

International 49er Class

www.49er.org

PRESS RELEASE

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2011 SEIKO 49er Europeans **Fast Track moves Aussies into the Lead**

An overnight rain cleared the air for the sailors and gave fresh conditions producing four spectacular races. The 49ers began the day in 10 knots of breeze which increased throughout the afternoon with puffs to 22 knots, providing a fast track.

“Today was like go-kart driving; a small course with 3 laps” commented Thomas Ploessel, the crew of Erik Heil, two young sailors from Germany (23 and 22 years) who currently sit in 8th. The duo qualified in third place for the gold fleet and had three good races today but also sailed one of their discards (5-9-21-6). Ploessel and Heil have been competing together for ten years, beginning in the Teeny, a small doublehanded boat sailed in Germany. Four years ago the duo switched to the 49er after being too heavy for the 470 and have never looked back. Asked if they were surprised by their success this week Ploessel responded “A little. We know that we are good; we’ve been training a lot.” And on the question of any pressure sailing with the more experienced teams, “A little, but we see that we can beat them, and that’s a good thing!”

Seven places in front of the Germans, in true world champion form, Nathan Outeridge and Iain Jensen (AUS) sailed a 9-3-1-2 to move them in the lead by a two point margin over yesterday’s leaders Dylan Fletcher and Alain Sign (GBR) who had a 1-7-11-7 day. Federico and Arturo Alonso (ESP) sit in third after a solid day of 2-5-4-4.

In the silver fleet, James Peters and Ed Fitzgerald (GBR), 2008 ISAF Youth World champions in the 29er lead the 40 boat fleet despite a disastrous last race.

The final series finishes tomorrow with the medal race to be held at 13:55.

For more information and full results: www.openeuropeans2011.com

Photos: www.photos.friedbits.com

Attached Photos: Photo credits: Fried Elliott: www.friedbits.com
#2887; Eric Heil and Thomas Ploessel, GER100
#2409: 49er fleet in Helsinki
#2987: GBR1233 (Dave Evans/Ed Powys), GBR5 (Dylan Fletcher/Alain Sign), FIN280 (Lauri Lehtinen/Kalle Bask)

About Seiko

SEIKO has been the main sponsor of the International 49er Class since 2006. Through this agreement, SEIKO has assisted the growth of the sport and has supported the future development of the 49er sailing through the supply of funds and equipment to the new generation of sailors. In return, SEIKO has gained valuable insights into the needs and wishes of the top athletes in world sailing, and is incorporating this knowledge into each new generation of Velatura, its marine watch collection.

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