

Laser World



September 2008

EUROPEAN'S

Slingsby takes trophy

Mutala dominates Women's Champ

Goodison wins 4th title

YOUTH CHAMPIONS DEFEND TITLES IN DENMARK

Mathilde De Karangat © David Kneale/Volvo Ocean Race/tonEdition

LASER 4.7 Record growth

Caribbean Laser Championships

CANADA - Venue for 2009 Masters

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Youth Champions Defend Titles in Denmark

Radial Youth

The 2008 Volvo Youth Sailing ISAF World Championship brought together over 240 young sailors from 58 nations in Århus, Denmark.

The reigning Volvo Youth Sailing ISAF World Champions in both the Boys and Girls One Person Dinghy events returned to defend their titles. Pavlos Kontides of Cyprus dominated the Laser series in Kingston last year to win by a race to spare and now, aged 18 and in his last year at the Youth Worlds, he started as hot favourite for a repeat performance in Denmark. Since winning gold last July, Kontides has put in some notable performances on the senior circuit. His performances have merited him more than just selection for the Cyprus Youth Team and following on from Denmark, Kontides will travel to Qingdao, China, where he will represent his nation at the 2008 Olympic Sailing Competition. In total 46 nations will be represented in the Laser fleet this year - a new record for an event at the Youth Worlds.

In the Girl's Laser Radial fleet the 2007 champion was also defending her title. Last year Gabrielle King (AUS) spearheaded her nation's success story, which ended with the Australians winning the Volvo Trophy. Like Kontides, she has already built on her 2007 success, most notably winning this year's Laser Radial Youth World Championship in New Zealand.

The event began with the competitors' parade through the city proudly waving their country flags following a marching band to the Town Hall where they were officially welcomed to Denmark. The Opening Ceremony was a Royal affair with the HRH Crown Prince Frederik of Denmark greeting the teams, volunteers and Organizing Committee to the city of Århus.

Big breeze, waves and frequent rain storms made for an adrenaline-charged regatta. Shifty winds throughout the week proved a good test for both the light and heavy wind specialists.

Reigning champion Pavlos Kontides got his series underway in style by leading the first race from start to finish. However, in the second race he was left at the back of the fleet after hitting the pin end at the start, but sailed through the fleet to

recover to second place behind Denmark's Thorbjørn Schierup. He carried on leading the fleet with another two first places on day 2, making it look very easy out on the water in the big breeze. American Luke Lawrence also showed consistency with two second places lifting him to second place overall and pushing local Århus sailor Thorbjørn Schierup into third. Kontides

maintained his dominant position at the top of the Laser standings throughout days 3 and 4 and by day 5 had done enough to secure the title. Luke Lawrence (USA) secured the silver medal, whilst Sam Meech (NZL) won the battle for bronze.

In the Laser Radial class, the 2007 champion, Gabrielle King (AUS), started well and was second overall to Isabella Bertold (CAN) after the first day. The defending champion gained overall lead after day 2 with consistent top five positions as Isabelle Bertold fell to 2nd place just two points behind. Gabrielle King proved herself on day 3 with two race wins to increase her overall lead to six points. New Zealand's Cushla Hume-Merry had her best day of the series with a 3rd and a 4th lifting her up into second overall, just ahead of Denmark's Cathrine Sofie Hall. On day 5 King added a third bullet to her scoreline and maintained her run of all top-five finishes to extend her overall lead in the Laser Radial fleet

King scored her fourth and fifth bullets of the championship on day 6 to take the title in style. "I thought after day two it was a possibility to win and then things kept going my way and ended up with this win. This is the best event, I love it," said the ecstatic young Australian. Susana Romero of Spain won the silver medal, just four points ahead of New Zealand's Cushla Hume-Merry who was awarded bronze.

Pavlos Kontides (CYP) became the first ever two-time winner of the ISAF St Lawrence Trophy, presented to the winner of the Boy's One Person Dinghy event - an incredible achievement considering the sailors to have come closest to it in the past (by winning one gold and one silver medal) are Russell Coutts (NZL), Ben Ainslie (GBR), Dean Barker (NZL) and Dan Slater (NZL)! Kontides explained, "It hasn't sunk in yet that I have won. I can't believe that two people from my country are in the top ten, it is great. This is my fifth and last Youth Worlds and I can't believe I am the only person to win two gold medals."

The Volvo Trophy went to Great Britain with gold medals in both the girls and boys 29er fleets but the fight for second place was a close fought one with New Zealand pipping Australia to the post by just two points.

Full results available:
<http://www.isaf.com/24448.php>



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Pavlos Kontides.



J. Celal Tumsen.



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Gabrielle King.

Challenging conditions for European Senior Championship

Sailors at this year's European Laser Senior Championship had their work cut out for them with demanding conditions at the North Sea coast in Nieuwpoort, Belgium.

Physical stamina and sound tactical skills were required to take advantage of the strong currents and the blustery south westerly wind ranging from 5 to over 20 knots.

For the qualifying series, sailors were split into 3 fleets and Day 1 got underway with fair weather conditions and a 14 to 18 knot westerly wind. The first race of the day went smoothly and saw reigning World champion Tom Slingsby (AUS), reigning European champion Paul Goodison (GBR) and world-ranked number 36 Bradley Funk (USA) winning their respective fleets. The start of the second race was made more difficult by a turning tide resulting in 1 general recall for the green fleet and two recalls for the yellow and red fleet. Slingsby scored another bullet, putting him at the top of the leader board ahead of Goodison and Michael Leigh (CAN) who were tied in second place.

Day 2 saw overcast weather conditions with wind that dropped from 12 to around 8 knots in the first race but then built up again throughout the day to over 18 knots, providing for some enjoyable downwind racing. The first race of the day went to Slingsby, Rimsas Laurynas (LTU) and 2003 European champion Vasilij Zbogar (SLO) in their respective fleets.

In the second race starts became quite difficult again due to the direction of the current, but after another general recall for each fleet the second race got underway. Tobias Schadewaldt (GER) made the challenging conditions work for him and scored his second 1st place. Slingsby finished 4th but this did little to challenge his top position on the leader board where he was followed by Goodison in second and Zbogar in third place.

Day 3 started with a slight delay due to a commercial ship entering the harbour but finally got underway with a strong current and a steady 10 knot breeze. Slingsby scored another 1st place, as did Tonci Stipanovic (CRO) and Matias del Solar (CHI) in their fleets. In the second race the red fleet had to be recalled once but then started cleanly. The wind dropped to 6 knots throughout the race leaving some sailors struggling against the current to cross the finish line. Diego Romero (ITA) made up for his black flag disqualification in race 4 by scoring his first race win. The winners of the other two fleets were Jean Baptiste Bernaz (FRA) and Joaquin Blanco Albalat (ESP).

The challenging conditions continued on the last day of the qualifying series with strong currents and a breeze ranging from 15 to 20 knots. It was, however, a fantastic day for Polish Number 1 Karol Porozynski who scored two 1st places in these tricky conditions. Slingsby delivered another solid performance, scoring a 2nd and 1st, allowing him to stretch his overall lead over Goodison to 11 points. Goodison scored a 26th in race 7 and a 2nd in race 8, leaving him just ahead of Zbogar finishing 5th and 3rd.

The first day of the finals series also turned out to be the last one as racing on Day 6 had to be abandoned in the face of adverse weather conditions with forecasted winds of 28 to 30 knots and steep waves.

The first finals race was slightly delayed but then got underway with a stable wind of around 18 knots. Deniss Karpak (EST) scored a 1st in the gold fleet, followed by Marc de Haas (NED) in 2nd and Goodison in 3rd.

The last race of the championship started after two general recalls in the gold fleet and 4 black flags issued to Leigh, Del Solar, Funk and Dan Beleben (GBR). Porozynski delivered another good performance and led home the gold fleet in this final race, followed by Stipanovic in 2nd and Arvid Claesson (SWE) in 3rd place.

It was the worst day for Slingsby in terms of scores with an 11th and 6th place finish, but overall had no effect on his position at the top of the leader board. He was crowned winner of the European Trophy with an 8 point lead over Goodison, who, in Tom's words, is "his biggest threat in China". It has been a successful sailing season for Slingsby in Europe this year; having already scored 1st places at the Holland Regatta and Kiel Week, this is his 3rd ISAF Grade 1 win in 2 months. Goodison, who like many sailors has been training hard and losing weight for Beijing, was unsure how well he would do in the strong winds and currents. He needn't have worried as he finished the regatta in solid second place with 25 points and took the European Champion title for the fourth year in a row. Zbogar, the 32 year old sailor who won the bronze medal for Slovenia at the 2004 Olympic Summer Games in Athens, finished 7 points behind Goodison on 32 points.

Overall it has been a very successful regatta with 151 entries from 27 countries. For full results, reports and pictures for this championship, please visit our website at <http://events.laserinternational.org/en/events/overview/100z19>



Paul Goodison.



Tom Slingsby.



Stiff competition at European Laser Radial Women's Championship

The Koninklijke Yacht Club in Nieuwpoort, situated on the North Sea coast in Belgium, welcomed 102 sailors from 32 countries to this year's European Laser Radial Women's Championship. Overall, conditions were challenging to say the least with a combination of strong currents and a blustery south westerly wind ranging from 5 to over 20 knots.

The undisputed star of this year's Laser Radial Women's Championship is Finland's Sari Multala. The 30 year old sailor from Helsinki took the championship by storm with an impressive 11 points in 10 races.

Day 1 of racing got underway with blue skies and a 14 to 18 knot westerly wind. The pace was set for the rest of the championship when Multala won both races of the day in her fleet, positioning her at the top of the leader board. Sophie de Turckheim from France also started the championship on a high with a 1st and 2nd place finish in her fleet. Defending European champion Evi van Acker (BEL) finished just 1 point behind de Turckheim with a 3rd and 1st, while World champion Sarah Steyart (FRA) and Katarzyna Szotynska (POL) both finished the day on 6 points overall.

Sailors were greeted by overcast weather conditions on day 2 of racing. Multala repeated her magnificent performance by scoring another 2 bullets. De Turckheim remained in 2nd place on 8 points after scoring a 3rd and 2nd place, still closely followed by van Acker on 10 points. Steyart moved from fifth into fourth place in front of Lucia Reyes (ESP) and Szotynska after a 3rd and 6th place finish while Sarah Blanck (AUS) shot up the leader board from 17th overall to 8th overall after a 2nd and 7th place finish.

Race conditions were challenging on the penultimate day of the qualifying series with a strong current and winds ranging from 6 to 10 knots. Blanck, World ranked number 3, seemed un-phased by the demanding environment and continued her successful journey up the leader board by finishing first in both races, settling in fourth position on 15 points. Two points ahead of her finished van Acker and Szotynska on 13 points. Multala seemed to struggle with the conditions in the second race and finished 26th, however, with the first discard coming into play she remained in first place on 6 points.

The last day of the qualifying series got underway after a slight delay due to the pin end boat not holding anchor, but after this minor hiccup the first race started in a 12 knot westerly breeze which grew to 16 knots as the race went on. Multala was back on form scoring a 1st, as did Cecilia Carranza Saroli (ARG) in her fleet. The second race was started after a general recall for both fleets and the growing breeze and choppy water tested the sailors' skills. Multala scored another 1st, staying miles ahead

of the competition on 8 points. Van Acker also finished 1st in the second race, allowing her to keep her second place with 17 points. De Turckheim recovered from her 26th and 10th place the day before by scoring two 2nd places which put her back up into third place, five points behind van Acker.

De Turckheim kept on fighting for the lead on the first day of the finals series in the Gold Fleet and sailed away with two 1st place finishes placing her in second position above van Acker who finished 2nd in both races. Multala did enough to hold the top spot on the leader board with a 3rd and a 4th place.

Adverse weather conditions called an early end to the European championship and so Sophie de Turckheim finished the championship in second place, 3 points behind Sari Multala, winner of the European Championship 2008. It was a great outcome for Multala who had been beaten to the top spot at the Kiel Week regatta by de Turckheim by 2 points the month before. The results certainly show that the competition was tough at the front of the Radial Women's Championship and one might wonder what could have been if the second day of the finals series hadn't been called off due to forecasted high winds of 30 knots. The two sailors were joined on the podium by last year's champion Evi van Acker in third place who finished just 2 points behind de Turckheim. The trio had dominated the course throughout the championship, each scoring only twice outside the top three, and finished the finals with a 14 point gap from the rest of the fleet.

Interested in attending next year's European Laser Radial Women's Championship? Application forms will be available on our website later this year, keep checking our website at <http://www.laserinternational.org/>

You can find full results, reports & pictures at <http://events.laserinternational.org/en/events/reports/100z18>

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Sophie de Turckheim, Sari Mutala & Evi Van Acker.

© Thom Touw



Evi Van Acker.

© Thom Touw



Sari Mutala, European Laser Radial Women's Champion 2008.



© Greg Harrowsmith

60 countries participating in Laser 4.7 regattas internationally

The Growth of the Laser 4.7

The Laser 4.7 continues to grow at a fantastic rate as more and more parents, clubs and countries are attracted to an easy single-handed development pathway. Starting with the Optimist the Laser 4.7 takes over as the rapid growth changes of adolescence kick in. Thereafter, according to development, boys and girls can move on to the Laser Radial and for some boys, finally on to the Laser Standard.

The Optimist class does a great job in providing many regattas at both national and international level. If you are brought up sailing in this environment then it is natural that sailors will look to continue in a similar environment as their bodies outgrow the Optimist.

What class delivers a similar national and international programme to the Optimist? The Laser 4.7! In fact it is the only ISAF class that gets anywhere near the Optimist numbers no matter how you measure it. Interest in the Laser 4.7 is so high at the top level that, for the first time, we had to introduce a qualification system for our 2008 Laser 4.7 World Championships to provide a fair distribution of places among the 40 interested countries wanting to send entries and that was with a 400 competitor entry limit!

We've hit a record 39 countries entering the 2008 World Championship. **From 2006 to 2008 inclusive, young sailors from 60 countries and all six continents have taken part in Laser 4.7 regattas internationally.**

The Pathway works

Two examples of progression taken from opposite ends of the world (and climates) are Tuula Tenkannen from Finland who finished 5th in the girls fleet at 2006 Laser 4.7 World Championship, was the girls 2007 Laser Radial Youth World Champion and in 2008 finished a very respectable 12th in the Women's Laser Radial World Championship. From Brazil, Baepi Pinna, went from 48th in the 2006 Laser 4.7 World Championships to being the runner up in 2007 and then on to take a 22nd in the Laser Radial Youth World Championship just 3 months later. Another Robert Scheidt in the making? Watch this space.

What is most exciting is seeing how the Pathway works in developing sailing countries where the Optimist pioneered the start of sailing for young people. As sailors progressed from the Optimist they went on the Laser pathway and now we are seeing new countries at Laser 4.7, Laser Radial Youth and Laser Standard events. In the last 3 years the Laser 4.7, Laser Radial and Laser Standard have been used together for the first time in the African Games and the Asian Games. In fact in many countries Optimist and Laser racing is the only racing that takes place!

Some people may say that is not good for

the development of sailing. If it was bad surely we would not be seeing the large participation and growth that we now have. **Laser sailors have gone on to sail Star, Finn, Tornado and 49er at Olympic level whilst many others are making a living on the professional keel boat circuit and in the Americas.** It seems like Laser was good for all these!

Youth Olympic Games

In February of this year the International Olympic Committee announced Singapore as the venue for the first Youth Olympic Games to be held in 2010. The Laser builders and other class builders were invited by ISAF to make a bid to supply single-handed equipment. ISAF selected 15 and 16 years old as the age group. The International Olympic Committee limited the total number of competitors to 100 boys and girls split between sailboards and single-handed boats.

The Laser builders offered the Laser 4.7 and also offered to supply Laser 4.7 for all six of the qualification events. Their bid emphasized the strength of the Laser 4.7 as evidenced by the high number of countries competing in the Laser 4.7 at international events, over 1000 Laser 4.7's sold every year, the pathway from youth to senior Olympic competition and the fact the Laser is a tried and tested product that is popular at all levels of sailing and has proved itself in the Olympic arena by delivering increased single-handed participation for both men and women.

Unfortunately the Laser 4.7 bid was not successful. The ISAF Executive Committee followed the recommendation of their 4 person working party to select the Byte C2 as equipment for the Youth Olympic Games. The equipment selection process for the Youth Olympic Games was different from the process that will be used in November for the 2012 'Senior' Olympic Games.

ISAF announced that the Laser 4.7 may be used for some of the qualifier events for the Youth Olympic Games.

The Future

Our goal for the future is to build on the existing very strong base and universality of the Laser 4.7. We recognise that is important to offer events each year for all youth age groups at all levels. We will promote more continental and regional events to reduce travel costs and give opportunities for more sailors.

We will also introduce a programme of developing and training Laser 4.7 coaches.

Our World Championship programme will continue to visit new continents to give maximum opportunity for sailors all over the world to experience. Next July we visit Brazil!

Jeff Martin
ILCA Executive Secretary



The Legend - Robert Scheidt.

© Thom Thow



Tuula Tenkannen.

Canada to host 2009 World Masters

Nova Scotia, Canada, has won the bid to host the World Laser Standard Senior Championship and the World Laser Masters Championship in 2009. The St. Margaret Sailing Club, Halifax, Nova Scotia, will be the venue with athletes competing on the waters of beautiful St. Margaret's Bay.

The Championships will take place from August 17th to September 5th 2009; the World Laser Standard Senior Championship 2009 will be followed by the World Laser Masters Championship 2009. The last time the World's were held in Canada was 28 years ago.

St. Margaret's Bay is known as one of the premiere sailing venues in North America, and for good reason. The pristine bay consists of approximately 5x7 miles of unobstructed, clear Atlantic waters. The racing area is free of shoals, islands, commercial traffic, and currents. It is aligned with the prevailing southwest winds and generates a 20-25 knot breeze on sunny days, often with large ocean swell. Typically, the sea breeze will maintain its direction within 5-10 degrees throughout the day. The air temperature is typically low-to-mid 20's (70F).

The St. Margaret Sailing Club is located on the Eerner shores of the bay. The club boasts a large beach shoreline and

thousands of square feet of open grass space. Located at the centre of it all, the 4,000 foot clubhouse looks out onto the water and will serve as the central headquarters for the event. The club has a long history of passionate support for dinghy events, and has a strong track record for successfully hosting exciting one-design events.

"This is exciting news for the St. Margaret's Bay community", said Judith Streach, Minister and MLA of Chester and St. Margaret's Bay. "The Laser World Championships will bring the sport to life for our sailing athletes and everyone in the community."

The organizing committee was recently presented with a cheque from Health Promotion and Protection for \$240,000 to help prepare the venue for the World championships. The 2009 Laser Worlds organizing committee is co-chaired by Rod Millar from the St. Margaret Sailing Club and Barbara Pike from the Royal Nova Scotia Yacht Squadron.

"This is the largest sailing event ever held in eastern Canada," said Pike. "This is not just a two or three day event. This is hundreds of athletes competing on St. Margaret's Bay for almost three weeks." "We are also extremely thankful to the municipal and provincial governments for the financial support they have provided to date, and specific thanks to Events Halifax for all the help they provided in preparing this successful bid," said Millar.

For more information please visit the website: www.2009laserworlds.org



Sailing in St Margaret's Bay.



The St Margaret Sailing Club.

2009 Events

- ① Rolex Miami
25-31 Jan 09
- ② Princess Sophia
4-10 Apr 09
- ③ Semaine Olympique
Francaise
18-24 Apr 09
- ④ Breitling Regatta
27-31 May 09
- ⑤ Kiel Week
20-28 Jun 09
- ⑥ ISAF Youth
Championship
9-18 Jul 09
- ⑦ World Laser 4.7
Championship
24 -31 Jul 09
(Subject to agreement)
- ⑧ World Laser Radial
Championship
28 Jul - 10 Aug 09
- ⑨ World Laser
Standard & Masters
Championship
20 Aug - 5 Sep 09
- ⑩ Sail Melbourne
15-20 Dec 09



Support Your Local Laser Dealer

Our class President, Heini Wellmann, explains the legal restrictions concerning the importation of Laser boats and spares.

The one design principle - through the Laser Construction Manual agreement and the Class Rules - makes sure that all Laser sailors have identical boats, spars, and sails at their disposal. There is no performance difference in the equipment to ensure that only the skill, tactics and physical preparation of the sailor make the difference in winning or losing a Laser race - and sometimes luck! This is the heart of the Laser's success.

Since the Laser became an Olympic class and later the Laser Radial, many of the top sailors are professionals - at least during the last two years before the Olympic Games. They travel all over the globe. For example during the northern hemisphere winter, many European sailors train and compete in Australia or New Zealand. The Australians and New Zealanders travel to Europe in May, June and July to participate in the big European regattas. The Class also organises the World Championships alternating around all six continents.

Therefore, it is important to know whether a sailor can buy a Laser, spars and sails in any country and import it to his home country. This is only possible under certain very strict conditions, as the Laser boat is protected by trade marks.

Some legal considerations are necessary to understand the sailor's rights and duties. The following is based on the advice of an international trade mark specialist at the request of the Class:

Most commercially used trade marks like Coca Cola®, Nokia® and Nescafé® are owned by the corporation, which uses them on a worldwide basis. For the Laser trade mark this is different: each builder owns the Laser trade mark for the territories they sell into. You can find these territories on the ILCA web site, <http://www.laserinternational.org/manu.htm>.

International trade mark agreements - supported by national and multinational

legislation and regulations - consider the import of a trade mark protected product into a country where the trade mark is owned by another company an infringement of the intellectual property (IP) rights of that company. These regulations allow the owner of an IP right to request customs offices to detain or not release goods which the IP owner believes infringes its IP rights. It should also be noted that these restrictions apply for both new and second hand boats.

Therefore, by buying a new or second hand Laser in one country and importing it into a country which is in the territory of another builder, you risk that the other builder takes legal action against you. This has already happened in the past: Lasers have been seized and detained by customs offices and have been returned to the country of origin at considerable cost to the person trying to import the boats.

However, in the case of the Laser there is an additional agreement to be considered. Before being selected as Olympic Equipment, all builders, the class and ISAF have signed an agreement that defines the rights and duties of each party during the period the equipment is selected for the Games. In one part of the agreement it is specified that the trade mark, trade name or copyright holders and the manufacturers will allow any individual sailor and/or organisation to buy a boat ready to sail, spare parts and sails from any licensed builder/producer/dealer worldwide, provided that such purchase is for the exclusive use of the sailor or organisation and is not used in a business or trade or for any commercial activity.

In summary: independent of any trade mark rights you can buy where you want, but solely for your exclusive personal use. You need to organise the transport yourself and obviously pay the import duties and taxes in your home country. You are not allowed to buy several boats and then sell them to your friends. This is also valid for second hand boats.



Independent of the possibility to buy a Laser for your exclusive personal use where you like, you need to consider two other aspects:

There is a Laser dealer in almost every country of the World. This is an important service to current and future owners of a Laser boat. Spare parts are readily available in case of need. If you buy through your local dealer you are helping to preserve that service and you do not have to go to the trouble of worrying about import duties and transport, which can be tedious operations. If sailors, during short term currency variations, shop around and buy the boats wherever they are a little bit cheaper, then the local dealer cannot make a living anymore, will go out of business and all sailors of that country will have to import the spare parts from overseas.

Finally consider the warranty given for a new hull. If you buy your boat in a country that is not in the same trademark area as your own, you cannot expect the trademark owner for your country to support a warranty claim for such a boat.

Therefore support your local dealer and buy locally.

I hope this clarifies the issues and I wish you happy sailing.

Heini Wellmann, Class President

Atlantic Coast Champs

The Atlantic Coast Championships for the Laser Standard, Laser Radial and Laser 4.7 were held on July 12-13 at the Brant Beach Yacht Club, New Jersey, USA. The Atlantic Coast Championships received a huge turnout and great racing for the Brant Beach Yacht Club. Ideal sailing conditions with a thermal driven SSE wind at 10-12 knots greeted the 175 sailors on both days of sailing. Nearly 30 Canadians braved the trip to New Jersey.

Eight races were sailed for the Laser Standard

and Laser Radial Fleets, with seven for the Laser 4.7. The top finishers included Kyle Rogochenko in the Laser Standard with top Junior sailor Ben Liebowitz. In the Radial Fleet David Alfoso was first with Chanel Cloutier Beaudoin top female. Dominique Racine won in the Laser 4.7.

Results:

Laser Standard

Kyle Rogochenko	11 pts
Royce Weber	17 pts
Rob Crane	23 pts

Laser Radial

David Alfonso	25 pts
Max Lopez	54 pts
Dylan Finneran	57 pts

Laser 4.7

Dominique Racine	10 pts
Wendy Reuss	14 pts
Christina Frost	20 pts

<http://bbyc.net/LaserACCs/index.htm>



European Laser Radial Men's Championship 2008

The European Laser Radial Men's Championship began on 12th July alongside the European Laser Radial Women's Championship at the Koninklijke Yacht Club, Nieuwpoort, Belgium. The beautiful blue skies, good wind of 7-10 knots and nice waves helped get both Championships off to a good start.

Two races were sailed on day 1 with the westerly wind picking up to between 14 and 18 knots. The first race started smoothly with a win for both Mathieu Frei (FRA) and Wojciech Zemke (POL). Mathieu Frei wasn't as lucky in race two, disqualified for being over the start line under the black flag, following a general recall. The overnight lead was held by Jon Emmett (GBR), Michail Aristeidis (GRE) and Wojciech Zemke all on 3 points.

Day two of racing saw two races sailed in overcast weather conditions. During the first race the south-westerly wind diminished from 12 knots to less than 10 knots. There was a general recall in the second race of the day, with 11 sailors disqualified

for being over the start line when the black flag was flown. Wojciech Zemke and Filip Matika (CRO) both won in their fleets in race 3, and Zemke scored a 3rd in race 4 keeping the overall lead.

Wojciech Zemke led with a 1st and a 3rd place on day three, holding the overall lead by 2 points over 2nd place Jon Emmett.

Day four saw Jon Emmett recover his overall lead with two first places from Wojciech Zemke who also took a 1st place in race 5 of the second fleet to sit just one point behind Emmett in second place overall. Jon Emmett said "In the light winds I won both races very

"I won the race by such a margin they missed me off the results!"

comfortably (the last race of the day I won by such a margin they missed me off the results to start with!) and moved into the lead overall".

The first race of day five was slightly delayed due to the pin end boat not holding anchor. Once this was resolved the first race got underway with a steady westerly wind of 12 knots at the start. Throughout the race the wind increased steadily to reach 16 knots at the finish with a consistent wind direction.

After a short break for lunch, the men's fleets got on the water again for race eight with winds in excess of 18 knots. The wind strengthened even more throughout the race to reach up to 21 knots, proving challenging for sailors unfamiliar with the choppy North

Sea. Jon Emmett, scored a 10th and a 4th taking him down 1 place to second overall. Wojciech Zemke scored a 1st and a 3rd allowing him to take overall lead on 12 points, just 3 points ahead of Jon Emmett. Mathieu Frei had his best day of the regatta, moving up to 3rd place overall with two bullets in races 7 and 8.

An issue with the start vessel caused a slight delay for the fleets on day six, the first day of finals racing. A replacement was soon found, the race committee members transferred and the boat positioned ready for the start, causing a delay of half an hour. Luckily, the wind was reasonably steady from the south-west and was between 16 and 18 knots. With the wind remaining consistent the race committee were able to start the first and second race back to back.

Mathieu Frei sailed well again on day six scoring a 2nd and a 1st allowing him to take the overall lead. Wojciech Zemke and Jon Emmett both had a disappointing race 9 scoring a 9th and 11th respectively but fared better in the final race of the day. Mathieu Frei took the overall lead on 14 points, closely followed by Wojciech Zemke on 15 points and Jon Emmett on 17 points.

All scheduled races were cancelled on the final day of racing due to adverse weather conditions. Average winds of 23 knots were measured close to the shore line with steep waves in the bay. In the afternoon winds of between 28 and 30 knots were forecast, calling an early end to the European Laser Radial Men's Championship 2008.

Mathieu Frei (FRA) was the overall winner of the European Laser Radial Men's Championship, followed by Wojciech Zemke and Jon Emmett in 2nd and 3rd respectively.

Full results at <http://events.laserinternational.org/en/events/results/100z17>



© Thom Touw

Mathieu Frei.

19th Open Caribbean Laser Championships

The "Caribbean Laser Championship" is back. From the 6th to the 8th of June 2008 the Caribbean Laser Championships returned, on the island of St.Maarten, after 1 year of absence.

The combined efforts of Organizer Frits Bus, the St Maarten Yacht Club and financial sponsor Heineken Beer, alongside a perfect location and conditions made the regatta a huge success.

Sailors from all around the Caribbean and as far as Canada enjoyed the azur blue Caribbean Sea at Baie Orientale where the regatta is known for its friendly attitude and leisurely sailing but still with a fierce competitive spirit.

The regatta began with 12-16 knots winds on the first day with lots of windshifts proving to be challenging competition.

In the Laser Standard class Brett Wright (BER) proved to be fastest ahead of Frits Bus from St.Maartin and Markku Hamala from St.Barths. In the Masters Class Olivier Bernaz, from France, stayed ahead of Jorge Abreu from the Dominican Rep. David de Vrie dominated the Laser Radial class and Kevin v.d. Burgh stayed

ahead of Joylon Ferron in the Youth category.

Next year will be the 20th edition of the Open Caribbean Championship and Organisers plan to make it special. If you love to sail in warm, blue water, and salsa all night long then make your reservation early for next year. Rental Lasers are limited so book early.

The 2009 regatta will be on 6-7 of June 2009.

Contact info@smyc or fritsbus@caribserve.net.

Results:

- Laser Standard.
 1. Brett Wright, Bermuda.
 2. Markku Hamala, St.Barths.
 3. Frits Bus, St.Maarten.

- Masters
 1. Olivier Bernaz, France.
 2. Rien Koerteknie, sxm.
 3. Jorge Abreu, Dom. Rep.

- Radial.
 1. David de Vries.

Youth.
 1. Joylon Ferron



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