



FOUR PEAKS Race



Rounding the windward mark (above) and tumbling in the Cheung Sha Beach surf (right)

H

ong Kong's 30th Four Peaks Race attracted a record 35 entries, all of which turned up in Tai Tam Bay on a sparkling Saturday morning, the 18th of January 2014. It

couldn't have been better for the mixed fleet of monohulls and one multi — 10 knots of northeasterly breeze, gusting

15, down the surrounding hills and through the Beaufort Channel.

Division A got away at 1000 followed, five minutes

later, by Div B. What a sight! Powered up, all keen, with *Mojito* in front of the

pack, heading for a windward mark before cracking off and out to Cape d'Aguilar for the faster boats. The B fleet headed for Shek Kwu Chau and their course which took in Lantau Peak, Mt Stenhouse, Violet Hill and finally Peak 300. The Div A boats, did the more traditional Ma On Shan, Violet Hill, Lantau course, ending with the ever-challenging ascent of Stenhouse on Lamma Island.

Vineta's runners led the way up Ma On Shan but *Wicked's* pair were the quickest in 1 hour, 27 minutes and 20 seconds. *Wicked* had had a late start but steadily gained ground throughout the race.

Then the race began to slow for both Div A and B, but not enough to stop *Vineta* releasing its runners for Violet Hill at 6.30pm.

Lantau Peak, at 934 metres, is a formidable climb for even the most experienced runners but, probably more of a challenge is the wretched surf at Cheung Sha Beach. Year after year it catches the unwary and 2014 was no exception with the B fleet arriving late Saturday afternoon and many runners struggling through the shore break.

With the Div A boats arriving around midnight, peak control on Lantau had plenty to do. All in the dark!

Having collected their runners, the faster boats picked their way across the West Lamma Channel for Lamma Island. Runners of *Vineta*, the Marten 49, were paddling ashore at 3.00am, skipper Helmuth Hennig among them.

In Div B, things were looking good for Stephen Davies and crew on the *J/80*, *FG3*. Davies is the founder of the Four Peaks Race and it is fitting that he went on to take line honours in 21 hours, 1 minute and 15 seconds. *FG3* also won the *J/80* division while *Ragamuffin* deservedly took HKPN

The northeasterly returned on Sunday morning, 19th of January, and *Vineta*

crossed the line just before sunrise (5:25:26). IRC winner was consistent campaigner, *Whiskey Jack*.

Once again, a magnificent effort by all — some 250 participants and countless volunteers on the peaks, on the water and back at the Aberdeen Boat Club. A prizegiving was held the following Friday (24th of January) on the patio of the ABC and prizewinners, competitors, friends and families enjoyed a superb curry buffet and photo presentation by *Fragrant Harbour*. Very noticeable among the happy throng was the number of languages being spoken — Italian, Dutch, French, Cantonese, Tagalog, English, German, Polish — 'international' indeed!



Scintilla heads out past Cape d'Aguilar

