



LIMITLESS

DECEMBER 2023

ISSUE NO. 1



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WORDS OF WELCOME

A huge welcome from Kay Rawbone BEM, Co-founder & CEO, Sailability Hong Kong Limited, to our first newsletter.



Without this help Sailability Hong Kong would not be what it is today and of that we must ALL be very proud.

In this, our first issue, we'll be sharing the news from key events, updating you on hot topics and telling the stories of our amazing sailors and volunteers. You can also find information on different aspects of Sailability's operations, for existing and potential new sailors and their families, volunteers, and sponsors.

What we offer to our community is 'more than sailing'. Why not come and see us, 'seeing is believing' and together we will continue to 'Make Sailing Accessible to EVERYONE'.

I hope you enjoy your read as you learn more about what we do and the lives we change.

Sailability today was born from a project initiated in 2009, with my late husband Mike, of introducing Sailability to Hebe Haven Yacht Club and Hong Kong, whilst using our joint knowledge and experience of sailing and SEN young adults, we are now one of the biggest and best in the world and recognised by many as a life changer.

I was delighted to take over the role CEO in 2018 as myself, along with Directors and many others continue our dream to **'Make Sailing Accessible to EVERYONE'**.

As we begin our 15th year of Sailability in Hong Kong we wanted to mark this milestone by sharing stories old and new to celebrate the growth of the charity and the achievements of our sailors, whilst also reaching out more to our donors, sponsors and supporters who have given so much.



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*Our best wishes to you ALL
from ALL of US,
for a Happy Christmas and
a Healthy and Prosperous New Year!*

SAILABILITY SPOTLIGHT

Tiring, Exhilarating, and Fun!

By Sean Purdie, Alison Cook, and Andrew Sheard



In October Sailability took part in the Hansa World Championships in Portimão, Portugal, including physically and intellectually disabled sailors plus a support personnel of parents, helpers, and coaches the team numbered 9 sailors, 1 coach and 6 helpers.

Sean Purdie and Alison Cook travelled with Sean's son Leo Purdie and saw a sailing Championship up close for the first time. Leo has autism, has competed in the 24-hour Charity Race and Barts Bash and often sails with Sailability on Saturdays.

On returning to Hong Kong, they penned a thank you letter, describing their experiences in Portimão and laying out clearly the positive impact that taking part in a major international sailing event had on their son:



"Dear Sailability Hong Kong,

We would like to thank your organisation for facilitating Leo's participation in the Hansa World Championships in Portimão in October 2023.

Leo benefited immeasurably from the week (as well as from his Europe holiday either side of the event!). The challenges he overcame during the actual sailing have boosted his self-confidence hugely; the sailors at times faced very difficult weather conditions, with high waves that Leo and his sailing partner Joel had previously not encountered in Hong Kong.

Even with sailing during heavy rain, and water collecting in his boat, Leo was willing to repeat races in such conditions. And despite becoming physically tired over the course of the week, he remained happy and eager to sail in every race possible. Moreover, he understood very well the purpose of the races and was keen to perform to his very best.

The championships as a whole were fully inclusive, and Leo further benefited from competing with sailors of very varying physical and mental abilities, as well as those with no such handicap.

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He appeared to understand that he was sharing the experience with those with greater challenges than his own, and that other sailors have also overcome tremendous barriers to participating in the sport. Certainly, as supporters, it was incredibly humbling to see competitors who were quadriplegic, paraplegic, blind and missing limbs.

Aside from the actual racing, the event as a whole was a wonderful experience for Leo. The camaraderie amongst the sailors and their support teams from various countries was great to be a part of. Each morning there was an interactive whole group meeting in which the day's races were discussed and any questions answered. The Hong Kong contingent then conducted their own meeting, from which Leo and Joel benefited greatly from the technical knowledge and experience of both Ed and Kay.

Each evening, the tired but exhilarated sailors and their support network joined in a fun social event, ranging from Karaoke to live bands with wheelchair dancing. The coming together of people with differing needs and languages (or no language) was a new experience for Leo, and one that will be very memorable as he looks back on all the photos of the week. Not only did Leo's sailing skills and self-esteem increase from all the races and expert support, he benefited from this very inclusive social experience.

Lastly, immense thanks must be given to both Kay and Ed, without whom Sailability Hong Kong could not have been represented in Portimão. They ensured everything ran smoothly, despite last minute changes due to weather conditions etc, and were available 24/7 with updates and to answer our queries. Thank you does not do them justice!

We very much hope that there will be future world sailing competitions in which Leo can participate, as the growth we have noted in him since Portimão is wonderful.

*Yours faithfully,
Sean Purdie and Alison Cook”*



All those taking part gained a huge amount from sailing in an international championship, some for the first time.

FOO Yuen Wai led the performances by the HK sailors coming 28th out of 87 in the Hansa 303 singles, in the final race of the Championship finishing in 6th place.



The Hong Kong, China team competed in the Hansa 303 singles and doubles event.

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SPONSOR RECOGNITION

Sponsor/Donor/Volunteer - Thank You

*I wanted to take a moment to say a **huge thank you to ALL our sponsors, donors and volunteers** over the years who have supported us and continue to do so, enabling Sailability Hong Kong to become what we are today; one of the best and diverse Sailability's globally.*

Sponsors and supporters play very different roles within Sailability Hong Kong. They sponsor our boats and their maintenance without which we wouldn't have any programmes.

They sponsor programmes for our sailors with many life challenges, from 7yrs to 92yrs, to be able to sail and experience the therapeutic effects of being on the water. They assist with running costs, events, t-shirts/kit for international competitions plus many miscellaneous items we may need.

They sponsor their time as volunteers in many, many roles which helps us enormously with our ever-evolving programmes and our outreach into our diverse community.

*Your continued support is appreciated by us ALL and without YOU we wouldn't be able to do what we do today as we continue to **'Make Sailing Accessible to EVERYONE'**.*

Thank You! (Kay Rawbone, CEO)

How YOU can Help us Going Forward – our 2024 Wish List:

**New Hansa 303s as many of our boats are 14yrs old and in constant use,
sails – continued usage in our climate reduces their life expectancy:
running costs,
insurance costs,
ongoing maintenance costs,
specific course costs,
volunteer training to include disability awareness,
race team clothing,
overseas participation for sailors of all abilities.**

MoHan (Limitless)



In July 2022, Sailability were donated this 40' Solaris by the **LI Ka Shing Foundation**.

The boat, which is maintained by members of Hong Kong's Solarista Club, enables Sailability HK to play a bigger role within the Hong Kong sailing community.

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VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Never Too Late

By Andrew Sheard

Ah Kai or to use his full name **CHAN Cheuk-kai**, is one of Sailability's busiest volunteers, having sailed on more than 30 days in October and November! Not only is he busy, he is also one of our most "senior" volunteers.



Ah Kai recounted that, *"One day we were sailing in Hansa's, and it was very windy so the boats were heeling a lot, much more than usual. I got soaked! What I didn't realise was that not only was I getting wet, but my mobile phone was getting wet too."*

"When we got back to shore, with the boats stored away safely, I discovered that my phone wouldn't work and I had to replace it. That was quite a memorable day for me! Some of my favourite moments have been when one of the instructors, like Jesse (Lam), have told me I'm making good progress."

Always keen to learn, Ah Kai is now progressing from Hansa 303's to sailing a Hansa Liberty.

So, it's never too late to learn, and never too late to start something new.

In October 2022 Ah Kai joined a group from the Sham Shui Po Kai Fong Association which had arranged a day sailing at HHYC with Sailability. Ah Kai enjoyed it so much, he kept coming back and joined Sailability as a volunteer.

He had no experience of sailing prior to this, meaning he literally started sailing at the age of 76! He's learned how to sail a dinghy, he can rig a boat, and he loves helping others. Although he's only been sailing just over a year there are many people on Sailability programmes with less experience than he now has.

"I've learned a lot from the instructors", said Ah Kai, "and have made many friends during the last year with Sailability. There is a good mood among the people here, it feels great to be involved."



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And whisper it quietly, **in a few days' time it will be Ah Kai's 78th birthday!**

Acknowledgement: Benson Tang

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UPCOMING EVENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Saturday Sailing

Our longest running programme continues with up to 14+ sailors with different needs joining each week. We operate 2 sessions during the day with some of our long serving sailors staying for the 2 sessions. Many are very competent on the water and can handle our boats alone or to assist someone with lesser skills. They can also accompany new visitors to Sailability to show the abilities of the sailors joining our sailing programmes.



Seeing is believing!! Andrew, a member and one of our volunteers asked 'Is November the best time of year for sailing in Hong Kong?'

Well, it certainly seemed so with our Hansa 303s out on the water with their colourful sails against the blue sky. As a group, have been out making good use of the excellent conditions.

Accompanied by instructors in safety boats, they sailed to waters near the university and then with the winds in their sails, returned safely to the club.

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PROGRAMME WRITE-UPS

24hr Charity Dinghy Race 2023 - Volunteers did us proud!!



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A huge thank you to **Hebe Haven Yacht Club** for the donation received this year – it really is appreciated and helps us to change the lives of more people through sailing, a sport many thought they would never have the opportunity to experience.

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This was the first year since 2004 that I was not able to attend the race due to supporting sailors at the Hansa World's in Portugal. However, with Sailability Volunteers, Instructors and Coaches we were once again able to show what great spirit and teamwork Sailability Hong Kong has. From cleaning and maintaining boats ready for the race, Senior Sailing Programmes producing red and yellow rabbits for the event to represent the theme colours, the lanterns on the boats at the entrance to the village and around our stall, and of course for the tidy up at the end of the weekend. **Thank you to EVERYONE.** Whilst in Portugal we had regular updates on the event and lots of photos so we did feel part of it as we got ready for our racing to begin on 16th October.

A huge **thank you** from me personally to our amazing **Team Leader, Paul Wu**, a volunteer, who ensured all went smoothly and that everyone had a good time. A prime example of the dedication and commitment shown by our volunteers to Sailability. As I always say, Sailability would not be what it is today without our volunteers!!!!

Kay Rawbone CEO

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AROUND THE ISLAND RACE

29TH OCTOBER 2023

Congratulations to MoHan and her crew, skippered by **volunteer Fred Vaudaine**, who took part in the Around The Island Race on Saturday 29th October.



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218 boats of differing classes took part with entry numbers back to pre-Covid levels and with more challenging conditions than the year before.

MoHan, as always, was racing with an inclusive crew and finished 41st out of 100 in their class. **Thank you to our volunteers** who are always there to support our Para Sailors during events like this one.

COA CONSULAR DAY

4TH NOVEMBER 2023



MoHan won first prize for best dressed crew! It wasn't the blue Sailability shirts that clinched it, something more historical!

MoHan was sailing with the Cruiser Owners Association. The event was joined by six Consul-Generals and their wives from the HK diplomatic sector.

In addition to the crew winning a 1st, for their costumes, MoHan was placed second in the race.

It was another great day with lots of fun. Our Team had followed the brief for the race by dressing up, with costumes from Italy to represent Solaris from Italy and of course Hong Kong!



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TREATS

12TH NOVEMBER 2023

On 12th November 2023, TREATS held their annual “Inclusive Sailing Day” attended by a range of young people with special needs and their families. This is the 4th year of this special day which highlights the skills learned during their annual sailing programme with Sailability Hong Kong.

Participants were from three HK schools – TWGHS Tsui Ting Tong, Hong Chi Winifred Mary Cheng Morning Hope, and CCC Mongkok Church Kai Oi School.

Sailability provided 14 Hansa 303 dinghies for the races, while families viewed the action from onboard Hebe One. Overall, there were 4 races, and some of the less experienced sailors in the group initially found the wind conditions challenging.

After lunch, Treats awarded certificates to all those who participated, plus prizes for the best sailors.



On behalf of Sailability HK, Kay Rawbone received a certificate of appreciation from TREATS, and the two Sailability Lead Instructors on the TREATS programme also received a gift as a token of thanks for their hard work. Well done everyone involved- sailors and families, HHYC, Sailability volunteers and instructors. Long may our partnership with Treats continue!



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GOLD COAST VISIT

2ND DECEMBER 2023

At the invitation of Matthew Bromley and Sino Management we finally managed to take one of our boats to the Gold Coast to showcase the support we provide to everyone in Hong Kong as we **'make sailing accessible to EVERYONE'**.

MoHan was sailed to the Gold Coast Yacht Club on Friday 1st December by Fred Vaudaine and Tai Leung in preparation for the formal presentation by Sailability to staff and members which also included a short trip out with Para Sailor Mark Poon, at the helm, after lunch.



A very well received visit and a very enjoyable day for all. MoHan made the return journey back to HHYC with a mixed crew as part of crew training for our volunteers Jessica and Anthony. Para Sailor Mark Poon was at the helm for the 5-hour trip back. Thanks to Tai for supporting MoHan's transfer to the Gold Coast and to Fred for the 3 days he dedicated to the event. Well done everyone and thank you to the Gold Coast for the interest shown in what we do.

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SOUTHSIDE REGATTA

ABERDEEN BOAT CLUB MIDDLE ISLAND
2ND-3RD DECEMBER 2023



Another annual event our sailors participate in is the Southside Regatta. This year we only had 3 sailors participating in the 2.4mR class, **Eric, Sylvia and Tsun Ming**. They sailed the boats over to Middle Island the Wednesday before the race as they have been doing for a number of years now – around a 5/6hr trip depending on sea conditions. They were supported by our safety boat, coaches and volunteers. Thank you.

Another **thank you** to the **Victoria Recreation Club at Deep Water Bay** for the access to their pontoon for our sailors to access Middle Island during this event.



Well done and thank you to them all for their enthusiasm to make this journey to compete as we try to participate in as much as possible at the various clubs.

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OTHER PROGRAMMES

OVER THE PAST FEW MONTHS

Saturday Sailing our first and longest running programme

Sallywag Foundation Programmes for under-represented youth

Schools& NGO's

TREATS,

Ebenezer School for the Blind,

Hong Society for the Blind,

Jockey Club Sarah Roe School,

TWGH Tsui Ting Tong School,

Morning Hope School,

Po Yan School,

Inner City Ministries

Para Sailor Training

MoHan Crew and Volunteer Training

Volunteer Training etc

The Hong Kong Club Foundation's charity support for Elderly Sailing is in its final year, and what a success it has been. During the 3 years of their funding, we will have welcomed more than 800 new sailors from within the elderly centres, clubs, NGOs, Associations etc.

For some it has been a once in a lifetime experience whilst for others it has provided them with sailing skills and an understanding of our beneficiaries, for them to become active and productive volunteers in many areas of our work.

It's definitely **#more than sailing!!**



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CLOSING EVENT OF THE YEAR

BARTS BASH - A DAY OF DRAMA! 16TH DECMEBER 2023



It was a day of drama at the Hong Kong Christmas Barts Bash! This charity fundraising event was postponed from September to 16 December only for bad weather to feature again.

Race officials took the decision to abandon the morning race for safety reasons after the 40 boats taking part had arrived at the start area. Para Sailor Sylvia Leung agreed with the decision saying, "not only was it very windy, but the waves were coming directly at us sitting low down in our boats." Instructor Jesse Lam said, "some of the sailors have not previously experienced conditions like those and were not enjoying the experience."



For the afternoon, to enable sailing to take place in calmer waters nearer to Hebe Haven the race was split into 2 fleets- one for HHYC and one for Sailability. The Sailability fleet included fourteen Hansa 303's, three Hansa Liberty's, three 2.4mR's plus four safety boats.



In the Sailability races there was more drama when the main mast on a Hansa 303 snapped into two! A safety boat was alongside within seconds to assist the two people on board. The racing continued and some competitive battles took place in the windy conditions. By the end of the afternoon, more than one boat crew reported torn sails but everyone was safe and smiling very happily back at the clubhouse.

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RESULTS

Overall category

1st Place Eric Cheung and Foo Yuen Wai

2nd Place Tara and Joe

3rd Place Sylvia and Carolyn

Saturday Sailing category

1st Place Tara and Joe

2nd Place Sunny and Henri

3rd Place Sophie and Henry

Hansa Liberty category

1st Place Chiu

2nd Place Kai

3rd Place Ricky

At the time of writing the amount raised hasn't been finalised and will be announced later.

Andrew 'Bart' Simpson was an Olympic Gold and Silver medallist who tragically passed away in 2013. Andrew passionately believed that everyone should have the opportunity to experience sailing and watersports, regardless of their background or circumstances.



A memorable day rounded out with a surprise visit from Santa Claus who presented certificates to the winners!

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A BIG thank you to everyone involved in this year's Barts Bash –
sailors, volunteers, instructors, photographers, the barbeque team, and all the staff at HHYC
without whom this event would not be possible!



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Isaac & Alexandra



Jesse Lam



Our chefs – Lizzie and David



Volunteers briefing



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Website: www.sailability.org.hk

Email: info@sailability.org.hk

FINAL WORDS

We hope you have enjoyed reading this first edition of Limitless!

If you want to support Sailability Hong Kong, there are many ways you can help:

Make a Donation

Donations of any amount are always welcome!

Visit our webpage www.sailability.org.hk/get_involved where you can donate online.

Donations can be one-off amounts or there is an option to donate a fixed amount each month which really helps us with our financial planning.

Become a Volunteer

Volunteers help with sailing and boat maintenance but we are also looking for additional volunteers to support us on marketing and communications, IT, public relations, translation, videography and photography.

Become a Sponsor

There are opportunities to sponsor a sailor, sponsor a boat, sponsor an event, or sponsor our participation in a Championship.

We can be flexible depending on your goals and objectives.

Contact our CEO, Kay, on +852 9808 0570

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