

Laser World



December 2009

Sail for Gold
Weymouth

ISAF World Cup Finals

Conditions
Challenge Sailors

World Laser Radials

European Laser
Standards

Goodison & Buhl Win

Hurricanes Hit Halifax

Excitement at the Laser Worlds & Masters

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Heini Wellmann
World Council Meeting

Neil Dunkley
Sailing in Thailand



Hurricane Bill Hits Halifax

Paul Goodison Crowned Laser World Champion

St. Margaret's Bay didn't disappoint on the first day of racing at the 2009 World Laser Standard Senior Championship. The Bay gave the world's top sailors a small taste of what could come over the next seven days of racing. Hot, hazy conditions, with winds ranging from 18 to 20 knots and smooth two to three foot seas, provided absolutely perfect racing for the 169 athletes from 51 countries. One experienced, but retired Laser sailor said, "It was absolutely thrilling to watch these top athletes snap those small dinghies around race marks with such practiced perfection."

The day was not without its problems, however. There were four general recalls in the first race - and at least four gear failures. One failure included Paul Goodison (GBR), putting him in fifth place in his fleet and 16th overall after the first race. Things took a turn for the better for him in the second race, where he took a second to finish the day in sixth place overall.

Top finishers after the first day of racing were Tonci Stipanovic (CRO) in the top spot, Nick Thompson (GBR) in second, Clayton Johnson (USA) third, Bruno Fontes (BRA) in fourth and Philipp Buhl (GER) in fifth place.

Day two proved to be more exercise for the volunteers hauling race marks than for the athletes, as fog hanging over the outer reaches of St. Margaret's Bay had the Race Committee making numerous course changes in an effort to find clear water.

In addition to this, with US and Canadian Hurricane Centres predicting Hurricane Bill would brush the Nova Scotia coast on Sunday, the Race Committee moved the first race of the day on Friday to noon, in the hope that accommodating an extra race would enable them to get ahead of schedule in case a day of racing was cancelled by storm conditions.

It was not to be. Only one race was completed with two fleets managing to get in a quick race and the third fleet proving anxious. There were numerous general recalls for sailors crossing the line early and more than 20 sailors were black flagged. It took an hour and a half to get the fleet off, which prevented further starts. At the end of the day Stipanovic remained in the lead with Johnson in second and Thompson in third. Pavlos Kontides (CYP) moved to fourth, while Goodison also moved up to fifth.

Conditions were ideal for racing on day three. The exciting racing saw a change in the leader board as, under sunny skies and winds of up to 22 knots, Thompson grabbed the lead from Stipanovic. With five races completed, and one result dropped, there were also some new faces in the top five, namely Julio Alsogaray (ARG) in fourth and Buhl back in fifth.

Of significance to the shift in standings among the top sailors was the decision to re-race the third race, sailed on Friday, for one fleet. That single race on Friday proved tricky for the blue fleet which had numerous general recalls and more than one third of the fleet black flagged. Following protests and hearings the decision was made to allow the race to be re-sailed. The results moved Thompson ahead of Stipanovic, a lead he kept to the end of the day. The re-race also briefly put Goodison into third, only to fall back to

sixth after the fourth race and jump back to third after the fifth.

"It was the best day yet," said sailing photographer Matias Capizzano, "Lots of action, waves, wind; some great racing."

There was no racing on day four, with Hurricane Bill forecast to bring with it a three metre surge and winds in excess of 50 knots, racing was cancelled.

"The current plan is to get back on the water Monday," said Rod Millar. "It's definitely a disruption to the Laser Worlds, but we're sailors, this happens."

Dozens of volunteers had secured equipment and readied the site for the storm.

"I guess you could call it battening down the hatches," continued Millar. "At only four metres long, these Lasers would be flying around in winds of 50 knots. Our best solution was to clear the interior of both buildings and store the hulls inside."

Day five also saw no racing, not due to too much wind, however, but no wind at all.

"It's disappointing to lose two days of racing," said event manager Duncan Enman. "It happens sometimes and just means we will try to get in more races in the next two days. Having a day without wind on St. Margaret's Bay, this time of year, is almost unheard of."

However, in true 'Goldilocks' style, the wind proved to be just right on day six. After one day with too much and one day with too little, the breeze returned, ranging from nine to 16 knots, meaning sailors could enjoy three well deserved and tough races after spending two days ashore.

In the gold fleet, Goodison took over first place, followed by Thompson in second and Michael Bullot (NZL) in third. Stipanovic dropped to fourth, while Alsogaray moved to fifth.

While a great day of racing had enthused the sailors, the arrival of Laser designer, Canadian Bruce Kirby, also inspired them. In the evening the competitors for the Masters portion of the Laser Worlds began to arrive, and St Margaret's Bay saw mix of

veteran and elite athletes milling around the Sailing Club.

"Forty years ago when I drew that first design," said Kirby, "I had no idea what it would turn into. Never in my wildest dream did I expect the success that I see here today."

A new Laser World Champion was crowned on the final day of racing. Goodison managed to hang on and take first place. Michael Bullot (NZL) took

second, while Thompson was third.

"The final race was classic with Goodison and Bullot hunting each other at the start," said event manager Duncan Enman. "It was a mesmerizing dance along the start line as each athlete tried to outplay the other. Amazing sailing, amazing sport, as one would expect at a World championship."

For full results and more images, visit: www.laserinternational.org.

“Amazing sailing, amazing sport, as one would expect at a World championship”

“Lots of action, waves, wind; some great racing”



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Ideal Racing Conditions for Masters

300+ Sailors Flock to St Margaret's Bay for 2009 World Masters

Tropical Storm Danny did little to deter sailors competing in this year's World Laser Masters Championship in Halifax. Due to heavy rain, the opening ceremonies were postponed for a day. Then higher than forecast wind gusts overnight knocked out power to the St. Margaret Sailing Club when an event tent blew down and wrapped around a power line.

Undaunted, organizers set up an emergency generator to provide enough power to get the fleets organized and sailors on the water.

Finally, with a little patience, the sun came out and St. Margaret's Bay showed promise. On the first day of competition, the winds started light, but then the Bay's famous sea breeze kicked in for winds of up to 18 knots.

The Masters takes in many sailors who started sailing a few decades ago – before the one-person Laser was deemed an Olympic class – and haven't found a reason to stop. Among the Canadians rigging up for the races were former Olympians Terry Neilsen, a former World Laser Champion, and Phil Gow, a Nova Scotian who represented Canada in the Sailing class in Barcelona in 1996.

Judy Lugar, a resident of St. Margaret's Bay, was one of 20 women competing. "Any day sailing is a good day and today provided a nice, easy introduction to the Bay", she exclaimed. "I'm just thrilled that the Worlds are here, in my home bay. I've sailed around the world and always thought nothing could compete with St. Margaret's Bay. Now I have a chance to show the best sailors in the world what we have to offer."

With the wind not coming in until mid-afternoon, the first race on day one didn't get started until three and sailors weren't off the water until seven in the evening.

Sailing at St. Margaret's Bay is not for the faint of heart. Under sunny skies, but shifty winds, it was again mid-afternoon before the race committee could get the first race off on day two. It meant for the second day in a row, athletes

were on the water for more than six hours.

An offshore shifty wind with speeds of six to 15 knots made for a good day of racing on day three and all fleets completed two races.

After a rest day on day four, day five proved to be one of the best days of sailing yet. "There were a lot of smiles out there today," said Gerry Giffin, president of the Canadian Yachting Association and a competitor. "This is what people came here for, some great days of racing."

Day six was again a perfect day for sailing. With sun and with a steady breeze of 16 to 18 knots, it was a day to test endurance, skill and strength.

Day seven of the competition proved disappointing because of the lack of a steady wind to set courses and racing was abandoned, but all fleets had completed ten races in the regatta.

"It's a disappointing last day," admitted event manager Duncan Enman, "but both the Seniors and Masters had some incredible racing days on St. Margaret's Bay."

The results of the seven categories in the Masters (the Apprentice, Master and Grand Master in the Laser Standard rig; and the Apprentice, Master, Grand Master and Great Grand Master in the Laser Radial rig) were as follows.

Laser Standard Apprentice:

At the end of day one, the top finishers were Adonis Bougiouris (GRE), followed by Brett Beyer (AUS) in second and Orlando Gledhill (GBR) in third. These sailors kept their positions until day three, when Stewart Casey (AUS) bumped Gledhill off third place. Day five saw Gledhill regain his position back in third. Bougiouris, Beyer and Gledhill remained in the top three for the remainder of the championship, resulting in Bougiouris taking the Laser Standard Apprentice title from last year's champion Beyer, who took second and Gledhill finishing third, up from his fourth place in 2008.

Laser Standard Masters:

Andrew Pimental (USA) was in first place at the end of day one, with Arnoud Hummel (NED) in second and Peter Vessella (USA) in third. The leaderboard changed on day two with Scott Ferguson (USA) coming in first, hometown favourite Andy Roy in second and Ari Barshi (DOM) in third. It continued to be a tight race with the top ten sailors within seven points of each other. At the end of day three, Hummel had moved to first, with Ferguson in second and Roy in third. On day five, Ferguson took the bullet in the gold fleet, while Hummel came in second, and Pimental third. Ferguson

kept his commanding lead over chief rival Hummel to take the title, with Hummel in second, while Ferguson's club-mate Pimental ended the championship in third. Last year's champion, Jan Scholten (AUS), finished in fifth place.

Laser Standard Grand Masters:

Wolfgang Gerz (GER) dominated the fleet and ended the championship taking the title from defending champion Mark Bethwaite (AUS), who came in second. There was a battle for third place. Alan Keen (RSA) took the third spot after day one, but was pushed off the podium by Robert Lowndes (AUS) on day two. Keen regained his third place on day three and managed to stay ahead of the rest of the pack for the remaining races, taking third at the end of the championship.

Laser Radial Apprentice:

The Apprentice division was dominated by athletes from the southern hemisphere. Richard Bott (AUS) took the bullet on day one, followed by Scott Leith (NZL) in second with country mate Edmund Tam in third. Day two saw Grant Willmott (AUS) move into first, while Tam moved up to second and Bott moved down to third place. Day three saw another move in the top three, with Bott regaining the top spot, pushing Willmott into third while Leith moved back into second. At the end of the championship, Bott took the title, with Leith in second and Willmott finishing third.

Laser Radial Masters:

Carlos Eduardo Wanderley (BRA) came first on day one with Australians Greg Adams and Vanessa Dudley in second and third. The leaderboard stayed the same until day five, when Joao Ramos (BRA) stole third from Dudley. The top three remained in their positions until the end of the championship, which saw Wanderley take the title.

Laser Radial Grand Masters:

There was plenty of movement in this fleet and a battle for the top spot raged between Rob Koci (CAN) and defending champion Peter Heywood (AUS). Koci took the bullet on day one, followed by Peter Whipp (GBR) in second and Heywood in third. On day two, Heywood moved up to first, while Alden Shattuck (USA) took second and Bruce Jones (NZL) third. On day three, Koci again claimed the top spot, pushing Heywood in second and Shattuck down to third. On day five, Heywood again claimed the lead, while Michael Pridham and Ian Rawet, both from Great Britain, moved to second and third place. These sailors kept their positions until the end of the championship, which saw Heywood keep his title.

Laser Radial Great Grand Masters:

Michael Kinnear (GBR) started well and took first place on day one, with Kerry Waraker (AUS) and Sandy Grigg (NZL) following him into second and third. The sailors kept their positions at the top of the leaderboard until day three, when Peter Seidenberg (USA) took first place. Waraker remained in second, while Kinnear moved down to third. These three positions were held by Seidenberg, Waraker and Kinnear for the remainder of the event. At the end of the championship, Seidenberg took the title for the fourth year in a row.

For full results, daily reports and more images, please visit www.laserinternational.org.



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Goodison & Buhl Dominate in Sweden

European Laser Standard Senior & Youth Championships

Heavy thunder and rain welcomed the start of the European Laser Standard Youth and Senior Championships at the Borstahusen Yacht Club, Landskrona. With wind speeds starting at six knots and increasing to 14 to 16 knots, the conditions were dramatic. However, the spirits of the 243 competitors were not dampened and both races planned for the first day were eventful.

The tone of the Senior championship was set early on with the battle for the lead being fought by top sailors Tom Slingsby (AUS) and Paul Goodison (GBR). Slingsby ended day one at the top of the leaderboard, after scoring a fifth and a first. Goodison had a bad start with a black flag in the first race, but managed to recover by finishing eighth in the second race.

Among the Youth, Filip Matika (CRO) led the way after a second and a first place, together with Pelt Gijs (NED), with a first and a second.

Sailors awoke to brilliant sunshine on day two, however light winds varying from four to ten knots forced the organisers to change both the Seniors and Youth courses several times before the first race. The light breeze also caused problems for the sailors on the start line, with several black flags.

Goodison showed his skill by coming first in both races, which saw him shoot to the top of the leaderboard with ten points. Javier Hernandez (ESP) also had a good day and, after a fourth and a third, he moved to second on the leaderboard, also with ten points. Slingsby did not have a good first race and discarded his 20th place. However, with a fifth in the second race, he ended the day in third place on 11 points.

Matika came 15th in the first race in the Youths but pulled himself together to keep his place on top with a third place in the second race. At the end of day two, he was still in a tied lead with Pelt, who scored 38 in the first and three in the second race.

Michal Gryglewski (POL) had a good day with a

third and first place and ended the day in second place, tied with Philipp Buhl (GER) who sailed consistently and came second in both races.

The sun continued to shine on day three and, with a Northwesterly three to six knot wind blowing, conditions were ideal and races started on schedule. The sailors were more disciplined and only one general recall was necessary on the Youth course.

Goodison continued to sail consistently and came second in both races on his course, maintaining his lead with 14 points at the end of the day. James Sandall (NZL) raced well and ended the day in second on 25 points, while Slingsby won the last race of the day and maintained his third place with 32 points. Hernandez moved down the leaderboard to fifth.

There were changes at the top of the Youth leaderboard on day three. Michal Gryglewski (POL) moved from third to first with 12 points after scoring two second places. Buhl moved from fourth to second with 15 points after coming first in the last race. Matika came eighth in the first race and, despite discarding his 20th place in the second race, he lost his spot at the top of the leaderboard and moved down to fifth with 29 points.

The final day of qualifiers was another day of brilliant sunshine but the wind was light and fickle, starting at three to seven knots and soon decreasing. The Seniors had a good first race, however the second race of the day was cancelled due to a wind shift of 100 degrees, after which the wind died completely.

Goodison continued to hold onto the top spot and managed to increase his lead with 15 points after coming first in the day's race. Sandall clung onto second place with 30 points, with Slingsby just behind him on 34 points. Tonci Stipanovic (CRO) moved to fourth place with 36 points, while Hernandez remained in fifth with 38.

The Youth, sailing just outside Borstahusen, got winds from South East in the first and from South West in the second race and managed to carry through two good races.

There were more changes on the leaderboard. Buhl climbed steadily up and found himself in the lead on 26 points at the end of the day. This pushed Gryglewski into second with 29, while Pelt remained in third. Matika slipped further down to 7th place with 51 points.

The sun continued to shine for

the first day of the finals and conditions could not have been better with a South Easterly wind of seven to eight knots. However, lots of windshifts made for some challenging sailing. On the Seniors course, the current was quite strong from the south and there were lots of black flags.

The conditions could not hinder the seemingly unstoppable Goodison, who had another good day. After a fourth and a third he continued to top the leaderboard with 32. There were many changes in the rest of the fleet. Pavlos Kontides (CYP) shot up the board from tenth to second with 54 points after a first and a sixth. Stipanovic moved up to third with 57, while Hernandez moved up to fourth. Slingsby had two 13th places and slipped down to fifth place with 60 points.

The Youth course had the windward mark in an area without much current, but many eager participants were over the line resulting in black flags. Buhl kept his lead with a total of 31 points, despite a fifth in the first race and a 50th (discarded) in the second. Wojciech Zemke (POL) had a good day discarding his 48th in the first race and coming second in the race two. He ended the day in second, just 13 points behind Buhl.

Pelt remained in third on 45, while Karl-Martin Rammo (EST) won both races and shot up to fourth, just one point behind. Gryglewski slipped further down the leaderboard and ended the day on fifth after scoring a 25 and 51 (discarded).

Despite thunder at the beginning of the last day of the championships, the sun continued to shine. The wind came from the South, blowing an average four to five knots, but a 40 degree windshift and decreasing wind at the end meant the second race was cancelled when the wind died completely and the thunder returned.

Goodison discarded his 20th place and was declared champion of both the European Laser Standard Senior Trophy and European Laser Standard Senior Championship 2009 with a total of 22 points. With three first places, two seconds and a third it was a well deserved win.

With a third place in the day's race, Slingsby advanced from third to take second in the Trophy, 21 points behind Goodison.

Hernandez came second in the race and ended the day on 46 points, which resulted in him coming second overall in the European Championship and third overall in the Trophy. Kontides discarded his 55th to come third in the European Championship and fourth in the Trophy with 54 points.

After leading the Youths for several days, Buhl was crowned champion with 32 points. Pelt was second on the podium with 62 points, while Zemke was just one point behind him in third. Rammo had a very impressive championship with three first places and a total of 67 points, seeing him end in fourth.

Robert Holmes (GBR) won the Under 19 event with 98 points, with Alex Mills-Barton (GBR) in second with 110 and, with 132 points, Ricardo Montemayor (MEX) in third.

Full results, daily reports and images can be found at www.laserinternational.org.

Heavy thunder and rain could not dampen spirits and racing was eventful at Borstahusen



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Wout de Visser (NED) chases Philipp Buhl (GER)



© Mats Svensson
Paul Goodison (GBR) takes the lead

President's Report

Our class President, Heini Wellmann, gives a summary of decisions made at the World Council Meeting, which was held in Halifax, Canada on August 27th 2009.

The deliberations of the World Council meetings, like a Board of Directors meeting of a corporation, are confidential.

This allows a much more open and frank exchange

of opinions, which is an important factor for good decision making. On the other hand all members of the class and even the wider public interested in sailing matters should be informed about the major decisions taken at the meeting.

First, we looked at our objectives for 2010 and the following years. Our main objective is to **increase the ILCA membership** from currently around 16,000 to **20,000 members** within the next two years. It is obvious that this objective can only be realised by hard work in the Districts. Experience has shown that two elements are essential: a strict, but friendly **control of the membership at all regattas** and a **successful support program for the 4.7 rig and youth sailing**. The membership control needs some organisational effort. District/fleet officers responsible for the control need to be named and have the courage to approach non-members at the regatta. The main argument is the one of solidarity. The class is run by volunteers, but there are some expenses to be covered like, for example, newsletters, training camps, prizes etc.

The World Council then looked at the **estimated Accounts for 2009 and the Budget for 2010**, which you can see in the separate table. The ILCA accounting year closes on September 30th. Therefore the Accounts for 2009 had to be estimated based on the actual figures available in August, but the final Accounts for 2009 should be very close. The World Council was somewhat concerned that the Accounts for 2009 as well as the Budget for 2010 show losses of around £40,000, which is more than 15% of the total income. This is due to the fact that the three main income areas - namely the Plaque fee, Sail button fee and Membership fee - have remained the same (per boat, sail or member) for five years. On the other hand the main expenditure, which is salaries and pensions, follows the general salary increases in the UK. In addition, an Operations Manager was added to the staff and we have again a Technical Officer fully operational. It is therefore foreseeable that the

losses will increase rather than decrease in the future. The Executive Secretary was charged to present proposals how to deal with this situation at the next meeting.

On the **Technical side** we reviewed the two most important technical projects which address the main quality issues of the Laser: the **low durability of the sails** and the **bending of the masts** - in particular the Standard sail, the top mast section and Radial lower mast. Both projects should bring the required quality improvements without changing the technical and performance characteristics compared to the current sails and masts. Quite some progress has been made in the **sail development program**. Several prototype versions have already been tested by top Olympic sailors in France and the UK. The mast improvement project is more complex and will require further studies.

We also took note that the **Technical Complaint Form** is now operational on the ILCA web site: www.laserinternational.org. This form is for members who have a quality problem with their boat, sail or spars and have not been able to reach a satisfactory response from their local dealer and the manufacturer.

Another concern of the World Council is the **development of activities in countries, which are not part of a Region**. The ILCA office was charged to develop a number of concrete programs for these countries.

In a number of countries the **Laser 4.7** has had an impressive **development** during the last few years. In these countries it has become the most attractive class to continue regatta sailing after the Optimist. This also assures that the Laser will not become over time an "old men" boat only - as it has happened with so many classes in the past. Some other countries still lag behind. The

World Council therefore asked the Regions and the builders concerned to work together to develop the growth of the 4.7 in these countries. **The Laser 4.7 is our future.**

I wish you and your families Merry Christmas and a happy 2010.

Heini Wellmann

ILCA OFFICE	2008 Approved Accounts	2009 Estimated Accounts	2010 Budget
INCOME			
Plaque Fees	34,959	34,038	34,000
Sail Button Fees	49,200	45,000	43,000
Membership Fees	80,021	78,699	80,000
Sale of Goods	10,140	11,180	11,000
Contribution to ILCA for Entry	38,512	37,828	26,250
Contribution to ILCA for Charter	21,462	27,029	20,250
Interest Receivable	35,408	18,655	24,000
Total Income	269,702	252,429	238,500
EXPENDITURE			
Publications	19,763	19,544	19,500
Testing & Development	12,452	30,878	15,000
Salaries & Pension	169,765	176,162	183,000
Office & Travel	35,632	28,452	27,331
Auditors / Bank Charges	5,972	3,261	4,300
Depreciation	5,763	5,238	5,700
Cost of Purchases	11,571	12,507	15,000
ISAF / World Council	15,506	18,150	14,495
Total Expenditure	276,424	294,192	284,326
Accumulated Funds b/f	851,536	836,396	794,633
Surplus for year	-6,723	-41,763	-45,826
Accumulated Funds c/f	836,396	794,633	748,807

Thompson & Tunncliffe Named ISAF Champions

Sailors meet at Weymouth for final World Cup Regatta

The 2008/2009 ISAF World Cup came to a dramatic and exciting end in Weymouth, during the Sail for Gold Regatta.

Racing took place at the Weymouth and Portland National Sailing Academy, the host venue for the sailing events at London 2012.

More than 1000 spectators watched the action during medal racing day, as the regatta reached its grand finale.

Unfortunately, the weather on the final day of racing was not kind to the sailors and lack of wind meant that many races were cancelled. Despite this, there was some fantastic racing earlier on in the week, as the sailors battled it out for the top positions.

Event director David Campbell-James said: "We've had a very successful 2009 Skandia Sail for Gold Regatta. It has been a complex event, bigger than any previously staged of its kind in the UK, with Olympic and Paralympic classes racing as part of the World Cup."

Laser Standard Fleet

Having led the fleet from day one, Tom Slingsby's (AUS) impressive record of five wins from five races was brought to an end by Paul Goodison

(GBR). However this wasn't enough to stop him dominating the regatta and Slingsby had secured the gold medal ahead of the medal race. Pavlos Kontides (CYP) and Andreas Geritzer (AUT) took silver and bronze.

Despite coming 7th at Sail for Gold, Nick Thompson (GBR) was crowned the 2008/2009 ISAF World Cup Champion. Croatians Daniel Mihelic and Tonci Stipanovic came second and third, respectively, in the Standings.

Laser Radial Fleet

Fresh from winning the 2009 World Laser Radial Women's Championship in July, Sari Multala (FIN) was on top form in Weymouth. Having discarded her only bad race of the regatta, she came second in the medal race to score gold in the regatta. Sarah Steyaert (FRA) took the silver and Marit Bouwmeester (NED) bronze.

Anna Tunncliffe's (USA) outstanding performance in the earlier ISAF World Cup Regattas ensured her place at the top of the Standings, and she took gold overall. Tina Mihelic (CRO) took silver and Alberte Lindberg (DEN) achieved the bronze.

The 2009/2010 ISAF World Cup kicks off in Australia, with the Sail Melbourne regatta starting on 14 December 2009 and followed by Rolex Miami on 24 January.

Full details of all ISAF World Cup events can be found at: www.sailing.org.



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Superb Sailing Conditions in Karatsu

World Laser Radial Men & Youth Championships 2009

Anticipation was high for the World Laser Radial Men and Youth sailors who completed registration and measurement procedures at Karatsu, Japan. The wind was predicted to be strong at the beginning of the week, with a period of rain and lighter wind likely later in the week.

The weather prediction was correct and there were superb sailing conditions at Karatsu on the first day, with warm sun, 20 knot North Northeasterly winds, a choppy sea and building swell. It was daunting conditions for some of the less experienced sailors and some scored DNF for being outside the time limit. However, the experienced sailors had a wonderful day with real gains to be made on the reaches and runs.

Ashley Stoddart (AUS) had a win in race one and a second in race two, ending the day as overall leader of the Radial Youth Girls' fleet. Mathilde de Kerangat (FRA) followed her closely with a third in race one and a very convincing win in race two. Alexandra South (AUS) ended the day in third place after a second in race one. Comfortably in second place in race two, South capsized rounding the last mark before a short beat to the finish. However, she managed to right her boat and finished the race in fourth.

In the Men's fleet, Marcin Rudawski (POL) appeared to enjoy the conditions and took two bullets to lie in first place overall. Hisaki Nagai (JPN) was holding second place but was disqualified in race two after a protest. Jan Ter Haer Sierk (NED) came in second overall followed by his fellow countryman Ben Koppelaar.

Radial Youth Boys blue fleet sailors Aleksander Arian (POL), Toma Visic (POL) and Oliver Loughhead (IRL) came in first, second and third in both races. The yellow fleet was much more mixed with Tobias Kirschbaum (NED) having a second and third, Filip Koblielski (POL) with a win and a twelfth and Chris Barnard (USA) a second and a seventh. At the end of the day, Arian was at the top of the leaderboard on two points, with Visic second on four points, Kirschbaum third on five points and Loughhead fourth on six points.

It was a long day on the water on day two, with windshifts causing a headache for race management and delays for sailors. However, patience paid off and eight good races were sailed.

The first two starts got away on time in North Northeasterly winds of 15 to 16 knots. Just before the start for the Youth Girls, the wind shifted to the right and the start was postponed. After a general recall on the second start, it was third time lucky and the fleet eventually got away. De Kerangat had another bullet and moved into first place on the count back from Stoddart. These two had a significant lead over the rest of the fleet at the end of the day, with Anna Agrafioti (GRE) seven points behind in third place.

The attempts to start race three for the Men resulted in two postponements for big wind shifts and a general recall. The fleet then got away on a black flag preparatory signal with one BFD. Race four for the two Youth Boys' fleets and Youth Girls were raced in good



conditions but again there was a delay for the Men. It was worth the wait for the new breeze of 16 to 18 knots from North East and the fleet was spread across the course for the first beat and on both gybes for the run.

Then the wind dropped to about seven knots and the final run, reach and beat to the finish were halved in length. Koppelaar was in the lead at the fourth mark and maintained the lead to win the race and move into second overall. Rudawski showed his skill to recover from sixth at the same mark to place second in the race. He looked like the convincing overall leader, four points ahead of Koppelaar with Jon Emmett (GBR) heading the chasing pack on 15 points.

In the Youth Boys, Arian made his mark with two more bullets to lead by five points over Loughhead, who had a second and fourth. Kirschbaum maintained third place and Chris Penney (IRL) moved up from tenth to fourth just one point behind Kirschbaum. Koblielski had a huge lead in race three of the Yellow Fleet but received a yellow flag and had to retire.

Summer arrived in Karatsu on day three and, with sunshine and light breezes, it was a beautiful day on the water, despite some rain ashore in the hills.

The first race for each of the four fleets was sailed in five to eight knots and the second in ten to 12 knots, with all eight scheduled races sailed. The day was an opportunity for those liking lighter conditions to show their skills and there was significant movement in position throughout the fleets in the overall results.

The lead changed in the Youth Girls with de Kerangat taking her third bullet to top the leaderboard with eight points. Stoddart ended day three in second place, with Michelle Broekhuizen (NED) in third on 18 points.

Stoddart and South were convincing leaders in the Under 17 award, with first and second places, respectively.

In the Men's fleet, race five results reflected the light conditions with the top two sailors down in the results. Giacomo Sabbatini (ITA) won the race with Cheol Seo Dong (KOR) in second. However, Rudawski continued to dominate the fleet with a win in race six to continue as overall leader. Koppelaar had an OCS in race six but continued to hold second place, 14 points behind Rudawski. Mohd Romzi Muhamad (MAS) moved into third place with the two big movers of the day, Insub Kim (KOR) in fourth

place and Sabbatini in fifth.

Poland was also dominant in the Youth Boy's with Arian first overall, leading by 17 points. There was a close battle for the next three positions with Matej Valic (SLO) second on 23 points and Alexios Katsios (GRE) in third on 24 points, ahead on count back from Barnard also on 24 points. The light winds certainly brought some changes in positions with Christopher Jones (AUS) moving up to sixth place from 12th and Keerati Bualong (THA) into seventh from 23rd.

In the boys Under 17 fleet, Philip Doran (IRL) led the way, with Nevin Snow (USA) second and Loughhead in third.

Despite a difficult start with low cloud, poor visibility and little wind, which delayed racing by half an hour, day four was another fantastic day of sailing. Two races were sailed for each fleet with the first race sailed in light winds of seven to ten knots and the second in 12 to 15 knots. The sun was shining and the seas were slight.

Arian had another consistent day to maintain his lead in the Youth Boys by 17 points from Barnard. Bualong had a second win to move into third place, while Nikolaos Chrisos (GRE) moved into fourth place with a second and third. Josh Porebski (NZL) moved into seventh place with an impressive win in the second race of the yellow fleet. Visic won the first race in the blue fleet while Snow took over the lead in the Under 17 group.

In the Youth Girls, South took two bullets to move into third place. However, first and second place were still held by de Kerangat and Stoddart, both of whom sailed consistently with a second and third each. Stoddart also continued to lead the Under 17 group.

Rudawski consolidated his big lead in the Men's competition with only one place outside



some windshifts and delays to allow a clear race course, upset the equilibrium in the Men's fleet as the black flag general recall gave spectator status to five sailors who were black flagged.

With the winner decided, the race was on for the other positions. The big mover was Kim who ended the day in third position, six points behind Koppelaar. Nagai moved to fourth place overall.

With some concern that there may be too much wind for sailing on the final day of racing, there was a sense of urgency to get good results in the Youth Boys. Arian maintained his 17-point advantage at the head of the Gold Fleet. There were significant changes in the other placings with Bualong moving up one place to second.

However the biggest mover was Visic who shot up the leaderboard from 22nd to third. Kobielski climbed from 14th to fourth, only one point behind Visic, after two wins.

There was little change in the top placings in the Youth Girls' fleet, with de Kerangat holding a four point advantage over Stoddart. South maintained her position in third ahead of Agrafioti, who had an impressive first and second.

In the Men's fleet, Koppelaar nearly ruined his chances of second with an OCS in the first race of the final championship day. However, he kept calm and finished second in the last race to hold second by four points from Kim. Sabbatini left his run too late but still came away with two wins, ending the championship in ninth.

The Youth Boys championship went down to the wire and was won on countback by Bualong, who snatched the winning spot from Arian after he scored a disappointing 17th in the last race. Kobielski's consistent sailing paid off and he took third place on the podium. The Under 17 group was won by Doran followed by fellow countryman Loughead in second and Snow in third.

The Youth Girls' champion was decided on the last race, where de Kerangat used the conditions well to finish in third and win the championship by three points over Stoddart. Michelle Broekhuizen (NED) finished third overall with consistent results of fourth and sixth. Marie Bolou (FRA) and Souffa Ben-horin (ISR) both had their first wins of the regatta and finished sixth and eighth (respectively) on the leaderboard.

The Under 17 fleet was dominated by Australia with Stoddart in first and South in second. Momoko Tada (JPN) took third.

Full results, daily reports and images can be found at www.laserinternational.org.

the top three in eight races. Koppelaar was 19 points behind, but had a 13 point buffer over Romzi Muhamad who lay in third. Nagai had his second win of the regatta to move into sixth place overall.

Sunshine, 14 to 18 knots and choppy seas greeted the sailors on day five. Rudawski again showed his dominance in the Men's fleet with two bullets, taking the World Laser Radial Men's Championship title.

Maybe the change in start order, combined with

Wind and Rain Stop Races in Finland

The European Laser 4.7 Youth Championship in Helsinki started well with Southwesterly winds of ten to 12 knots during the first day.

Urška Kosir (SLO) led the Girls from the start and took the bullet in the first race, followed by Ewa Korpak (POL) and Viktorija Andriulyte (LTU). Spanish sailors dominated race two with Patricia Coro finishing first, followed by fellow countrywoman Julia Vallo. At the end of day one, Andriulyte was at the top of the leaderboard with six points, followed by Coro.

The Boys were split into two fleets. Early leaders were Simon Laganis (SLO), who topped the leaderboard at the end of day one, and Harald Faste (NOR). Damian Pietruszewski (POL) ended the day in third place overall.

The South Southwesterly wind was around ten knots on the morning of day two, dropping as the day went on. However, racing conditions were good with wind speed of around eight knots at the end of the day.

The Girls' fleet eventually started after two general recalls. The long first beat tested the speed and tactical skills of the sailors and it was Aura Miquel Molons (ESP) who was in the lead when girls rounded the first mark. Coro had an excellent race and she had taken the lead as they rounded the third mark. Miquel Molons didn't give up, however, and she took the bullet followed by Coro.

In the second race, Katarzyna Szyfter (POL) took an early lead after the first beat, followed by Anastasiya Omelchenko (RUS). However, it was Danaí Giannakoudi (GRE) who proved to be the strongest sailor and she took the bullet followed by Vallo in second and Szyfter in third.

Mario Benini (ITA) won the first race in the Boys' yellow fleet and Viatcheslav Sheludyakov (RUS) took the bullet in the blue fleet. In the second race, Daniel Gonzalez Galan (ESP) was leading the yellow fleet after the first beat and he was able to hold his position until the finish where he got his first bullet. Juraj Divjakinja (CRO) finished second and moved up the scoreboard to the third overall.

In the blue fleet the winner of race two was

Davide Domeneghetti (ITA), who subsequently moved to top of the leaderboard, ahead of Faste.

Day three started with a Southerly wind of up to 12 knots, but the wind had decreased by the time the fleets had launched. The Girls were eventually able to start on the third attempt. Paulina Czubachowska (POL) was leading the fleet as they rounded the first mark, followed by Vallo and Noora Koskiahde (FIN). Vallo fought to the front and managed to sail into the lead, crossing the finishing line first, but there was disappointment when she was black flagged.

Coro was named race winner, followed closely by Koskiahde and with Chubachowska in third. Coro ended the day at the top of the leaderboard with a nine-point advantage over Andriulyte. Kim Pletikos from Slovenia was third overall and top of the Under 16s.

Giovanni Coccoluto (ITA) took the bullet in the Boys' yellow fleet and he climbed up the leaderboard from fourth to second, just five points behind Domeneghetti. Despite a black flag in the day's only race, Faste ended the day as leader of the Under 16 category and in third place overall.

In the blue fleet Romain Paridant de Cauwere (SUI) took the bullet, while Toño Alcazar (ESP) moved to fourth place in the Under 16s and tenth place overall after coming second.

Strong wind and rain caused problems for the organizers during day four. A 20 knot Southwesterly wind greeted the sailors when they left the harbour. However, this suddenly decreased and moved to the South East, which caused a long delay. Conditions had improved when the Girls started their race, but when the leaders were on the second leg a rain storm hit the course area and wind speed increased to 30 knots. Racing was abandoned for the day.

The Boys were split into final groups based on day three's results, with the top 74 racing in the gold fleet and the rest in the silver fleet.

The final day started with little wind, however it quickly picked up and the competitors headed to the start line. Ignasi Lopez Carcare (ESP) led the Boy's gold fleet to the first mark, followed

by Coccoluto and Benini, with regatta leader Domeneghetti in fifth. Coccoluto managed to take the lead from Lopez Carcare and took the bullet. He moved up the leaderboard to second, just one point behind Domeneghetti. Lopez Carcare finished third and moved up to third overall.

In the second race of the day Tom Britz (GBR) took the bullet and moved to third overall. Coccoluto had another excellent race, finishing second and taking the championship title from Domeneghetti, who finished 11th and came second overall. Britz took the Under 16 title, followed by Eduardo Bueno Gonzalez (ESP) in second and Alcazar in third.

Ida Voutilainen (FIN) dominated the whole of the first race in the Girls' fleet, while Stella Romaini (GRE) finished second. Regatta leader Coro had a great race, finishing third and Andriulyte finished fourth, moving to second overall.

In the second race for the Girls, Coro and Andriulyte took first and second places and, at the end of the day, Coro was crowned champion with Andriulyte in second place and Pletikos in third. Pletikos was also champion of the Under 16s, while Oren Jacob and Maya Glantz, both from Israel, were second and third.

For full results, daily reports and more images, visit: www.laserinternational.org.



Sail Thailand - Fit for a King!

Neil Dunkley looks at the history of sailing in Thailand



© Bob Gardham

Royal Varuna Yacht Club, Thailand



© Bob Gardham

Wish you were here...?

for bringing on young local sailors to the highest international standards. The great enthusiasm and dedication of the young sailors and the hours of on the water training they put in every week make up for lack of resources.

Of course dinghy racing is not new to Thailand – its roots are deep. In 1963, King Bhumibol was rowing off the Klai Kangwol Palace in Hua Hin when he was passed by Prince Bhisatej sailing along very slowly. Upon arriving back at the beach the King examined the Prince's boat and thought there must be a quicker way of sailing it. That started the interest and together they built a number of boats in a room at the Chitrlada Palace in Bangkok using the Palace moat as their testing waters. The King built a succession of OKs and Enterprises, with one OK being sailed by himself across the Gulf of Thailand some 64 nautical miles. The rudder from this OK has been, and still is, the subject of a challenge trophy raced for each year under the auspices of the Royal Varuna Yacht Club.

On the 16th December 1967, sporting history was made in Thailand when the King was awarded the gold medal at the South East Asia Peninsular Games (now the SEA Games) sailing his OK number 27. In honour of the occasion Thailand still celebrates National Sports Day every year on this date. In recognition of the King's prowess as a dinghy sailor and his great contributions to sport, the International Olympic Committee bestowed the 'Insignia of the Olympic Order' upon the King – the only reigning Monarch to receive such an honour.

Pivotal to dinghy racing in Thailand is the Royal Varuna Yacht Club (RVYC) – situated in South Pattaya, around 140 km from the Thai capital Bangkok and 1½ hours drive from its new Suvarnabhumi airport. The Club, which was founded in 1957 and moved to its current location in 1967, was once the popular sailing ground of the Thai Royal Family and was given Royal patronage in 1965. Due to Thailand's beautiful all year round climate, racing is conducted every weekend of the year with junior sailing very much a part of the programme, run by their coaches from their junior clubhouse.

The RVYC stands within its own private grounds and has a beachside swimming pool. Its private sandy beach is sheltered from the prevailing northerly and south westerly winds, making launching safe and easy. Palm fringed offshore islands with beautiful beaches some eight to ten kilometres away make for some great racing for all classes sailed at Royal Varuna. There is

nothing better than relaxing with a good beer after a round the islands marathon, watching the sun set over the islands, followed by a great BBQ and more beers at the perfectly positioned beach bar.

The Club is already well known to many classes who have held their world and Asian championships there. Most notably Lasers have held their Pacific and World Masters Championships at Royal Varuna together with the Enterprise and Fireball classes. The Asian Byte CII and Optimist Championships are a continual feature to the clubs international calendar, and the Hobie Asian Championships were sailed there in 2008.

2010 sees Royal Varuna hosting a number of international Laser events:

Asia Pacifics:
27 Feb 2010 – 5 Mar 2010

Asia Pacific Laser Masters:
6 Mar 2010 – 12 Mar 2010

Laser 4.7 Worlds:
31 Mar 2010 – 8 Apr 2010

The following websites will give all the information needed to enter these regattas and the club is hoping for a great turnout, not only to share the enjoyment of its magnificent sailing waters but also to taste the great Thai hospitality that prevails.

To access the Notices of Race please visit:
www.laserinternational.org

Regatta website can be found at:
www.laserthailand.org

You can visit The Royal Varuna Yacht Club website at: www.varuna.org

There is no better time to be involved in dinghy and Laser racing in Thailand than right now. This past summer 17-year old Keerati Bualong scored a sixth in the 29th Volvo ISAF World Championships in Brazil and then bettered that great result by winning the Laser Radial Youth World Championship in Japan, beating the world's best.

In the Optimist class, which has been the backbone of youth sail training in Thailand for many years, 13-year old Noppakao Poonpat became the girls' Optimist World Champion finishing fourth overall at this year's Worlds in Brazil. As quoted afterwards in the Brazilian press 'the winds dance in the Bay of Niteroi had found the ballerina to the star performance - Noppakao Poonpat - as she displayed incredible boat handling skills to master the tricky conditions'. In the same regatta the Thai Optimist team won Bronze in the total nation team scores behind Brazil and Malaysia.

At a ceremony held at Government House Bangkok recently, the Laser and Optimist teams' achievements were honoured by Prime Minister Abhasit Vejjajiva, the young sailors having brought credit to the Kingdom in the world of yachting and Thai sport.

So how can this success be achieved in two of the most hotly contested classes in the dinghy sailing world, with so few sailors and so few resources available to them? Unlike many large competing nations which have national squads, large budgets, endless types of professional coaches and selection trials in many different locations in their respective countries, the Thai team has very limited funds, no travellers circuit, only a handful of local coaches and a youthful but small national sailing squad!

Credit has to go to the Yacht Racing Association of Thailand and the Royal Thai Navy who together have developed a recipe for success



© Fred Hoffmann

Noppakao Poonpat



© Dave Kneale/Volvo Ocean Race

Keerati Bualong