

FRAGRANT HARBOUR

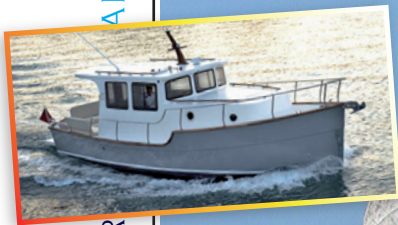
Year 2017

HK\$40 • P240 • Bt160 • S\$8 • MR16 • Rp50000

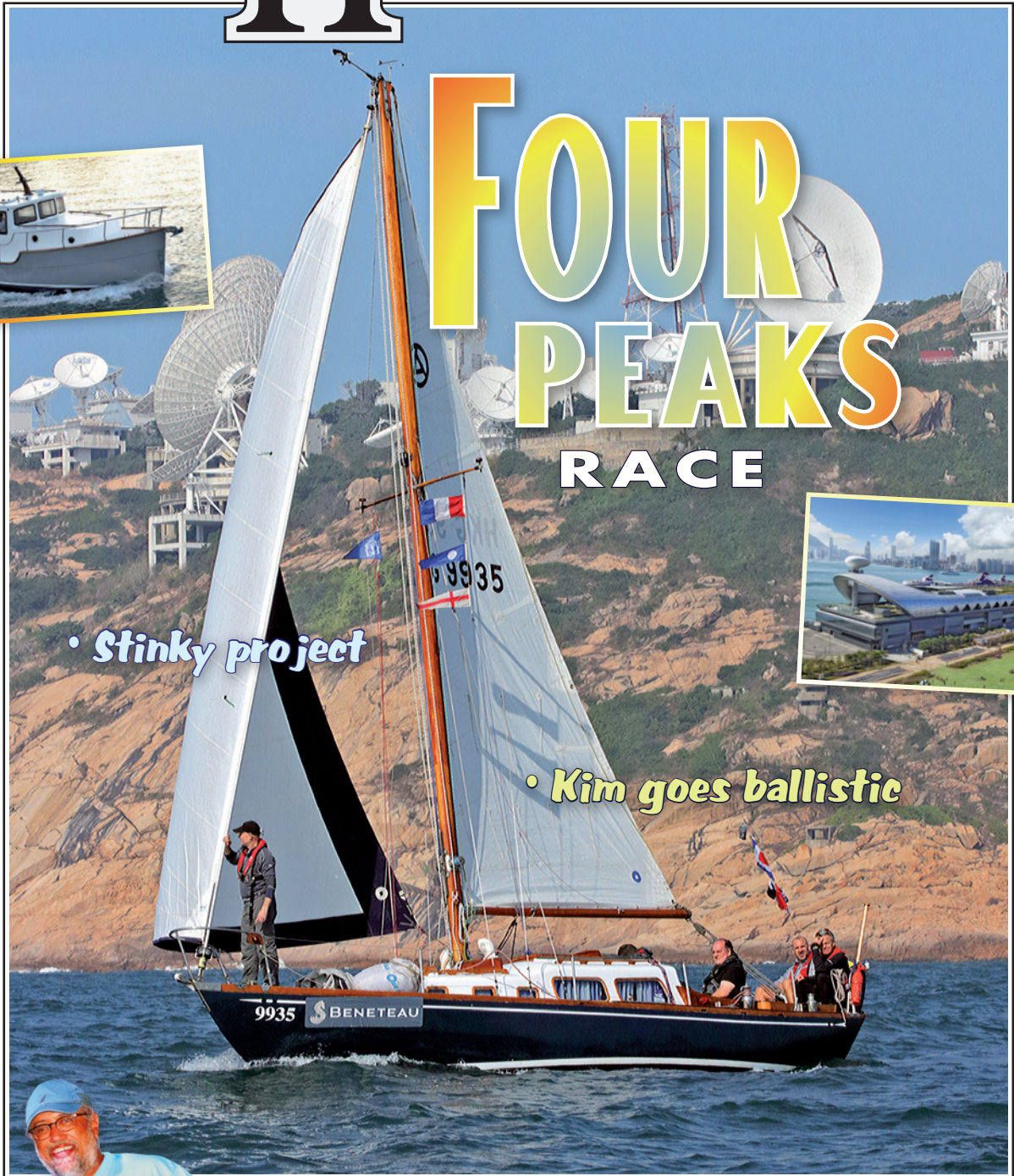


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ARRIVES



NORTH AEGEAN TRAWLER



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RajaMuda & King's Cup



The Beneteau Four Peaks Race was held over the weekend 21st and 22nd of January 2017. Racing got underway on Saturday at 1000 with Division A IRC and HKPN heading for a short windward mark, and then on to Waglan Island. Division B HKPN started five minutes later.

Winds were about 6 knots so, from the outset, it was a tactical race for the 21 starters, despite the Observatory's prediction of Force 4 to 5 for the two days.

Well in the lead heading out of the Beaufort Channel (Sheung Sze Mun) was *Ambush*, with race chairman Tristan Stewart on board, lending his valuable Four Peaks Race experience as tactician.

Around Waglan, outside Po Toi and under Cheung Chau, it was a run to Cheung Sha Beach and the first peak — Lantau. Tactics

again came into play as the boats watched each other, and tried to stay out of 'holes'. On *Daydream*, sailor and tactician Olivier Decamps reported there was a good atmosphere despite flopping about leaving Lantau. "We got caught for about two to three hours. It was very frustrating," said Decamps.

"We then made for Lamma and dropped our runners near the power station, then picked them up on the other side of the island," said Decamps. From there it was on to Violet Hill and finally up to Sai Kung and the ascent of Ma On Shan . . . almost to the top.

Jon Zinke, who has manned the peak control on Ma On Shan for some 14 years,

said, "... we basically had to stay on the Maclehose Trail. Same thing last year. Even though the ABC applied a long time ago, we couldn't get permission to go to the top as they don't want the trails worn down. We had to stay on the saddle about 100 metres below the peak. Worse, during the night, we could hear people climbing the peak, even individual runners.

"We got our first runner at about 0420 in the morning and the last at about 1145 on Sunday," said Zinke.

Although into its 33rd year, and a very established race, it still takes as many as 70 volunteers, all told, to make it happen.

Further, many of these volunteers return year after year and there's something very re-assuring when phoning race control at the ABC and a cheerful Diana Bruce knows what answer to give.

Said Decamps, "... coming in to Sai Kung, we came very close, released our inflatable kayak about five metres from the wall and it worked well. When the runners returned, we lifted the kite and got out of Port Shelter but the final stretch to Middle Island was painful. We finished on Sunday at 13:47:58.

Jon Cannon, owner of *Tolo*, said they had a slow start but their speed increased during the run to Lantau. "After picking up Elaine Morgan from the other side of Lamma, we made up more time, before rounding Chesterman Buoy and going in to Stanley.

"No holes for us going up to Sai Kung and, we were nine seconds off winning Ma On Shan! To our advantage, we had Stephen Davies, the father of the Four Peaks, on board who helped enormously with tactics."

Cannon likes changes and having a

different course every year. "But I would like to see much bigger drop zones. For example, why not just put a ring around Lamma and be done with it? Also, I don't see why Chesterman is necessary. The freer the race, the more tactical it is. If you have too many restrictions, it takes out some of the challenge."

Red Kite II won IRC Division A, *Scintilla* took HKPN Division A and *Ragamuffin* emerged victorious in HKPN Division B. The prizegiving was held at the Aberdeen Boat Club on the 27th of February 2017. Steve Hilton, who features in *Ragamuffin* on our cover this issue, acted as MC and the crowd enjoyed the excellent hospitality of the ABC.

The Four Peaks Race has a character of its own and has, in the past, attracted large fleets — there were 40 entries in 2015. It is also a *local* race, even though there are many nationalities that participate — we've heard eight languages at a Four Peaks prizegiving! No need then, and in our opinion, to glamorise it with the trappings of 'internationalism'. Besides, local knowledge is important in an event of this nature. There are plenty more local boats and runners who could be enticed — just requires a more co-ordinated and concentrated marketing campaign.

Go for it, ABC.



Daydream (left) and happy crew on Scintilla (below right)



Four Peaks RACE