

Eight Nations to Contest First Ever Youth SAILING Champions League

Hamburg/Travemünde, 25 July 2018 – The Youth SAILING Champions League is the latest innovation to be launched out of the successful SAILING Champions League format, and 18 crews from eight nations are getting ready to compete against each other in Travemünde, Germany, from 27 to 29 July. The first-ever league competition exclusively for sailors from 16 to 23 years old at Travemünde Week attracts prestigious yacht clubs from Austria, Croatia, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Switzerland. These talented young sailors will be the first to trial a new Final Series format to determine the regatta winner.

Some of the yacht clubs are already well-versed in the short-course windward-leeward style of racing that takes place in a professionally-maintained fleet of J/70 sportsboats. The Royal Danish Yacht Club (Kongelig Dansk Yachtklub) recently won the inaugural event in the Women's SAILING Champions League at Kiel Week, in addition to also leading the overall standings at this stage of the Danish National Sailing League 2018. Can helmsman Emil Kjaer uphold the honour of his prestigious Copenhagen yacht club against some stiff competition from across Europe?

Other clubs with good form at the senior level include Circolo della Vela Bari, with the team from southern Italy clinching the first SAILING Champions League semifinal in Porto Cervo a few weeks ago. There is nothing to stop the under-23 sailors from competing in the other League events, and it's those that carry prior experience through from other regattas that are likely to be threatening for the podium in Travemünde.

Catharina Sandman, one of 17 female sailors competing in Travemünde, from the Finnish entry Nyländska Jaktklubben said: "Our team consists of two girls and three boys and our background is mostly in dinghies such as the Optimist, Laser, 29er and 49er. We have all been sailing together since we were kids mostly competing against each other so we are really excited to finally team up and join forces. We are very much looking forward to the first Youth SAILING Champions League and we are expecting tough competition with great spirit."

Trial of new Final Series

As well as being the first ever youth event in the league format, there is a new Final Series being trialled which should bring the event to a more exciting, spectator-friendly conclusion. The top four boats from the Qualifying stage go through to the Final Series, carrying forward their ranking from Qualifying as a single race score. The winner of Qualifying would carry through a race win, the runner-up would carry through two points, and so on.

Now the Final Series can begin with just four boats in the race, and the teams will race against each other until one team has won two races. If the winner of Qualifying wins the first race of the Final Series, they become the outright winner of the regatta. On the other hand, the maximum number of races that could take place is four, if the race wins have been evenly distributed across all four teams.

Founder and co-organiser of the SAILING Champions League, Oliver Schwall commented: "We've got a good feeling about this 'first to two wins' format. It's an experiment, but the

beauty of this system is that the winner of the last race becomes the overall winner. We feel that this system offers a good balance between rewarding a consistent performance throughout the Qualifying stage, while also keeping the tension and excitement until the very last race of the competition.”

The youth competitors will be following in the footsteps of the senior circuit, with 36 clubs having just raced at Travemünde last weekend for the German Sailing League.

Nynne Ammundsen, General Secretary from ISLA (International Sailing League Association) was delighted to see such a good showing of teams from across Europe: “Following the runaway success of the league format over the past five years, establishing a youth league was an obvious next step. We’re delighted to see such a strong uptake for this first event in the Youth SAILING Champions League and I’m sure the competition will be every bit as fierce as we see at the senior level. The youth is the future and therefore ISLA can only applaud all the great work that has been done so far to make the Youth SAILING Champions League event happen.”

Livestream and results by SAP

As with all SAILING Champions League events, the final day of racing on Sunday will be live broadcasted by SAP from 12:00 hrs (CEST), with expert commentators providing blow-by-blow analysis of the racing, aided by the detail provided by SAP Sailing Analytics. The SAP Sailing Analytics provide 24/7 additional statistics and data for sailors, fans, spectators and media like GPS tracking, real-time analysis, live leaderboard combined with 2D visualisation. You find all results on sapsailing.com!

You can follow the action on Sunday here: youtube.com/watch?v=2MC2Ktdt6UA
The broadcasting of the Final Series starts at 14:00 hrs (CEST).

To follow all the action online, tune into the livestream this Sunday. This will be available on Facebook, YouTube and also on www.sailing-championsleague.com.

For further information, please contact:

SAILING Champions League

Karolin Wehner

Phone: +49 40 226 316 4-63

Mobile: +49 176 617 351 87

E-mail: press@sailing-championsleague.com

Website: www.sailing-championsleague.com

Background Notes for Editors

PAST WINNERS OF SAILING CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

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.

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