


## VITAL STATISTICS...

Name:	Alexandra Rickham	
Class:	Skud 18	
Position:	Helm	
DOB:	11 September 1981	
Born / Grew up:	Kingston, Jamaica	
Currently Living:	Epsom, Surrey	
Occupation:	Full-time sailor (qualified as Environmental scientist)	
Started Sailing:	Following a diving accident in 1995, I first sailed on a day out while rehabbing in Miami. However didn't start taking the sport seriously until studying for Masters in Environmental Technology at Imperial College, London 10 years later.	
Duration in current class:	Started sailing with Niki Birrell in November 2007 but had earlier spent eight months training to helm in the new SKUD class while studying.	
Name of Sailing Partner:	Niki Birrell	
Coach:	Marcus Lynch	
Greatest Strengths in Sailing:	Keeping calm	
Greatest Weakness in Sailing:	Racing experience	
Biggest Goal:	Gold medal	
Who has been the most influential person in your sailing career:	Niki Birrell!	
Other interests away from sailing:	Skiing, cooking travelling	
Personal sponsors:	Little Britain Challenge Cup	
Career highlights:	<p><b>Paralympic Games:</b> Beijing 2008                      5<sup>th</sup></p> <p><b>IFDS World Championships:</b> 2012                                      Gold 2011                                      Gold 2010                                      Gold 2009                                      Gold</p> <p><b>2012 record:</b> Skandia Sail for Gold              Gold Hyeres Regatta                      Silver</p>	

	Rolex Miami OCR	Silver	
	<b>2011 record:</b>		
	Sail Melbourne Regatta	Gold	
	Skandia Sail for Gold	Silver	
	Hyeres Regatta	Gold	
	Miami Regatta	Silver	
	Find full career results <a href="#">here</a>		

## MEET THE SAILOR...

### Who is Alex Rickham?

A tetraplegic athlete, Alex became disabled as a result of a shallow diving accident. She says qualifying for Beijing 2008, less than a year after teaming up with Niki, was her greatest sporting achievement although winning four back-to-back World titles since Beijing is up there now too.

She believes she and Niki's toughest competition are the teams from the USA and Australia although says anyone on the water is a rival. Because of her spinal injury her body thermostat doesn't work properly, which means she takes on the air temperature around her. She also don't sweat properly so gets really hot or really cold. Training abroad in the winter is the only way they can get the hours on the water they need to. Even when the air temperature is ok, because they are out on the water for long periods it can feel very cool, so Alex has always got copious amounts of clothing on, typically five layers on my top half, three layers on the bottom and a balaclava. She virtually have no wind touching her except for her eyes.

Hydration on the water is also a major issue too. If it is cold, for some reason drinking seems to make her body temperature drop but if it is hot and she drinks a lot nature takes over! As a wheelchair athlete on a boat for a few hours at a time, that is not ideal. She has had to master sipping at the right times to make sure she doesn't dehydrate.