



Coach : Thomas Chaix (ISA junior coach-manager)
Team IRL : Timothy O laoire (1991), Howth YC
Ross Vaughan (1992), Royal North YC
Cian O Regan (1992), Kinsale YC

Location : Uruguayo YC (Montevideo, Uruguay)

Dates : 29 Dec 2006-09 Jan 2007

Number of countries : 50

Number of sailors : 229 (3 starts)

15 races were sailed (full program) allowing 2 discards

Wind direction an strength / current:

Race 1 : North Easterly 6-10 kts. Shifty and gusty. Slight Current from North.

Race 2 : North Easterly 4-6 kts. Shifty and gusty. Major shift for the finish of start 2 and 3. Slight current from North.

Race 3 : South Easterly 18-20 kts. Big waves. Moderate current from South Easterly direction

Race 4 : South Easterly 16-18 kts. Big waves. Moderate current from South Easterly direction

Race 5 : South Easterly 15-18 kts. Big waves. Moderate current from South Easterly direction

Race 6 : South Easterly 5-6 kts. Waves and short chop. Slight current from Northerly direction

Race 7 : South Easterly 6-8 kts. Waves and short chop. Slight current from south Easterly direction

Race 8 : Southerly 10-12 kts. Waves and short chop. Slight current from south Easterly direction.

Team racing day : southerly 5-7 kts.

Rest day : southerly 20-25 kts.

Race 9 : Southerly 8-10 kts. Left over of waves and chop from previous day. Slight current from northerly direction.

Race 10 : Southerly 8-10 kts. Left over of waves and chop from previous day. Slight current from south Easterly direction.

Race 11 : Southerly 8-10 kts. Left over of waves and chop from previous day. Medium current from northerly direction.

Race 12 : Easterly 8-10 kts. Waves and short chop. Slight current from northerly direction turning South Easterly mid race and gaining rapidly strength.

Race 13 : South Easterly 8-10 kts. Waves and short chop. Strong current from South Easterly direction.

Race 14 : South Easterly 7-8 kts. Waves and short chop. Strong current from South Easterly direction.

Race 15 : Easterly to North Easterly wind for first start 5-6 kts. Very shifty. Flatter seas. Northerly current. More settled at 12-14 kts for second and third start from a Easterly direction. Current gaining strength from South Easterly direction.

Note on the current : strength and direction are affected by the winds mainly and by the tide. With southerly winds, waves tend to travel very fast increasing the current



strength. A way to observe current shift and veins is to look at the colour of the water and its displacement. Dark blue is water coming from the Ocean and muddy water is coming from la Mar del Plata.

Results analysis

Pl.	Sail #	Name	Tot	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
1	GER11861	Julian Autenrieth	72	1	1	9	12	5	3	-38	-20	14	3	12	1	1	4	6
2	SIN33	Griselda Khng	74	8	-15	8	8	1	7	OCS	4	1	8	11	6	1	1	10
3	ECU136	Edgar Diminich	90	2	18	17	1	BFD	1	6	1	-34	4	1	9	2	10	18
4	PER284	Stephanie Zimmermann	95	1	20	2	-29	7	17	19	-31	5	2	10	3	2	3	4
5	MAS81	Rufina Tan Hong Mui	95	OCS	3	8	-65	4	11	9	5	12	6	8	4	3	19	3
6	NZL4216	Marcus Hansen	107	20	13	3	1	1	6	31	1	14	7	-37	OCS	4	5	1
7	ECU118	Jonathan Martinetti	121	OCS	4	2	2	19	3	31	-46	3	15	5	10	4	7	RDG
8	CHI284	Benjamin Grez	140	31	2	22	10	-37	2	3	31	2	-36	14	5	13	3	2
9	ITA6784	Leonardo Dubbini	148	-35	-53	8	13	15	7	18	14	18	2	8	8	17	14	6
10	SIN55	Russell Kan	150	5	19	-48	11	22	12	-34	12	2	12	18	10	12	5	10
11	BRA3036	Diego Montautti	153	10	4	24	BFD	3	2	14	7	10	16	26	-38	5	24	8
12	SIN11	Sean Lee	160	7	-42	25	28	8	10	OCS	23	1	22	6	1	6	4	RDG
13	SIN22	Rachel Lee	165	35	15	22	-44	-52	6	8	33	1	14	2	7	2	3	RDG
14	JPN1145	Haruka Komiya	170	2	7	21	20	18	-43	1	-51	11	5	1	8	39	23	14
15	SIN77	Timothy Seet	172	13	-63	4	31	6	10	-37	6	8	5	29	9	15	20	16
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167	IRL1169	Cian O Regan	553	61	-67	46	31	26	66	45	31	54	57	42	13	64	17	OCS
180	IRL1150	Ross Vaughan	620	50	71	33	10	53	65	OCS	35	25	53	65	64	30	66	OCS
201	IRL1141	Timothy O Laoire	689	75	45	31	33	28	43	OCS	66	70	-76	53	60	74	67	44

Best country : Singapore

Team racing results : 1st Singapore
2nd Peru
3rd Germany

Top 15 finishers

Asia : 7

South America : 5

Europe : 2

Oceania : 1

North-central America : 0

Africa : 0

Note : Europe was the continent the most represented in numbers (followed by south America, North-central America, Asia, Oceania and finally Africa)

ISAF policy on recall :

To understand the numbers of OCS, it is important to explain the new ISAF policy on recall. In order to minimise "time wasted" and getting the races started on time (for media coverage mainly), it is now advised to OOD to avoid general recall. Therefore,



the X flag (individual recall) is now flying when boats (even a large number) are spotted over the line. This has 3 implications:

1. Starts can only be under I flag (round the end) to be able to control boats acknowledging their fault.
2. Boats above the line but being “properly covered” may be able to race and have a finish. Previously, when boats were known over but not identified, the policy was to fly a general.

For the sailors, it has a couple of implications

1. if the group you plan to start into goes up, you face three choices:
 - going up with them, try to stay invisible from each end of the line but risk the OCS.
 - Staying on the line (transit), try to get away from the group, but very likely fail to start in clean air with dreadful implication for future tactical decision.
 - Hail the sailors around you try to keep them below the line with you. Usually unsuccessful but worth trying.
2. Starting on one side of the line, it is worth listening to talks on committee boat to make sure your number is not called. It is easy to go around an end and save your race.
3. From the middle of the line, it is pretty much back to the 3 choices.

For information

At first Irish sailors tend to go for the second option (transit) leading to disastrous starts, but then went for the first option (going with the fleet) which led to a couple of OCS.

Race 7 : Ross : 25th, Timmy 50th

Race 15 : Cian 11th, Ross : 50th

For a good result, key factors were:

- A good race prep (speed test-confidence, current, wind patterns, start line routines, making a race plan...)
- Nutrition and drinks. Keeping protected from the sun!
- Good starts to be able to apply own strategy in clean air
- Speed to remain in strong controlled position in clean air
- Playing the shifts. Not taking too many headers and playing your own wind!
- Taking into account the current (mark rounding and downwind routes)
- Picking a side towards the end of each beat.
- Minimizing unnecessary tacks towards the finish line. Finishing from a side (line short)
- Ability to re-assess the race plan taking into account new factors (wind shifts, current change of direction or increased strength, position of the fleet...)

Irish results and recognised strength-weaknesses analysis

Results were disappointing in general but a few good races were sailed. I described the two best ones just below.

Race 4 : The start was very average but Ross went for clean air before he started to play with the shifts. His speed was good (18kts) and he rounded the top mark in 30th. After a good downwind display Ross was about 25th at the gate. On the second beat, he worked the right side of the course finishing on a long layline starboard tack. By doing that, he made sure he could finish on clean air and worked hard on the speed



(kinetics upwind). He overtook all the boats tacking too often in the center (current) and was lucky enough that the wind remained steady on the last third of the beat. He crossed the line in 10th.

Race 15 : Cian had a very good start towards the pin end side of the line. He played the center left on the first beat. The wind shifted to the left to remain left up to the windward. Cian rounded in 25th position which he held until the gate. He then decided to take advantage of the port lift still available going to right of the course. Every time he had the opportunity (short header), he tack back towards the center of the course. Half of the boats ahead of him went far left allowing plenty of clean on the center right. Cian was also pretty fast. Cian decided then to finish on the starboard layline. A good display of speed gave him the edge on the boats coming back from the left and the centred ones which had to tack too often. He crossed the line 11th (unfortunately OCS!).

Other good races included a 13th (Cian), a 17th (Cian), two 25th (Ross), a 26th (Cian) and a 28th (Timmy). In these races, the sailors managed to apply some of the winning factor (speed, clean air, shifts, finish line approach...)

Major factors throwing the sailors towards the last positions of the fleet.

ASHORE

- Wasting valuable energy or time while having fun (eg, football)
- Loosing the focus towards the objective. Concentration! Not to mix up with pressure.
- Lack of ability to analyse a bad performance, learn from it and move on.

AFLOAT.

- poor starts, especially at the beginning of the event
- First beat tactics. Often they found themselves going on the sides (often the wrong ones) looking for clean air due to speed problems, the lack of trust in a more conservative approach or a lack of understanding in the wind patterns (must admit it was very difficult to see patterns emerging from wind reading and shifts)
- Lack of anticipation of the current when it gained in strength towards the end of the event
- Speed in the light air and choppy seas.

And for Cian, I would add stress management as a potential explanation of poor early races. Following good races in the prep program Cian and I recognised his potential to sail good races. This may have added some form of pressure we did not manage to deal with.

Coaching side

As it was my first worlds, everything was new on the management side and I had to learn and adapt on a day to day basis which obviously impacted the sailors.

At an optimist worlds, one major aspect to take into consideration is that active coaching following race observations is practically almost impossible. 2 coaches have to share a coach boat and are allowed only to leeward of the start line and beside the finish line. There is an area where they can “travel” but time did not really allowed it. This means the coach can only see the starts from behind, the jibe mark approach and



the last third of the second beat. This is very limited for a race analysis and imply that sailors are able to talk through their race.

Information the coach can give from the RIB are:

- wind information before first start of the day
- Current information before first start of the day
- Start debriefing
- Last beat choices and finish line approach debriefing

This is very limited and some other nations work with another coach (often the team leader) who stays ashore or goes on one of the spectator boat. Both coaches are on communication.

Another advantage of having a second coach is on shore duties. It allows debrief, checking the protest, staying for protest while the rest of the team can go to the hotel and relax. It also helps to optimise time spent on shore duties (petrol for RIB, food, drink...).

The last but not least advantage I see is the possibility to swap coach afloat to create a choc in case of poor results.

In any case, the sailors need to be very **independent**, but work as a **team** and capable of feeding the coach with information. They have to be able to formulate a plan and reassess that plan throughout the race and not expect the coach to tell them where to go. Some of the top sailors seemed more “professional” and less “kid” in their approach. Another thing that seemed to come out good sailors was confidence and focus (not arrogance or aggressivity). I think the three Irish did well but feel there is still work to be done on that aspect.

I understand it was an exceptional year with only three sailors representing Ireland and I must say the parents helped a lot each morning and when coming back ashore, but it was very demanding and stressful for the coach to act as “Team Mum” on top of the coaching duties. This probably impacted to some extent the quality of the coaching towards the end of the event. That said I must say the three sailors have been very responsible and made good effort to be on their best behaviour.

A couple of key facts

Weight : In the top 15, most of the sailors were in the mid 40 kgs, the lightest being probably Singapore Griselda Khng at around 39-40 and heaviest Italian Leonardo Dubbini at 50kgs.

Europe facts:

Best German was world champion Julian Autenrieth (44-45 kgs)

Best British was 27th Phil Spark (38kgs)

Best French was 34th Sacha Pelisson (37-38kgs)

All these sailors were fast which helped greatly to take the right tactical decisions.

Even in Races 3, 4 & 5 with stronger winds, race winners where below 50kgs.

Techniques and fitness made the difference versus heavier sailors.



Age :

The youngest sailor was 10 and the oldest 15, but in general sailors were 12-15.

Time on the water

All nations or individuals performing well are spending 2-4 days a week on the water and race regularly at international level. The optimist international calendar is actually very rich.

Sails

The winner was a J sail but all sails seemed to work well. It is just a matter of adjusting them well and getting the most of them

Key aspect to work on for future

I am not sure we want the level of professionalism some team have as in Ireland the “fun” aspect is very important and enjoying the sport is the main drive for kids and parents. I don’t think parents are ready to accept that level of training and the Irish school system does not really allow the time required.

But here are a key factors I think we should look at to improve the results within our philosophy.

A world champion is fast!

Speed is something we can work on at young age. A major focus on setting the boat properly and doing loads of speed test and boat handling for U12 (as young as 10 year old) seem to be a good approach. Along the road, work a little on tactics and racing situation.

A world champion goes the right way!

When sailors turn 12-13, **tactics** and **race situation** must be the major focus. The most talented sailors must be encouraged to travel and race abroad for experience. At that age the sailors are usually the right size for the boat.

A world champion has experience!

At 13-14 (15), having done several races home and abroad, we may be able to compete at the highest std (speed + tactical knowledge + experience)

These 3 components are essential to have a good result. The std of a world championship is too high to be missing one.

Speed = time on the water + understanding of the boat setting + kinetics + optimum size

Tactical knowledge = white board situation + interaction with coaches

Experience = events (home and abroad)

Probably the hardest to put in place but with no doubt the most important : Culture and Education

- Respect for the opposition, for the gear...
- Being a team player (German or Singapore model was interesting)



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- Ability to focus towards an objective
 - Knowing when it is “fun time” and when it has to stop to allow quality sailing and when it is time to concentrate.
 - Managing the “fun time” to avoid wasting energy
 - Understanding that optimist is a learning boat and recognising when it is time to move on to the next class even with the feeling of an “unfinished business” in the class. Guidance is available on matter (talk to coaches or sailors who have “done it”!)

Thomas Chaix
Coaching & expertise in competitive sailing
(contracted ISA junior coach-manager)
4 The paddocks
Fenit Village
Tralee
Co Kerry
00353 861725256
laserthomas@eircom.net