

Report 2011

This report review an exceptional year for all programs I had an involvement in but also for graduated sailors that progressed under one of my program in the past. This report will look into:

- ISA optimist squad including Palma
- IODAI European team
- IODAI B'Meer
- IODAI U12 UK nationals
- Bcademy laser program (private program complementing the ISA academy)
- Performance of graduated sailors from the 2010 and 2011 junior programs

OPTIMIST

The carding system is no longer in operation, however it worth noting that the year has been the most successful ever if we look at the old criteria.

The tables below review all results of interest this year.

Former carding events would produce 22 sailors U15 achieving the set criteria . This is 9 extra sailors compared to 1009 and 2010. This is the confirmation of the progress of the fleet despite the difficult economical conditions.

EUROPEANS (Top 40)

Peter McCann, 5th
Sean Donnelly, 27th
Eoin Lyden, 33rd
Clíodhna Ní Shuilleabhain, 37th

B'MEER (IRL, GBR, NED, BEL, POR, FIN, SWE, USA, GER, NOR, CZE) (top 50%)

(Sean Donnelly, 4th)
Adam Hyland, 5th
Chloe Eggers, 20th
(Clíodhna Ní Shuilleabhain, 22nd)
Fergus Flood, 39th
Sean Waddilove, 53rd
Douglas Elmes, 67th
Conor O Beirne, 85th
Conor Kneafsey, 94th

PALMA (ESP, NED, IRL, POL, GER, SUI, NOR, SWE, FIN, BEL, CZE, CAN, FRA, ITA, SLO) (top 50%)

Sophie Browne, 4th - 1st girl
(peter McCann, 15th)
(sean Donnelly, 35th)
Daniel Raymond, 49th
(Douglas Elmes, 59th)
Harry Whitaker, 63rd
Jil McGinley, 79th
Ronan Cournane, 84th
(Clíodhna Ni Shuilleabhain, 91st)
Megan Parker, 96th
Harry Durcan, 121st
(Conor O Beirne, 124th)
Colin O Sullivan, 128th
Alacoque Daly, 155th
Ewan Mahon, 161st
Evie Byrne, 176th

Other results showing our progress in non-carding events (top 20 finishes)

FRENCH OPEN (FRA, IRL, ESP, BRA, BEL, GBR, INA, ALG, NED, HKG, MON, DEN, CAN, SUI)

Sophie Browne, 7th-1st girl

GERMAN OPEN (NED, GER, POL, IRL, DEN, FIN, FRA, BEL, SWE, POR, NOR, ESP, JPN, SUI, USA, RUS)

Adam Hyland, 11th

BRITISH OPEN U12 (IRL, GBR, ESP, USA, IND, UAE, HKG, RSA, NED)

Ewan Mahon, 13th
Niamh Henry, 14th-2nd girl

BRITISH OPEN O12 (FRA, GBR, IRL, ESP, USA, BER, RSA, NZL, FIN, IND, KEN, NED, AUS)

Peter McCann, 13th
Sean Donnelly, 16th

INDIA INTERNATIONAL REGATTA (SLO, MAS, IND, INA, IRL, CZE, SRI)

Conor O Beirne, 7th
Sean Waddilove, 13th

TEAM RACING EUROPEANS

Ireland (Peter McCann, Sean Donnelly, Eoin Lyden, Megan Parker, Clíodhna Ni Suillebhain), 7th

TEAM RACING MONACO CLUB INVITATIONAL (MON, FRA, IRL, SUI, RUS, POR, BEL)

Royal Cork YC, 3rd

I was the coach for the 3 carding events (Europeans, Palma, B' Meer) as well as the UK open, the IIR and the team racing Europeans. Below are a review of the main events I attended.

EUROPEANS

For the last 3 years, our premier team¹ qualifies for the Europeans making the event our best indicator of progress at the top of the fleet. It has been now two years in a row that Irish sailors have made an impact at the event and Ireland has ranked in the top 10 European countries ahead of our strong Neighbour, the UK.

This report will review the 2011 europeans and see how we can continue on progressing. It will therefore also address the ISA squad and its role.

1. Europeans 2011 data

- 12 races, 2 discards in 6-15 kts of breeze. The Tavira Thermal kicked in every time; it provided oscillating breeze with variation in strengths and shifts up to 20degrees either way.
- Great on the water management with relatively fair races
- 130 boys / 95 girls / 37 countries
- Team IRL : 15 top 10 finishes for the team secured by all members but one
- Team IRL : 5th position overall in the boys, best individual result since 1981 and best ever in the "modern era" of optimist sailing.
- Team IRL : 10th country
- 2 extra sailors made the carding criteria putting the provisional total number of Optimist junior cards 2011 at 11.

2. Team Ireland preparation

- All members but 2 were members of the ISA squad and had undertaken the squad winter program. The two sailors not member of the squad took part in other winter programs and one of them was a member in 2010.

¹ In 2011, the winner of the trials declined her place to go to the worlds. In 2009, the 4th ranked sailor of the trials declined his place to go to the worlds.

- All sailors but one sailed at Palma 2010
- 2 sailors sailed (with success) in B'Meer 2011 and one sailor sailed in Garda 2011
- Due to the busy spring program (4 regionals) and the fact all sailors had international experience, no team training was planned in Ireland
- 3 days of preparation were allowed on site. It actually became two days afloat as Measurement took most of the first of these days.

3. Team support & logistic

- Sailors used their own boats for the second year in the row
- We took our own RIB (my personal coach boat)
- Team support was composed by a coach (me) and a team leader/mum, both with excellent knowledge of the "hows" of the event. We did not use the possibility of a third official support team member as per previous year.
- Parents came on holidays but remained out of the way of the team unless asked to assist which occurred on a couple of occasions.
- We were accommodated across the water. The rooms, the food and the setting in general was excellent.

4. Team Ireland

- Sailors behaviour was excellent in general
- Bed time was respected which allowed the sailors to maintain good form throughout the whole event
- The potential of the buffet dinner which provided balanced meal was not fully taken advantage of by the sailors, but kids are kids and fruits and vegetables are not really a priority diet ☺. Overall it was acceptable however!
- The couple of mistakes done on the arrival day (sun burn for a few sailors) were not repeated keeping the team in good health.
- The sailors were very independent in their preparation, especially around their boat and the coach saw quality and understanding of rigging and sail shaping.
- However, items were forgotten at the hotel on a few occasions (sun glasses, life jacket...)
- Overall it was easy to trust the sailors to make the right decisions in terms of behaviour and preparation.

5. other teams

These are a few notes on other team preparation, behaviour and approach to the event.

- Spain (best team in terms of results) : it was a very similar team than ours in terms of size of the sailors. The sailors had raced internationally and participated in the youth regatta in Workum in May where they already made an impact building strong confidence. Their team had 3 coaches: one official coach who had the same constraints than the Irish

coach and two coaches on “spectator” boats taking care of speed testing and setting the kids boats until the warning signal. After the warning signal access to the sailors was denied to these two coaches but they strategically placed themselves to windward of the course and on the outer loop feeding the official coach with information via VHF. It was a technique used by Poland in Slovenia. In the Távira conditions, it gave them a distinct advantage as shifts in information could be fed back to the sailors still on the waiting area.

- Nederland : It was a team of similar ability to ours. They raced internationally a lot (including workum) and did a week long camp in Távira in the spring to get a good idea of the venue and its particular.
- The French, Finnish, Hungarian, Greeks (and probably a few more) had their premier team entered so their approach was very similar to ours.
- UK. Our nearest neighbour struggled greatly at the event. Their sailors seemed to lack independence and were very lost in trying to make decisions for themselves providing very inconsistent results.

6. review of team Ireland's progress in the last few years

Best boy :

- 2011: 7th (5th European)
- 2010: 7th (7th European)
- 2009: 50th
- 2008: 74th
- 2007: 62nd
- 2006: 115th

Best girl :

- 2011: 39th (34th European)
- 2010: 33rd
- 2009: 40th
- 2008: 32nd
- 2007: 53rd
- 2006: 47th

Country results

- 2011: 10th
- 2010: 11th
- 2009: 17th
- 2008: 21st

Sailors in the first half (out of seven) / junior cards

- 2011: 4 / 4
- 2010: 5 / 5
- 2009: 2 / 2
- 2008: 1 / 0
- 2007: 3 / 1
- 2006: 1 / no carding

In 2007, we started to see IRL sail numbers scoring top 10 from time to time. In 2009, we felt we were competitive and all team members started to be capable of scoring individual top 10. In 2010, Ireland was making an impact as a team becoming one of the potential top 10 European nation and we won our first race at the Europeans. In 2011, we led the Europeans, top 10 finishes were a daily occurrence and we remained on course for a medal until the final race of the regatta.

UK NATIONALS, U12 squad

From before I ever coached IRL optimists, the U12 were travelling to the British nationals and raced in the junior fleet. It would now more appropriate to call it the British open as numbers and foreign participation has been growing steadily with over 10 countries entered this year (USA, GBR, IND, UAE, NED, IRL, RSA, HKG, NZL, AUS, BER, FRA, KEN, ESP)

1. The event

As per usual the organisation was all about following the instructions of the British and over-fussing about safety, rules and coddle muddle the kids instead of using common sense. If it has the drawback of removing or diminishing the ability of the kids to think for themselves, make mistakes and learn from them, it always provides fair championships with extremely well set races. PRO was the experienced Peter Saxton and it allowed for a full series in challenging conditions (light and shifty)

- 12 races (6 qualifiers, 6 finals)
- 146 juniors
- 9 countries entered in juniors / USA, IRL, GBR, HKG and ESP represented in top 15.
- 8 IODAI junior squad / 10 non squad (we included Calum, HKG and Mahesh, IND in the set up).

2. The results / data

- two top 15
- silver medal in the girls (14th overall)
- 13 gold fleet / 5 silver fleet
- several top 10 finishes

Overall, the results were down from the previous 3 years, but the squad was the smallest of the last two years and we were missing our top sailor who was at the German open with the development team (clash of dates). However quality were shown and despite small the group showed promises for the future.

The squad had 5 girls and 3 boys. The non squad had 3 girls for 5 boys. The particularity of this year is that many of the sailors, despite only 11 or 12 are already optimum size or too big with the impact that they will unlikely sail to the optimist age limit and their technical potential will be under pressure rapidly.

B'MEER 2011

2011 was pretty specific with a very small team from Ireland attending. With only 11 sailors I ended up being the sole coach for the first time ever. The trip was as usual parents led keeping the cost high. It must be however noted that the approach taken favors greatly a very relaxed approach for the coach and the team therefore favouring performance.

Once more B'Meer was a model of organisation with quality racing. Excellent competition was provided and learning opportunities were numerous and to be valued.

The results were outstanding with 2 top 5 overall, two top 5 girl and best country. 9 sailors out of 11 achieved the criteria set by the ISA.

PALMA 2011

With 300+ boats and an incredible standard, Palma is considered like the open winter Europeans. Once more the quality of racing was excellent and makes it for an event to attend as a midwinter championship.

21 Irish sailors attended keeping it the best attended regatta for the Irish.

Results were also unprecedented with Sophie Browne taking the girls and Peter McCann securing 15th but more importantly most sailors achieving their objective.

IIR 2011 (India)

I had two sailors at the IIR. It is a small scale international regatta. The quality of racing was excellent although the standard relatively weak passed position 25th-30th. In term of value for money, it was excellent exposing the sailors to Asian's conditions, giving them a cultural experience for a relatively low budget. It is one to keep in mind from the cultural and value for money perspective.

Team racing Europeans, LAKE LEDRO

The team was probably not the Strongest we could have had, but they worked well together and learnt how to interact with each other and help each other. The event is a very good learning event with positive interaction with the empire and valuable briefs and debriefs. It is however an un-necessery event to attend and is pretty much the cherry on top of the cake for the sailors having managed to qualify the country.

Other

I did not actively coach at the other regattas listed above, however it is noted that the German open was a good event to attend. The decision to discard the french open was unfortunate as it surely is better value for money keeping cost lower, especially since it is usually held on the west coast of France.

The cherry on top of the cake was the incredible performace of Sophie Browne in NewZealand at the worlds. The Tralee sailor concluded her very successful

campaign taking the silver medal in the girls section and an unprecedented 13th position overall. She will now transfer into 420.

Graduated sailors

The progress in 2011 was obvious in the optimist class. Furthermore it is important to note the achievement of sailors who graduated from the 2009 and 2010 optimist programs, indeed they have been excellent.

Topper worlds
3rd Patrick Crosbie
15th Erica Ruigrok

Laser 4.7 Europeans U16
2nd Seafra Guilfoyle
10th Cian Byrne

Laser 4.7 Europa Cups U16
3rd Seafra Guilfoyle (La Rochelle)
7th Cian Byrne (Torbole)

Laser 4.7 UK end of season
1st Cian Byrne

Laser radial UK end of season U16
1st Seafra Guilfoyle
4th Dara O Shea
7th Conor Murphy

Robert Dickson and Sean Waddilove teamed up in a 420 and the arly sign of their progress are excellent. Peter Mcann is transitionning into 420 with some success. Adam Hyland has also made a successful transition.

Academy and bcademy

Seafra Guilfoyle just made it into the academy in the radial.

The Bcademy is a private program I run to bridge the gap towsrds the academy. 5 sailors undertook the program in 2011 and 12 sailors are now involved in the program. Several of these sailors are issued of the junior optimist program and have hopes to make an impact on the youth scene.

DRAFT 06/01/2012