

# Laser World



June 2008

## World Laser Radial Women's 2008

Sarah Steyaert sailed to victory in the World Laser Radial Women's Championship 2008, a great result for the French sailor whose previous best was a 6th in the 2006 Worlds. The world title seemed to be going China's way until series leader Lijia Xu was disqualified from the final race when she was given a ruling on body movement by the on-water judges. As this was her second offence in the series she was required to retire immediately, and she sailed off the course after the first beat.

The championship, hosted by the Takapuna Boating Club, New Zealand, commenced on Saturday 15th March with a frustratingly long day for competitors waiting on the water. The sailors left the beach around 10am when a light south-easterly appeared to be building. A course was laid but the wind dropped away, forcing race organisers to shift the fleet and hunt for breeze which just never came. A decision was made at 5pm to abandon racing for the day and the fleet made their way ashore.

Thankfully, a 20 knot south-westerly greeted sailors on day 2 of the regatta allowing racing to begin on time. Evi Van Acker (BEL) definitely seemed to enjoy being back on the water after having spent recent months out

due to illness. The Belgian demonstrated that she's back on form with a stunning start to the regatta. Despite traditionally being more of a light air specialist, Van Acker's recent training paid off and she won the first race in the blue fleet.

Sari Multala (FIN) had an equally good start to the regatta, finishing 2nd in race one in the yellow fleet and then following up with a win in race two. Both Sarah Blanck (AUS) and Paige Railey (USA) also started strongly and were joint third just two points behind the overnight leader.

Just one race was sailed on day 3 with a postponement due to lack of wind. A light north easterly breeze gradually filled in and the fleet left the beach in the afternoon. The day undisputedly belonged to Anna Tunnicliffe (USA) and Lijia Xu (CHN) who both brought home a race win with a solid leading margin in their respective fleets.

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## World Laser Masters 2008



The World Masters counted over 350 competitors from 18 nations with a strong presence from Australia, New Zealand and the USA. The entry list was filled in record time. Sailors from as far afield as Japan, Zimbabwe, Dominican Republic and Thailand gathered at the Gosford Sailing Club in Terrigal, Australia for the event that is renowned for its high quality racing, post-racing camaraderie and varied social program. Competitors and their accompanying partners were welcomed in traditional Aboriginal fashion during the opening ceremony.

Despite expectations of an Australian summer, the weather turned out to be more of a mixed bag of sunshine and rain while shifting breezes tested the skill and concentration of sailors and race committee alike. Fortunately, conditions picked up towards the end of the

championship and provided some exciting racing.

This year's top places were filled with some familiar faces but also with a few newcomers to the Master Worlds. Defending World Champion Brett Beyer (AUS) claimed the Standard Apprentice title for an unbeaten 5th year in a row with a remarkably consistent performance throughout the championship; his final score of 10 was made up of 6 wins, 2 second places and one discarded OCS score. He said: "I'm very happy. There wasn't much wind, maybe 10-12 knots, and the racing was very close as usual".

Since the Sydney sailor joined the Masters in 2001, he has always finished in the top three, missing the top spot only twice in 2002 and 2003. Was it a tough win this year? "Well, this is my best scorecard, so I guess that makes it look easier than it was. It was hard close racing, so the scorecard is a bit deceptive," said Beyer.

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SMALLTALK**

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# World Laser Masters 2008

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He was joined on the podium by New Zealand's Rohan Lord with 20 points and Taiminen Jyrki (FIN) with 22 points. Jyrki commented: "I am happy with my series; it was close all the way through and a lot of fun. The racing was especially close with Brett and Rohan. I haven't done a Worlds for three years. The first one I finished sixth, then fifth, then fourth. Now I am third, so next time I should be second," he laughed.

Brad Taylor (AUS) had been leading the Standard Master fleet all week and went into the last day of racing with a five point lead. But his luck ran out on day 6 when second placed Jan Scholten (AUS) snatched the lead with a 3rd and 1st place.

Scholten finished just 2 points ahead of Taylor with a final score of 18. A newcomer to the Masters, he said of winning: "I stuck to my program. My starts were conservative. I got to know my rig and got better boat speed as the week went on, which allowed me to then concentrate better on what was going on around me. I was basically confident I had a chance after sailing at the Australian Laser Nationals and Asia Pacific Championship, but I didn't know the internationals and I didn't know Brad. Having the breeze pick up in the last couple of days helped too".

A disappointed Taylor explained: "I got to third place in Race 8 and had a close tussle with Jan - we had a great tacking duel. I tried to get right, but he held me to the left and I finished fifth. In the second race I had a good start and went right, but there was more pressure on the left. I did well to get back up to sixth. I had a really good regatta though."

In the Standard Grand Master fleet, it was an exciting finish with only two points separating winner and runner-up. Leaders of the fleet Mark Bethwaite (AUS) and Wolfgang Gerz (GER) went into the last day of racing with only 1 point between them. Gerz beat Bethwaite in the first race which meant they were now on equal scores. But the last race saw the Australian claim back the lead: "Wolfgang was after me at the start of the first race", 59 year-old Bethwaite said. "It was a day of trying to stay clear at the start. It was exciting racing. I turned the tables on him and the hunter became the hunted. He came at me again on the last run, but I got him on the last reach. I gave him dirty air to hold him out and put two boats between us by the finish. That enabled me to win. Of course I am very happy".

Bethwaite retained the championship title on 20 points, closely followed by Gerz on 22 points.

Jack Schlachter (AUS) finished third with 31 points after winning Race 8. Just behind him came regatta organiser Rob Lowndes (AUS) who was thrilled with his second place in Race 8 that brought him home fourth overall on 39 points.

"If I die and go to Paradise today, it couldn't be any better". Those were the words of Radial Apprentice James Liebl (USA) after scoring two second places on day 2 of the championship. But better still, the newcomer went on to win five races altogether, placing him right at the top with twelve points. The World Champion exclaimed: "This is fantastic. It's a great place to sail and I want to come back! I didn't think I'd win; I actually came out here to work on my heavy air sailing, we don't get much of that where I come from. In retrospect, I'm glad

it was mostly light, otherwise I know I wouldn't have won," he said.

He was joined on the podium by John Jagger (AUS) with 30 points and Richard Bott (AUS) with 41 points.

Yet another newcomer to the Masters Worlds, Alison Casey (AUS), finished eighth overall in the Radial Apprentice fleet to claim the Women's World Championship title. Casey, not having sailed much over the last six years, came to the event with no expectations yet ended up posing some serious competition to fellow Apprentices, at one stage holding third place overall. With a final score of 60 points, she beat second placed Justine Ella (AUS) by 26 points. Third place went to last year's runner-up Yvonne Malmsten (SWE) with 139 points.

New Zealand's Mark Orams lead home the Radial Master fleet on the last day. With a final score of 12 beating British Stephen Cockerill (17 points) and Australian Greg Adams (25 points) to the title. "I feel relieved. It's been tough sailing all week," Orams said. "It's nice to win with a win! It was a bit stressful, because I couldn't find the bottom mark. I stood up in the boat for a while looking for it. I had a huge lead at the time, but the swell was so big, that unless you and the mark were on top of the swell at the same time, you just couldn't find it. It didn't help that the mark was orange and sun was right in your face".

In the Women's fleet, 2006 winner Christine Bridge (AUS) beat defending champion Lyndall Patterson (AUS) to the Radial Master Women's title. With 75 points, Bridge finished 9th out of 48 in the overall fleet.

Australian Peter Heywood led home the 33 strong Radial Grand Masters fleet on the last day to finish at the top of the leader board. Consistent scores within the top five guaranteed him a very solid first place, 11 points clear of runner-up Brian Watson (AUS). Gill Waiting from New Zealand, the only competitor in the Women's fleet, finished 23rd with 173 points.

Radial Great Grand Master Peter Seidenberg (USA) delivered the best score overall in the series with 9 points, consisting of seven wins in nine races. For the third year in a row the 70 year-old beat Australian Kerry Waraker to the title. "I'm just so happy we got the conditions yesterday and today that we all imagined we would get here. I'm very happy with my win. I very much enjoyed the regatta. I expected Kerry to be my main competitor. He beat me in Brazil (2005), then I beat him in Korea (2006), Spain (2007) and now here. It's a very nice rivalry between us and I hope it continues," Seidenberg said.

It will be interesting to see if this year's newcomers can defend their titles in the different conditions next year when the Masters Worlds will be held at St. Margaret's Bay in Nova Scotia on the east coast of Canada. St. Margaret's Bay is around 5 miles wide and aligned with the prevailing southwest winds which generate a 20 to 25 knots breeze on sunny days in the summer.

Full results and photos are available at: <http://events.laserinternational.org/>

"I couldn't find the bottom mark. I stood up in the boat for a while looking for it."



James Liebl, Radial Apprentice winner.



The Prize giving ceremony.



Alison Casey, Women's Apprentice winner.

# World Laser Radial Women's 2008

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Sarah Steyaert.



At the starting line.



The medal winners.



Lijia Xu.

"I knew that I had to finish in the top fourteen - I knew the points."

**Despite their performances neither Tunncliffe nor Xu were at the top of the leader board** as Tunncliffe was carrying an OCS and lay 36th overall while Xu had a DSQ on her scorecard and lay 30th. This would all change when a discard came into play.

It was a mixed day for most on day 4 with some serious shuffling on the leader board as the day unfolded. The light winds continued to frustrate race management and made for an eventful day on the water, the intention to start early was thwarted by lack of breeze due to a large high sitting over New Zealand's North Island.

The blue fleet was well into race five, with local sailor Jo Aleh (NZL) out in front with a four minute lead, the finish line was in sight when the race was abandoned as the dying breeze was stalling sailors towards the back of the fleet.

The blue fleet headed back out onto the course later in the day. Aleh came out firing after her earlier disappointment and put a second on the scoreboard finishing behind Susanna Romero Steensma (ESP).

**In the yellow fleet Xu was also on form** winning race four and scoring a 3rd in race five, taking the overall lead and discarding her DSQ from Race 2. Sarah Steyaert (FRA) dropped back to second overall on the leader board with a 2nd and a 36th in races 4 and 5 while Van Acker was still looking strong just one point behind her with a 2nd and 14th in the day's races.

Racing in gold and silver fleets, sailors on day 5 faced an overcast sky and a north easterly breeze ranging between 6 and 10 knots with a challenging swell.

"You couldn't really see where the wind was coming from because the waves were so big. It was really difficult and everyone had mixed results, and I think that's why I'm still

in second place." said Van Acker after racing. "It was kind of like China, so that was good practice."

Chinese sensation Xu, who had the overnight lead, won the first race of the day in the gold fleet. Eighth around the first mark, Xu battled back to cross the line 12 seconds ahead of Charlotte Dobson (GBR).

Race seven was Xu's worst in the regatta apart from her DSQ in race two; she finished 30th which effectively wiped her large leading margin putting Van Acker from Belgium back within striking distance of the lead. Van Acker managed to further diminish Xu's lead by finishing ahead of her in race eight, the last race of the day. Xu was 6th while Van Acker was 4th narrowing the gap to four points at the conclusion of the penultimate day.

Steyaert of France remained in third place overall despite a mixed day on the water. She recorded a 24th, a 20th and a 3rd leaving her nine points behind Van Acker.

**On the final day of racing Steyaert sailed consistently well, lying third at the start of the day she won race nine and then placed 5th in the final race which was enough to secure her first ever World title.**

Steyaert was aware of what she needed to do as things unfolded on the water in the final race. "I saw her (Xu) take the flag," said Steyaert, "and I knew that I had to finish in the top fourteen - I knew the points. And I did it, so I knew I had the World Championship."

Disappointment for Xu, who had been outstanding throughout the regatta, came with a disqualification in the final race. Despite losing her grasp on the title in the final hour Xu comfortably won the silver medal.

When asked about the disqualification after reaching the beach Xu admitted she was disappointed. "It was very disappointing, but

a lesson learnt. I will do better in Qingdao."

Andrea Brewster (GBR) was delighted with the bronze medal. This regatta was part of ongoing trials for four sailors vying for British women's Olympic selection. "I'm really, really pleased. I don't think it's sunk in yet," said Brewster at the conclusion of racing. "I was fifth going into today, and I knew if I sailed like I sailed yesterday, then I had a shot at the podium, and I did, so it was great. I couldn't have had a better day really."

**The final day was one of disappointment for Belgium's Van Acker who had a shot at the title at the outset of racing,** lying second overall. In her worst day yet Van Acker recorded a 47th and 20th slipping out of the medals and back to 9th overall.

Also in contention in New Zealand were 6 spots for the Beijing Olympic Games, with 23 competing nations that had not yet qualified. Karin Soderstrom, placed 8th overall, secured the 1st Olympic spot for Sweden. The other spots went to Singapore, Spain, Greece, Croatia and Ireland.

Qualifying their nation does not guarantee these competitors an entry to the Olympics, most will have to sail off against their compatriots in other regattas to claim their Beijing selection or prove to their national authorities that they are up to the job.

The results of the Worlds have definitely lengthened the short list of contenders for the Laser Radial Olympic gold medal at the Beijing Olympic Games this summer. Sarah Steyaert has certainly put herself in the spotlight, and Lijia Xu's 2nd place in Takapuna shows that she is still a force to be reckoned with. Bring on the Olympics.....

Full results and photos are available at: <http://events.laserinternational.org/>

# Downwind Sailing (Part 2)

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

Continued from the March edition of LaserWorld.

### Nose dive

At some point it will be impossible to avoid running into the backs of waves or nose diving. The best thing to do is to hold tight as you run into the back of the wave (see illustration A) brace yourself and try and keep the boat heading in the same direction. As the water washes over the deck it is important to hold the mainsheet tight as the pressure in the rig will greatly increase as the boat slows. Lean back and hopefully the bow will come clear and you can sail away. It is important to try and clear the cockpit of the excess water as quickly as possible to reduce the chance of it happening again, it will be more balanced and less likely to capsize.

### The Kicker

The kicker is the key control for the sail downwind, get it right and the boat can become easy to steer and stable, get it wrong and the boat becomes very twitchy and difficult to control.

1. Shows the kicker set too tight. The sail becomes flatter and the leech very tight. It becomes very difficult to be accurate with the sheeting angle as there is margin for error, any small steering alteration will change the entry and exit from the sail greatly.

2. Shows the kicker too loose. It is now very difficult to get the correct sheeting angle at the top and bottom of the sail because there is such a difference between the two. This

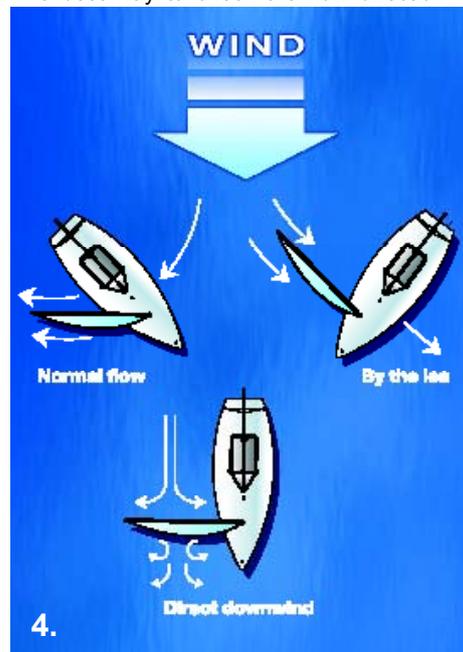
usually leads to the boat becoming very rocky and power is lost from the top of the sail.

3. Shows an ideal kicker tension. The sail is full with enough twist to allow the leech to react to changes in course without losing any power out of the sail.

### Running general principles

#### By the lee

When sailing by the lee the flow of air over the sail is changing; the flow is going from the leech to the luff. A common mistake often made when sailing by the lee is to let the boom out too far. If the sail is let out beyond 100 degrees then it will be hard to get the flow to change direction. If the boom is at 90 degrees then the top of the sail can be way beyond this when the kicker is eased. The best way to check the flow direction is



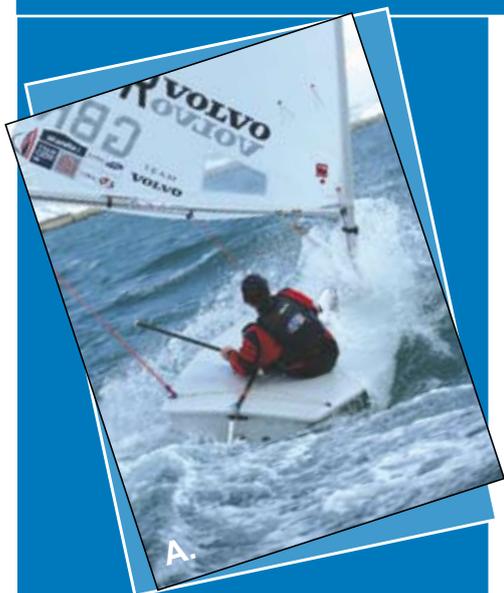
by looking at the tell tales on the sail and seeing which way they are pointing. See illustration 4.

### Sailing in gusty conditions

If you sail in a gust of stronger wind for longer downwind you are going to be quicker to the leeward mark. You need to check the wind regularly to see if there is any change in pressure that you can take advantage of. If a gust is coming from one side of the course sail to the gust and then in the gust for as long as possible. This will usually involve altering course to sail in the direction that the gust is travelling. Using a wind indicator gives a good indication of where the wind is coming from, by looking in the direction that the wind indicator is pointing you can anticipate the wind coming. Illustration 5 (top of opposite page) shows an ideal path in gusty conditions.

### Advanced wave principles

Waves are not all the same and this can be used to our advantage. I like to think of

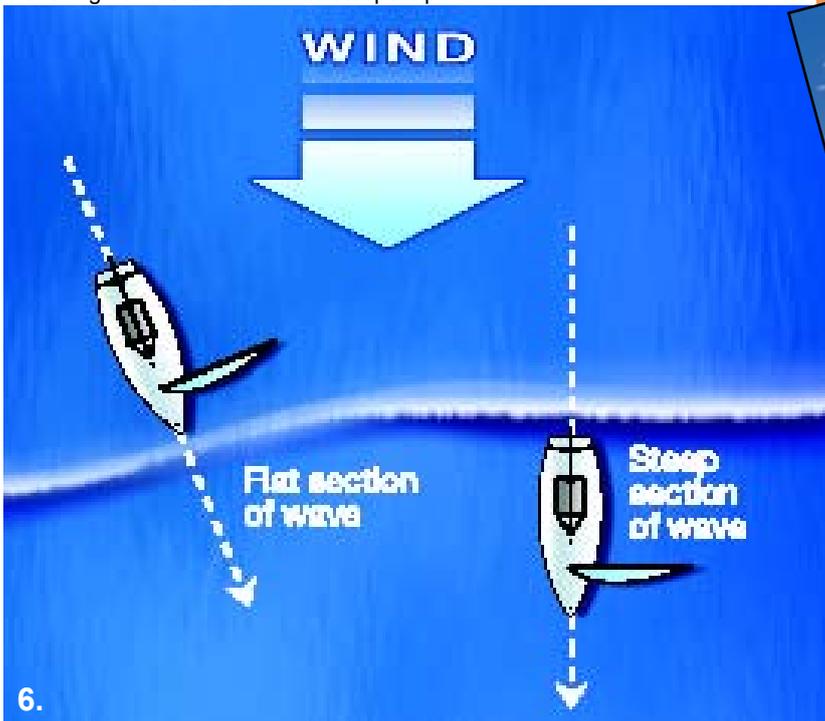




5.

sailing downwind in waves as being similar to travelling on an escalator. Going down the run on the same wave it's as if you are standing stationary on the escalator. If you let the waves go underneath the boat then it is like stepping backwards on the escalator and if you get onto the wave in front it is like stepping forward. To be the fastest we need to try and make the most steps forward but this is not always possible and changes with the wind strength. In strong winds the objective is to make as many forward steps as possible and in light winds try to reduce the backward steps. So how do we do this?

Travelling down the wave on its steepest part



6.

will gain the most acceleration and by going up the wave on its flattest part there will be the least deceleration, see illustration 6.

It is not possible to catch every wave so it is important to be patient and selective when choosing which one to go for. When you try and catch a wave and miss it you will go slower than a sailor that has just gone straight.

Catching the right waves you can ride for a longer period of time which is much better than riding four waves for a short period. To catch a wave you have selected you need to sail closer to the wind, either more by the lee or on a tighter reach. This will power the boat up and increase the speed, once the wave comes sail in the direction it is travelling and this may mean altering course. By using your weight to steer the boat less rudder is needed and the ride on the wave will be longer, so try and go with the wave whichever way it is taking you as this will help prolong the ride.

When the boat is trying to catch or surf on a wave it can be turned in one of two directions. I like to call these upturns when you head up towards a reach, and downturns when you bear away by the lee.

**Upturns**

To help the boat to turn it is important that the boat is heeled to leeward, so lift your weight from the windward side to help the boat heel. As the boat starts to heel head up slightly, as you start to head up sheet in to keep the sail pulling (see illustration 7). Flatten the boat to squirt the boat forward down the wave, don't let the boat come beyond upright.

**Downturns**

Before you start to turn let the boat roll to windward (see illustration 8), as the boat starts to roll bear away down the wave to the desired course; you may need to lean inboard to stop the boat rolling any further. As you accelerate down the wave lean inboard to flatten the boat slightly and re-trim the main, it will probably need to be eased slightly.



7.



8.



This section is taken from the RYA's latest publication, the 'Laser Handbook' by Paul Goodison.

Priced at £16.95 the 'Laser Handbook' is available to order from the Laser Library [www.laserinternational.org/library](http://www.laserinternational.org/library)

# World Laser Radial Men's 2008

Following a week of inconsistent breeze at the Women's Laser Radial Championships, the Laser Radial Men enjoyed a week of great north-easterly breeze at Takapuna Beach, New Zealand.

The 71-strong fleet sailed all 12 races in exhilarating conditions with a great swell and breeze which just kept building, beginning the week with 8-10 knots and settling at around 18 - 20 knots towards the end of the championship.

The spring tides caught out a number of sailors on the first day with seven black flags issued. American Brad Funk claimed the first win of the championship followed by Canadian Michael Leigh and Pelt Gijs from the Netherlands. Local James Sandall (NZL) put in a good performance to lead home the fleet in the second race, followed by Leigh and then Funk in third.

**Michael Leigh dominated the leader board throughout the second and third days winning all four races.**

Always right behind was Brad Funk except in race 5 when Simon Morgan (AUS) claimed the runner-up position. Day 4, however, put a temporary stop to Leigh's and Funk's runaway lead when wind shifts caught them both out. Leigh who had so far only finished 1st and 2nd ended up in 10th place in race 8.

With Funk having to retire from race 7 with a DNC score and then finishing seventh in race 8.

James Sandall put his local knowledge to good use winning both races on day 4, allowing him to claim back his third place from Morgan. But Morgan was quick to respond taking back third overall on day 5 when he won the first race and finished fourth in the second race of the day. With Leigh and Funk well out in front in the championship the battle now was for the third place. As day 5 drew to a close, the hot contenders for third place were Morgan on 32 points, Sandall on 35 points and James Burman (AUS) with 38 points.

**The last day saw Leigh scoring yet another 1st and 2nd place which made him this year's undisputed World Laser Radial Men's Champion with a series score of 15 points!** Second placed Funk finished the championship on a high with a win in the final race which put him 9 points behind Leigh on 24 points overall.

Morgan triumphed with a 3rd and 5th place on the final day, finishing the championship in third place on 40 points overall. Sandall, scoring two 7th places on the last day, ended the championship on 49 points. After last year's 39th place in the Laser Radial Championship, this meant a tremendous success with a significant jump up the fleet to 4th place this year. He also beat Burman to the 1st Under 21 title. Burman finished 8th in the final two races earning him a 5th place overall.

Other sailors in the top ten included Max Andrews (NZL) in 6th and Mathieu Frei (FRA) in 7th place. Last year's champion Ben Paton (GBR) just missed the top ten finishing 11th with 128 points, nine points behind him in 13th place was New Zealand's Mark Orams, who just a month earlier had been crowned the World Laser Radial Masters Champion in Terrigal, Australia.

The prize giving at the North Harbour Stadium in Takapuna brought the World Radials to a close.

Full results and photos are available at: <http://events.laserinternational.org/>



## Croatia - Idyllic Venue for World 4.7's

Croatia, the venue of the World Laser 4.7 Youth Championship 2008, is one of the most beautiful and unspoilt areas of Europe, offering an amazing range of scenery and landscapes. Croatia is one of the best sailing spots in the Mediterranean with 3,000 miles of beautiful coastline and over 100 beaches with Blue Flag status.

The beautiful Croatian city of Trogir is a haven of cultural and historical monuments, art, and architecture and is proudly on the UNESCO list of World Heritage sites. The wider surroundings of Trogir are characterized by lavish green vegetation, numerous islands, rocky and pebble beaches. Trogir is an attractive town with a harbour and marina on the coastal strip of the Kastela Gulf, 27 km west of Split. The old town centre is situated on a small island between the island of Ciovo and the mainland; connected with mainland Croatia by a small stone bridge, and with the island of Ciovo by a drawbridge.

Trogir was originally founded by Greek colonists from the Island of Vis in the 3rd century BC and is known for being the most well preserved Romanesque-Gothic town not only in the Adriatic but in all of Central Europe. Trogir's medieval centre, surrounded by walls, comprises of a preserved castle and tower with numerous houses, churches and palaces from the Romanesque, Gothic, Renaissance and Baroque periods.

The Croatian coast has a Mediterranean climate with an average 2,600 hours of sunshine per year. During July and August, the average sea water temperature is between 24 and 27 degrees Celsius with an average air temperature between 21 and 28 degrees Celsius. In August the wind is predominantly South-westerly between 12-15 knots with occasional South-easterlies of 10-12 knots and North-easterlies of 15-20 knots.



# World Laser Radial Youth 2008

**New Zealand sailor Andrew Maloney was the deserved winner of the 2008 Laser Radial Youth Boy's World Championship held at Takapuna Beach, New Zealand after leading the event from day two.** Another New Zealand medal went to Cushla Hulme-Merry in the Youth Girl's division who narrowly lost the title, in a tie break, to Australian sailor Gabrielle King.

Conditions throughout the regatta proved to be pretty spectacular with north-easterlies of 12-18 knots giving the sailors a good workout in the big waves. The local talent of Andrew Maloney, Gabrielle King and Cushla Hulme-Merry dominated throughout the week with consistent top 10 scores in the tricky conditions.

The spring tides caught sailors out with numerous starting penalties being given. The Youth Boy's fleet being the worst hit with seventeen black flag penalties given in the second race of day one.

New Zealand sailors topped the overnight leader board in both the Youth Boy's and Youth Girl's fleets, a pattern that would continue throughout the week. Matt Vincent (NZL) had a fantastic start to the regatta with two wins closely followed by Maloney and Guilherme Pereira (BRA) in joint 2nd place. In the Youth Girl's fleet Hulme-Merry led King overnight by just 1 point.

Day two was definitely Maloney's day as he produced two wins giving him a comfortable nine point lead. Pereira moved into second place with a sixth and a fifth giving him fifteen points, just ahead of Sam Meech (NZL).

In the Girl's fleet Hulme-Merry retained her lead with a consistent string of seconds followed by her first win of the regatta. **'I was happy with my seconds and being so consistent but I sorted my downwind in the second race and was pleased to get a win.'**

King held onto second place with a first and a seventh, while Claire Dennis (USA) leapt up the scoreboard after having a wrongly scored DNF in race two corrected to a seventh place.

In the Youth Boy's fleet, Maloney started well on day 3 with a third in race five but slipped up with a starting penalty in race six, although he managed to stay top of the leader board, eight points clear of second. Martin Evans (GBR) moved up to second on seventeen points having scored a third and first, Maarten-Max Moerman (NED) followed in third on eighteen points.

Hulme-Merry retained her lead on day 3 in the Youth Girl's fleet with some consistent sailing, holding a four point margin over King in second place. Sarah Gunni (DEN) jumped up the score board into third place after discarding a black flag in race two.

**Day 4 was business as usual for Maloney, having another two great races scoring a first and fourth, stretching his lead to ten points.** Evans held on to second while Cam McKee (NZL) moved up the score board with a third and first.

The second race of day 4 for the Youth Girl's fleet saw a few of the top sailors caught out by a big wind shift. King managed to avoid the wind shift and took the lead with a very consistent day scoring a first and second. Hulme-Merry dropped back to second after scoring a second and a seventeenth while Gunni held on to third place with a third and thirteenth.

Day 5 saw no change to the top two in the Youth Boy's fleet. Andy Maloney held firm in the top spot after scoring two seconds. Evans remained in second although Tom Burton (AUS) took up third after posting a first and third in the windy conditions.

**The top two in the Youth Girl's fleet switched places again on day 5 with Hulme-Merry scoring two wins and overtaking King.** Gunni held on to third with two seconds

The final day of racing produced similar conditions to those experienced all week, fifteen knot north-easterlies with a reasonable swell. The work was virtually done for Andy Maloney who was already clear of Martin Evans in 2nd place going into the final day of racing. Andy Maloney (NZL) took the Youth Boy's title as expected, cruising to a seven point lead ahead of Martin Evans (GBR). Maarten-Max Moerman (NED) fought his way back to finish in third place.

In the Youth Girl's contest, the title came down to the last race between Gabrielle King (AUS) and Cushla Hulme-Merry (NZL). Gabrielle finishing first and Cushla second, secured the title for Gabrielle on a tie break. Sarah Gunni (DEN) had a third and a ninth place in the final day's races to hold onto third place overall.

Full results and photos are available at: <http://events.laserinternational.org/>

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Girl's winner Gabrielle King.

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Boy's winner Andrew Maloney.



The Laser Radial Boy's Fleet Start Sailing.

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The 'Improving Your Start' article featured in the January edition of LaserWorld (pages 4-5) was originally written by Jon Emmett for [www.lasersailing.com](http://www.lasersailing.com).

# Small Talk with the Masters

We get into the minds of some of the most successful and experienced Laser Masters sailors to find out what makes them tick and what exactly they love about Masters sailing.

## 5 x World Laser Standard Grand Masters Champion Mark Bethwaite:

**Which has been your favourite World Laser Masters event? Why?**

My favourite World Laser Masters was Cancun, Mexico, in 2000. A combination of great wind and waves, crystal clear water, rigging on the beach in front of the hotel, the pool with swim up bar, margaritas and Mexican food were sensational.

**How would you describe the World Lasers Masters to someone that doesn't sail?**

I would describe it as great sport for geriatric yachtsmen – physically demanding and truly global.

**What's your best sailing tip?**

There is no substitute for, nor better way to prepare, than time on the water.

## Laser Standard Grand Masters sailor and Terrigal Organiser Rob Lowndes:

**What is it you like about World Laser Masters sailing?**

It's fantastic racing with no young upstarts to burn you off on the start line. Great friends and a real incentive to keep fit and to learn to sail faster. It is something to look forward to every year and has become a passion for many of us.

**Do you think the competition at World Laser Masters events is getting tougher? Why? How are you trying**

**to stay ahead of the competition?**

It is getting tougher because each year we are getting older and new guys sneak into each age group, many with outstanding past records! Also many (like me) are retired or semi retired and put a lot more effort into training and learning new skills. I try to stay up there by working on my fitness, having some coaching and sailing often - in all sorts of conditions. I am amazed at how much there is still to learn after sailing the Laser for so many years. Us old guys should be able to keep up with the young guys downwind - that's a goal which seems very hard to achieve!

**What's your best sailing tip?**

Sail flat and fast upwind. In a breeze, constantly work the main to achieve this. Watch some surfing movies to learn how to better use waves downwind.

## 6 x World Laser Standard Apprentice Masters Champion Brett Beyer:

**What encouraged you to start competing in the World Laser Masters?**

I never gave Masters sailing much thought before I turned 35. Then in 2001, I competed in the Seniors Worlds in Cork, Ireland and just turned 35 during that regatta. It just made sense to stay on and compete in the Masters Worlds. I was fortunate enough to win those Masters Worlds and I think it was this regatta that got me hooked.

**How would you describe the World Laser Masters to someone that doesn't sail?**

It may be difficult for a non-sportsman to understand what World Laser Masters competition is about. You could explain the physical exertion and pain but that would not make it clear. You could describe the sensation of sailing to a non-sailor, but this would be foreign to them. You could describe the intense competition combined with social atmosphere but this may be confusing. So, most just say it's a bunch of "old people" racing in small boats.

## Former World Laser Radial Apprentice Women's Champion Yvonne Malmsten:

**What encouraged you to start competing in the World Laser Masters?**

I had done some Laser Senior Worlds before, and when I was able to compete in Master Worlds I just went there instead.

**What's your best sailing tip?**

Stay fit, and hike hard.

It is about not giving an inch on the race course, but admitting one's "senior moments" and laughing about them back on shore.

## 5 x World Laser Radial Great Grand Masters Champion Peter Seidenberg:

**What is it you like about World Laser Masters sailing?**

It is measuring myself against my peers from around the world and enjoying the company of people with the same passion for sailing, many of whom have become my friends. It is about not giving an inch on the race course, but admitting one's "senior moments" and laughing about them back on shore.

"I would describe it as great sport for geriatric yachtsmen – physically demanding and truly global."

**When did you start sailing the Laser?**

I bought my first Laser in 1973, two years after its invention. The sail number was 11003. I have sailed a Laser pretty regularly ever since, for 35 years now, still learning to master this little, simple, yet complex boat.

**What encouraged you to start competing in the World Laser Masters?**

Masters sailing started worldwide in 1980. It was at the first North American Masters in 1980 at the Fort Worth Boat Club in Texas when I heard that the first World Masters Championship in France had taken place earlier that year. I decided then that I would go to the next Masters Worlds. It was the beginning of a love affair with this event, and I haven't missed a single one since then, 25 in all.

**How would you describe the World Laser Masters to someone that doesn't sail?**

I would describe it as an event that one can take as seriously as an important regatta, or as nonchalantly as a big family reunion. If you want to make friends with like-minded people, go to a Masters World Championship. I am already looking forward to the next one!

## Standard Grand Masters sailor and ILCA World Council member Bob Blakey

**Which has been your favourite World Laser Masters event? Why?**

Fortaleza, Brazil. I love sailing in the Trade Winds – warm and breezy.

**Do you think the competition at World Laser Masters events is getting tougher?**

Yes, it gets tougher because the new entrants in each age group division are so young. The new Apprentices look like teenagers. I try to stay competitive by sailing more and learning from experts.

**What is it you like about World Laser Masters sailing?**

Being able to compete in a World Championship in the sport I love while approaching old age and keeping fit. Also, the wonderful friendships made with fellow competitors. I was never much good at other sports, just slightly less hopeless at yachting.

**What's your best sailing tip?**

Enjoy it. – If you aren't enjoying it, then do something else.

