

## EVENTS WATCH

## MAKING THE 35TH SPECIAL

Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors marks 35th anniversary with major running event, writes **Prudence Lui**

The Hong Kong Institute of Surveyors (HKIS) celebrates 35 years of surveying excellence this year, and is commemorating this milestone in the Institute's history with an array of creative initiatives. Stealing the limelight was its first-ever large-scale running event, which attracted members, industry practitioners and the general public. The race, entitled Runderful Pro, was held at the Charles K. Kao Auditorium of Hong Kong Science Park on the morning of 15 September. The race was a great success and drew 900 registered participants, who demonstrated their fleet "turn of foot" agility in various marathon racing categories.

The Organising Committee (OC) of the anniversary event broke away from traditional event practices by initiating something bold, new and imaginative. The idea of holding a running event was the brainchild of Sr Dr Lesly Lam, Chairman, Organising Committee of 35th Anniversary Celebration, HKIS, who suggested the idea to the Institute's General Council last December. After gaining approval, Sr Dr Lam led an eight-member OC. They are themselves amateur runners who have participated in local and overseas marathons, so they were able to provide valuable insights for organisers and participants alike. As the first institute in town to hold such an event, the ultimate goal was to stage a festive event while tapping into the energetic talents of surveying professionals.

Recognising their lack of expertise in running a marathon/racing event, the OC realised the immense level of resources and workload required to host a professional race. Hence, the decision was made to place the management of the event in the highly capable hands of a professional race organiser, which handled the entire event

management and logistics, including booking the venue, the programme rundown and race registration. It had a strong team of full-time staff and volunteers to coordinate/manage the event from start to finish.

The race was divided into different categories: 10KM Individual, 3KM Individual and 1KM Family. Group cups were arranged for practitioners to form teams within their respective industries, such as Architect Cup, Landscape Architect Cup, Planner Cup and Engineer Cup. The aim of this division into categories was to encourage greater bonding of participants with other members of their industries while celebrating with fellow professionals from other industries. The 10KM Professional Institutions' Invitation Cup and 1KM Presidents' Invitation Cup were also created for presidents and vice presidents of other professional institutes to participate and cultivate friendly relationships.

While a professional organiser was brought in to organise the event, the OC actively secured sponsorships and took charge of promotion within the industry. There were about 300 prizes up for grabs, creating greater incentive for participants.

Careful consideration was given to the wellness/well-being of participants. A list of big-name sponsors was quickly compiled and they were invited to contribute. Meanwhile, WhatsApp messages were sent out to team members to tap into their extensive lists of connections and networks and encourage their members to participate. In June, public enrolment, on a first-come, first-served basis, was rolled out to the general public. By late August there were 800 runners signed up.

Quite a number of challenges presented themselves during the planning stage. One key challenge involved obtaining approval from the Institute's General Council, given

their concern regarding serious accidents that have often occurred in marathon races elsewhere. Approval came after provision of a detailed outline of remedial action to cope with sudden emergencies, i.e. Red Cross first-aid helpers who would cycle along the route from time to time to offer assistance to any casualties. A month before the race, expert runner Steve Lo was invited to give a talk on how to prepare and train for a marathon.

On race day, on-site decoration and preparations started as early as 4am. The race venue resembled a mini version of the Standard Chartered Hong Kong Marathon. Flags/banners lined the start/finish lines and race route. A colourful line-up of booths was set up for registration and VIP reception, luggage storage and carnival games. Designated changing areas for men and women were thoughtfully arranged. By 7am, some experienced runners had already arrived for warm-up. Some runners participated in the stretching and warm-up techniques provided by a veteran coach, who demonstrated on stage. Before the official start, Walter Cheung Shu-wai, the Guest of Honour, shared his abundant marathon experiences with participants. This well-known marathon runner started competing only at age 44, but has already conquered 80 marathons on six continents. He is also the first Hong Kong runner to complete the Everest Marathon, the highest-altitude marathon in the world. As a role model, he sent a positive message to participants that one can start running regardless of one's age. At 8am, together with General Council members of the HKIS, the official starting gun was fired, to signal the start of the 10 km run. All participants received an official tailor-made T-shirt designed with the HKIS's corporate purple colour. More than



300 prizes were given out.

The goal of the race was to foster communications between industries while serving as a platform for community service. Revenue raised after expenditures was donated to the HKIS Charitable Foundation. The HKIS Community and Charity Services Committee teamed up with the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals, Jockey Club Tin Shui Wai Integrated Services Centre and the Hong Kong Society for the Deaf. Children from their respective organisations were invited to participate in the 1KM and 3KM races for free, whilst enjoying the vibrant atmosphere of a large-scale running event with HKIS volunteer members. Wheel for Oneness, the first Charity Team in Hong Kong, was invited to foster a special bond between the able-

bodied and the disabled, with the former assisting the latter in competing in the races. Everyone, regardless of their identities, could overcome obstacles and participate in this grand occasion together while taking in all the excitement and glory of running in a marathon. Overall, the event was a grand success in celebrating the 35th Anniversary of the HKIS. Races concluded at around 10am. However, with the long list of prizes then given out, the event officially ended at 11:45am.

The celebratory spirit will continue long after the race, with the HKIS 35th Anniversary Band Show, showcasing the Surveyors Band, S!R in a much-awaited return at the Dada Bar of The Luxe Manor Hotel in Tsim Sha Tsui at 7:30pm on November 29. This 10-person band is composed of

two drummers, two guitarists, two bassists, two keyboardists and vocalists, who will rock the audience with their familiar pop music, songs from the 80s and 90s and modern tunes in English, Cantonese and Mandarin. The band will play some 30 songs, some mixed by the band in a medley format, with two original songs composed by the band. The band stages a performance once every two years, and it raised about HK\$40,000 last time. For our 35th anniversary performance it would like to use this celebration to raise more funds. Ticket purchases include drinks and canapés. All revenues received will be donated to HKIS Charitable Foundation Limited after deduction of the necessary basic expenses.