

World Masters Championship

Oslo, Norway

The 7th Snipe World Masters Championship held in Oslo, Norway at the Vestjensens Seilforening (West End Sailing Club), June 25 to July 6, attracted 58 teams from 14 nations, demonstrating the international strength and popularity of the Snipe Class. The ages of the skippers ranged from the 45 year minimum to a high of 85, Kazumi Hirasu of Japan. 18 teams were composed of husband and wife, father and son/daughter or siblings, illustrating the strong family nature of the Snipe Class. If you add up the years of Snipe sailing appreciated worldwide probably total the year the Ice Age covered Norway!

The event was a perfect example of SCIRA's theme, "Serious Sailing, Serious Fun" as the sailing was competitive and the partying and friendship was even better, and to the Masters, certainly more important. SCIRA Norway did a great job providing a quality fleet of charter boats for the foreign competitors. While facilities were limited, they were comfortable and provided a relaxing place for conversation and fine meals, which provided a taste of the typical Norwegian menu. Many participants arrived early or stayed after the event to enjoy the many attractions offered by the beautiful and pristine City of Oslo, the dramatic countryside, and the fjords of Norway.

The preliminaries to the event started on Wednesday, with two great evening fleet races in which many of the masters participated. The winds of 8-12 knots up the fjord raised hopes of great sailing conditions for the event.

Day 1 of racing was disappointing. The fleet waited on the fjord for a sea breeze to develop, but it never materialized. Tuesday's conditions brought light to moderate rain, but there was a good breeze from the south and race 1 was off and running. As the race progressed and the storm clouds grew, the wind abated somewhat. During the last windward leg to the finish a fresh breeze out at the stern clouds on the right side of the course produced a sizable starboard tack lift to the finish, benefiting the boats that went right. The leaders, Paulo Santos and Birger Jansen, having noticed the

storm clouds, headed in that direction and Jansen (Apprentice Master) having worked fartiers to the right came out on top. Several sailors in the top of the fleet who ventured to the left side saw their hopes of a good finish vanish quickly. Antonio Roquette from Portugal, in 5th at the leeward mark fell to 52nd. Bjørn Iversen from Brazil fell from a similar position to 41st. The highest finishing Master was the team of Jary Thompson and Dec Shilling from USA with a 13th and the top Grand Master was Bjørn Sundby of Norway with a 2nd. After race 1, the stormy conditions deteriorated further and a second race was not possible. Going into Wednesday's day, one race had been completed in two days of sailing. However, in the spirit of the Masters event, Wednesday was a day for tooling the Oslo area. Thursday brought a 10-12 knot wind from the southwest, but also rain. Two good, medium length races were sailed with Thompson/Shilling (Master) winning the first race and the team of Carlos Wanderley and Bruno de Brazil (Grand Master) winning the second. The top Apprentice Masters for the day were the team of Past Commodore Jimmie Lowe of the Bahamas and crew Janet Krefling of Norway with a 2nd in the first race of the day. The top Master in the second race was Jiro Yamamoto with an 11th. Carlos Wanderley was the top Grand Master with a 15th. After the competition on Thursday, the event was back on schedule and the local competitors were looking forward to the remaining two days of sailing one race each day.

Thursday appeared promising in the fore morning as the competitors prepared and sailed out to the course. However, the wind from the southeast continued to build to over the 15 knot maximum allowable velocity for the Masters. With the start delayed, the fleet sailed into the marina for the island golf club and decided in shelter for about 1 hour. Ralph Swanson was reportedly seen heading for the golf club to see if he could play a round! As the wind kept building to the 20-25 knot range, the racing for the day was canceled and most of the competitors sailed back to the club on jibs alone. The schedule was adjusted to allow, if at all possible, 2 races on Saturday. This would result in the 5 races being sailed with a throwaway being allowed. Most sailors had already sailed their throwout race. Sailors were hopeful that the front would blow through that night and moderate breezes with blue skies would prevail.

On Saturday the sailors got their clear skies and the warmest day of the event (no dry suits). However, there was no wind. The fleet waited on the fjord until 2:30 pm, 30 minutes before the deadline for starting on the last day. The fleet hoped that the sea breeze from the south, up the fjord, would arrive and at least one good race would be completed. All hope for a 5th race and a score saving throwout had vanished. Surprisingly, a light breeze came in from the northeast and a windward/leeward race was started before the time limit. Going into this race



Paulo Santos of Brazil rounds near the top. photo Dennis Kelly.

Paulo Santos was leading Birger Jansen by .25 points. At the start the fleet split, with some going left to the shoreline and others heading right looking for sea breeze. The left side maintained the most consistent breeze and the fleet spread out over a considerable distance. The left appeared to offer the most hope and the leaders at the last leeward mark headed that way. The wind continued to die to the point that the lower 2/3 of the fleet was drifting without any wind at the leeward mark while the top 10-14 in the fleet were ever so slowly able to cross the finish line. Christiansen of Denmark crossed first, but Jansen/Stige finished 11th, just ahead of Santos/Farman to take the overall victory and Apprentice Master title by .25 points. However, there were about 50 boats on the course drifting towards the finish with hopes of improving their positions.

What happened next will be remembered as a classic in the history of Snipe Masters events. The water to the south had become dark and the sea breeze at 4:00 was finally coming up the fjord. Many drifting near the finish line hoped they could finish before the lower half of the fleet rolled over them. Nearly the entire remaining fleet crossed the finish line, downwind with overlapped poles up, in near planning conditions. The Race Committee was faced with an impossible job of sorting through the mass of unidentifiable "white" boats as they crossed the line. A video camera was used in an attempt to document the mess. The Committee's final score was considered very fair under the circumstances and a tribute to the overall high quality of race management for the entire event. They concluded that many had crossed the line in one huge mass and awarded 13 boats a tie for 32! One competitor that had been in the top 10 at the leeward mark ended up 32nd!

So much for the racing. It's off to the banquet and party for an enjoyable evening of dining, dancing and awards. The appropriate awards were given out and of the competitors received a SCIRA Trill as a remembrance of their visit. Many took to the dance floor and talked about the next World Masters in Cordoba, Argentina in March of 1998.

—Don Hackbart



Past Commodore Jimmie Lowe and Janet Krefling during a light air race. photo Dennis Kelly.

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Results

Skipper	Country	Hull #	Finishes	Total
Birger Jansen	Norway	28810	1-8-9-10	27.25
Paulo Santos	Brazil	13504	2-3-12-11	28.00
Jimmie Lewis/Janez Krefling	Bahamas	28811	5-2-17-3	29.00
Carlos Wanderley	Brazil	28632	12-15-1-3	29.75
P. Christensen	Denmark	26833	8-13-7-15	38.00
Orin Bonni	Norway	29088	4-17-15-9	45.00
Jiro Yamaoka	Japan	21379	16-12-11-14	53.00
Mats Grdin	Sweden	27828	5-6-24-19	55.00
Gunnar Jansson	Sweden	27456	25-20-10-4	59.00
Lennart Eoof	Sweden	28940	20-26-8-6	60.00
Ba Lindqvist	Sweden	28221	21-11-3-28	63.00
Johan Melander	Norway	28256	9-23-29-3	64.00
Garcia de Soto	Spain	22744	24-7-22-16	69.00
P. Jøen Kristensen	Denmark	28759	27-25-18-1	70.75
Jacques Persson	Denmark	28018	15-32-7-22	74.00
Jerry Thompson/Don Schilling	USA	24762	15-7-1-6-32	80.75
Naoki Ohara	Japan	28877	3-2nd 4-18	84.00
Sinding Larsen	Norway	19428	14-21-20-32	87.00
Antonio Korpela	Portugal	29292	32-17-14-8	88.50
Don Hackbart/M. Christensen	USA	29014	11-27-23-32	93.00
Flemming Rasmussen	Denmark	26540	37-39-6-73	95.00
Steinar Buius	Norway	28339	22-43-16-20	101.00
Tense Kurogi	Japan	29035	51-9-31-12	106.00
Lars Anger	Sweden	28861	33-5-38-31	107.00
Wesley Swanson/K. Ojaflon	USA	29200	26-15-25-32	111.00
Pablo Aguirre	Argentina	29012	32-28-26-27	113.00
Alessandro Sciacca	Italy	28959	51-24-28-13	116.00
Clasas Capella	Finland	28199	43-16-33-32	118.00
Ruben Gomes	Portugal	25120	19-30-15-39	118.00
Bjorn Sundby	Norway	26769	7-18-11-25	121.00
Bibi Juul/Eskander	Brazil	28631	4-1-2nd 5-21	126.00
Sam Mallev	USA	24087	26-31-40-32	129.00
Bill/Sherry Welch	USA	27772	44-34-37-17	131.00
Oscar Gonzalez	Argentina	28971	18-37-48-32	135.00
Munro Sigurd	Japan	28250	17-39-34-46	135.00
Per Gobber	Sweden	15099	42-19-45-32	138.00
Anders Jork	Sweden	27450	30-35-25-48	139.00
Ben Poston/Ed Creek	Canada	22443	22-27-2nd 29	143.00
Per Jø. Hansson	Norway	27886	36-22-27-2nd	144.00
Hans Risberg	Norway	27065	40-33-21-51	145.00
Kristian Skarset	Japan	28194	56-4-32-45	151.00
Roger Nylund	Finland	28123	34-42-44-32	152.00
Jacques Romain	France	29005	10-45-49-49	153.00
Fujita Motomasa	Japan	28412	54-35-36-32	156.00
Tord Persson	Sweden	27427	45-40-39-32	157.00
Ralph Swanson/Marta	USA	28999	31-46-40-29	165.00
Eugene Sartori	USA	26995	39-47-45-25	171.50
Christen Bendisart	Norway	18157	50-50-50-50	171.00
Ichiro Tameda	Japan	18680	47-51-43-23	173.00
Jan Langfeldt	Norway	28021	48-41-47-45	181.00
Arne Svendsen	Norway	27607	37-40-40-7	182.00
Daniel Sotomayor	Portugal	28206	38-49-32-47	186.00
Katsumi Hirata	Japan	28328	35-44-42-53	187.00
Halvor Pedersen	Norway	27410	50-50-50-50	190.00
Sigurd Wren	Norway	21123	29-32-30-40	190.00
Lennart Larsson	Sweden	28350	50-40-51-32	192.00
Leo/Joe Murphy	USA	28282	45-43-40-32	195.00
Jan Nilsson	Sweden	38065	58-53-45-54	224.00

Bold denotes Grand Master (65+ yrs)
Italic denotes Master (55-64 yrs)
 Plain text denotes Apprentice Master (45-54 yrs)

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