

Media Monitoring

Publication: **BYM Sailing & Sports News – Online**

Circulation/Audience: -

Date: **29 November 2007**

Reference: **Monsoon Cup**

Headline: **Monsoon Cup: Mirsky sets impenetrable trap on Hansen**

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Monsoon Cup: Mirsky sets impenetrable trap on Hansen

Thursday, 29 November 2007

The consensus is that it was shifty out there. If you were on the right side of a shift, you gained the advantage and could control your destiny. Some of the favorites and the veterans didn't catch the first shift. Adam Minoprio and Tiffany Koo sailed the first match of the first flight. Minoprio led around the weather mark and extended his lead to win. Katie Spithill and Paolo Cian had a closer match, but Cian crossed the finish line a half boat length ahead of the Aussie team.

The most exciting match of the flight, and maybe the regatta (I know that it's early, but it was an amazing display) was between youngster Torvar Mirsky and old pro Bjorn Hansen. Mirsky set an impenetrable trap on Hansen at the second weather mark. At some point, Mirsky drew a foul. Knowing that it is against the rules to clear the foul within two boat lengths of the mark, he tried to push Hansen beyond the mark and peel off and take his penalty gybe and head to the weather mark. The boats luffed motionlessly for a lifetime and Mirsky was able to push Hansen off to starboard of the weather mark, leave his competitor and round the mark. Mirsky camped on Hansen on the downwind and tried to make Hansen draw a foul. The fourth match, under full speed with their spinnakers up, ran by Mirsky and Hansen, but not before the leeward Mirsky forced Hansen into the overtaking boats. Once Mirsky knew that Hansen had committed the foul, his team popped the chute and took off for the finish line. The ISAF ranked tenth place skipper Torvar Mirsky won his first match of the regatta.

Jesper Radich, the 2001/02 Tour champion won his first match against Ian Williams, whose Team Pindar went into this final stage of the 2006/07 Tour in second overall.

It wouldn't be a Monsoon Cup without rain and true to form, a rain squall came through between flights. As the first match of the second flight between Bjorn Hansen and Katie Spithill headed up the beat, the rains dissipated.

The feature match of the second flight was the clash between former world champion, Dato' Peter Gilmour and Ian Williams, who was second coming into the final stage. The pair were fully engaged before the start. Williams entered the starting area prematurely and consequently was given a penalty, but Gilmour who crossed the starting line at full speed was OCS. Both boats went back in total synchronicity and Gilmour came out to leeward of Williams. Williams turn was to exonerate himself from the pre-start foul, but he took the turn at the same time as Gilmour went back to clear himself from the OCS. Gilmour wanted to go right and threw in a tack. Williams tacked on him and was in the controlling position going right. Gilmour did another slow tack to the left. Williams found pressure and crossed clear ahead of Gilmour on the port layline to the first weather mark. Gilmour used his wind shadow to come from behind pass Williams and Gilmour went on to extend his lead on the three lapper and win.

In the Hansen/Spithill match, Hansen was in control the entire time and won by seven boat lengths. Likewise, the young champion-slayer, Torvar Mirsky put quite a distance on Paulo Cian. Top-ranked Mathieu Richard crossed the finish line half a leg ahead of Jesper Radich.

Getting a good start and being able to get out to the right was the formula that worked best throughout the first two flights.

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At the post-race press conference, Torvar Mirsky said, "it was a bit of a surprise to finish off the day with a 2-0." His young team has been practicing hard in Foundation 36's at home in Perth. Mirsky thought that his team, being more familiar with the boats and fresh off practicing at home did not need a warm up session as much as some of his competitors who were unfamiliar with the boats.

To say this is a wonderful place to watch a match race is an understatement. Balconies, and broad windows overlooking the unobstructed race course along with screens, monitors and live commentary make the racing absolutely riveting.

About Stage 15

The Monsoon Cup is the final Stage, of the 2006-07 season. In its third year the Monsoon Cup has maintained its prominent position on the World Tour. Offering the richest prize purse for a sailing event, RM1 million (\$300,000).

The Monsoon Cup 2007 is the final ISAF Grade WC match race regatta this year and will see a new ISAF Match Racing World Champion crowned. To ensure the Monsoon Cup is an absolute thriller championship points from the event count double and must be included in the series score, guaranteeing a fight to the end with any one of 5 of the top teams able to win the World Championship.

Duyong Island at the mouth of the Terengganu River plays host to the Monsoon Cup where the purpose built sailing facility acts as a grandstand overlooking the racing area making a spectacular setting for this final event. The Monsoon Cup will be sailed in the identically matched and supplied Bakewell-White designed Foundation 36's with 5 crew. Live coverage on Saturday and Sunday between 1400-1600 (UTC +8), including the semi-finals and finals, will be shown on Eurosport, Star Sports Asia, Showtime Arabia and Sky NZ. You wouldn't want to miss it!

2007 Match Racing World Championship Season

Stage 7: May 23-28, Match Race Germany, Langenargen, Germany

Stage 8: July 2-8, Match Cup Sweden, Marstrand, Sweden

Stage 9: July 24-29, Portugal Match Cup, Troia, Portugal

Stage 10: August 8-12, Danish Open, Copenhagen, Denmark

Stage 11: August 14-19, St Moritz Match Race, St Moritz, Switzerland

Stage 12: September 11-16, Latium Match Cup, Rome, Italy

Stage 13: October 9-14, Bermuda Gold Cup, Hamilton, Bermuda

Stage 14: November 13-18, Brazil Sailing Cup, Vitoria, Brazil

Stage 15: Nov.28-Dec 2, Monsoon Cup, Kuala Terengganu, Malaysia

ISAF Match Racing World Championship Leaderboard (Top 8)

(After Stage 14 of 15)

1. Mathieu Richard (FRA) Saba Sailing Team, 140 points
2. Ian Williams (GBR) Team Pindar, 132 points
3. Paolo Cian (ITA) Team Shosholoza, 115 points
4. Sébastien Col (FRA) Areva Challenge, 93 points
5. Bjorn Hansen (SWE) Team Apport.net, 87 points
6. Peter Gilmour (AUS) PST, 66 points
7. Magnus Holmberg (SWE) Victory Challenge, 64 points
8. Ed Baird (USA) Alinghi, 55 points