

Laser World



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A MINUTE WITH: Top photographer Richard Langdon

STEP BY STEP AS YOU GROW



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RULE CHANGES EXPLAINED



2012 SOUTH & CENTRAL
AMERICAN CHAMPIONSHIPS



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Step By Step As You Grow

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Follow the route through from Junior to Youth to Olympic Classes!

by Jon Emmett



© Lijia Xu

Lijia Xu in her Optimist, 2004



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2012: Lijia at Rolex Miami



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On the podium with

At first glance the connection between an Optimist and a Laser may seem a small one. They are very different boats, but actually this is a very common progression for young sailors, as they follow the single handed route through from Junior to Youth to Olympic classes.

For many sailors it comes as somewhat of a relief finally not having to control their weight to stay competitive. In fact one of the biggest transitions will be going from being heavy in a class (and maybe having to keep their weight down) to being light in a class and having to put on weight.

Naturally the more mature sailors will always have an advantage over the younger sailors in terms of skills and experience, but these sailors will tend to be towards the upper end of the weight range. So maybe this suits those of naturally slight build or those who put on weight later.

Indeed trying to control your weight at such an important developing age can lead to its own problems. So when you are the correct weight to move to the Laser, why not do so?

The direct move to the Laser is now even easier with the huge increase in the popularity of the 4.7 rig in recent years meaning that there is no need to wait. Indeed some of the mature sailors who are already too heavy would be better to move sooner rather than later, so as to get the best possible start in their Laser careers.

Now many sailors are supported heavily by the federation so may need to wait to gain the most from the Optimist class, which is an ideal launching base for any sailor's career. Towards the end of your time in the Optimist you are obviously racing against much younger and less experienced opponents, so this is where you are most likely to gain your best results. For this reason most people will aim to race their last major championship in the last year that they are eligible to do so.

However losing weight for young sailors is a hard job and if possible it is sensible to follow the boat for your correct body weight. This logic remains true as you work your way through the Laser family, always trying to be in what is the right boat for you at that moment in time, so maybe if you are of a naturally lighter frame you just progress more slowly.

Lijia Xu from China is a great example of someone who made the transition. A past Double Optimist World Champion she also went on to win the Radial Worlds and is now campaigning for the 2012 Olympics hoping to improve on her Bronze at the 2008 games.

The Laser has many advantages as a class. It is a low cost investment into Olympic sailing where there is no technical knowledge loss as there would be with other transitions to more technical boats. All the boats are the same, so it is the skill of the sailor which makes the difference, which is why Laser sailing so rewards time in the boat.

Also the logistics for Laser sailing make it very easy for everyone to get to regattas. The option to travel around the World with just some ropes, blocks and a tiller certainly makes life easier. This gives a lot of opportunities for attending international regattas.

One of the key differences in the transition is the very physical nature of the Laser. This is probably exaggerated as many Optimist sailors will leave the class being right at the upper end of the competitive weight range (or possibly over) and then join the Laser class being towards the bottom end of the weight range. This is why it is well worth considering stepping into the Laser 4.7 to make the transition easier.

Therefore getting Laser fit becomes one of the key priorities, but actually this can be improved at the same time as working on the boat handling techniques. Compared to an Optimist the Laser is a much bigger hull which is steered by a much smaller rudder. So body movements become absolutely crucial here.

When first stepping into the Laser it is perhaps sensible to go out in light to moderate winds to start with and then progress naturally from there. You learn very little when you have your centreboard in the air and your mast in the water, and you obviously do not want to damage yourself or your equipment.

The skills you need will come very quickly although they are of course hard to master, but it is these invaluable skills learned in the Laser class which lead to many top sailors (the list is far, far too long to mention here) continuing to have success in every class that they race.

Clarification of Rule Changes

ILCA's New Class Rules Explained!

by Clive Humphries, ILCA Technical Officer

MAINSHEET

Rule 3(c) i and ii are rewritten without changing content. An additional sentence is added to make it clear that the mainsheet must be tied or knotted after the mainsheet block and the knot or tie shall prevent the mainsheet being pulled through the mainsheet block.

This may seem common sense but with the trend to use thin mainsheets it has been noted that a simple overhand knot

or even a figure of 8 knot can pull through the gap between the sheave and the cheeks of the block. Ever born away around the first windward mark in a good position only to find the mainsheet merrily flowing through all the blocks and unceremoniously capsizing to windward? Rethreading the main while on the water is not easy, particularly when there is a fair wave pattern running.



MAINSHEET: Legal



MAINSHEET: Legal

CENTREBOARD

Rule 14 (f) - a sentence has been added that incorporates the 2011 interpretation that when the shockcord is attached to the bow eye it may also pass through an attachment to the "Builder Supplied" deck block fitting or the Cunningham fairlead.

The advantage of this is that the shock cord does not get involved with the vang fitting. In this example a tie line is shown but it should be noted under the definition of "attached" (see rule 3a vi) a shackle, clips, balls, hooks could equally be used.



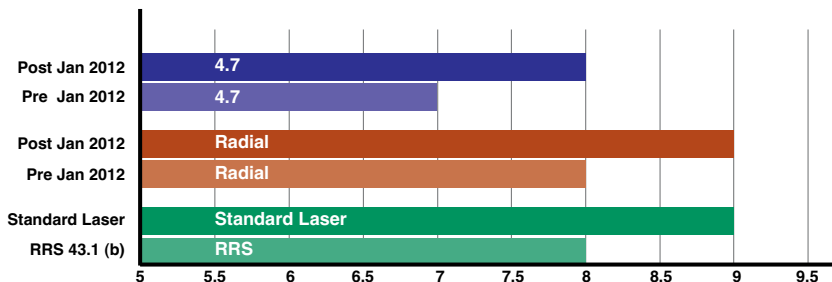
CENTREBOARD: Legal

CLOTHING

Rule 6a Clothing and equipment weight limit is increased from 8 to 9kg for Radial and 7 to 8kg for Laser 4.7. The Standard Laser weight limit remains at 9kg.

A survey of Laser sailors had found that Radial and 4.7 sailors were inadvertently exceeding the old limits with what would

be considered by most, normal clothing for colder conditions. It is thought that the addition of hiking pads to most sailor's equipment has caused the increment observed since the earlier days of Laser sailing.



ELECTRONICS

Rule 22 - Allowing a compass has been extended to make it clear that all types of electronic equipment including mobile phones, radios and cameras are

prohibited unless modified in the sailing instructions. The ban on electronic compasses is maintained. A timing device is explicitly allowed.



ELECTRONICS

Full Class Rules at: www.laserinternational.org/rules/classrules

www.laserinternational.org

Richard Langdon's

A minute with

Richard Langdon



Richard Langdon



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Olympics in Qingdao, China



© Richard Langdon

Key West 2010

Why Photography?

I was in my early teens when I had my first SLR camera, bought for me by my parents. But I was also very interested in other forms of art too, not only photography.

Why Yachting Specifically?

Sailing photography was never my intention whilst studying photography. It just happened right at the end of my course.

Have You Ever Considered Other Subject Matter?

I would love to do other areas of photography. But I've been lucky enough to be so busy with the sailing that there never seems to be time to move into other areas.

Photographic Inspiration?

Alastair Black first caught my imagination. Then after that it was images from Kos and Carlo Borlenghi.

Favourite Photograph (Sailing or Non Sailing)?

I have several photographs that I quite like. But I've never taken the perfect shot. Any other good photographer will agree that you never actually reach perfection. When that day comes, you go and do something else!

First Major Laser Event?

I covered the Laser Nationals at Parkstone Yacht Club, Poole (UK). I think it was in 1991.

Best Sailing Photograph?

There's not really a "best". But thinking about Lasers, I would have to say that the Europeans in Cartagena, Spain was great because the day I went was amazing conditions. Huge long swells and lovely sunshine.

Favourite Venue?

You would assume I would say the Caribbean of somewhere like that. But the UK can be the best.....when it's at its best... the low light in an evening, the cloud formations and great backdrops all make for a great place to take sailing photographs.

Favourite Class of Boat?

I prefer dinghies. A maxi in 20 knots of breeze hardly creates a wave or ripple, let alone spray. But a dinghy in 10-15 knots has movement, power, spray and a human element.

Favourite Laser Photograph?

Probably a shot in Cartagena....or perhaps some Sail For Gold images... on those windy days.

Top Tip For Sailing Photography?

Practice, practice, practice!! Keep your gear dry in a big cooler. Spend as much money on the lenses rather than the body.....and just have a pre planned concept you want to achieve. You don't need huge telephoto lenses either.



Ocean Images



© Richard Langdon

Has Technology Changed Your Work (internet, digital cameras, websites, galleries, downloads, video, etc)

I hated digital when it first came out. Now I love it. There are so many advantages and with Photoshop it's brought me back to darkroom procedures....without the darkroom. But with digital, I have also seen a huge revolution in distribution and social media. So whilst digital images are instant, our clients expectations have changed with it.

How Do You Achieve Clear / Stable Images Whilst On The Water?

That's even more about practice....and simple things like sitting at the back of the rib rather than the front. Then there's an adequate shutter speed. Say 1000th of a second or less.

How Have The Different Photo Web Services Effected You eg. Flickr/ Facebook/Picasa

It's changed my client's expectations. Slowly they are taking the place of traditional media like newspapers etc. But sailing websites don't pay. So commercial clients are needed. It's harder to turn up at an event on spec now and make money.

Have You Ever Dropped / Lost A Major Piece Of Camera Equipment?

Considering I've done the job for 20 years it's not too bad. I've fallen in once and trashed a £5000 camera. I was insured. But it's the daily wear and tear that's expensive. It's intense and obviously not insured.

Have You Ever Had Any Accidents Whilst Up A Mast Or Hanging Off A Boat?

Touch wood nothing more than being hit by a windsurfer. I was in the water with my camera housing and he was jumping over me. Once he got it wrong! I gained consciousness underwater... not knowing which way was up...slightly concussed. But I still take risks. Last year I videoed a 66 foot catamaran (Gunboat 66) whilst I was in the water. I let them sail over me and went between the hulls!

Any Funny/Amusing Stories From Photo Shoots?

Nothing specific. Every job is different. That's why I like being a freelancer. You meet so many different people and no job is the same. But I can assure you I've met great characters and been entertained throughout my career.

What's New And Exciting On The Horizon For Ocean Images?

Video is my new latest thing. I love doing it and clients really want it at the moment. I started early (about 2 years ago) and now about 50% of my business is video.



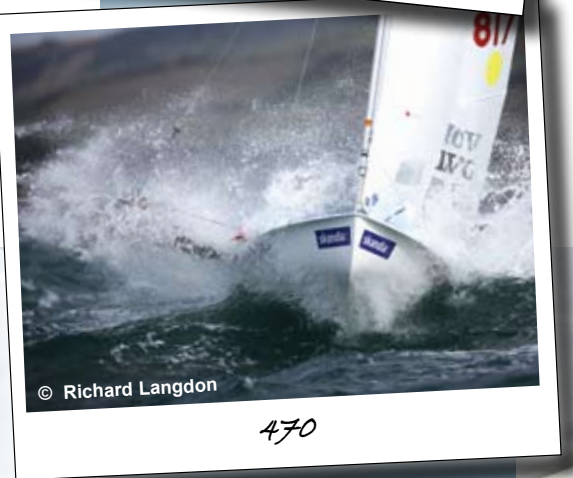
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Sail For Gold, Weymouth 2009



© Richard Langdon

Gunboat 66



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For further information and to view more of Richard's amazing images, please go to:
www.oceanimages.co.uk

www.laserinternational.org

2012 Laser Masters Central & South American Championship

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Carlos Palombo reports on the Fifth Central and South American Masters Laser Championship 2012

The fifth Central & South American Laser Championships, organized by the Club Náutico Mar del Plata, has once again given the sea an exceptional nautical landscape.

With 40 participants, including many foreign helmsmen, the racing was supposed to start on Saturday but was not possible due to the bad weather conditions. However, on Sunday and Monday, the course area saw perfect conditions.

On Tuesday, the conditions were tougher: 1.50m. high waves, SE wind gusts of 15 knots, a partially clear sky with a temperature of 23 degrees. This combination led to the Race Committee having to change the course area and set a windward-leeward circuit closer to Playa Grande.

The two last races were then sailed, completing the eight race schedule for this Championship. These last two races were critical, as the results decided second place in the Standard fleet between Leslie Jenkins, who was first in the Apprentice Master Category, and

Hector Longarela. Alejandro Cloos had already secured his first place and was in no danger of being caught.

Meanwhile, in the much larger Radial fleet, Master Carlos Palombo of CNSE had already secured his first place before the rest of the positions had been established. These ended up as follows: second place for Luis Andre Castro from Brazil and third for Alberto Larrea of CPNLB, who ranks first in the Grand Master Category.

Once the daily social activities (organized by the Club Náutico Mar del Plata) had finished, the awards ceremony took place attended by the race authorities, the organizing club, the competitors and the general public.

The VI Central and South American Masters Laser Championship 2013 will take place in February 2013 in Punta del Este, Uruguay.

For the complete results, please go to: http://www.cnmp.org.ar/panel/archivos/425_RESULTADOS%20SERIES.pdf



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Hermann & Katrin Cornelius

Hermann Cornelius was the Sailing Director for the 1972 Olympic Games in Kiel, Germany. In the same year he became the inaugural Chairman of the German Laser Class Association and his wife, Katrin, became the secretary.

As soon as he first saw the Laser he developed a strong belief in the class and what it could offer the sport of sailing. Laser made it's first appearance at the Olympics in 1972 when it was

Hermann Cornelius 1927 - 2011

displayed at the Olympic harbour thanks to Hermann!

For 35 years they, together, ran the German Laser Class Association from their home making it the largest National Class Association on mainland Europe.

During this time with the class Hermann served as Chairman of the European Laser Class Association and also as Vice-President of the Laser Class World Council with special responsibility for ISAF matters, consequently attending a number of ISAF meetings.

Between them they organised the second Laser World Championship in 1974 at the Kiel Olympic Centre.

Apart from their Laser work they have both helped in every Kiel Week since the early 1970s. Hermann worked hard at Kiel week and in ISAF to promote

the class seeing the Laser to be a great benefit to developing countries, many of whom he fostered during Kiel Week.

Hermann and Katrin retired from their position in the Laser class in 2007. Their last official duty for the Laser class was to introduce their successor to the European Committee of the Laser class at its Annual European Meeting at the Royal Thames Yacht Club in London, Great Britain. During the meeting Laser Class Executive Secretary and ISAF Council member, Jeff Martin, presented Hermann and Katrin each with an ISAF Silver Medal for their dedication to the sport of sailing. A well deserved award that meant a lot to both of them.

Hermann slipped his anchor on 11 December. The memory remains strong with all his many Laser friends.