



From Strength to Strength Para Dragon Boating in Hong Kong

From Tradition to Modern Dragon Boating

Dragon Boating, a Chinese traditional ritual, a game, a sport, a realization of strength and team spirit, requiring tremendous power of hands and legs; yes, I agree, but not the last phrase.

Para Dragon Boating comes in the sport of modern Dragon Boating started when the International Dragon Boat Federation (IDBF) appointed Dr. Raymond Ma, the Chairman of the Hong Kong Dragon Boat Association to be the Chairman of the IDBF Para Dragon Boating Committee in 2010.

Our Para dragon boat teams

The first participant in the Dragon Boating for the Disabled (a formal name of Para Dragon Boating was not conventional name known to most of the people in Hong Kong at that time) was the Hand-in-hand Divers whose members are more adaptive to water sports. In waters, we see boundary with no limits.



On top : The first International Para Dragon Boat Race on 17 June 2011 in Hong Kong Victoria Harbour



On left : A Paddler (spinal cord injury of T12/L1), cannot use his legs to balance his body) on Dragon Boat machine (International Association of Hand-in-hand Divers, Hong Kong)

On right : self developed adaptive chair with the assistance of the Prosthetic and Orthotic Dept, Kowloon Hospital (International Association of Hand-in-hand Divers, Hong Kong)





A joint meeting with other Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) was later held in April 2010 where an initial plan was drawn. However, with no funding and resources, the spark did not grow as wished.

The determination



In Feb 2011, the Para Dragon Boating went to its second development when a formal committee was set up as one of the sub-committees under the Hong Kong Dragon Boat Association.

With the appointment of Dr. James Lam as the Honorary Advisor in Para Dragon Boating and Ms. Fay HO as the sub-committee Chairman, the Para Dragon Boating finally went solid to explore the practicability and development of Para Dragon Boating in Hong Kong.

The path was never easy to walk.

With disabilities of all sorts, we relied on frank, unbiased, open atmosphere to communicate our own limitations to help overcoming difficulties. Numerous phone calls, emails, correspondences exchanged. Only on the point of getting the physical disabled paddlers stepping out from shore to the floating pontoon had already occupied nights of discussions.



International Para Dragon Boat Race



The first International Para Dragon Boat Race was held on 17 Jun 2011 in the Hong Kong Dragon Boat Carnival. Eight local Hong Kong para dragon boat teams and one overseas team from Jiangmen in the Guangdong Province, Mainland China joined the race.



On top left and right :
International Association of
Hand-in-hand Divers (HK)



On left : Dragons Abreast Hong
Kong



One Mainland China paddler was amazingly using a 'rod' to walk, he didn't even have a crutch! They were the champions of the race!



The visually challenged, they listened to the command of the leader and paddle, paddle, and paddle. They won the first runner-up.



For the hearing impaired, they did not hear the drum beat but rely on the vibration of the drumstick hitting on the side of the boat and follow uniformly their front paddlers. They won the second runner up.



Mentally challenged young kids did not receive any prize but their parents were gratefully in tears seeing their children race in an open sea internationally and catch cheers from thousands of spectators.



More and more, paddlers with one arm; paddlers with no legs, paddlers with feeble mind; paddlers survived from dreadful illness..... the mind and soul of the spectators were captured.



Our Hope

Para Dragon Boating is a new extension in modern Dragon Boating. The Hong Kong Dragon Boat Association works on voluntary basis to cover the cost of venue, boat rental, coach fees and other fees. Government funding and private donation are paramount to advance this sport worldwide.

Our next goal is to invite more Para Dragon Boat teams to come to Hong Kong for the Club Crew World Championships (CCWC) in next year where more than 100 overseas teams are expected to participate in the championships.

We see the strength of these paddlers, we see a sport with no limit, are we going to allow our limitations to limit these people's potentials? Do you want to help rocking the World?





Para Dragon Boat Teams participating in the Hong Kong 2011 International Dragon Boat Race

1	江門市兄弟龍舟隊	Brother Dragon Boat Jiangmen (Mainland China)
2	高誌樑訓練學堂	Derek Ko Training Academy
3	香港乳龍	Dragons Abreast Hong Kong
4	香港聾人協進會 猛龍隊	Hong Kong Association of the Deaf - Mang Lung Dragon Team
5	香港盲人體育會	Hong Kong Blind Sports Association Ltd
6	香港聾人福利促進會	Hong Kong Society for the Deaf
7	國際傷健潛水協會(香港)	International Association of Hand-in-hand Divers (HK)
8	鄰舍輔導會智齡專上學院 智尊金龍隊	NAAC CASEN A-Talent Dragon Boat Team
9	鄰舍輔導會智齡專上學院代表隊	NAAC CASEN Dragon Boat Team



香 港 龍 舟 協 會
HONG KONG DRAGON BOAT ASSOCIATION

For enquiries : Hong Kong Dragon Boat Association

Tel : (852) 8106 8134
Fax : (852) 2577 1873
Website : <http://www.hkdba.com.hk>
E-mail : hkdba@hkolympic.org
Address: Room 1032, Olympic House
1 Stadium Path, So Kong Po
Causeway Bay, Hong Kong