

Circolo della Vela Bari Wins the SAILING Champions League 2018

St Moritz, 2 September 2018 – Four days of tense competition and a nailbiting final race on Lake St Moritz brought victory for the Italian team from Circolo della Vela Bari (CVB) in the SAILING Champions League Final in St Moritz, Switzerland. The team from CVB claims the title ‘Best Sailing Club of the Year’. Runner-up is the Swiss club from Société Nautique de Genève ahead of Wassersport Verein Hemelingen from Germany who take the third place. Thirty-one yacht clubs representing twelve nations came to St Moritz to fight for the prestigious silver trophy in the SAILING Champions League Final 2018.

For the second consecutive year, the silver trophy of the SAILING Champions League stays in Italy. The CVB from the southeast coast of Italy takes over the title from their fellow Italians from Yacht Club Costa Smeralda. Three months after winning Semifinal 1 of SAILING Champions League in Porto Cervo, Simone Ferrarese, Valerio Galati, Corrado Capece Minutolo and Leonardo Dinelli claim the title ‘Best Sailing Club of the Year’.

Simone Ferrarese admitted: “We were very, very lucky, we can’t pretend it was anything else. But we never gave up, even when we were a long way behind. Sometimes we were unlucky on other days so maybe the luck came back for us today. Over the four days I think we have sailed very well and all of us are so happy to have won this regatta, to make Circolo della Vela Bari the best sailing club in Europe.”

The Italians won in the most extraordinary showdown between the top four teams who qualified through to the four-boat final. After seven flights of eight-boat races, it was the Swiss team, Société Nautique de Genève, who came through qualification at the top of the leaderboard. If the Swiss could win the first race of the finals, the ‘first-to-two-wins’ format for this competition would have made them the champions.

In a very light-airs final race, it looked like the Swiss would indeed close out the regatta. The Germans, Norddeutscher Regatta Verein and Wassersport Verein Hemelingen, were parked on the far side of the final run and it looked like the regatta was slipping away. But a small gust from behind wafted the Italians past the Germans and the Swiss. As they crossed the finish line, all four boats were overlapped but CVB won the race by only one metre, and the SAILING Champions League 2018 after adding up the points.

The light-airs conditions came in strong contrast to the two semifinals which took place earlier in the summer. Porto Cervo produced moderate winds in Sardinia, while St Petersburg produced some all-out planing conditions on the Neva River, with winds gusting up to 30 knots. St Moritz was a much more subtle challenge. While day one produced perfect breezes under bright blue skies, the next three days of lighter wind demanded smooth boathandling and roll-tacking in the sub-5 knot conditions.

The host, the city of St Moritz, worked closely with the hosting club of Sailing Club St. Moritz and the region Graubünden to make sure that this gathering of international talent was given a world-class reception, with lavish parties in the evening and a great opportunity for all the international crews to get to know each other better.

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Martin Berthod, director of St Moritz Tourism was delighted to have welcomed so many top-level crews to the lake high in the Alps: “Water sports and sailing in summer is as important to us and the Engadine region as winter sports in winter. We want to offer our guests sports and relaxation, so we took the chance to work together with the SAILING Champions League to present sailing to our guests with hosting the final for the best clubs in Europe.”

The SAILING Champions League is proud to be supported by a number of key partners: Juvia, KRAFTWERK, DEDON, Breitling, Badrutt’s Palace, DKSH, SAP and Marinepool.

For the clubs on the podium, three main partners handed over special prizes:

1st place - Breitling: four watches of the model Superocean Héritage

2nd place - DEDON: a deep sofa from the TIGMI collection

3rd place - KRAFTWERK: one Nautic Tool Trolley equipped with tools and four Swiss army knives

Live broadcasting by SAP

Did you miss the races of the SAILING Champions League Final? 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!

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Background Notes for Editors

PAST WINNERS OF SAILING CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

2018 – Circolo della Vela Bari, Italy

2018 – Youth SCL: Bodensee Yacht Club Überlingen, Germany

2018 – Women’s SCL: Kongelig Dansk Yachtklub, Denmark

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.

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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 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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