

# Laser World



March 2008

## Laser World Championship 2008

Tom Slingsby from Australia successfully defended his 2007 Laser World title on his home waters at the NSW Central Coast town of Terrigal following the abandonment of the final days racing due to rough conditions.

Slingsby's talent and flair has lifted the sailor into the record books as only the second Australian sailor to win back to back titles in this competitive class; Glenn Bourke won three consecutive titles from 1988 to 1990.

One hundred and sixty of the world's best sailors representing 57 nations contested the Championship in conditions that were mostly very windy southerlies on big seas and swell. "Fresh is my preferred conditions," Slingsby confessed, "but I am getting there in the light winds.

The 23 year-old paid tribute to second place getter Julio Alsogaray from Argentina, who won the opening two races in light shifty south-easterly winds on a huge swell and sea. It was to be the only light air day of the event. Alsogaray held the lead for the first 3 races before the discard gave Slingsby the edge. In races 7 and 8 Slingsby handed the lead back to Alsogaray when he only managed 14th and 18th positions in the shifty conditions on the first day of racing in gold, silver and bronze fleets. Slingsby said afterwards: "It was shifty and I went the wrong

way every time; I had a really bad day."

On the second day of finals Slingsby hit back with two first places in the more regular 15 to 20 knot north easterly winds to regain the lead. "It was my perfect conditions," he said. "I've had good speed all week but sometimes speed can take you the wrong way".

"Julio did a great job here; he didn't finish any worse than ninth place. He will be a big threat at the Games in China. He sailed awesome," said Slingsby who finished the event on 27 points. "He has all the tools to win in any conditions, but in China, it will be whoever can perform best that week," Slingsby said.

While Slingsby only had two blips in his score, the silver medalist, Julio Alsogaray from Argentina, took charge at the top of the scoreboard from the first day, only losing his lead marginally on two days to Slingsby.

Alsogaray finished the Championship on 29 points, just two points adrift of the Australian.

One ponders what may have been had two more races been sailed.



Continued on Page 2.

## World Laser 4.7 Championship 2007



Hermanus, near Cape Town in South Africa hosted the 2007 World Laser 4.7 Youth Championships, starting just after the Christmas break, the Championships had a friendly atmosphere with 118 competitors from 27 countries in 6 continents. The Championships opened with the 'Mixing of the waters' ceremony in which representatives from each country poured water from their home sailing area into a large ceremonial vessel. This was then blessed and taken to the water's edge and poured into the waters of Hermanus Yacht Club.

Light breezes for the start of the Championship led to postponements and a late start on the first day, finally with two races concluded with Elisabetta Macchini (ITA) loosing out to Andraz Gulic (SLO) on the last beat in the yellow fleet and the blue fleet being dominated by the Polish team.

As the wind steadied on day 2, the introduction of the black flag helped to control the sailors enthusiasm at the starts. The morning saw Marko Peresa (CRO) and Alex Zimmermann (PER) victorious. As the day progressed the wind grew to around 14 knots finishing with Baepi Pinna (BRA) having a successful day to end up just one point

behind Championship leader Andraz.

More delays on day 3 as the wind refused to steady over the course area, finally the wind settled and peaking at around 16 knots the wind slowly eased. Day 3 saw the first win for a local sailor as Mathew Shaw (RSA) led home race 6 in the yellow fleet and Canberk Karahan (TUR) scored two second places. In the blue fleet again the Polish reigned supreme with a win for Piotr Ogrodnik (POL) followed by a win for Alexandre Alencastro (BRA) who was chased to the finish by Zimmerman and Travis Dow (NZL).

Day 4 began and more delays – but this time the delays were due to the celebrations of the night before as four hundred competitors and supporters saw in the New Year together with a large party and fireworks. The wind settled again later in the afternoon and the first day's racing of 2008 commenced. After several recalls the yellow fleet eventually got away with Boris Bignoli (ITA) leading home and Lina Stock (CRO), the first of the girls to cross the finish line.

In the blue fleet on the first downwind leg there was a definite split between the race leaders and the main chasing group.

Continued on Page 3.



# Rolex Miami OCR

## Medal Races Determine Champions in Olympic Classes

After a short 30-minute "Medal Race" in the Laser and Laser Radial, US SAILING's Rolex Miami OCR officially concluded. The regatta, an ISAF Grade 1 world ranking event that attracts elite sailors as well as up-and-comers, hosted 369 sailors from 34 countries across 4 Olympic Classes. The awarding of gold, silver and bronze medals was based on scores from fleet racing that began on Monday 28th January for everyone; however, because of a new sailing format that will debut at the 2008 Olympic Games in Qingdao, China, the Olympic-class sailors stayed on for an extra day. Fleet racing scores determined the top-ten sailors, who then advanced to the medal-racing round, which counted double in the scoring and acutely effected strategy plays for medals.

"All I could think was 'I have to catch up, I have to catch up!'" said the overall winner in the Laser Radial class Paige Railey, who started prematurely, and after re-starting behind the fleet found herself in last around the top mark of a scheduled two lap course. Her closest competitor in overall scoring, Anna Tunnicliffe, also had jumped the gun and was working her way up from sixth at the top mark to eventually win the race. "I knew that if Anna got a first, I had to get at least an eighth to still win overall," said Railey, who began picking off boats by playing a lane that was clear of wind-shadowing boats. In the end, she finished seventh, a score good enough to put her three points ahead of Tunnicliffe in the final standings. Though Railey and Tunnicliffe are long-time rivals -- Tunnicliffe edged out Railey at the U.S. Olympic Team Trials for Sailing to become the USA's representative to the Olympic Games in August.

Continued on Page 6

© Dan Nerney/Rolex



Paige Railey, winner in the Laser Radial.

# Laser World Championship 2008

Continued from Page 1



Javier Hernandez

Consistent results from World Ranked No. 11 Javier Hernandez, including a win in one race, ensured a bronze medal for the Spanish sailor.

2nd to 10th places overall changed daily and the Argentine sailor, not one of the hot favourites going into the title, was obviously the one to beat. "For sure I came here to win and I will do everything in my power to do that," he said in the closing stages of the Championship. In any other event always finishing in the top ten in a 160 boat fleet would have guaranteed a title.

Of the sailors ranked by ISAF No's 2 to 10 in the world, only two finished inside a top 10 result. World No. 9, Michael Bullot (NZL) finished fifth, 24 points behind Slingsby. World No. 2, Paul Goodison, placed seventh, 44 points away from the winner.

Already chosen to represent New Zealand in Beijing, Andrew Murdoch, the World Ranked No. 4, fell short with a 13th overall finish. Both his Kiwi team mates beating him. Athens silver medalist and Beijing bound Andreas Geritzer (AUT) missed out making the Gold fleet in the Finals while Athens bronze medalist, Vasilij Zbogor (SLO), finished fourth overall, but 20 points away from Slingsby.

Goodison and Murdoch, along with other top rankers, said the first day of racing had pretty much dictated their results. Both suffered 33rd place results in Race 2, but Goodison's subsequent disqualification from Race 6, coupled with a 20th and a 27th, killed any hopes he held.

Unusually, and especially after coming fresh from a win at the Laser Asia Pacific Championship at Sail Melbourne, Goodison did not win a race, but did come up with four third places.

Murdoch, on the other hand, counted two wins, a second and a third in his score, but his other results let him down.

Silver medalist Alsogaray felt understandably thwarted when the last two Finals Races were abandoned due to strong winds that gusted to 32 knots at times and steep seas. After postponing the start whilst waiting for a front to pass, Principle Race Officer, Tony Denham, and ISAF Course Representative, Jeff Martin, went out on the course area to set up a course in a building sea. "We tried to find some shelter in the next bay but it still took a long time for the committee boats to make progress safely due the very steep waves" said Martin. "We were on the edge all the time. The mast head wind speed never dropped below 24 knots". At around 2.30 pm the Gold and Silver fleets were called afloat but before any of the fleet had left the beach the decision to try for a race was rescinded. "Having made the decision to race we received a warning from the lifeguard services of increased winds approaching. The sea state was not improving and it was proving dangerous for the mark laying teams to set the marks and difficult to keep the marks in position.

We were outside ISAF wind strength guidelines for the Olympics and I was mindful that it was not only a World Championship but also an Olympic qualifying event for many countries and sailors." said Jeff Martin.

Over the past year, the world ranked No. 13 Argentine scored top three results at ISAF Grade 1 regattas, but at others, he fell well short. During these World's, he was on top of his game. Slingsby overcame him on two days, and when it mattered most, particularly on what was ultimately to be the final day, when he won both races, streaking away in Race 10 to win by a huge margin.

"This has been one of the most testing Laser World Championships ever," said organising committee chairman Rob Lowndes. "Conditions over the past week have ranged from superb north-easterly sea breezes to wild electrical storms and lighter variable winds.

"In spite of the weather challenges, all of the competitors I've spoken to said they had a great regatta, regardless of their placing, and that's all we can hope for," added Lowndes.

### Ten make Beijing Games cut

From the 26 nations vying for the final 10 Laser places for nation qualification to the Beijing Games, Jeemin Ha made Korea proud as the first one in, when he made it into the Gold fleet.

The other nine nations qualified from the Silver fleet. They are: Switzerland (Max Bulley finished 59th), Japan (Yoichi Iijima, 63rd), Malaysia (Kevin Lim, 69th), Singapore (Leong Seng Koh, 77th), Venezuela (Jose Ruiz, 80th), Dominican Republic (Raul Aguayo, 85th), Russia (Igor Lisovenko 86th), Hungary (Zsombor Berecz 93rd) and Guatemala (Juan Maegli, 99th).

Qualifying a nation does not necessarily mean an automatic entry to the Games for the competitor who qualified his country. Competitors may have to sail off against their countrymen in other regattas to claim their Beijing selection to meet their National Olympic Committee qualification level.

Hosted by Gosford Sailing Club the Laser World Championship was made possible by the NSW State Government, including contributions from NSW and the Department of Sport and Recreation. Other major sponsors included Gosford City Council, Ace Conveyor Group and Star of the Sea Luxury Apartments.

### Final Results

- 1. Tom Slingsby AUS 27pts
- 2. Julio Alsogaray ARG 29pts
- 3. Javier Hernandez ESP 39pts
- 4. Vasilij Zbogor SLO 47pts
- 5. Michael Bullot NZL 51pts

Full results and photos from the Laser World Championship are available at: <http://aus08.laserinternational.org/>



© C&C Images

Jeemin Ha qualifying Korea for the Olympics.

# World Laser 4.7 Championship 2007

Continued from Page 1



The final day saw the south-easterly wind increase in strength to around 20 knots with gusts of 25. The Race Committee postponed the start and held the fleet ashore after measuring sustained gusts of 27 to 32 knots. 40 minutes later the wind had subsided back to its earlier range and the fleet were called afloat for some exhilarating and tough sailing.

The Gold fleet, sailing first, started at their second attempt and immediately attacked the left hand side of the course. In a balanced upwind leg Luciano Hlanuda (CRO) led around the first mark closely followed by Lazaros Theodosiadis (GRE), Baepi Pinna and a tight chasing pack. The strong winds had already turned the tables on overnight leader Andraz Gulic who struggled to finish in 50th place. Fellow lightweight Boris Bignoli was also buried in the late twenties.

Theodosiadis caught a good gust on the downwind leg leaving the rest of the fleet standing. By the time he got to the top of the second windward leg he was 75 seconds ahead of Filip Kobielski who had climbed from fifth place. On the next downwind leg Theodosiadis extended further and cruised home to take the winning gun 2 minutes ahead of Kobielski and Kostomoiris. Matika and Pinna followed in 4th and 5th places. After ten races Bignoli was at the top of the leader board with Gulic 5 points behind.

Contrary to the first race, the fleet took the right hand side of the course for the first leg of the second race of the day. At the first mark Kostomoiris rounded first ahead of the rapidly improving Utka Gonener and the expected pair of Matika and Pinna.

Following a hard fought battle the consistent performances of Croatia's Filip Matika proved successful and he was crowned 2007 Laser 4.7 Champion, closely followed by Baepi Pinna and Alexander Zimmermann in 2nd and 3rd places respectively.

It was a double celebration for the host country of the 2008 Laser 4.7 Worlds as Tajana Ganic's scores of 29 and 25 in the mixed fleet were just enough to give her a two-point advantage over Ewa Makowska from Poland, giving her the World Laser 4.7 title.

## Overall Male Results

- |                        |        |
|------------------------|--------|
| 1. Filip Matika CRO    | 54 pts |
| 2. Baepi Pinna BRA     | 59 pts |
| 3. Alex Zimmermann PER | 64 pts |
| 4. Boris Bignoli ITA   | 65 pts |
| 5. Jacob Bozic SLO     | 69 pts |

## Overall Female Results

- |                      |         |
|----------------------|---------|
| 1. Tajana Ganic CRO  | 195 pts |
| 2. Ewa Makowska POL  | 197 pts |
| 3. Lina Stock CRO    | 226 pts |
| 4. Tiffany Brien IRL | 244 pts |
| 5. Matea Senkic CRO  | 245 pts |

Conditions had become more overcast and the breeze continued to build with a short chop developing on the race course. Leading girl Ewa Makowska (POL) did not fair well in the changeable conditions and by the end of the second beat had lost the lead to Ivan Zotov (RUS). At the end of the race Zotov claimed 1st place, followed by Makowska in 2nd.

The wind disappeared from the Cape Region of South Africa on day 5. The sailors waited ashore for several hours and were then called afloat as a fickle wind arrived in the afternoon. Several attempts were made to start - each time aborted due to major shifts in the wind direction. The Race Committee conceded at 5.30pm, with the fleet being split into Gold and Silver fleets for the final two days of the Championship.

After two days of frustrating weather, the first day of finals racing saw a fresh south-easterly wind. Now split into Gold and Silver fleets, the first race saw a clean start in around 10 to 12 knot of winds. The port end of the line was favoured, allowing Rafal Milczarczyk (POL) to port tack the fleet. Series leader Gulic chose the port end of the line and worked the left hand side of the course, as did most of the fleet. However it was Martino Tortarolo (ITA) who led George Kostomoiris (GRE) round the first mark. Gulic rounded in 16th while his closest rival, Alex Zimmermann was 8th. The second beat again saw the fleet preferring the left of the course. The eventual race winner was Travis Dow who made a good recovery in the second half of the race. Gulic made the most of his good fortune to finish second ahead of Utku Gonener (TUR).

The wind increased to around 12 to 14 knots for the second race. Gulic again chose the port end of the start but this time had a bad start. Halfway up the windward leg he was hard left in a group of 12 boats that had split away from the main fleet on the right of the course. When they came back together it was clear he had chosen wrongly and rounded the first mark in 30th. At the front Filip Matika (CRO) rounded ahead of Milczarczyk and Sharhar Jacob (ISR). By the end of the second round Jacob had worked his way through to second with Gonener pulling up from 8th to 3rd.

At the end of a challenging two-race day Gulic still held the overall lead by a slender two points. Bignoli moved up to second with a fourth and a fifth race score. Gonener's two third places moved him from 29th to 11th.

# World Council Meeting

The World Council of the International Laser Class Association met for their annual meeting this year in Terrigal, Australia. The meeting scheduled for the 14th February between the 2008 World Laser Championship and the 2008 World Laser Masters Championship was very successful. With representatives present from the European region, the North American region, the Asia Pacific region, the ILCA office and the boat manufacturers the meeting was well attended with a wide range of topics to be discussed.

Heini Wellmann, the class president (elected in 2006) led the World Council through a large and comprehensive agenda. Early in the agenda was the election of class officers, which saw all officers remain in their positions un-appointed:

President: Heini Wellmann  
 Vice Presidents: Jean-Luc Michon and Hugh Leicester  
 Chief Measurer: Jean-Luc Michon  
 Chairman of the Technical and Measurement Committee: Tracy Usher  
 Chairman of the Events Committee: Hugh Leicester

Information on the coming World Championships for 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012 was given. Time was spent on the prospective venues working around the 2011 ISAF World Championships and considering the possible implications if the Laser 4.7 is selected as equipment for the 2010 Youth Olympics. ILCA is introducing a revised World Championship bid structure that will shortly be published through the ILCA web site. The new Championship bid process will be used for future Championships, the first Championship available for bid being the 2010 World Laser 4.7 Youth Championship.

The class accounts and a three year forecast were discussed together with the plans and objectives for the future development of the class and its administration. The financial situation of the association is sound. An extract of the 2006 and 2007 accounts are published in this Laser World.

Reports from each region show that in general the International Laser Class continues as a global leader with growth recognised in several regions for the Laser 4.7 and youth sailing on the whole.

As a result of the continuing interest in youth sailing around the world the ILCA office was asked to research the feasibility of a World Laser Standard Youth Championship meant for sailors from 17 to 20.

A lengthy discussion ensued on the management and possible re-organisation of the global and regional structure. With the ever-increasing number of countries becoming members of the International Laser Class and the growth in the interest of Laser sailing in previously in-active countries there may be the need in the future to revise the present structure of regions and districts.

Finally the council addressed a number of proposals for class rule interpretations and rule clarifications all of which will be further reviewed by the Technical and Measurement committee. The class rule interpretations will be published if agreed and any rule changes will be put to a member's vote.



# ILCA Finances 2006

At the World Council Meeting held in Terrigal, Australia, on 14th February 2008 the World Council approved the audited accounts from 2006.

The approval of the 2006 accounts was delayed due to the finalisation of 2006 Championships.

The 2006 accounts are shown below. All figures shown are in £ (GBP).

Accounts:	2006	2005
<b>INCOME</b>		
Plaque Fees	64,495	47,742
Sail Buttons Fees	61,007	51,024
Renewal Subscriptions	70,890	122,554
Sale of Goods	16,502	10,806
Miscellaneous Income	220	4,000
Championship Income	669,673	43,086
Interest Receivable	25,107	26,160
	<b>907,894</b>	<b>305,372</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
Championship Expenditure	625,556	36,458
Publications	18,883	16,212
Technical	12,340	34,124
Teaching	0	989
Office / Staff	129,784	111,785
Auditors / Bank Charges	23,862	4,117
Depreciation	1,589	1,185
Cost of Goods Sold (adjusted for stock)	14,010	9,988
ISAF / World Council	8,905	4,380
	<b>834,929</b>	<b>219,238</b>
<b>Accumulated Funds b/f</b>	<b>736,623</b>	<b>650,489</b>
Surplus for Year	72,965	86,134
<b>Accumulated Funds c/f</b>	<b>809,588</b>	<b>736,623</b>

## Downwind Sailing

Article and pictures taken from 'RYA Laser Handbook'  
By Paul Goodison

**Having good boat speed** downwind is essential if you are going to win races, it is also a great way of escaping from the middle of the fleet back to the leading bunch. Sailing the shortest route to the mark is very rarely the fastest, by sailing larger angles downwind you can achieve greater speeds and have the ability to catch waves. The most important sail control downwind is the kicker, by sailing with a looser kicker the boat becomes more versatile helping it to accelerate out of changes in course.

To help catch waves you nearly have to forget about the direction of the next mark, just concentrate on catching waves and surfing them for as long as possible.

**See Training Exercise 4 (right).**

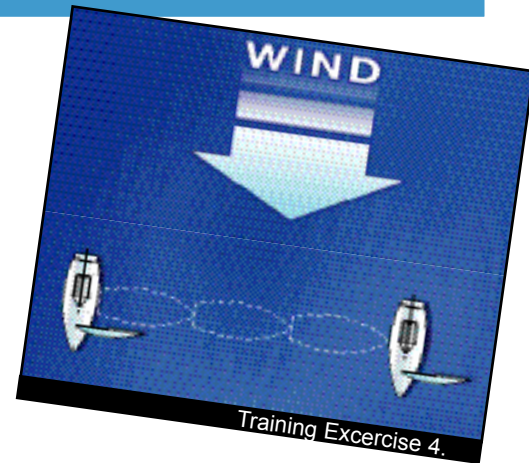
### Running in light winds

#### Sail Settings

The kicker should be loose enough to enable the top of the sail to twist away and to flex. This helps the sail react to gusts and alterations in course without you needing to adjust the mainsheet. As the leech moves the sail pants and the boat is propelled forward, the outhaul should now be as loose as it ever needs to be with just over a hand's width between the foot of the sail and the boom cleat; this creates power and drive in the lower third of the sail. Ease the Cunningham to allow fullness in the sail. The critical control is the kicker and this should be set "by eye". When sailing by the lee, look at the leech around the top batten, this area of the sail should be able to move between 10 and 30 cm fore and aft. If the leech is tight and the movement is restricted ease the kicker and if it is moving more than 30 cm, tighten the kicker slightly.

#### Technique

In light winds it is important to keep all movements slow and smooth to keep the wind in the sail stable and attached, if the



boat is rocking around then the air flow over the sail will be disrupted and this will cause the sail to lose drive. Sailing by the lee is often faster in light winds, the boat needs to be heeled slightly to windward, to reduce the wetted surface area, this also helps gravity to keep the boom out. Your body weight should be kept forward in the cockpit to keep the transom clear of the water and the daggerboard should be raised around 15 cm, this helps the boat to track in a straight line when sailing large angles by the lee.

Boat speed in these conditions will be determined by wind speed more than technique, be observant and keep looking behind for wind. When sailing in a gust the boat can be sailed closer to a downwind course, as the wind drops steer back towards a bigger angle by the lee.



**Running in medium winds**

**Sail Settings**

The sail settings are very similar to light wind settings, again the kicker being the most crucial. The mainsheet no longer needs to be eased beyond 90 degrees as there will be more pressure in the sail causing the top to twist open, the top of the sail can twist beyond 100 degrees of the centreline even when the boom is at 80 degrees.

**Technique**

As the wind increases and the boat starts to plane the weight needs to move back in the boat, this helps to keep the bow clear of the waves. In marginal planing conditions the weight should be moved forward as the boat slows and aft as the boat accelerates.



Medium Winds

Note the boom is not at 90° but the top of the sail is due to the twist.

**Goodies Guide for sailing on a run**

- As the boat slows the angle to the wind needs to decrease; do this by either bearing the boat away more to sail by the lee, or by sailing higher towards a reach.
- When the boat accelerates the speed needs to be turned into vmg and the boat should be sailed more downwind.
- The daggerboard should only be raised 15 cm so that the boat can track in a straight line.

When sailing in waves steer the boat onto different angles to help catch waves and increase speed. When the boat changes direction trim the mainsheet to compensate for the change in direction. To change direction try to use the heel of the boat to assist the turn, heeling the boat to leeward to head up, and leaving the boat to windward to help bear away. This will reduce the amount of rudder needed.

**Running in strong winds**

**Sail Settings**

In strong winds it is less important to ease the outhaul as you are not looking for any extra drive from the sail. It is however important to release the Cunningham and the kicker. If the Cunningham is left on then the leech will be really soft and will lead to too much twist in the head of the sail, this leaves the boat difficult to sail and often causes the boat to capsize to windward. If the kicker is not released then the boat is very twitchy because the leech is

remembering that this is a much tighter kicker due to there being more pressure in the sail. The outhaul can be left in its upwind setting. By releasing the Cunningham the outhaul will automatically become slightly fuller.

**Technique**

Sheet the mainsheet in slightly to help stability, the boom angle should be around 70 degrees but the top of the sail about 95 degrees as the leech twists away.

Try not to run dead downwind, steer positively so that you are either by the lee or on a broad reach and sit back as far as you can. It can often help if you hold the tiller extension at the tiller to extension flexi-joint which will give a more positive feel to the rudder.

If things start to get a bit hairy then sit tight and try to keep the boat in a straight line, sheeting the mainsheet in by about a metre. The worse thing you can do is sheet out or alter course as this makes the boat unstable and uncontrollable because all the forces are moving. The daggerboard again should only be raised up to 20 cm to help tracking and in the worst case scenario there will be something to stand on if things go wrong!



Strong Winds

The boom is at 70 degrees with a lot of leech twist.



This section is taken from the RYA's latest publication, the 'Laser Handbook' by Paul Goodison. Available to order shortly from the Laser Library at [www.laserinternational.org/library](http://www.laserinternational.org/library).

To be continued in June's LaserWorld.

# ILCA Finances 2007

At the World Council Meeting held in Terrigal, Australia, on 14th February 2008 the World Council approved the audited accounts from 2007.

The 2007 accounts are shown below. All figures shown are in £ (GBP).

Accounts:	2007	2006
<b>INCOME</b>		
Plaque Fees	74,527	64,495
Sail Buttons Fees	44,926	61,007
Renewal Subscriptions	70,395	70,890
Sale of Goods	8,290	16,502
Miscellaneous Income	0	220
Championship Income	387,728	669,673
Interest Receivable	33,009	25,107
	<b>618,875</b>	<b>907,894</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
Championship Expenditure	364,466	625,556
Publications	16,639	18,883
Technical	8,040	12,340
Teaching	0	0
Office / Staff	158,013	129,784
Auditors / Bank Charges	16,087	23,862
Depreciation	5,286	1,589
Cost of Goods Sold	10,150	14,010
ISAF / World Council	6,042	8,905
	<b>584,723</b>	<b>834,929</b>
<b>Accumulated Funds b/f</b>	<b>809,588</b>	<b>736,623</b>
Surplus for Year	34,152	72,965
<b>Accumulated Funds c/f</b>	<b>843,740</b>	<b>809,588</b>

# Rolex Miami OCR

Continued from Page 2

The gold medal for Railey counted simply as a notable personal accomplishment on her campaign trail to the next Olympics. "Anna is still another sailor, like so many good sailors here," said Railey, "so it's personal for me not just in beating her but also in beating them." While Tunncliffe won the silver medal, Karin Soderstrom (SWE) took the bronze.

Polish Laser sailor Maciej Grabowski won the gold medal in the men's Laser fleet on the strength of a third-place finish. With the USA's Kyle Rogachenko only six points behind him, Grabowski "couldn't let him go".

He covered Rogachenko, as Rogachenko - a member of US SAILING's Elite Youth Development Team -- was the only one who could steal away his gold medal. "It was not necessary to win the race or take risks," said Grabowski, who is a sure bet to represent his country at the Olympic Games. Grabowski strayed from the norm by choosing to come to Miami rather than participate in the Laser World Championships in Australia this February. Conflicting World Championships were the reason. "For me it made sense to sail in a place with lighter winds that will be more like Qingdao," said Grabowski. Winning the medal race to take the silver medal was Grabowski's fellow countryman Marcin Rudawski, while Denmark's Anders Nyholm won the bronze.

## Results

### Laser Standard

1. Grabowski, Maciej POL 38pts
2. Rudawski, Marcin POL 45pts
3. Nyholm, Anders DEN 46pts

### Laser Radial

1. Railey, Paige USA 41pts
2. Tunncliffe, Anna USA 44pts
3. Soderstrom, Karin SWE 62pts



# Olympics Review

With the 2008 Olympic Games fast approaching, we review a few of the strong contenders for the Laser Standard and Laser Radial Olympic Gold Medals.

## In the Standard Fleet

### Tom Slingsby



With the top spot in the World ranking and the 2007 and 2008 World Champion titles under his belt, Slingsby's performance speaks louder than words. He was already selected late last year to compete at the Games for Australia and his win in Terrigal confirmed his rightful place in China.

### Julio Alsogaray

Alsogaray started 2008 on a high with a 2nd place at the World Standard Championship 2008. He also came first at the Princess Sofia Trophy in Spain and 5th in the Quindao Test Sophia event in 2007.



### Javier Hernandez

Prior to his recent huge success coming 3rd in the 2008 World Laser Championships Javier was ranked 11th in the World, with improving results year on year in the World Championship and top twenty results before the worlds in Australia. Could 2008 be Javier's year?



### Paul Goodison

The British No 1 sailor has got to be a strong contender for the Olympic Gold. Goodison won the Asia Pacifics at the beginning of 2008, his first regatta since breaking his wrist 3 months ago. He came 7th at the recent 2008 World Standards.



### Matias Del Solar

The 32 year old from Chile is currently number 3 in the world ranking. He came 7th in the 2007 ISAF Games, 13th at the Olympic test event in Qingdao, and although he only finished 25th in Terrigal he stands a good chance of grabbing that precious medal.



## In the Radial Fleet

### Tania Elias Calles Wolf

As No 1 in the ISAF Laser Radial rankings Tania is definitely a strong contender for the Olympic title. She was 6th in the 2007 ISAF Games, 8th at the Qingdao Olympic Test Event and 4th at the Asia Pacific Regatta at the beginning of 2008.



### Anna Tunncliffe

Anna Tunncliffe (USA) admitted to finding the conditions in Cascais tricky but still managed a 5th place at the 2007 ISAF Games. She has since won the long running battle against Paige Railey for the title of USA No 1 and also won the Qingdao Olympic Test Event in 2007. Anna stands a very good chance of a medal if she is on form.



### Evi Van Acker

The two times European Champion was disappointed with a 13th at the 2007 ISAF Games. She came 3rd at the Qingdao Olympic Test Event and is currently 3rd in the ISAF rankings.



### Sarah Blanck

Sarah Blanck (AUS) missed out on a medal in Athens by 1 point in the Europe Class. This year she has won the AUS Nationals, The Sydney International Regatta and the Asia Pacifics.



### Tatiana Drozdovskaya

The surprising 2007 World Champion from Belarus will be defending her title in New Zealand before going to the Olympics. Can the 1st ever Belarussian World Champion win again?



### Jo Aleh

New Zealand's No 1 sailor was 8th at the 2007 ISAF Games, 2nd at the Qingdao Test Event and 3rd at both the Sydney International Regatta and the Asia Pacifics. She is one of the top light wind sailors which could be an advantage in Qingdao.



### Liija Xu

The 2006 World Champion is China's biggest sailing hope for the Olympics and is expected to perform well on her home turf. She's not performed so well in 2007 but maybe she can deliver a surprise in 2008.



# Laser Asia Pacific 2008

**Reigning World Standard** Senior champion Tom Slingsby (AUS) led the Championship (hosted by Royal Brighton Yacht Club) on Day 1, but an OCS on Day 2 dropped him down the leader board. However, once he dropped that result, Slingsby proved he was the man to beat ahead of the Worlds at Terrigal in February, but it was Paul Goodison who stole gold on the final day.

Goodison, who will represent the British team at the Olympics, produced mixed results early on, but quietly worked his way to the top, drawing level with Slingsby on the penultimate day of the regatta.

The Medal race was the deal breaker. Mike Bullot (NZL) won the race from Goodison, with Michael Leigh third, Milan Vujanovic (CRO) fourth, Andrew Murdoch (NZL) fifth, Bernard Luttmier (CAN) sixth and Slingsby seventh.

Goodison's second gave him the gold medal ahead of Andrew Murdoch (silver) and Slingsby (bronze) who finished 10 points behind Goodison and one behind Murdoch.

The Medal race was difficult and frustrating for all. Slingsby accepts what happened, but said afterwards: "You couldn't pick it. It was so light and fluky. I had the lead early on, but I went to the back of the field on a big shift. I couldn't recover. It was hard."

He said Goodison, who was in Melbourne contesting a first major regatta since breaking his wrist, will be difficult to beat at the Worlds, along with Murdoch, Michael Leigh and others.

Slingsby, though, is on top of his game, sailing consistently at the top in all conditions. He counted five wins and two third places in his tally, only straying outside top three twice, including his OCS. Along with the others, Slingsby, who won the Australian Laser National title a week prior, will take a short break, then get back into training, both on and off the water, in preparation for the Laser World's.

Goodison, who won two races and placed top three in five races, is dangerous when in peak form, as is Murdoch, who clocked up three wins at the regatta.

Sarah Blanck's (AUS) gold medal win at the Asia Pacific Radial Women's Championship was one of the more decisive victories of the regatta; a 21 point margin to second placed Sari Multala (FIN) the runner-up at the 2007 ISAF Worlds, and a further point to Jo Aleh (NZL).

Counting four each of wins and second places in her score, Blanck tripped only once with an affordable 16th place, subsequently used as a discard. She left the event with two things in mind; winning the March Laser Radial Worlds in New Zealand and bringing home an Olympic medal from China.

Coming fresh from her National title win the previous week, Blanck was ecstatic to win Asia Pacific gold at her home club, the Brighton Yacht Club, after finishing third in a wafy and light Medal race.

Since enlisting the coaching services of Sydney 2000 Laser bronze medallist and

2006 World Champion Michael Blackburn, Blanck has shown a new determination and is a much more self-assured person these days.

"I'm feeling a lot more comfortable and I know where I'm heading. To win at Sydney, the Nationals and now here, confirms to me I am heading in the right direction.

"I am more confident, especially in the light weather against people like Jo Aleh who is brilliant in light air." Aleh still has the edge in light weather though, winning the double points medal race and the previous day's race, in extremely light winds.

Multala won silver despite a disappointing ninth place in the Medal race in which Nathalie Brugger (SUI) finished second. The Finish girl kept Blanck honest from Day 1, winning three races. But three results outside the top three, in addition to her Medal race score, let Multala down.

World ranked No. 3 Tania Elias Calles from Mexico finished fourth. One point away, China's Olympic medal hope and 2006 World Champion, Lijia Xu was fifth and Laura Baldwin (GBR) sixth.

Xu, only 20, is sure to perform well on her home turf at the Olympic Games. Her country expects big things from her. Baldwin is not one of the three British girls in contention for Olympic selection, but her performance at the Sydney International Regatta and here in Melbourne suggests that should be otherwise.

The Laser Radial Men's gold went to Greg Adams (AUS) who before the Medal race was 18 points ahead of fellow Australian and Youth sailor on the move, Klade Hauschildt, who started the final day in fourth place overall, but came home well to claim silver. Bronze went to Richard Bott (AUS).

## Contact Details

### INTERNATIONAL OFFICE and European Office

PO Box 26, Falmouth, Cornwall, TR11 3TN,  
UK

Tel: +44 1326 315064

Fax: +44 1326 318968

E-Mail: [office@laserinternational.org](mailto:office@laserinternational.org)

[www.laserinternational.org](http://www.laserinternational.org)

### Asia Pacific

E-mail: [sueblakey@ihug.co.nz](mailto:sueblakey@ihug.co.nz)

### Central & South America

E-Mail: [cefanucchi@hotmail.com](mailto:cefanucchi@hotmail.com)

### North America

E-Mail: [admin@laser.org](mailto:admin@laser.org)

[www.laser.org](http://www.laser.org)

[www.laserinternational.org](http://www.laserinternational.org)



Goodison in Action.



The Radial Fleet Start Sailing.

Full  
results  
available at  
[www.sailmelbourne.com.au](http://www.sailmelbourne.com.au)

# 6th Caribbean Laser Midwinter Regatta



On the second start of the 6th Caribbean Laser Midwinter Regatta, held in Cabarete, the usual "Starboard" and "Protest" yelling changed into screaming when a humpback whale ducked the middle of the start line. Other surprises included a 2nd place finish in the first heat by Great Master (65+ years old) David Hartman of Florida. Behind him were current North American Champion Thomas Barrows of the US Virgin Islands, and Canadian Olympic team sailors.

The usual "Starboard" and "Protest" yelling changed into screaming when a humpback whale ducked the middle of the start line

The three day event featured a light wind day, a strong wind day with big waves and a third day with moderate winds. Raul Aguayo of the Dominican Republic finished first, with Canadians Lee Parkhill, and Antoine Boueilh following. 1st place Masters with Handicap was Ari Barshi from the Dominican Republic, followed by 10 times world champion Keith Wilkins of Great Britain, and Tim Landt of the USA.

Adding to the fun of the event, was the inclusion of the Laser 4.7, and Laser Radial in the same start with the full rigs. The 4.7 and Radials sailed a shorter downwind leg, to meet again with the full rigs on the weather mark. The Laser class with its different sail sizes offers an opportunity for 13 year old sailors to compete against 72 year old Laser legends.

The event was sponsored by The Marquee Sapphire, luxury beachfront condominium complex, being built in Cabarete.

For more information go to [www.caribwind.com](http://www.caribwind.com)

**Results:**

**Laser Standard:**

- 1. RAUL AGUAYO (DOM) 8pts
- 2. LEE PARKHILL (CAN) 16pts
- 3. ANTHONY BOUEILH (CAN) 23pts

**Masters (with handicap):**

- 1. ARI BARSHI (DOM) 9pts
- 2. KEITH WILKINS (GBR) 22pts
- 3. TIM LANDT (USA) 26pts

**Laser Radial:**

- 1. IRINA PEREZ 7pts
- 2. JORDI BROS 13pts
- 3. JEAN PIERRE DOMINO 19pts

**Laser 4.7:**

- 1. LUIS PRIDA 7pts
- 2. SEBASTIAN BROS 10pts

# Aussies Rule at Australian Laser Championship



Tom Slingsby, Sarah Blanck and Rohan Langford saw off a strong International fleet of 298 Lasers to win the Australia Laser Championships at Blairgowrie (27th Dec 07 - 4th Jan 08) for the Laser Standard, Laser Radial and Laser 4.7 classes respectively.

The final 2 heats were fought in a dying northeasterly wind, which started the day at 20 knots and ended at 5 knots.

Tom Slingsby (AUS) recorded a 17 and a 5 on the final day to beat home a fast closing Michael Leigh (CAN) by 2 points (with a 3.2 score on the last day) and Nick Thompson on 30 points.

Sarah Blanck (AUS) overcame illness earlier in the week to grab 2 bullets and end the series on 20 points, 6 points clear of Jo Aleh (NZL) and Veronika Fencova (CZE) on 31 points.

Rohan Langford (AUS) sailed consistently to consolidate his early series lead to finish on 24 points with 2nd place Stephen Collings (AUS) on 47 and 3rd place Jarrad Lincoln (AUS) on 48 points.

The regatta was successfully conducted to schedule by over 125 on and off

water volunteers from the Blairgowrie Yacht Squadron and the Victorian Laser Association with support from the Rye, Daveys Bay and Royal Geelong Yacht Clubs, all under the auspices of the Australian Laser Class Association and Sail Melbourne. The regatta tested new scoring software enabling competitors to receive results by SMS alongside posting to the Internet.

The Championships ended with a presentation night attended by 480 of the Laser fraternity with presentations being made by 1987 World Champion Stewart Wallace and multiple Olympic representative Michael Blackburn.

**Results:**

**Laser Standard:**

- Tom Slingsby (AUS) 24 points
- Michael Leigh (CAN) 26 points
- Nick Thompson (GBR) 30 points

**Laser Radial:**

- Sarah Blanck (AUS) 20 points
- Jo Aleh (NZL) 26 points
- Veronika Fencova (CZE) 31 points

**Laser 4.7**

- Rohan Langford (AUS) 24 points
- Stephen Collings (AUS) 47 points
- Jarrad Lincoln (AUS) 48 points

