

**Better Tomorrow for All Apr 2026**

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## **Editor's Remarks**

**By Michael Ng**

In April 2019, I walked into Mong Kok Stadium as a visually impaired football fan, filled with anticipation for an AFC Cup match. All I wanted was to immerse myself in the passion and intensity of the game from the stands. Instead, I was subjected to humiliating treatment—I was mistaken for a member of an illegal betting ring. Feeling deeply aggrieved and powerless, I left midway through the match.

At the time, I could never have imagined that this seemingly absurd misunderstanding, once shared online and picked up widely by the media, would become an unexpected catalyst for advancing sports equality in Hong Kong. When I chose to speak out, it was not to seek personal redress, but to pose a simple question to society: if we cannot see, does that mean we have no right to experience the thrill of sport?

That lingering sense of frustration and indignation eventually became a powerful force for change.

Over the past six years, the JC Sports Programmes with Audio-description Service has emerged in response to this need and gradually taken root. It has not only broken down the invisible barriers that long separated visually impaired individuals from the world of sports, but has also brought countless people—many attending live events for the very first time—into stadiums to experience the full spectrum of sporting emotions alongside sighted fans.

This issue of Better Tomorrow for All features three remarkable stories that capture the spirit of this movement for inclusion. Audible Accord: Audio Description Rekindles Edwin and His Wife's Football Dream shows how audio description reconnects the worlds of visually impaired and sighted individuals, while also rekindling love and companionship. Unseen Passion: From the Commentary Box to a New Chapter for the Visually Impaired Community traces our staff member Oscar's journey from the commentary box into the vibrant community of visually impaired supporters, where their pure, unfiltered passion inspired him to commit himself to inclusive sport as a lifelong mission. Finally, Powerful Action, Macro Vision — Rethinking Advocacy for Independent Living highlights both the importance of sustained action and a broader vision: six years of on-the-ground efforts have dismantled physical barriers, encouraged newly built sports venues to introduce audio-description facilities, and turned barrier-free principles into tangible reality.

Although the Jockey Club Charities Trust's funding programme has now fulfilled its mission, what it leaves behind goes far beyond technology and experience. It represents an awakening—the realization that barrier-free sport is entirely achievable—and marks the beginning of a new perspective on sports audio description.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to Mr. Li Tak Nang, Dr. Louie Lobo Hung Tak and Mr. Keyman Ma, our dedicated audio describers, and the many volunteers who have stood with us over the years. The JC Sports Programmes with Audio-description Service will not end with the conclusion of funding. We will continue to champion the development of sports audio description, striving towards one simple truth—in sport, everyone is equal.

## **Audible Accord: Audio Description Rekindles Edwin and His Wife's Football Dream**

**By Ho Ho-yuen**

“The most unforgettable match I’ve seen in recent years must be the Hong Kong Premier League final between Lee Man FC and Wanderers!” recalls Edwin, a visually impaired football fan, with excitement. Recently, he visited Lee Man FC’s training base through the Hong Kong Blind Union’s SPA (Jockey Club Sports Programmes with Audio-description Service), where he felt the players’ sweat first-hand as they trained. Since then, he has become a die-hard supporter.

He recounts the final: “My wife, Abby, and I were full of confidence in Lee Man, but we ended up losing 0–3. Like the fans around us, we were disappointed for quite a while.” This sense of sharing joy and sorrow with thousands of fans felt truly long-lost to Edwin.

A lifelong sports enthusiast, Edwin loved swimming with Abby when they first met. He was also an avid football fan, often glued to live TV broadcasts. “Once, he cheered so loudly during a match that even the decorators working on the building’s exterior were startled!” Abby laughs. However, as Edwin’s vision gradually deteriorated, his passion was forced to pause. “Before, I could glance at the screen and see the players’ positioning and tactics clearly, but now even match commentary doesn’t provide those details. Even at the stadium, I can only sit there, listening to others’ cheers, unable to join in.” Losing his sight seemed to rob him of the right to celebrate—and despair—alongside other spectators.

The turning point came when a friend introduced Edwin to an event hosted by the Hong Kong Blind Union’s SPA programme. It was the first time in over a decade that he had “seen” a football match again, filling him with indescribable joy. “The audio describer’s narration was so vivid! In just a few words, they captured the ever-changing action on the pitch, perfectly timed with the stadium atmosphere. What other spectators saw, I heard!” Edwin rediscovered the joy of watching matches. Yet after the SPA-arranged games ended, his football itch remained unscratched—so his “personal audio describer,” Abby, stepped up.

“Seeing how engrossed he was, I tried narrating for him myself—only to find it really hard!” Abby recalls with a laugh. “Once, I went on for a full ten minutes before realizing I’d mixed up the players from both sides!” Luckily, as a veteran fan, Edwin could correct her from experience. Now, when watching matches together, they compete to guess free-kick outcomes and predict player movements. Thanks to audio description, watching football has not only become a shared interest but has also deepened their rapport and understanding. Edwin jokes, “Sometimes, during nail-biting moments, she’ll shout her opinions from the stands, which embarrasses me a bit! (laughs)”

To catch Hong Kong Premier League games, Edwin and Abby have travelled to sports grounds in Fanling, Tai Po, Tsing Yi, and beyond. Match days have become the perfect opportunity for them to venture out and enjoy life—and for Abby to pop into local markets and discover regional delights along the way.

The SPA programme has not only reconnected Edwin with sighted fans but has also brought new warmth to the couple’s relationship. From the helplessness and

disappointment he once felt over his vision loss to now sitting side by side on the terraces, cheering for their team, these shared memories have revitalized their bond—letting them hear each other's deepest companionship and love in every match.

## **Unseen Passion: From the Commentary Box to a New Chapter for the Visually Impaired Community**

**By Chow Chun-cheong**

Society has long tended to label visually impaired persons (VIPs) as “physically vulnerable,” as if they are only suited for static activities such as music. As for the intense and dynamic world of competitive sports, the common refrain is often: “It is better to avoid it for safety’s sake.” Yet, does the inability to see truly mean one must remain estranged from sports? Can friends in the visually impaired community not share even a portion of the blood-pumping excitement found on the pitch? And if not, why?

This is not only a profound question for many VIPs, but also a myth that Oscar, a colleague at the Hong Kong Blind Union (HKBU), has been diligently working to dispel through his actions in recent years.

Oscar was formerly a professional sports commentator—what is locally known in Hong Kong as a “ball talker.” He was accustomed to creating an electrifying atmosphere from the commentary box, using his voice to convey the intensity of the match to listeners. In 2020, during his spare time, he participated in the training course of HKBU’s SPA programme (Jockey Club Sports Programmes with Audio-description Service). After six months of training, he realized that although both activities involve the use of voice, Audio Description (AD) demands a far more nuanced approach to “painting” the scene in vivid detail.

For the two years following his training, he devoted himself to volunteer work, serving as an Audio Describer at various stadiums. During that period, however, his interaction with VIPs was largely limited to acting as a sighted guide, with few opportunities for deeper personal exchange. It was not until a memorable outing to Tin Hau that his perspective was profoundly transformed.

Before the match that day, Oscar led a group of visually impaired (VI) fans on a short walk from Tin Hau to the South China Athletic Association for yum cha—a traditional Cantonese tea gathering. During their conversation, he was astonished to discover that these friends, who “could not see,” could discuss team tactics and player statistics as fluently as he could—and often with even greater passion. “At that moment, I truly realized that passion for sport knows no boundaries of vision.” This encounter deepened his appreciation of the true value of AD: it is no longer merely a one-way transmission of information, but a means of precisely presenting the sporting world he loves to fellow enthusiasts who cherish it just as deeply. As a result, in late 2022, he officially joined the Blind Union, transforming his professional expertise in “ball talking” into a dedicated mission to serve the VI community.

As one adrenaline-filled match followed another, the six-year funding from the SPA programme officially came to an end at the close of 2025. Yet the participants have not dispersed, and the enthusiasm of these VI sports fans remains undiminished. For Oscar, this is not a conclusion, but the unlocking of a new level for even greater sporting achievements.

Today, his vision extends even further. In addition to continuing to help everyone “listen” to major tournaments through AD, he aims to integrate sports and wellness holistically into the lives of VI individuals. Recently, he has begun collaborating with fitness centres, guiding VI friends into the gym to challenge themselves with equipment and push their physical limits.

Who says that persons with visual impairment can only engage in quiet, sedentary pursuits? With his fervent voice, Oscar continues to accompany them as they surge forward in the world of sports, ensuring that the joy and fulfilment brought by athletics extend without limit.

## **Powerful Action, Macro Vision — Rethinking Advocacy for Independent Living By Merrick Ho**

From our early advocacy for the installation of audible traffic signals to our recent success in pressing banks to install voice-guided ATMs, Hong Kong Blind Union (HKBU) has remained steadfast in its pursuit of independent living for people with visual impairments. As society undergoes rapid transformation, we have come to recognize that slogan-driven advocacy is no longer adequate. Instead, it is essential to identify shortcomings in public policy, intervene proactively, and catalyze incremental change through the professional lens of users and the identity of active participants.

Slogans alone cannot demonstrate the necessity of a facility—only concrete action can. Approximately ten years ago, when the term “Sports Park” existed merely as a line in a policy document, there were already sporadic calls for the establishment of audio description facilities in such venues. As the concept of sports audio description was non-existent in Hong Kong at the time, those suggestions failed to gain traction. Subsequently, with funding from the Hong Kong Jockey Club, HKBU launched the Sports Programmes with Audio-description Service (SPA) and, through extensive on-site trials, established the operational details for local sports audio description, integrating it as a key component in the professionalization and popularization of major sports events. Today, in addition to the Kai Tak Sports Park, many newly completed government performance venues are equipped with comprehensive audio description facilities. Progress in hardware infrastructure depends on the evidence and momentum generated by action.

Effective advocacy is not fragmentary but holistic and concrete. Before the funding for the aforementioned sports audio description service concluded, Blind Union explored various avenues to secure continued support. In the course of this advocacy and fundraising effort, our staff and committee members gained valuable opportunities for in-depth reflection: Is the current logic of resource allocation for such projects reasonable? What are the ideal responsibility-sharing models for the government, the business sector, and the community? In recent consultations on the Policy Address and the Budget, Blind Union has repeatedly proposed “Barrier-Removal-Oriented” advocacy, precisely in an attempt to introduce a macro perspective for understanding these issues to society at large. At a time when the government faces fiscal constraints, large-scale resource restructuring is far more essential than minor policy adjustments that merely patch existing gaps.

A successful advocate is a capable participant. Over the years, representatives of HKBU have been actively involved in countless official and semi-official bodies and committees. During the recently concluded National Games, Radio Television Hong Kong (RTHK) selected specific sporting events to provide sports audio description on the main audio channel and engaged audio describers trained by Blind Union. This was not only a landmark investment of public resources into sports audio description but also the most substantive recognition of HKBU’s professional standards in the field. Although the SPA programme has completed its historical mission, it has left us with more than just techniques and experience—it has provided fresh insights into the path ahead in our pursuit of independent and autonomous living.

## **Activities Review**

### **25<sup>th</sup> January 2026**

#### **2024-2025 Volunteer Recognition Ceremony**

A total of 41 dedicated volunteers attended the “2024-2025 Volunteer Recognition Ceremony” in person to collectively celebrate the impactful service achievements accumulated over the past year. This ceremony not only commended the volunteers for their selfless dedication to supporting our members' daily lives and promoting a barrier-free, inclusive environment, but also served as a heartfelt recognition of their compassion and genuine intentions. Blind Union sincerely thanks every volunteer for walking alongside us. Through your passion and actions, we have successfully created an inclusive community.

### **28<sup>th</sup> February 2026**

#### **Hong Kong Island Flag Day 2026**

The Hong Kong Island Flag Day 2026 successfully mobilized around 800 volunteers—including 100 members and their companions—to raise funds for the visually impaired. Thanks to generous public support, the event raised over HK\$600,000 in total, comprising HK\$340,000 from street flag-selling and approximately HK\$270,000 from online donations and the Gold Flag campaign. Blind Union deeply thanks all volunteers and donors. All proceeds will directly advance our services and foster an inclusive society, upholding our vision of "Equality, Opportunity, and Independence."

### **8<sup>th</sup> March 2026**

#### **Award Ceremony for the Li Chu Shuk-kwan Education Fund and Lee Bing Vocal Music Development Fund**

The award ceremony was successfully held on 8<sup>th</sup> March 2026. For over a decade, these funds have supported outstanding visually impaired youths in their academic pursuits, personal growth, community participation, and vocal music development. The event celebrated the awardees' hard work and highlighted society's commitment to their diverse development. Blind Union sincerely thanks the founders for their generous vision, which empowers visually impaired youths to overcome limitations and showcase their unique talents.

### **18<sup>th</sup> March 2026**

#### **2026 Spring Dinner**

Blind Union's "2026 Spring Dinner" was successfully held on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2026. Hosting 45 banquet tables, the evening saw enthusiastic participation from many members, creating a lively and bustling atmosphere. Through a rich variety of programs—including an a cappella performance, a themed quiz game, and a lucky draw—the event showcased the vitality and inclusive spirit of our members. Blind Union expresses its sincere gratitude to Sin Fung Engineering Company Limited for their generous sponsorship. Their support allowed the dinner to conclude perfectly in a joyous atmosphere, enabling our members to welcome a hopeful new year filled with laughter.

### **25<sup>th</sup> March 2026**

#### **eConnect Holds Sustainability Seminar**

On 25<sup>th</sup> March 2026, the eConnect Employment Network held its "Sustainability Seminar cum 10th Anniversary: Business-Social Partnership & Building Inclusive Workplaces". Ms. Jackie Kwan, Chief Executive of Blind Union, attended the event as our representative. Mr. Ho Kai-ming, Under Secretary for Labour and Welfare, was invited to deliver a speech, acknowledging the network's achievements in promoting employment for persons with

disabilities. During the event, a survey conducted in collaboration with the City University of Hong Kong was released, revealing high public support for inclusive employment. The seminar gathered representatives from various sectors to discuss integrating inclusive employment into ESG strategies and building an inclusive workplace through cross-sector collaboration.