



18/3/2008

39 Trofeo S.A.R. Princesa Sofia MAPFRE

Capricious winds for end of qualifications.

Mallorca is no exception: weather forecasts are often wrong!

Sailors and regatta organisers were expecting a strong south westerly with waves, but the stronger winds today came from the North. While it granted the Yngling with 18 knots, and the 49er with a weakening medium breeze, it failed to reach the Finn course forcing the racing committee to abandon the first race of the day. Meanwhile the Tornados were enjoying a totally different wind from the west! With the last qualification races scheduled today for the Lasers, 49ers, 470 and RS:X Men, the weather didn't make it easy for the racing committees who had to adjust to the capricious winds to provide fair racing for all. In the end, all races were sailed as scheduled, and the favorites are keeping their place at the top of the classifications.

Petra Niemann (GER) continues on her quest to conquer the Trofeo Princesa Sofia with two more victories in the Laser Radial. The Trophy is given every year to the sailor or team with the least points in a fleet of a minimum of 20 boats. The laser radial fleet is right on target and with 5 points to her overall score (Petra is discarding a 1st!), the German is in good position for the coveted cup. The Norwegians Anette Myhre and Catherine Gjerpen are conserving their place in 2nd and 3rd.

Competition is tight for first place in the Tornado, Yngling and 470 men, with teams on equal points.

French Tornado sailors Xavier Revil and Christophe Espagnon and Germans Johannes Polgar and Florian Spalteholz have each scored a first and a second. The German team seemed to have recovered their earlier form after a disappointing result at the World Championship this year where the pair placed 21st. Polgar and Spateholz good results in Palma in a small but talented fleet will be welcome as they prepare for the final Olympic selection regatta in Hyères.

The Russian teams are still leading the Yngling fleet and are now on equal points but regatta defenders Americans Barkow/Howe/Capozzi and world champions Ayton/Webb/Wilson (GBR) are also on equal score only 2 points behind. While the British enjoyed the heavier breeze to claim the first race, Athens Gold medalist in the 470, Sofia Bekatorou's boat took the bullet in the second.

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The top 4 is unchanged in the 470 men. Gabrio Zandonà/Andrea Trani (ITA) and Javier Conte/Juan de la Fuente (ARG) have won a race each and are still on equal points in first and second. Vice-World Champion, Alvaro Marinho and Miguel Nunes (POR) have mastered the tricky conditions and smart sailing compensated for lack of speed: “We played the shifts well! Our good boat is still on the way from Australia so we are using an old boat and are not so fast”. A first and a third today brings, the Portuguese to 8th overall.

Unsettled leaders

Marina Alabau and Alessandra Sensini are conserving a safe margin in the RS:X regatta. While the Spanish had inconsistent results with a 9th and a win to take first place overall, the Italian collected top 3 results. Bryony Shaw is unmoved in 3rd place after winning the first race.

World #3, Nick Dempsey (GBR) is dominating the man division after winning today's races. Ivan Pastor is moving up to second overall after discarding a 10th place.

In the Finn fleet, Ben Ainslie is increasing his lead with a 4th place and a win while the rest of the fleet had mixed results. The shifty winds were hard to read on the Finn course, racing on the eastern corner of the bay. Ainslie will prove once again hard to beat. In second position, Ivan Kljakovic Gaspic (CRO) has scored top 10 results but is 14 points away from first place. World Number 1, Jonas Hoegh-Christensen (DEN) had up and down results with a second and 20 he is discarding, to place 3rd in front of Zach Railey (USA) who has lost 2 places to 4th after a disqualification at the start.

The top 3 remains unchanged in the Laser class with Paul Goodison (GBR) and Nick Thompson (GBR) scoring similar points today. Rasmus Myrgren (SWE) who has been reinstated yesterday in 3rd place has suffered from the shifty conditions to finish 12th in the first race and win the second. Other race victories go to Andreas Geritzer (AUT) who gets back from 31st to 4th place after deleting 17 points from his overall score. Alejandro Foglia from Uruguay has had a great day with a 5th and a win to place 12th overall while in 31st position, Igor Lisovenko (RUS) takes the other win.

New leaders in the 49er and the women 470 classes.

Natalia via Dufresne and Laia Tutzo (ESP) have claimed back the top spot in the 470 women after scoring a 2nd and a 4th. Early regatta leaders the Italians Conti/Micol and Germans Rothweiler/Kussatz have collected high scores but are still in the top 3.

Bronze medallist at the 49er World's in Melbourne in January and Athens Silver medallists, Rodion Luka and Georgiy Leonchuk (UKR) have stolen the lead from Jan Peter and Hannes Peckolt (GER) after a 6th place and 2 wins scored in today's 3 races. The Germans are only 2 points behind after consistent results. “It was a tricky day with challenging conditions. We





had choppy waves and very gusty winds.” The brothers have chosen Palma for their training camp: “We come here every year for a few months. It is great for training.” The young sailors, who have quickly reached the second place in the world ranking, have their eyes set on a place on the Olympic podium. “Now that the selection trials are over we can concentrate on testing our equipment and select the best gear for China.”

The qualification phase is over and the 49ers, Laser, 470 and RS:X men fleets will be now divided in Gold and Silver.

Pictures are available to download from the website www.trofeoprincesasofia.org with credit to be given as instructed. Rough footage will also be available throughout the week with a fee.

For more information please contact Corinne McKenzie on corinne.mckenzie@orange.fr or on the Spanish mobile: +34 648 788 659 or by sms only on +33 670101813

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