

## Welcome to the S4E Newsletter

### Where we came from..

The Hansa/Access story began over 30 years ago with the development of a little multi purpose sailboat that I thought was ideal to introduce Asian people to sailing. I lived in Singapore at the time, and didn't see why Asians should be taught to sail in an unstable, capsizable, odd rectangular box called an Optimist. In my imagination was something far more appropriate for the traditionally non swimming, non sailing people of Asia.

But the sailors in control of the sport weren't interested in this revolution, instead they seemed intent on being more western than westerners. So I moved back to Australia, with good timing as Sailability had just arrived and it turned out my boats, with ballast keel for stability, steered with a joystick and sailed seated were ideal for disabled people.

And thus began the symbiotic Access Dinghy, Sailability, Sailing for Everyone journey. Sailing for Everyone seemed the obvious way to go, that's if you really want the best for disabled people as most don't want to be segregated off into disabled sailing programs. Why not include them as equals?

Then in 2001, that's 24 years ago and about 10 years down the path we received an astonishing email from Japan. Mr Ishi was the founder of a group who were focused on improving the infrastructure and lives of Japan's aging population. He wrote they were "shocked" on seeing our boats in action as they were the finest example of Universal Design they had ever seen.

Jackie and I had never heard of UD so did our research and were delighted to see what we were doing actually had a name. We were inadvertently involved in a community welfare, social justice project. We were among the world leaders in UD and were subsequently invited to present our boats at the 2002 UN Conference on Aging.

Throughout the life of Hansa we have steadfastly rejected being branded as disabled sailing as that's not how we started and obviously not what we do today. Instead we do offer disabled people the opportunity to leave their disability behind and participate as equals. So you can't say our boats were specially designed for disabled people, but you can say they were designed with disabled people in mind.

Universal Design is not necessarily a discipline, it's more an undisciplined process that considers and incorporates the needs of everyone from the beginning. Its not about adapting something to make it more usable. It's a process that arrives at a fully inclusive package, so those words inclusion and exclusion, those opposites are irrelevant. Everyone is talking inclusion these days, it's become today's buzz word, a fashionable catch cry, which hopefully brings the mainstream positive change and leaves a lasting legacy when it fades.

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#### Our Patron

Her Excellency,  
The Honourable  
Ms Sam Mostyn  
AC



#### In This Issue

- Highlights of 2025
- 2025 World and International Championships
- Inaugural Beach Ability Regatta
- Inaugural World Inclusion Championships
- EOI's for upcoming events sought
- What's coming up in 2026 and beyond

## Where we came from

But there's no guarantee of that as there is always resistance and a backlash when a progressive movement hits headwinds, or simply runs out of steam.

We need to be aware that so called progress is regress to others and always leaves behind an increasingly disgruntled and ever growing opposition who will tear it all down when it's their turn at the wheel.

What Hansa represents is something quite different as it's not a binary equation like that, it's not an inclusion versus exclusion story subject to vagaries of fashion or the winds of change.

A challenging idea is its a manifestation of an imaginary non binary world, a slice of heaven on earth, of love in action.

Or put that aside and contemplate the simplicity of this: You don't have to talk inclusion of anyone if you didn't exclude them in the first place.

**CHRIS MITCHELL - HANSA CLASS DESIGNER**

## Where we are now?

Currently, you will find Hansa Class boats sailing in 43 nations—Antigua, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Estonia, Finland, France, Great Britain, Germany, Greece, Hong Kong, Hungary, Indonesia, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Korea, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Latvia, Lithuania, Malaysia, Malta, Netherlands, New Zealand, Oman, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Samoa, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tahiti, Turkey, United Arab Emirates and United States.

## Where we're heading!

In 2026, there will already over 50 major regattas listed on the [calendar](#) on our website—[www.hansaclass.org](http://www.hansaclass.org)

Our European Championships will be held in Barcelona in September and we are heading to France in 2027 for our World Championships.

The Former Paralympic boat—the SKUD18—will be the star of the NZ International Match Race in Auckland in February 2026.

We're collecting boats to send to emerging nations—see page 5

And we're also building HEAPS of new boats!

## Expressions of Interest for 2028 Regional Championships & 2029 World Championships

The International Hansa Class Association is now seeking expressions of interest for our Regional Championships in 2028 and World Championship in 2029.

These regions are Europe, Asia Pacific and Americas. The classes are the Hansa 2.3, 303 singles and doubles and Liberty. The SKUD18 can be included if sufficient boats are available for the regatta.

Requirements and more information can be found within the Race Management and Event Management guidelines here on our website – [World and International Championships – International Hansa Class Association](#).

The official Expression of Interest form is contained within the Race Management Guidelines.

# Out of this World(s)!

The 2025 Hansa Class World and International Championships were held at Royal Prince Alfred Yacht Club in Newport, Sydney in March 2025. The regatta was the culmination of months of work by RPA Club volunteers, members and officials, Hansa Class and Hansa Sailing representatives which ultimately saw 182 sailors from 17 different countries come together for the event. The event also served as the NSW State and Australian national championships.

The team from Hansa Sailing scoured the east coast of the country for charter boats for the overseas competitors and Sailability NSW programs came to the party in chartering out their boats for the event. Following a practice race and briefing, when competitors got on the water for the first time everyone gathered for the Opening Ceremony. A Parade of Nations and a Traditional Aboriginal Welcome and Smoking Ceremony were held and the regatta was officially opened on March 24th by Her Excellency the Honourable Margaret Beazley AC KC, Governor of New South Wales.

The first day of racing produced some tricky conditions for the fleets, with wind shifts and strong winds making conditions interesting to say the least for competitors and the race committee. This World Championship saw the entire Hansa fleet of boats sailing at a World Championships for the first time since 2016—from the Hansa 2,3, 303 singles and doubles, Liberty and the former Paralympic boat, the SKUD 18. Returning to SKUD18 sailing since retiring after his Gold Medal win at the Rio Paralympics in 2016, Queensland's Dan Fitzgibbon showed he had lost none of his skill by taking out the first day's racing in the SKUD18 fleet.

Day two saw racing for the 303 singles fleet—the largest ever 303 fleet in Australia with 75 competitors—tripling the number of sailors who took place in the last Hansa Worlds in Australia in 2012, with only 24 competitors. The fleet contained 3 time Hansa World Champion, Poland's Piotr Cichocki, who was looking to add the trophy to his cabinet yet again. Former winner Australia's Chris Symonds was also keen to take home the title from his home Worlds. Similarly, in the 303 doubles, Cichocki and Symonds have taken out the last two doubles titles between them, and were again competing with crew Olga Górnas-Grudzien and Manuela Kilinger respectively.

The Hansa 2.3 saw 5 overseas sailors take on 5 Australians for the championship. Having come second in this class at the Worlds in 2023, Japan's Yui Fujimoto was looking to go one better this time. As the only female in the fleet, she had a point to prove. The Liberty fleet had another impressive female looking for glory, in IHCA President, Vera Voorbach from the Netherlands, Vera's name is all over the Hansa Liberty Servo Assist trophy, having one it at the last 4 Hansa Worlds. In 2021 and 2023 she added the overall Liberty trophy to her collection, and was looking to do the same again here. However, hot from his win in the 2024 Hansa Asia Pacific Championships, Hong Kong's Foo Yuen Wai was keen to add another Hansa title to his collection.

Across the week, competitors saw a range of conditions, with unseasonal light winds making things tricky for the race committee. Ultimately, 6 races were completed for all the divisions, allowing a drop of their worst score for all the divisions.

In the Hansa 2,3, it was a strong victory for Yui Fujimoto, winning 4 races, and coming 2 and 3rd in the other 2. Her win also made her our first female Hansa 2.3 World Champion.

In the 303 singles, there was another comprehensive victory, this time by France's Gauthier Bril. He sailed almost flawlessly, with 4 victories and 2 seconds, to beat home Poland's Cichocki by 4 points. Chris Symonds had a couple of poor races which saw him ultimately finishing in 7th place.

Symonds fared better in the 303 doubles with crew Manuela Kinger, finishing in 2nd place ahead of Cichocki and Górnas-Grudzien. However they couldn't get in front of the UK/AUS team of Rory McKinna and Jess Wong who had never met before the event and only teamed up when 303 singles sailor McKinna decided he'd also like to sail doubles. A familiar face at many Hansa Class events, it was McKinna's first Worlds victory and he was a popular victor..

Foo Yuen Wai and Australia's veteran Charles Weatherly ended equal on points in the Liberty Championships, with Foo winning on a countback with Vera Voorbach in 3rd. Voorbach retains her grip on the Servo trophy, taking it home with her again. In the SKUD fleet, Australia's Fitzgibbon and Somers gave a masterclass, winning every race to take out the title.

A fantastic week and a great Venue, as evidenced by the fact that later Royal Prince Alfred Vice Commodore Julia Hornsby won a NSW and Australian Sailing Award for Volunteer of the Year and RPA won the NSW division and was a finalist in the Australian Sailing Yacht Club of the Year Awards.

Hear from some of our champions via [this link](#)





Full results on  
the official website

[WWW.HANSAWORLDS.ORG](http://WWW.HANSAWORLDS.ORG)



## New lease of life for older boats



# WE ARE LOOKING FOR

**SECOND HAND OR UNUSED 2.3'S OR 303'S**

**Do you have boats that are unused? Help us give these boats a second life!**

**CONTACT US**

**Why not donate them back to us for refurbishment and deployment into emerging nations?**

- Looking for full boats (minus sails)
- Boats will be refurbished at our expense to support inclusive sailing and grassroots programs worldwide
- Donors will receive acknowledgment on refurbished boats

**Your unused boats can open up the waters for others.**



Hansa Sailing have put out the call for second hand or unused 2.3's and 303s to repurpose.

The demand for boats in emerging nations and grass root programs is huge, so we have reached out to give new life to unused boats.

So far, boats have been offered from as far away as Scotland and Australia.

These boats will be refurbished by the Hansa team to be shipped to new and emerging groups of sailors around the world.

If you know of any boats that fit the bill, please get in touch.

## Vales

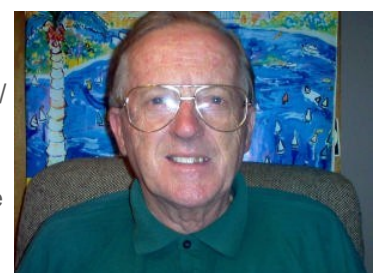
In 2025, the Hansa family lost two people who were vital participants in our formative days as the Access Class Association in Australia.

Terry Peek was a former Director of the Access Class Foundation and inaugural President of the International Access Class Association. He was heavily involved with Special Olympics as a Head Coach and was a longtime International Measurer for our class.

His efforts in sailing earned him a Lifetime Achievement Award from Australian Sailing in 2020. He passed away in September 2025, aged 80.



Similarly, Allan Jones OAM, was there in the early days, establishing a Sailability program at Pittwater, acquiring 3 Access dinghies in 1996. He went to Greece in 2003 to help start Sailability Hellas, then to Hyderabad in 2006 to start Sailability India. As head of Sailability NSW, he encouraged people to participate in Access/Hansa events, and supported team Pittwater at events in Australia and around the world. Allan had planned to attend the Hansa Class Worlds at his home club in March 2025, sailing his beloved 2.3, however his health did not allow it, and he passed away in late 2025 aged 94.



## New waters in 2025

## Mysore, India

In October 2025, the Para World Sailing Asian Inclusion Series went to Mysore, India. 50 sailors from 13 countries took part the Hansa 2.3 and 303 singles and doubles. Hansa Sailing's Chris Mitchell was also there to assist with the boats, as some of the sailors were relatively new to the sport. Sailors were also offered Para Classification by a team of classifiers supplied by PWS. Sailors in the 2.3 and 303 were all awarded ranking points— in a first for the 2.3. This boat provide its versatility and suitability for off the beach launching and has seen a surge in popularity this year.



Racing took place over 4 days on the scenic backwaters of the Krishna Raja Sagar (KRS) dam. Japan's Yui Fujimoto—fresh from her World Championship triumph in Sydney—took out the 2.3 singles female division, whilst France's Alain Plouet took on the Men's title. In the 303 Women's singles, India's Thimiti Rashmita took the title, whilst Malaysia's Mustafah Bin Junell took the men's title—beating home some experienced sailors from France and Japan.



The largest division was in the 303 doubles, which was ultimately split into 5 separate fleets. At the end of racing, the sailors from France came 1st, 2nd and 3rd. The event was so successful that future events are already being planned.

## Turkey



A gleaming fleet of new Hansa 303's arrived in Turkey in time for the World Ability Sports inaugural Beach Ability Games which also took place in October.

This regatta saw 18 competitors from 9 countries compete in 8 races. Seasoned campaigner, Rory McKinna from GBR sailed an almost flawless regatta to take out the event from sailors from Hong Kong and Italy, The local Turkish sailors clearly quickly adapted to their new boats, finishing 4th, 5th and 6th.

Planning for future events is already underway.

## Oman

The final major event for 2025 was another inaugural event—a World Sailing Inclusion Championships. Again the brightly coloured Hansa 303's were part of the action with 33 competitors taking part in a single person division.

The racing was completed with 3 divisions each day, with 9 races taking place over all. Conditions were mainly light, which allowed some of the novices - some of whom had never seen a 303 before - to get a great feel for the boats.

The event coincided with the International Day of the Disabled, so sailors and their supporters were allowed a rest day before the event to take in the sights of Muscat.

Following on from his win in Turkey, GBR's Rory McKinna took home the 303 title. The 2026 event will be held in Portimao, Portugal.



Some of our 2025 Events  
See the full list [here](#)



[February 2025](#)

[NZ 303 Championships](#) Wellington, New Zealand. Feb 13th & 14th

[March 2025](#)

[Portuguese 1st National Qualifier](#) Portimao March 1st & 2nd

[April 2025](#)

[Belgium Sailability Cup](#) Nieuwpoort , April 19th to 21st

[NZ Liberty Championships](#) Auckland, April 24th to 27th

[Portuguese 2nd National Qualifier](#) Alqueva April 26th & 27th

[Italian National Regatta](#) Brindisi, April 26th & 27th

[May 2025](#)

[Portuguese Regional Championships](#) Povoense, May 2nd to 4th

[French Hansa Class Championships](#) Cazaux, May 1st to 4th

[13th Enoshima Championships](#) Enoshima, May 10th & 11th

[Hebe Haven Open Regatta](#) Hong Kong, May 17th & 18th

[June 2025](#)

[East Japan Para Sailing Championships](#) Tokyo, June 7 & 8

[UK Hansa Class Championships](#) Weymouth, Jun 13th to 15th

[August 2025](#)

[Herb Meyer Regatta](#) San Francisco, August 2nd & 3rd

[Dutch Hansa Class Championships](#) Braasemermeer, August 29th to 31st

[September 2025](#)

[Portuguese Championships](#) Marina de Vilamoura, September 18th to 21st

[14th Peace Cup](#) Hiroshima, September 20th & 21st

[US Para Sailing Championships](#) San Diego, September 26th to 28th

[IBSA Youth Regatta](#) Antibes, September 25th to 27th

[October 2025](#)

[Swiss Hansa Class Championships](#) Lake Lugano, October 10th to 12th

[Hansa West Cup](#) Nantes, October 11th & 12th

[November 2025](#)

[Navicap Challenge](#) Monaco, November 28th to 30th

[Inclusive Classes Regatta](#) Freshwater Bay, Western Australia, November 29th to 30th