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elcome again to the Discovery Bay Yacht Club (www.dbyc.net), based in Discovery Bay; we are a community of yacht owners and crew who enjoy fun & friendly regattas, cruises and races.

Our cruising fleet has continued to ply the waters west of Hong Kong, from short hops to Mui Wo, medium outings to Lamma, and longer ones to Middle Island and the Sokos.

We had a farewell cruise for two visiting yachties from Belize — Serge and Cynthia — who have been very involved in our events over the past six months, both on and off the water and in the committee boats. The sendoff turned out both wet and windy, so getting ashore in the dinghies to Mui Wo was an adventure in itself and no one stayed dry. Luckily there was plenty of fine food and warm mulled wine at the Turkish Bahce restaurant.

The winds taking us to the Sokos for an Easter Overnighter with *Aegean*, were much more favourable, and *Sapphire* made a stopover at Cheung Chau for lunch with *Lola*. And then a splendid southwesterly to carry us to the anchorage off the North Sokos. *Champagne Lady* arrived just as the sun set into a blaze of red.

As the moon rose, we all joined together for a “bring what ever you have to share” supper on *ZhuLu*, and everyone got back safely to their respective yachts. After a comfortable night, we faced a stiff easterly home the next day.

We saw *EMC2 (Emocean2)* set off to cruise to the Philippines and then watched on the Yacht Tracker software as *Allegro* and *Vega* both had to turn back in the South China Sea Race with damaged sails in the strong winds and high seas. Congratulations to *Xena*, by the way!



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Despite postponing our Drag Races for a week due to lack of breeze, there still wasn't much, and six yachts set out in a misty haze to start the racing season with some practice short courses.

Our committee boat was *Elkson*, a 32-foot Grand Banks which Anders Haden and Soeren Sorensen graciously allowed us to use — also many thanks to Bo Fussing and Steve Wallace with his RIB as a safety boat, setting the buoys and helping first-time race officer, Nik von der Luehe, with his job. Much appreciation to Ivailo Tonchew, too, who offered to film the fleet with his drone which he launched and landed on the committee boat — an interesting undertaking when the committee boat is swaying from side to side in the waves. We hope we can convince Ivailo to do this again on

a day with more breeze!

The first attended race started slightly behind schedule — *ZhuLu* hit the line perfectly and stormed off (as far as that is possible in a 3- to 4-knot breeze). Unfortunately, that wind died fairly quickly, so this race was abandoned. The start of the next race, with a little more breeze building, followed soon after.

This time it was *Sapphire* that hit the start line in fine form and vied with *Tom Pepper ii*, the Etchells, for the lead up to the windward mark. Garry Smith had noticed that there was more pressure on the starboard side of the course and started on port and stayed on the starboard side of the course and, for a while, successfully took advantage of this.

On the downwind run to the finish, *Sapphire* did not hoist its kite. *ZhuLu*, with its kite up, took advantage of this and overtook the struggling *Sapphire*. Finishing order:

ZhuLu, *Sapphire*, *Allegro*, *Tom Pepper ii*, *Yellow Bollero* and *Nervous Breakdown*.

In the second race, *Allegro* was over the line early (Tom Wiesinger and his crew seemed to have misunderstood the committee boat's various signals, perhaps due to different pressures on the available horns). *Sapphire* again lead the race up to the windward mark only to be overtaken on the downwind leg by *ZhuLu* which then waited too long and messed up a jibe resulting in *Sapphire* taking line honours.

Finishing order: *Sapphire*, *ZhuLu*, *Tom Pepper ii*, *Allegro*. *Nervous Breakdown* and *Yellow Bolero* did not make the cut-off time set for this second race as towards the end the wind died altogether.

With fog setting in, the race committee then decided to abandon the remaining races, but added one last race — Motor to the Bilge Bar of the Discovery Bay Marina Club. All crews seemed delighted and, by the size of the bow and stern waves, it was all to clear that this was by far the fleet's most preferred race. *ZhuLu* won this one (having perhaps the strongest engine). *Sapphire* came 2nd with *Tom Pepper ii* in 3rd, which was exactly the positions on aggregate.

Many thanks to all the participants and particularly our sponsors — DB Marina Services and Discovery Bay Marina Club, along with the volunteers who graciously offered their help.

By the time you read this we will have completed our Round Lantau Race, held on the 23rd and 24th of April, with *Fragrant Harbour* as one of our sponsors. Full report in the next issue. For details of all our upcoming events visit www.dbyc.net

— Lindsay Pickles, *Commodore*

