



Great Danes Win First Ever Women's SAILING Champions League

It's the first time an event in the Women's SAILING Champions League has ever taken place, and Kieler Woche in northern Germany was the venue. With 10 teams from six nations, the Royal Danish Yacht Club and Hellerup Sejlklub made it a one-two victory for Denmark.

Kiel, June 2018 – Kongelig Dansk Yachtclub, aka the Royal Danish Yacht Club, has won the inaugural event of the brand-new Women's SAILING Champions League. Over the three days of the regatta which took place from 16 to 18 June during Kieler Woche, two Danish crews dominated the league racing in J/70 keelboats. There were all kinds of weather conditions over the three days but the final day saw spectacular conditions with a south-westerly breeze blowing at 11 to 13 knots.

Each team competed in 20 races across the three days, and the Royal Danish Yacht Club rarely finished out of the top two in any race. Strangely, the final heat proved to be their worst score, although that 4th place didn't matter because the crew with helmswoman Henriette Koch, Anne-Sofie Munk-Hansen, Tina Schmidt Gramkov, Helle Ørum Ryhding and Lotte Meldgaard Pedersen had already notched up a commanding lead in the standings. Koch, who represented Denmark at the London 2012 Olympic Games, commented: "I think it's a pleasure we're starting a new tradition – a new way of sailing. It's great to be the winning team in the first event. On top of that I think it's brilliant to finally have a women's sailing championship!"

Hellerup Sejlklub finished in second place. Both Danish teams were some way ahead of the chasing pack who were focused on who would grab the final podium place going into the last heat of the competition. A first place gave Akademischer Segelverein Warnemünde third place overall, just one point ahead of fellow German team from Deutscher Touring Yacht-Club who finished on equal points with Dutch entry International Yacht Club Amsterdam..

Nynne Desirée Ammundsen from ISLA (International Sailing League Association) said: "It's been a blast! Following 50 competitive women in 10 teams from different nations sailing in Kiel is a really good start. This is only the beginning. We have established a strong base and a solid foundation to make sure the Women's SAILING Champions League concept goes from strength to strength. Having sailors from different nations, classes, levels and ages is exactly what ISLA is working towards, 'developing the league format'. It's great to see sailors respond so positively to this format."

Did you miss the races of Women's 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!

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These clubs competed in Women's SAILING Champions League:

| | | |
|----|-------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1 | Denmark | Kongelig Dansk Yachtklub |
| 2 | Denmark | Hellerup Sejlklub |
| 3 | Denmark | Women on Water |
| 4 | Finland | Nyländska Jaktklubben |
| 5 | Germany | Akademischer Segelverein Warnemünde |
| 6 | Germany | Deutscher Touring Yacht-Club |
| 7 | Germany | Norddeutscher Regatta Verein |
| 8 | Netherlands | International Yacht Club Amsterdam |
| 9 | Sweden | Malmö Segelsällskap |
| 10 | Switzerland | Zürcher Segel Club |

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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".

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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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