

ISAF Sailing World Championships 2007- Finn Gold Cup
Cascais, Portugal, July 5-11

Thursday 5th July

The waiting is over...

The 2007 Finn World Championships – and the first opportunity to qualify for the 2008 Olympic regatta – started in near perfect conditions in Cascais, Portugal with race wins for Emiliios Papathanasiou (GRE), Chris Cook (CAN) and Ed Wright (GBR)

Racing today was scheduled to start on course three at 13.00, however the earlier promising wind had dropped to almost nothing by the start time. Racing finally got underway at 14.00 as the offshore breeze gradually built to reach 25 knots by the times the Finns headed for home some four hours later. The racing was sailed in two fleets, yellow and blue, started 10 minutes apart. The first off, the yellow fleet, sailed an outer trapezoid course, while the blue fleet sailed an inner trapezoid course.

Yellow fleet

The first race for the yellow fleet started in 7-10 knots of wind. Emiliios Papathanasiou (GRE) couldn't have hoped for a better start to his 2007 Finn World Championship campaign. In the first race he rounded the first mark in seventh place and gradually worked his way up the fleet to the front and then led round the final offwind legs to the finish. In the second race he led from start to finish, extending his lead to end the day with a perfect score and lead the championship with 2 points.

THE EARLY LEADER IN RACE ONE, LIIV HARLES (EST) WAS FOLLOWED BY ALEXANDER MUMYGA (BUL) AND RICARDO CORDOVANI (ITA). PAPATHANSAIOU WAS IN THE LEAD BY THE SECOND WINDWARD MARK AND NEVER LOOKED THREATENED, WHILE IVAN KLJAKOVIC GASPIC (CRO) WORKED UP FROM A POOR FIRST BEAT INTO SECOND PLACE AND HØGH-CHRISTENSEN RECOVERED WELL TO FINISH THIRD. LOTS OF HIGH RANKED SAILORS WERE STRUGGLING MID-FLEET.

Michael Hruby (CZE) was close on Papathanasiou's transom in race two but could only watch while the Greek sailor sailed away from the fleet. With Hruby dropping to fourth by the finish, Høgh-Christensen had pulled through to second while Brendan Casey (AUS) sailed well to place third.

Get to know the sailor: Daniel Birgmark (SWE)

If I were not in Cascais I would be...at home with my family

My top tip for this week is...be careful of the starts, as they will be cracking down on premature starters and using the black flag

My main strength is...probably tactics

My proudest moment is...when I became a father a year ago

My friends would say that I'm....a nice friend I hope, maybe you have to ask them

I am very bad at...many things and keeping time

My philosophy for life is...have fun,

I think the favourites this week are...there are many favourites, that could do well. And now we have the guys from AC racing back here - and more prepared than in Balaton - so they could do well.

The best thing so far about Cascais is...sailing conditions, but many good things here such as a good organising committee, friendly people and great hospitality

If I were in charge of sailing I'd...do what we are now doing now in the Finn class to make the class more media friendly with on board cameras and tracking systems. I also think it's really good that so many Finn sailors are getting involved in making this happen.

Blue fleet

Second placed overnight, Ed Wright (GBR) described racing in blue fleet. He said, "The first race was very tricky as the wind went back and forth and neither side really paid that much. Half way up the first beat there was a big right hand shift that left a lot of us stranded on the left. I managed to get back to fourth, taking places both downwind and upwind, but doing three laps helped a bit."

Michael Maier (CZE) - one of the many returning Finn sailors from the +39 America's Cup challenger - was the early leader in race one until he was eventually wound in by Chris Cook (CAN) who went on to win the opening race.

THE SECOND RACE WAS STARTED IN 10-15 KNOTS OF BREEZE AND COOK AGAIN TOOK THE LEAD. RAFAEL TRUJILLO (ESP) – WHO WAS THIRD IN THE FIRST RACE – TOOK OVER COOK'S LEAD BY THE SECOND LAP, BUT THEN WRIGHT TOOK HIS TURN AND LED TO THE FINISH. WRIGHT CONTINUED, "IN THE SECOND RACE I GOT A REASONABLE START, AND HAD A REALLY NICE RACE. A COUPLE OF TIMES THE RIGHT PAID AND A COUPLE OF TIMES THE LEFT PAID, BUT I JUST TRIED TO STAY WITH EVERYONE ELSE REALLY." SUMMING UP HIS DAY HE SAID, "OVERALL, I AM PRETTY HAPPY WITH TODAY AS I WAS REALLY JUST TRYING TO SURVIVE. COURSE THREE CAN BE A BIT TRICKY, AND I THINK WE ACTUALLY GOT SOME GOOD WEATHER OUT THERE TODAY – IT CAN BE QUITE RANDOM AT TIMES."

ONE CASUALTY OF THE STRONGER WIND WAS DAN SLATER (NZL) WHO AFTER AN AVERAGE PERFORMANCE IN RACE ONE, ROUNDED THE TOP MARK IN FIFTH, CAPSIZED AND LET THE WHOLE FLEET SAIL PAST HIM BEFORE HE GOT HIS BOAT UPRIGHT AGAIN. HE LATER SAID, "NOW I HAVE CAPSIZED THE FINN TWICE IN MY LIFE AND BOTH TIMES WERE AT WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS. SLATER HAS RECENTLY BEEN ELECTED TO THE ISAF ATHLETES COMMISSION AS THE FINN REPRESENTATIVE. HE LIES IN 32ND PLACE OVERNIGHT, ON EQUAL POINTS WITH THE 2007 EUROPEAN CHAMPION EDUARD SKORNYAKOV (RUS).

Get to know the sailor: Anthony Nossiter (AUS)

If I were not in Cascais I would be...in Australia, surfing, windsurfing, enjoying the good life and taking a break

MY TOP TIP FOR THIS WEEK IS...HIKE HARD

MY MAIN STRENGTH IS...WINDY WEATHER AND POWER

MY PROUDEST MOMENT IS...FINISHING THE VOLVO OCEAN RACE

MY FRIENDS WOULD SAY THAT I'M....THAT I WOULD OUT BENCH THEM

I AM VERY BAD AT...RUNNING

MY PHILOSOPHY FOR LIFE IS...ENJOY IT

MY FAVOURITE FOR THIS WEEK IS...CHRIS BRITTLE, HE'S 120 KG OF POWER.. [GOT A 9 AND 4 TODAY]

THE BEST THING SO FAR ABOUT CASCAIS IS... BEAUTIFUL CLEAN WATER, FRIENDLY PEOPLE, INTERNATIONAL CULTURE, IT'S FANTASTIC. THE CUP SHOULD HAVE BEEN HERE!

IF I WERE IN CHARGE OF SAILING I'D...WE'D ALWAYS HAVE TRIANGLE COURSES WHEN IT'S WINDY

Close on points

Looking ahead to the racing, Pieter-Jan Postma (NED), who is lying in 14th place after a 5 and 13

today said, "The conditions here are just about perfect. It's different if you are on one of the outer courses where there is lots of wind to the inner course which is more shifty and difficult, so its going to be really interesting sailing."

Behind Papathanasiou, the next three sailors are all on 5 points. The 2006 European Champion Ed Wright (GBR) scored a 4, 1, while the defending World Champion Jonas Høgh-Christensen (DEN) scored a 3, 2 and the 2004 Olympic silver medalist Rafael Trujillo (ESP) scored a 3, 2. Two more races for the Finn class are scheduled for tomorrow, Friday at the slightly later time of 16:20.

FULL RESULTS CAN BE FOUND ON THE EVENT WEBSITE.

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Links:

ISAF Sailing World Championships: www.cascaisworlds2007.com

INTERNATIONAL SAILING FEDERATION (ISAF): WWW.SAILING.ORG

Notes for Editors

ISAF Sailing World Championships 2007

Over 1,300 sailors from 76 nations are competing at the 2007 ISAF Sailing World Championships, from 28 June-13 July in Cascais, Portugal. The Championships are the principal qualification regatta for the 2008 Olympic Sailing Competition, with 75% of all national places to be decided. 'The Wind Is Calling' is the official motto for the 2007 Worlds.

ISAF has appointed Sportshows and CSI Sports to manage TV production and distribution before, during and after the event. Footage and VNR's will be available – for more information please contact marketing@isaf.co.uk.