

Club Nautique de Versoix brings the first SAILING Champions League title to Switzerland

Kiel, October 4, 2026 – *The Club Nautique de Versoix secured the 2026 SAILING Champions League title during a thrilling finale on the Kiel inner fjord this weekend. In the 13. season of this successful league format, the coveted championship trophy goes to Switzerland for the very first time.*

The venue demanded everything from the international top crews during the racing in the standardized J/70 keelboats. Tricky and shifting winds between the huge cruise ships in the harbor basin created highly demanding conditions during the first days. Tactical intuition, sensitive trim and the absolute necessity to keep the boat moving constantly in the light breeze were essential. The short course races became a true stage for light wind specialists.

There was no clear dominance by any single team throughout the regatta. The performance level of the fleet was simply too high, with established teams and newly formed crews engaging in a constant battle. France's APCC Nantes looked strong in the early flights before dropping back after a few mistakes. By the halfway point, a fierce battle had developed at the top. Germany's Norddeutscher Regatta Verein (NRV), Finland's Åländska Segelsällskapet, and Norway's Kongelig Norsk Seilforening (KNS) were tied at exactly 16 points.

At the end of the second day, Club Nautique de Versoix moved up to take the lead. They went into the deciding Sunday tied on points with the Norwegian Tønsberg Seilforening. The fight for the four Final Four tickets intensified dramatically. With four races per flight, almost every finish mixed up the leaderboard. Versoix defended first place in the qualification. Behind them, it was incredibly tight. The NRV, APCC Nantes, and KNS claimed the remaining three final spots with exactly 30 points each. Segelclub Stäfa from Switzerland and the Polish club HRM Racing missed the final by the narrowest of margins with 31 points.

For the big showdown of the top four, Kiel presented completely untypical weather. Bright sunshine and unusually warm temperatures offered perfect sailing conditions.

The Final Four format is unforgiving. The first team to score two race wins takes the title. As the winner of the preliminary round, Club Nautique de Versoix already carried one bonus win into the final. However, the high-caliber competition had no intention of giving up. In the first final race, KNS, the 2015 title holder and winner of this year's qualifier, had the best start and took the win on the water. In the second race, the 2022 champion, NRV, countered with smart decisions on the upwind leg to secure the victory.

Suddenly, there was an absolute tie among the three favorites. A single race win separated them from the overall title. In the third and decisive race, the crew from Versoix kept their nerves. They confidently took the lead and crossed the finish line first. KNS secured silver. The NRV completed the podium in third place, and Nantes finished fourth.

"We have seen incredibly close and high-class sailing throughout this entire season," said Anke Nowak, CEO of the SAILING Champions League. "The fact that the Final Four remained wide open until the very last second proves the enormous depth of experience we have in the league. Congratulations to Club Nautique de Versoix. They delivered an outstanding performance under immense pressure and truly deserve to take the title to Switzerland for the first time."

With this triumph, the Swiss club not only dominated the 2026 season. They also immediately booked the first ticket for next year. As the reigning champion, Club Nautique de Versoix receives a wildcard and is the first confirmed finalist for 2027.

The final event of this year's season concluded perfectly with the award ceremony at the Hotel Kieler Yacht Club. The hotel served as an excellent host and basecamp for the athletes throughout the weekend. Mayor Gerwin Stöcken was there in person to present the trophy to the newly crowned winners and congratulate them on their outstanding performance.

The dates and venues for the 2027 SAILING Champions League will be announced shortly.

Follow all the action live: sailing-championsleague.com

About the SAILING Champions League: <https://sailing-championsleague.com/about/>

Pictures per club/country:

<https://konzeptwerft.smugmug.com/SAILINGChampionsLeague/2026/Final-HKYC-/PRESS-c-SAILING-ENERGY> (Credit: SAILING Champions League / Sailing Energy)

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