

yes! can do!

Life in Hong Kong was not good in early 2002. Unemployment was high; complaints about everything being wrong were rampant. A normally ebullient society was dragged down by a sluggish economy and a general lassitude about life.

And then by chance the Charities Department had the opportunity to inspire people to live their lives to full potential, to set goals and meet challenges no matter the difficulties.

“Their enthusiasm and positive attitude towards life touched the heart of many Hong Kong people who were in despair and encouraged them to meet challenges head on.”

BENNY CHEUNG WAI-LEUNG,
PARALYMPICS GOLD MEDALLIST

The Club was asked to participate in a fund-raising venture called “Around the World in 80 Ways” – a play on the legendary Jules Verne novel, *Around the World in 80 Days* – in which a team of disabled people – two blind members, another with no legs, a fourth with a debilitating heart disease – would travel around the world using 80 different methods of transportation, some exotic like riding elephants, and get people to join them along the way. “We were totally lukewarm because we don’t raise funds and this has nothing to do with Hong Kong,” says Executive Director, Charities and Corporate Secretariat, William Yiu. “But on reflection, what these folks had to say was, they set out to do what they can despite disabilities. We also have problems in Hong Kong and if they can face theirs, we can face ours.”

The “Hong Kong Challenge” was born, a competition within the concept of Around the

World, with its slogan, “Yes! Can Do!” to remind Hong Kong that if you believe in yourself, nothing is impossible, that the ills of today will be the fading bad memories of tomorrow.

People were involved as teams, not loners doing their own thing. There was the Business Challenge, where company teams moved around Hong Kong on different forms of transportation, from helicopters to canoes. On the old Kai Tak Airport, 777 secondary students put together a giant jigsaw puzzle filling 5,400 square metres.

Another group of youngsters joined the Around the World team rowing from Sai Kung to Kau Sai Chau on kayaks, rafts, dinghies, anything that floated.

Benny Cheung Wai-leung, a former Hong Kong fireman who lost his left leg rescuing an elderly lady during a typhoon in 1983, joined the Around the World team while it was in Hong Kong. Benny has never let the loss of a leg stop him. He won four gold medals in wheelchair fencing at the 1996 Paralympics and he was struck by how the Around the World team would not accept that anything was impossible: “Their enthusiasm and positive attitude towards life touched the heart of many Hong Kong people who were in despair and encouraged them to meet challenges head on.”

The “Yes! Can Do!” slogan permeated the Club as the project moved ahead. When some would complain “It can’t be done”, they’d find “Yes! Can Do!” signs posted over their desks the next day. Head of Charities, Mrs Doris Ho recalls telling staff, with some trepidation, she would abseil off the roof of the Club Headquarters if they’d raise money for the Challenge, although she’d never abseiled before. Fortunately for her, the Club’s insurer said “No! Can’t Do!” and refused to let her jump.

But the message remained “Yes! Can Do!”, telling all of Hong Kong it was time to get moving.



我 做 得 到 ！

二〇〇二年伊始，香港失業率高企，經濟疲弱。一個動感之都，變得了無生氣。然而，因為一封信的啟示，馬會決定為香港人打打氣，重振一顆逆境自強的奮鬥心。那是一封申請資助的函件——四名殘疾人士，無視身體的缺陷，策劃以八十種不同的交通工具，環遊世界，把自強不息的信念宣揚開去。慈善及公司事務執行總監饒恩培先生表示：「既然他們可以克服困難，我們香港人同樣可以扭轉逆境。」「八十法環遊世界——香港挑戰之旅」就此應運而生。為期三個月的活動，邀請了社會各界人士參與，包括商界人士、中小學生、殘疾人士等。活動以「我做到！」為主題，激勵港人不畏挑戰的奮鬥心。馬會過往較少贊助籌款項目，然而，可以在這個充滿怨氣的時刻，凝聚港人力量，亦很值得！「八十法環遊世界」雖然已經圓滿結束，但「我做到！」的信息已傳遍公司上下——同事在工作上遇到挫折時，翌日其案頭即會出現「我做到！」的字條，挺奏效的，不妨一試。香港人，就讓我們一起延續「我做到！」的精神。

“ 他們的生命力及樂觀的人
生態度，感染到香港很多不幸
的人去積極面對困難。 ”

張偉良，傷殘人士奧運會金牌得主