

Young Germans from Bodensee Yacht Club Ueberlingen Win Youth SAILING Champions League in Travemuende

Travemuende, 29 July 2018 – Three days of intense competition and a nailbiting four-boat final sees Bodensee Yacht Club Ueberlingen from Germany win the first ever event in the Youth SAILING Champions League after a stellar performance in Travemuende, Germany. Kongelig Dansk Yachtklub from Denmark is runner-up ahead of fellow Danish team from Roskilde Sejlklub in third place. Not only was this the first SAILING Champions League event aimed specifically at sailors aged between 16 and 23, it was also the first time a new race format - the four-boat final - has been tested.

After two final races, the first winner of the Youth SAILING Champions League is the German Bodensee Yacht Club Ueberlingen from Lake Constance. The young crew with helmsman Konstantin Steidle, Alexandra Lauber, Patrick Hasse and Jonathan Koch went as third ranked club into the Final Series and secured the overall win. Helmsman Konstantin Steidle explained: “The last race was really close and we are just happy to have won! It’s amazing but we haven’t realised it so far. We sailed at our best in the final races. It was a tough competition, especially the Danish teams did a great job, as well.”

Crew Jonathan Koch commented on the new Finals format: “We were very nervous about the final races but it was a lot of fun. It’s just all to zero before the races and every team can win. It’s a great idea.”

For the front group, the final day was all about making sure you had done enough to make it through to the four-boat final. After twelve flights with 36 races, the final was a battle Denmark vs. Germany: the Kongelig Dansk Yachtklub (KDY) and Roskilde Sejlklub from Denmark against Bodensee Yacht Club Ueberlingen (BYCUe) and Lindauer Segler Club from Germany.

This new Finals format means that your overall position from Qualifying is taken into the Final Series. So as winner of the Qualifying Series, KDY carried through a first place and hence already one race win. Whichever of the four clubs secures two race wins would become the overall champion.

In the first final race, BYCUe won, putting them level with KDY, the winner of Qualifying. The other two yacht clubs were really starting to feel the heat, desperately needing a win in the next race. In final race 2, BYCUe earned her second race win, giving the young crew from Germany the overall victory.

Oliver Schwall, founder and co-organiser of the SAILING Champions League said: “The experiment with the four-boat Final was a great way to finish off the regatta. It keeps the interest and excitement for much longer, because whoever wins the last race becomes the overall winner. How often do you see that in sailing? It will be interesting to see if other areas of the sport pick up on this idea. We’re proud to have been the ones to pioneer it here in Travemuende at the first ever Youth SAILING Champions League.”

The atmosphere among the 18 clubs from eight nations was friendly, respectful and exemplary for other events. “The sportsmanship you showed during the event was outstanding and set the benchmark for sailing worldwide,” added Oliver Schwall at the prize giving ceremony. “This weekend has been an important step forward for the League concept, two big experiments confirmed as a success. Innovation is risky, but we had a good feeling

about introducing a Youth SAILING Champions League, and actually it has gone much better than I ever imagined. And with around 20% of the sailors being female, that created a fun atmosphere. It would be great see even more girls competing here in future events.”

Over the three days, the clubs experienced all kinds of wind conditions: from Freaky Friday, with the wind averaging 17 knots and gusting quite a bit more at times with big waves – it was a day to hang on to your hats – to lighter airs on Saturday and Sunday putting a greater emphasis on tactics.

Next weekend, the league competition continues with Semifinal #2 of the senior circuit of the SAILING Champions League. The event is 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 Sailing 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 Youth 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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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