

# October

# SMU SAILING



**SMU Sailing  
breaking  
boundaries in the  
Middle Kingdom**

## B'DAYS THIS MONTH

- SHERRY - 11TH NOV
- GWENNIE - 15TH NOV
- JUSTINA - 16TH NOV
- CAT - 26TH NOV

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- We have a look at the new batch of champions in training
- We talk to SMU Sailing's SEA games sailor
- Have a look at what it takes to sail offshore
- China Cup 2011

## FOR MORE INFO

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or on our Facebook page..remember to like us!!

# SMU SAILING

## NEWSLETTER



### What does it take to become a sailor

Sailing as a CCA in SMU has achieved some of the most impressive results seen by any SMU sports team on an international scene. As such, our fierce athletes need to mirror this passion and we do so to a great extent through intensive physical training and rigorous water sessions. Being in the prime of our physical ability, its easy to mistake the sailors for triathletes, dragonboaters or other elite sportsmen. It's usually our seriousness during training and quiet demeanor in the library that really set us apart.



On a quiet day during SMU's "recess" week, the author was sitting by the sea, sipping his beer watching the future of SMU Sailing learn the ropes, literally. The level 1 proficiency course ensures sailors possess a basic level of sailing knowledge before we throw them into the deep end to learn how to sail keelboats. It was heartening to watch the young recruits show true grit and determination as they displayed their mad skillz around the small course set. it was also funny as hell watching (and in some cases, listening) to them capsize and fall into the water, Enjoy the pics.



### China Cup International Regatta 2011

In the crazy, difficult, deadline filled week otherwise known to SMU students as Week 11, a team comprising of SMU undergraduates and alumni flew up to Hong Kong to compete in the prestigious China Cup International Regatta 2011 on board the extremely competitive Beneteau 40.7s This is only the 2nd time that SMU Sailing has been represented in what is undoubtedly one of the most keenly contested keelboat regattas in Asia with teams coming from as far as the USA, Australia, Russia, Israel as well as a host of teams from China and Hong Kong. Held from the 28th to 31st October, teams first sailed a passage race from Hong Kong to Shenzhen, where they stayed for the remainder of the event racing a mix of windward-leewards as well as passage races.

The fine young sailors who went were: Shaun Toh, Calvin Lim, Greg Ho, Chung Peiquan, Eric Loh, Winfrid Wong, Catherine Chua, Er Zixian, Fidelis Tan, Brandon Heng & Alexi Lim. If you would like stories about Miss Shenzhen, new strand of HIV, adult channels or Jay Chou, you know who to contact.

Aside from the team on the Beneteau, SMU Sailing's alumni team comprising of Su Jun, Karene, Junjia, Louis and honorary SMU student Remy from UWA also went up to compete in the Far East 26 class making it the largest showing by SMU so far. Of course the team manager for this trip was the ever present, Andrew Tam and despite the searing pain in his recently broken arm, he went up with the sailors to ensure the best support was given. That's true passion!

Racing wise, skipper and China Cup veteran Shaun Toh was able to drastically improve on last years position by coming in a very respectable 15th out of 28 boats including notching up a 5th place in one race. What makes this even more impressive is the fact that many of the teams that take part are professional teams who spend their lives sailing. The Far East team went one better than

their undergrad teammates and went home 3rd overall after a great performance.

It has truly been a remarkable journey for out SMU Sailor and with the limited training opportunities available, they have done the school very proud. The sailing club would like to thank the boat owners who so kindly put their expensive boats in the hands of uni kids to allow us to get the exposure to boats of that size. In particular, the sailing team would like to thank Sarab and Robert for the use of Windsikher and Tantrum respectively.

We would also like to thank Hong Kong based Modern Media who sponsored the sailing team with a brand new sail, and enough tshirts to last a lifetime.

### Quiet at last for the sailors

Unlike other CCAs, sailing has no peak season or off season, we race all year round, beginning in January all the way round. This year, after a grand total of 11 regattas in 5 different countries, the sailors have a break. The next regatta we are looking at is in December, after which the whole cycle starts again. So the next time you have a sailor in your group for a project, show some understanding for the poor guy, its not his fault he's traveling all the time, skipping class and having fun...its really tiring!! For the sailors, enjoy the break, recharge your sea legs cause come December, you won't know what a free weekend feels like again..

### Upcoming Events (Nov)

#### **- SMU Final Exams**

The SMU exams are so important that they deserve their own column in the newsletter. That's right, exam time! The time where friends become zombies, students become vicious and tables become battlefields..For the freshmen, this is your first taste of 24hr library warzones, welfare packs and fighting over who's stuff was there first, don't get used to it, 4 more years suckers..

In any case, the SMU Sailing family would like to wish everyone good luck for their exams, happy mugging, we'll go sailing again soon! Fair winds friends..

Wiggle wiggle wiggle wiggle..yeah

# EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW



*Samuel Ong is a 3rd year Business student who was recently selected to race on board Audi Ultra, a super maxi brought into Singapore with the intention of developing big boat racing in the country. As one of the few Singaporeans on board, Samuel raced alongside sailors, riggers, engineers and other professionals required on a boat of that size. 2 weeks ago Samuel embarked on a journey he'll never forget, to race in the China Coast regatta as well as the Hong Kong to Vietnam offshore race. We caught up with the busy man, who also is a prolific Judo player as well as a keen rugby enthusiast as he shared his own experiences on board a 100 ft boat.*

**One word: surreal.** That pretty much sums up the whole experience in short.

Sailing takes on a whole new level in big boat racing. Sure, the basics are pretty much the same, but the prep work becomes even more important. Sometimes, just more. And it all starts from the docks; moving sails with one standing at 700m<sup>2</sup>; sorting PFDs and harnesses by numbers running up to 24; loading offshore gears and toolboxes (more like cases), the list goes on. The saving grace might be the cool Hong Kong weather and beautiful city skyline at the marina. Simply surreal. At times, it does lose its appeal when you're soaked in sweat and grease, fitting 5m long battens in the dark and all other boats are vacated. But everything changes on the water.

Doing round the cans in timings that are more common in match races does add the icing on the cake, but at such proportions, mistakes don't go cheap either. Automatic winches snapping 18mm halyards; sail switching frenzy as winds soften up; mark-rounding drama hyped up in full volume. Nevertheless, learning was hard not to be a continuous process when sails are recognized by letters and numbers, and use of foreign technologies like a canard fin and dynamic furling rigs. There was just so many things to learn, to discover and to explore, just not enough time. Ultimately, the greatest satisfactions came from being able to race aboard a boat in the top IRC category for the first time, taking line honours and, to top it all off, rolling Frank Pong's Boracay. Simply surreal.

The sweetest rewards came in the form of the most grueling race I've yet done. 656nm from Hong Kong to Nha Trang, Vietnam was led up to more than 48hours on the boat. Showers and hygiene were the least of our problems but at least the view to the way to the start line was mesmerizing, and so I thought. Strong winds gusting up to 25 knots kicked off the race and we were off, round the windward mark in 11 minutes and disaster hit almost immediately. A slight wind shift threw the course preparation off course and we were forced to head out before throwing on the A2 to head down with the NE monsoon.

Within a couple hours, the horizon was a blank with nothing in sight, 360 degrees around. We're on our own and knowing morphine shots were part of the first aid inventory sure didn't provide much optimism. By nightfall, the stars came out in hoards so plentiful, it's hard to imagine it before this. Then, watch duty kicked in; 3 hours standby, 3 hours on and 3 hours off. But by the second night, with a blown kite from surging the boat at 18-20 knots, stanchions destroyed from freak hoist accidents; hardly anyone had a full 3-hour rest. Like clockwork, to add to the fun, squalls came right around our course. Wetness was not a problem as the sprays already took care of that, abnormal gusts were. Bow work was made even tougher at a time when the heel was exaggerated by a toasted canting keel, as the 10tons in the keel went opposite directions. Man overboard occurred in a split second and that was all it took to almost lose a crew. When land crept in over the horizon, the next morning, satisfaction from completing a Category 1 offshore race started to set in. But not without one last sail change, yet again, to go around a mountainous spit upwind across the finish line. The thought of never seeing land again and actually doing so?

Simply surreal.

# EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW



*Sara Tan is one of those girls that you are forced to look up to, not just because of her excellent sailing ability but also because she stands at a towering 172cm tall, which to be fair dwarves most guys she meets. At only 21 years of age, Sara has already competed in one SEA games picking up a Silver medal in 2007 in the 420 class. This year, Sara is again representing Singapore at the 2011 SEA games in Indonesia but the difference is, she is doing so while juggling the hectic life of a first year business student in SMU. We caught up with the busy girl in between training and asked her to sum up her semester as she strives for gold both on the water, and in the classroom*

After not doing very much for almost 2 years, I was quite excited about starting school SMU. But before the term had begun I'd already started lagging. I missed all my classes in the first two weeks having just returned from Europe, then having to sail in the selection trials. And I didn't have a clue what was going on. The initial excitement soon turned into panic as hands shot up around me with reckless abandon. But class part drama aside, I managed to get settled into school quite quickly with the help of my friends and group mates who were all very understanding and also extremely brilliant.

Training intensity seems to have increased at a rate similar to school workload. While I find that rather unfortunate, it forces me to make the most of my time, whether in school or in training. Some days it gets a bit crazy when there's gym in the morning, a class at noon, then sailing at 4 and finally a project group meeting at night. But I guess it helps that the sailors have a stronghold over a section of the library, occupying several tables and shelf-bottoms. The shelf-bottom spaces have definitely been a highlight of my SMU life so far. Without which I would have to lug around bags of training barang every day.

*We wish Sara all the best as she competes against the regions best sailors. She is competing in the women's double-handed 470 class with former SMU sailor Dawn Liu. Don't worry we'll be sure to get a full write up from her when she comes back..just a few days before her stats paper!! Its not easy being a national sailor, let alone a national sailor studying for Stats, BGS and Biz Law.*

