive, we are using traditional names for these jobs – no sexist bias is inferred or intended.

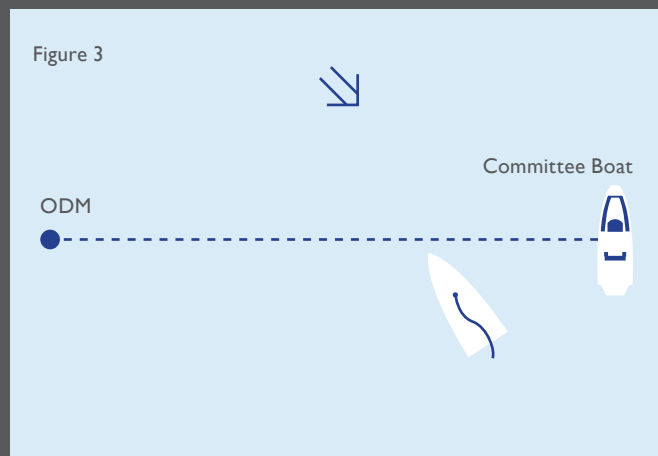
- **Helmsman** – Calls tacks, gybes and steers the boat; is responsible for developing and revising race strategy; monitors weather and boat instruments.
- **Mainsail Trimmer** – Trims mainsail for the best speed; communicates constantly with the headsail trimmer and helmsman to keep both sails in the same trim mode; maintains a balanced sail plan; and keeps the boat going on the right heading and speed.
- **Headsail Trimmer** – Adjusts headsails for the best possible boat speed; communicates directly with helmsman about speed and height, the pressure in the sail, and the location of nearby marks and other boats.
- **Tailer** – Tails new jib sheet during the tacks; trims guy downwind and backs up headsail trimmer; and calls approaching breeze upwind.
- **Cockpit** – Adjusts halyards, spinnaker pole settings, and some sail settings; calls time to the start; adjusts settings such as the



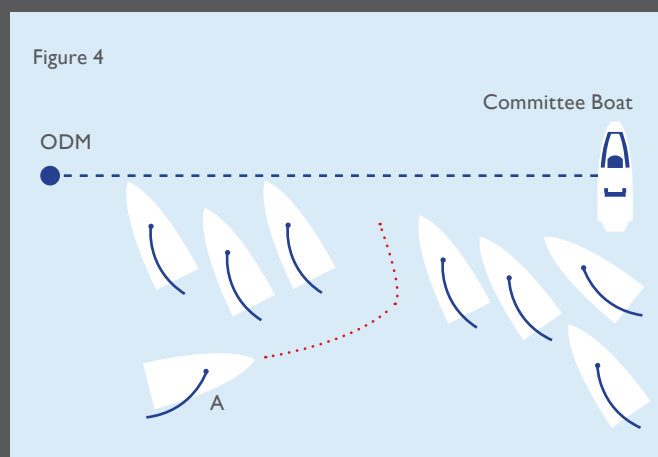
A has shorter run to mark. B has right of way in a collision situation.



Biased towards ODM or pin end. A shorter line reduces the effect.



Sails flapping on centerline, bow points to biased or favoured end.



A approaches on port looking for a gap to tack into.



vang, outhaul, or jib halyard; assists Trimmers by helping to keep the cockpit lines clear; organizes boat's interior, and retrieves and stows sails; works directly with Bowman, Mastman and Trimmers to affect manoeuvres, sail changes, and sail trim.

- **Mastman** – Pulls (sweats) all halyards at the mast to raise the sails; assists Bowman with headsail changes, spinnaker sets, gybes, and douses; and helps manoeuvre spinnaker pole.

- **Bowman** – Changes headsails; connects, sets, gybes, and douses the spinnaker; calls starting line, waves, and other boats; and climbs rig for tuning and repairs.

Boat optimising

Tactical boat racing begins well before the starting sequence. Optimising your boat will give you better boat speed and mark you out as a serious racer. Start forward and, working aft, remove anything not required by the race rules. Off come the niceties like roller furlers to save weight, especially high up the mast. Keep the remaining weight as close as possible to the middle of the boat to minimise seesawing. Should you need to add equipment, you should aim to create a net loss, i.e. for every 1kg of safety or navigation gear you add, try to remove 1.5kgs of something else. But race prep doesn't stop there. Even boats stripped bare can still be given a boost.

The trick is to use minimum gear to maximum effect, for example, permanently splicing Genoa sheets to the sail will remove the weight of snap shackles, reduce the risk of injury from a flogging clew should the sheet snap, and minimises the chance of shackles or bulky knots catching on the rigging while tacking. Another common practice is to strip the UV cover off the working end of the halyards to reduce the weight aloft –

just remember to use a messenger line clipped to the shackle and pull the line into the mast when not in use to prevent UV degradation. Also, make sure the cover is securely stitched and whipped to the line where it encounters clutches and winches. Check the rules for the minimum gear allowable in your class and look for ways to multitask equipment.

The way you use your boat can also affect performance. Learn to steer the boat with its sails as much as possible (just a little weather helm to keep feedback from the water going to the helmsman is ideal), as excessive rudder use causes drag and reduces speed. Mounting the instruments on the mast allows for better visibility from anywhere in the cockpit and helps keep the crew engaged and thinking about how to get the boat going faster. Spinnaker sheets can be led straight to ratchet blocks on the toe rail to keep winches free for pre-loading when rounding a leeward mark.

The possibilities for optimising your boat are endless, and while the internet is a good place to start looking for inspiration, nothing can replace experimentation on your own boat.

I hope the hints, tips and tricks above have whetted your appetite for more effectively racing your sailboat. From here on in, the sky is the limit. Chandlerys are full of books written on subjects as diverse as sail trim and rig optimisation to race skippering and the racing rules of sailing. Or, if the internet is more your style, there are countless sites offering advice and tips to further your knowledge, with the usual caveat that you should view everything online with care and more than a pinch of scepticism. Use your best judgement and assess what might work on your boat and what probably won't. Then get out there and try it – after all, what have you got to lose? **H**

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Aberdeen Boat Club 香港仔遊艇會

Peter, Louis, Justin and Lars training for the worlds




THE HONG KONG SEA-AIR LOGISTICS RS500 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP TEAM 15 – 19 August 2011

Words and photo by Kevin Lewis

ABC acquired our RS500 Dinghy in 2008 and since then we have been developing High Performance sail training, led by our club Coach, Rory Goodman. Two ABC sailors, Justin Tse and Will Stephens took part in the first-ever RS500 World Championships in 2010 and this year four of our sailors will take part, together with one each from RHKYC and HHYC. Supported by ABC and sponsored by Sea-Air logistics, all six sailors will travel to the World Championships at Weymouth, with Coach Rory, from 15 to 19 August. This is the first time in recent years that a team, largely from ABC, has travelled to a significant overseas championship, and thanks must be made to our sponsors, as well as ABC, for facilitating and supporting the exciting venture.

ABC sailors taking part include 15 year old Peter Simpson, who has been sailing for eight years and has had significant success in the RS Feva class, Louis Bon-Smith who is 17 and has sailed dinghies and keelboats competitively for the last three years, Justin Tse who competed in last years Worlds and has been sailing for the last 8 years, and Lars Schkade, also a

member of RHKYC, who joined ABC to train in the RS500 and has competed in the Laser 4.7 Class Europeans and World Championships. These sailors are joined by experienced RS500 sailor Will Stephens from RHKYC, who helped in last year's Worlds to finish 14th overall, and HHYC's Cosmas Grelon, former Hong Kong Optimist National Champion who finished 33rd in the 2010 Optimist World Championships.

To allow members to follow the progress of the team, a dedicated web page on the ABC web site has been set up, together with a Facebook Page that will include regular updates, photos and videos from the team and Coach Rory. Look on www.abclubhk.com under "Dinghy" and go to the "RS500 Team" page. 



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Aberdeen Boat Club 香港仔遊艇會



OCEAN FRIENDLY SEAFOOD PROMOTION

For reservations please call the Coffee Shop on 2554 9494

Last month in Horizons, we talked about our effort to become a greener club over the next few months and years. The actions we have taken are not only based on recycling and reducing our carbon emissions, but also involve being more thoughtful in the choices of food we serve.

Marcus Shaw, former Hong Kong WWF chairman and president, demonstrated last month at the International Asian Club Managers Conference that if nothing is done to control the depleting of fish stocks in the world's oceans, then by 2048 there will simply be no fish left.

Not only does this mean the death of an industry providing jobs for millions of people, but also the destruction of the only means of survival on some remote islands.

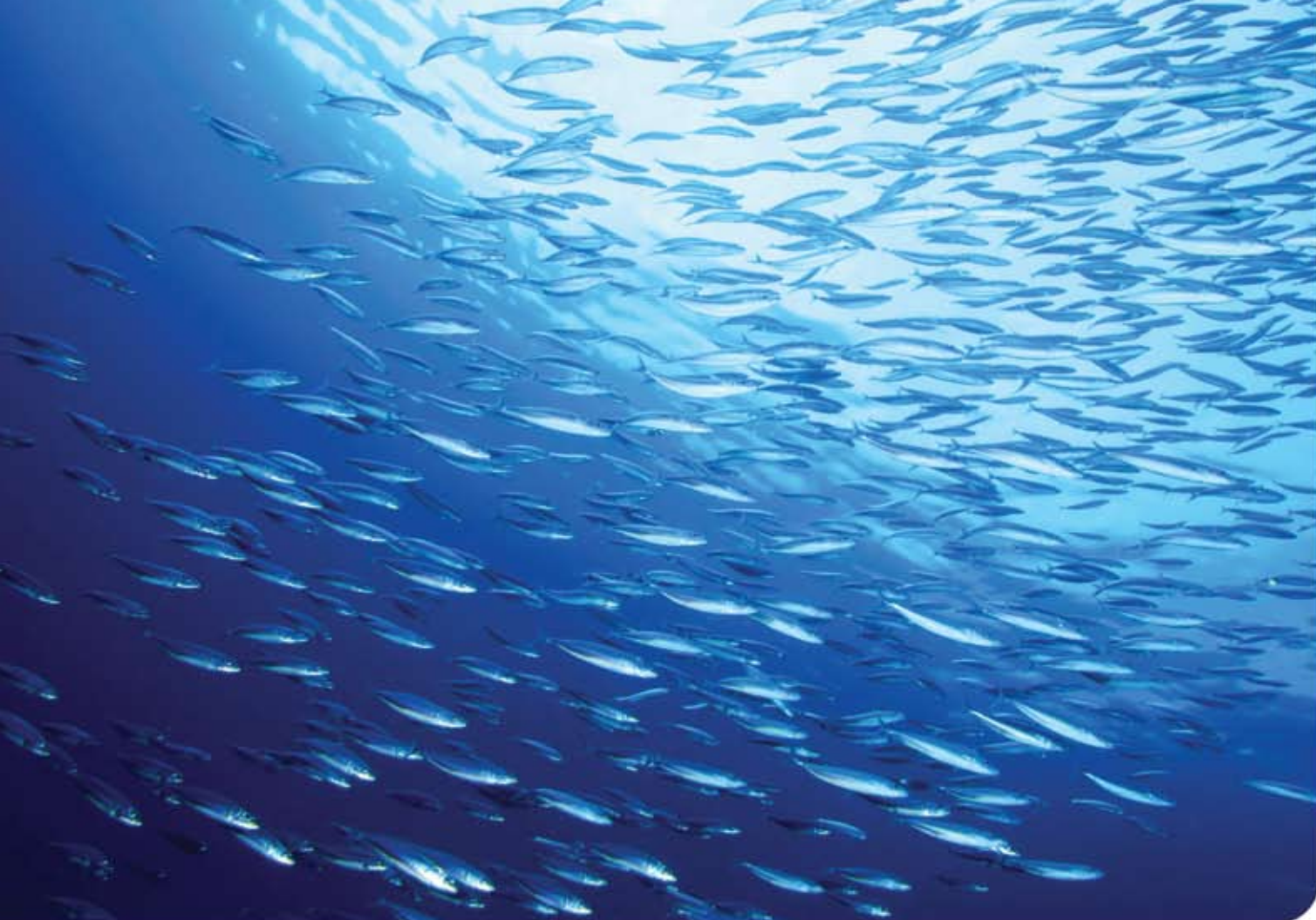
So, for the next month ABC will offer an Ocean Friendly Seafood Menu, approved by the WWF. The seafood

menu prepared by our Chef has been selected from the species of fish recognised as sustainable and listed on the WWF seafood guide. This guide will be available at the club for the duration of the promotion. Having the guide with you when visiting a restaurant

or doing your shopping will help you to choose a fish or crustacean not in danger of extinction, and will contribute to protecting the supply of seafood for future generations.

Bon appetit. -H-





SUSTAINABLE SEAFOOD PROMOTION

in cooperation with wwf.org.hk

Global and local marine fisheries are putting pressure on the marine environment, but your choice can make a difference! When you dine at the Aberdeen Boat Club you can now choose from our sustainable seafood menu. This menu chooses sustainable seafood according to WWF-Hong Kong's Seafood Guide.

Twins Soup wild caught East Australia lobster soup and wild caught South China sea urchin soup \$58

South China Squid Cocktail romaine lettuce and spicy tomato salsa \$68

Seafood Salad Dutch mussels, farmed South China clams, farmed South China scallops \$78

Pan-fried Portuguese Sardine with capers, olives and anchovies \$118

Roasted North American Black Cod served in a herb crust with tarragon mousseline sauce and grilled vegetables \$138

Steamed Australian Scallops with garlic two ways \$108

Poached Pacific Salmon (Alaska, US) Dumpling with Chinese spinach and saffron cream sauce \$128

Pan-fried Farmed Jade Perch (Hong Kong) with pesto angel hair \$138

Boston Lobster (Canada) poached, grilled, thermidor \$298



MEET THE MEMBERS

Find out who you are rubbing shoulders with



Diana and Patrick Bruce
Members

ABC members since 1992, Patrick and Diana sail frequently and are regular badminton players. Patrick has an architectural/design practice and Diana is a part-time court reporter, part-time secretary to two professional organisations and part-time voice artist. They have a daughter and a son, and are now proud grandparents to a delightful little grandson.

Patrick has vivid memories of his father and uncle building a dinghy to sail on the "Pink Pan" saltpan in Oranjemund on the Skeleton Coast of what used to be South West Africa, now Namibia. On the other hand, Diana's (equally) vivid memories of sailing as a small child in the UK are of being excruciatingly cold and wet.

Fast forward to 1994 and they bought their first boat, a GRP Enterprise dinghy. This was followed by an old ex-Club Phase II. The couple currently owns *Ragamuffin*, a 28' Taipan, built the year they were married so it's easy for Patrick to remember how long he's been happy, and a wooden Enterprise dinghy.



Tsui Kam Tak, Andy
Restaurant Manager

Trilingual Andy has been a mainstay of the ABC's food & beverage division for nearly two years. His duties include manpower and menu planning, training, stock control, and operational and project control.

Known for his friendly manner and consummate professionalism, members with young children have Andy to thank for untold numbers of sugar rushes and brain freezes. He is always ready to go beyond the call of duty for a parent or club member in need, and most of us have a story of how Andy has come to our aid in some way.

Andy is a devout Buddhist and volunteers his time at the Hong Kong Buddhists Association in Lockhart Road. He came to the ABC via several local restaurants and a long stint at the Hong Kong Cricket Club. His CV contains an impressive list of honours and accomplishments, and he continues to add to these at every opportunity.



Henry Lam
Captain Waiter

One of the freshest new recruits to the ABC family, Henry Lam is already making a great impression. Described by one prominent, long serving ABC staffer as a 'dynamic young man', Henry has shown a remarkable ability to quickly assimilate the culture at the ABC and to begin carving out a niche for himself.

He wants to learn to sail, if the opportunity presents itself, but for now he will keep himself busy in his spare time playing football and basketball. He is already halfway there as his favourite tippie is a pint of Carlsberg, assuring him of a crew place on many ABC boats!

Henry lived in Australia for six years where he travelled and studied. He says the best part of his new job is meeting and getting to know club members from all around the world. Welcome to the ABC Henry, it's good to have you on board.





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LIVE COOKING STATION

Date: Every Sunday Lunch Time

Time: 12noon to 2:30pm

Venue: The Patio

Wok Fired Noodles with Salad Bar \$80

Only Wok Fried Noodles \$58

Noodles: Rice Noodle (Ho Fan), Rice Vermicelli and Egg Noodle

Choice of ingredients: Beef, Chicken, Squid, Shrimps, Ham, Bean

Sprouts, Spring Onion and Egg



Aberdeen Boat Club 香港仔遊艇會



BEER OF THE MONTH



Leffe Brun Beer

\$22/Bottle



Aberdeen Boat Club 香港仔遊艇會



“Here lies the body of Johnny O’Day
Who died preserving his Right of Way.
He was right, dead right, as he sailed along,
But he’s just as dead as if he’d been wrong!”

PUGWASH

A shocking introduction to sailing

I had never sailed before but was excited to be involved in a race to Macau. The weather had been dreadful with squalls throwing us around quite a bit, and a few of us on board were feeling quite seasick. But that was the least of our worries as we sailed into Victoria Harbour and the worst case scenario played out like a really bad movie. First, the skipper who had come forward of the wheel for the first time all trip was hit by the mainsheet during a crash gybe. He was thrown off his feet and went headfirst into a winch, splitting his skull open.

Onto the radio and before long, although with the adrenaline pumping it felt like ages, the rescue services arrived and lifted the casualty off the boat. So there we were, an inexperienced crew, in foul weather at night, in the middle of one of the world’s busiest waterways. It was then that the lightning began to flash across the sky.

We made the decision to drop sail and head for Tsing Ma Bridge to put something over the top of the boat – lightening always strikes the closest thing right? Not always, as we found out when our mast was hit just as we went under the bridge. I remember something hissing, boiling the water a few metres off the boat which I later discovered was the top foot of the mast. The electronic navigation instruments were fried, the radio was fried, the navigation lights were fried, the engine electrics were fried but being a diesel she kept on running albeit a bit on fire, and there were no lights down below.

Fighting a fire by torchlight is no easy task, but it’s better than fighting one in the dark. After we stopped the burning it was time to check the through hull fittings for damage to make sure we weren’t sinking. With the sails out of action due to the still smouldering mast we limped through to the RHKYC and

safety, willing the damaged and burnt engine not to quit on us. It never did.

I guess the moral of the story is this, never forget that just when things can’t possibly get any worse, they can. On the bright side, when the medics were scanning the skipper’s brain they found an undiagnosed tumour. He was successfully treated and is alive today. WK

This issues honourable mentions – P3’s own Jo Allum and David Tait, both injured in boat related accidents. David slipped while hauling in his boat’s anchor and fell onto a winch (ouch), and Jo was sliced open on an exposed screw fixing while slipping over the side of a small boat for a swim (argh). Time for a boat safety article methinks.



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