

Sailing in Qingdao

Getting people into sailing - Friendship sailing regatta - Qingdao boat show

Text by Jeppe Mortensen, www.sailweta.com

How do we get more people into sailing so we all can have more fun on and off the water?

Qingdao is a sailing city, and sailing is FUN, helps to reduce stress, and is a good exercise – yet why are we seeing so few sailing boats out on the water? Is the answer that people are not interested in sailing because they have not yet had a chance to be exposed to the sport?

It is probably not that simple, but it should be reasonable to assume that with more people owning a boat, more friends and family members will get exposed to sailing, and a chain reaction can be started that would lead to more people getting interested and involved.

So how do we get more people to own boats? By promoting sailing seems to be the obvious answer, but can you promote sailing if people do not have a chance to get exposed to the real thing? The question becomes similar in nature to the old age question about which came first, the chicken or the egg(?)

In this month's 'Sailing in Qingdao' I'll be writing about two events which both aims at getting more people into sailing.

Hopefully one day in the near future, having a fun 'spontaneous race' with another sailor out on the water here in Qingdao will no longer be such a rare occurrence.

Having any suggestion(s) how to get more people into sailing in Qingdao?
Please write wetaqingdao@ketav.com and share your thoughts. Thanks.

Friendship sailing regatta – China / Korea / Japan

Photos by Steven Gao, Lennon Bar



Regatta preparations

In January, 2008 a group of local sailors left Qingdao with a mission -- to lay the foundation for an annual three-country, two-leg sailing regatta.

On board the two Qingdao yachts, "Happy Times" and "Yi He", this group of people sailed to Pusan, Korea to facilitate the planning of the first leg of the regatta.

On April 19, 2008 a group of 19 people went back to Pusan to complete stage two of this regatta preparation mission -- sailing "Happy Times" and "Yi He" to Fukuoka in Japan, before heading back to Qingdao.

Planned return date to Qingdao is April 30, 100 days before the Beijing 2008 Olympics kicks off.

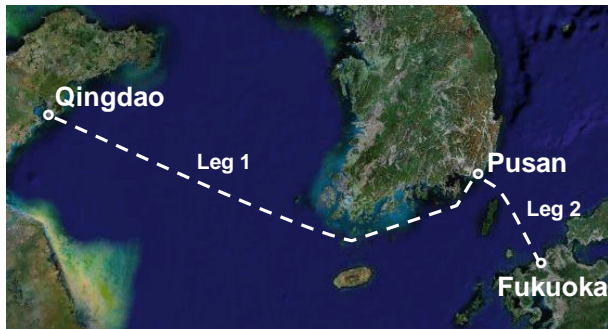
This two-stage planning and preparation trip is the first time in recent history where Chinese sailing boats are visiting Korea and Japan. Three journalists are on board to follow the journey.

The friendship regatta

The regatta will be held in the spirit of FRIENDSHIP and CULTURAL EXCHANGE with an objective to promote sailing, notably in China, Korea, and Japan.

The regatta will take place each year in May and is open to interested yacht owners in the region.





Leg 1: The first and longest leg of the regatta will be from Qingdao to Pusan in Korea. A distance of approx. 550 nautical miles.

Leg 2: After a stop-over in Pusan, participating yachts will leave for the second and final leg, the approx. 135 nautical miles to the finish line in Fukuoka, Japan.

Each year a number of crew positions will be available on the participating yachts. Interested individuals can apply for these positions, and if selected, will receive the training necessary to assist in sailing the yachts during the regatta.

Having a regatta between three countries and with crews of different nationalities, raises a few practical issues, one of them being visa application procedures. With the planned regatta receiving support on diplomatic levels, from city governments, and local/national sailing federations, such practical issues become manageable.

Having seen previous initiatives aimed at turning Qingdao into a 'sailing city', here are my hopes for what this planned regatta will provide yacht owners and people with an interest in sailing:

- An incentive for more people to buy a yacht. More boats means more chances for people to get involved in sailing.
- An event with an ever growing number of participating yachts from all over the region – a happy gathering of sailing enthusiasts that are keen on sharing with others their passion for sailing and the social life that comes with it.
- That the public will be able to greet and watch the participating yachts up-close. It's hard to dream about sailing when looking over a fence and being kept 100 meters away from the nearest yacht.
- That a significant number of crew positions will be made available to individuals who otherwise would have had no chance to get involved in yacht sailing.

Qingdao Boat Show – May 22-25, 2008 (Thursday to Sunday)

The 6th China International Aquatic Sports & Boat Show is being held at Qingdao International Convention Center, May 22-25, 2008.

Having been held in Yin Hai International Yacht Club for the last two years, the boat show is now back in the convention center. The convention center's taller ceiling will enable more exhibitors to put mast and sails on their boats, giving visitors a better impression of what's on offer.

Don't miss this opportunity to explore what options there is to get out and have fun on the water in Qingdao..!

Opening hours

Thursday	9:30 - 16:30
Friday	9:00 - 16:30
Saturday	9:00 - 16:30
Sunday	9:00 - 13:00

Venue address Qingdao International Convention Center
High-Tech Industrial Development Zone
9 Miaolin Lu, Laoshan District

Tickets While entry tickets are being issued for the exhibition, the organizer has today, April 21, confirmed that bringing your namecard should get you through the door.



Having questions regarding how to get started sailing in Qingdao?
Call 1388 463 7870 (Jeppe), or write: wetaqingdao{at}ketav{dot}com
Interested in windsurfing? Philippe can answer your questions on 1358 927 1595