

14 European Clubs Qualify for SAILING Champions League Final

Porto Cervo, 3 June 2018 – Teams from 22 clubs representing 13 nations were battling over four intense days of competition at Semifinal 1 of SAILING Champions League (SCL) in Porto Cervo for a ticket to the SAILING Champions League Final in St. Moritz coming up at the end of August. The first 14 sailing clubs qualified in Sardinia for the final event in Switzerland. The Italian yacht club, Circolo della Vela Bari, has won the opening round organised by Yacht Club Costa Smeralda with the support of title sponsor Audi, after a commanding performance in Sardinia. In the beginning of August, 16 other sailing clubs qualify at Semifinal 2 in St. Petersburg, Russia, to complete the list of 32 participants besides host club Segel-Club St. Moritz and SCL Champion Yacht Club Costa Smeralda.

Excellent starting skills and clear-headed tactical racing delivered victory for the crew representing Circolo della Vela Bari (CVB), one of two Italian teams competing on the sparkling waters of the Costa Smeralda. Simone Ferrarese's team went into the final day just in front of Austrian rivals Yacht Club Bregenz, with Club de Voile Saint-Aubin Elbeuf also well in contention. However, neither the Austrians nor French could match the blinding consistency of the CVB crew who won all three of their races on the final day to win the 22-team contest with a race to spare.

Ferrarese was delighted to win in such dominant fashion: "We had an amazing day today. It's great to come out with a race victory and it's fantastic to win in Italian waters! We love Porto Cervo and we love this event. It was tough until the end, especially in our last race to keep our eyes on the French team from Club de Voile Saint-Aubin Elbeuf who was our direct rival. Thanks to my crew, they did an amazing job."

Although they may not have won in Porto Cervo, the Austrians were still very satisfied with second overall. Compared with the Mediterranean heat of Northern Sardinia, skipper Max Trippolt will perhaps enjoy the cooler climes of Switzerland in just under three months from now. "Sailing so many races in four days, the sun in Sardinia kills your brain and keeping the concentration up is not easy at all, so we're very happy to have qualified for the SAILING Champions League Final. But the competition is going to be even harder in St. Moritz when the best clubs from the semifinals come together. We'll give our best and see what's possible."

Aside from winning the event, the other battle in the middle of the fleet was to secure one of the 14 places available for the final in St. Moritz. APCC Nantes sailed well in their final heat to take second place behind the winners from CVB, the French doing enough to secure qualification for Switzerland. Last of the qualifiers was Jachtclub Scheveningen from the Netherlands, with their Dutch compatriots WSV Giesbeek finishing just one place and three points behind, but meaning they just missed out on a ticket to St Moritz.

The Yacht Club Costa Smeralda (YCCS) ran an exemplary regatta, proving why this venue continues to be one of the most clear choices for hosting world-class sailing contests. YCCS Commodore, Riccardo Bonadeo, commented: "The club became famous for hosting Maxi yachts but we also want to welcome the young sailors to compete at events like SAILING

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Champions League. We are happy that this new challenge for the club is achieving great results for sailing. We make every effort to create the same spirit of sport for young people in the smaller boats – because this is the future of our sport.”

The YCCS regatta was the first of two semifinals, with the second semifinal due to be hosted by St. Petersburg Yacht Club in Russia from 3 to 6 August, just a few weeks before the 2018 Final which will be hosted for the first time by Segel-Club St. Moritz, high up in the Swiss Alps from 30 August to 2 September.

Live broadcasting by SAP

Did you miss the races of SAILING Champions League? Just visit sapsailing.com and click through the SAP Sailing Analytics for replays of all races and different and interesting statistics about the action on water. You find the overall results on sapsailing.com!

For further information see the SAP Media Kit.

The qualified clubs for the Final in St. Moritz (in order of the overall result):

	Nation	Club	City
1	Italy	Circolo della Vela Bari	Bari
2	Austria	Yacht Club Bregenz	Bregenz
3	France	Club de Voile Saint-Aubin Elbeuf	Saint-Aubin Elbeuf
4	Switzerland	Regattaclub Bodensee	St. Gallen
5	Germany	Segel- und Motorboot Club Überlingen	Überlingen, Lake Constance
6	Monaco	Yacht Club Monaco	Monaco
7	Switzerland	Regattaclub Oberhofen	Oberhofen, Lake Thun
8	Denmark	Kongelig Dansk Yachtklub	Copenhagen
9	Italy	Società Canottieri Garda Salò	Salò, Lake Garda
10	Finland	Åländska Segelsällskapet	Åland Islands
11	Germany	Wassersportverein Hemelingen	Bremen
12	Sweden	Cape Crow Yacht Club	Gothenburg
13	France	APCC Nantes	Nantes
14	Netherlands	Jachtclub Scheveningen	The Hague

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Background Notes for Editors

PAST WINNERS OF SAILING CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

2017: Yacht Club Costa Smeralda, Italy
2016: Deutscher Touring Yacht-Club, Germany
2015: Kongelig Norsk Seilforening, Norway
2014: Kongelig Dansk Yachtklub, Denmark

HOW DOES THE SAILING CHAMPIONS LEAGUE WORK?

The most successful National Sailing League clubs compete against each other in three SAILING Champions League events, two semi-finals and then a Final. Each club forms a team from its most accomplished sailors. To win the title and the much sought-after trophy, the clubs have to perform under pressure and put in a world-class performance when it matters most. Short races, one-design boats, a standardised course and a competition between the most prestigious sailing clubs in the world - all these ingredients combine to guarantee sailing at its best.

THE IDEA BEHIND SAILING CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

It's a straightforward format that has been working well in football for years; now we have clear proof that it also works for sailing: *An international club competition generating high levels of media interest and a competition that clubs, sailors and fans can all identify with.*

The idea behind SAILING Champions League is simple: it's the championship of the national champions. The most successful clubs of the National Sailing League countries are competing against each other to fight for the title: "Best Sailing Club of the Year".

WHY NATIONAL SAILING LEAGUES?

The SAILING Champions League is based on the same proven and successful format of National Sailing Leagues. It all started out with a bold experiment in 2013 with the creation of the German Sailing League in 2013. The format was the brainchild of consulting and holding company "Konzeptwerft" in conjunction with some of the leading German sailing clubs as well as the German Sailing Association.

The concept took off like wildfire and it wasn't long before it started capturing the attention of sailors in other countries. The organisers of the German Sailing League started getting several serious inquiries from all around Europe and even from the USA. In 2014, Denmark became the first European country to adopt the format of a National Sailing League along the lines of the German model. As of 2018, 17 countries in Europe and the USA are running their own National Sailing Leagues. The logical conclusion of this trend? One international League for the national champions and the best of the National Sailing Leagues – the SAILING Champions League.

YOUTH SAILING AND WOMEN'S SAILING CHAMPIONS LEAGUES

Following the exponential growth of the League format, the next obvious steps were to create special Leagues for Youth and Women's competition. So for the first time in 2018 we see sailors competing in the Youth SAILING Champions League and Women's SAILING Champions League. It's all about making league sailing as accessible and attractive as possible to a wider group of sailors, as well as increasing the appeal to sponsors and commercial partners.

HISTORY OF SAILING CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

In 2013, the consulting and holding company "Konzeptwerft" in Hamburg revolutionised the sport of sailing in Germany. For the first time the clubs raced directly against each other in a friendly competition called the National Sailing League. The concept took the ages-old tradition of "club versus club" and turned that friendly rivalry into a competition that immediately caught the interest of sailors

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around the country. It ignited a passion for inter-club competition that hadn't previously existed. This enthusiasm not only caught the attention of the nationwide sailing community but also regional and nationwide media.

With a TV live stream as well as in-depth race analysis provided by SAP Sailing Analytics, fans and indeed anyone interested in sailing can follow each race of the National Sailing Leagues in real time on the internet. A panel of sailing experts and professional TV presenters bring all the action and excitement directly to people's homes and sailing clubs around the country.

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