

1998 Youth World Championship

—SEAN CARROLL

As I sit safely back in my apartment in Charleston, SC deftly trying to study for final exams, I am constantly distracted

by the memories of this years Youth World Championships. At the 96 worlds in Metedeconk, the Ecuadorian sailors had brought photos of their yacht club in Salinas. I have spent the last two years longing for this regatta. My crew of Kate Sheahan on the bow and Karl Schutte in the middle spent the trip getting to know each since meeting for the first time.

Upon arrival in Guayaquil, we were greeted by a mob of people, thankfully one of them

was holding a Lightning Worlds sign. Seeing that was a relief for my crew and me after flying all day to a city we had barely heard of filled with people who didn't understand a word we were saying. After bridging the language barrier we realized that Paco Sola had taken care of everything and all we had to do was put our stuff in the van and go the hotel. After a much needed night of sleep it was back into another van and off on a two hour safari toward the sea. Once settled in by the yacht club pool, with icy cool drinks in hand, my crew and I toasted the Lightning class for hosting such quality events.

The regatta began with an oscillating 12 knot on shore breeze. The general swell ran at an odd angle to the breeze and a steep chop quickly developed. After being run over off the line we struggled to about tenth at the weather mark, with some familiar faces back there with me there was no taking a breather. There were hot little battles brewing everywhere. Unfortunately we encountered a hot little battle at the leeward gate and incurred a foul. The rest of the race was spent trying to play catch up. We had great seats for the race up front though. John Boxberger USA won the race followed closely by Bruno Ficker BRA.

After a nice relaxing lunch at the club and an efficient boat rotation, we were back to the course. The breeze had shifted left and built to 15, it looked as though the beach would be favored. Everyone lined up for the drag race to the left - naturally I decided we should tack right to clear our air. Before we knew it Boxberger and I were stranded on the starboard lay line watching the compass drop twenty degrees. The persistent left shift remained for the rest of the day. The long boat speed beats in substantial breeze favored the bigger boys and Camilo Bustos COL came away with the win leading Andrew Allen's crew from Canada. Camilo

Bustos COL with an impressive three, one led after the first day. John Boxberger fought his way out of the pack second

race and finished the day with a one, six to grasp second overall.

After regrouping during the night, my crew and I knew we were in for a long week if we did not figure something out. I hate to say it but a few raunchy jokes from Karl was all it took and we were off to the races. The breeze had lessened from the previous day and had gone right quite a bit. A steep chop persisted

over the constant swell. After a clear start the fleet split, half to the right half to the left. Again, boat speed was at a premium, after everyone settled into their new boats it really became a horse race to win either side. The fleet did not join again until the weather mark. The first few boats led from the left and then the majority of the right made out. The Olympic course settled every one into a parade. After a shifty second windward the top three were Bruno Ficker BRA, Constantinos Merentitis, and luckily ourselves. The last windward would decide this one. Tight coverage ensued around the mark as we all tried to go our separate ways. We eventually won out on the right to take the race followed closely by Fricker and then Merentitis.



Miguel Plaza, Jr. congratulates the new Youth World Champions, Sean Carroll, Karl Schutte and Kate Sheahan



First Runners-Up - The Team from Parthenon Fleet 286: crew Michalis Koulianos, crew Elias Manolakis, Greek District Commodore Andy Sinopoulos, team coach Stelios Sotiriou, skipper Constantine Merentitis. Photo courtesy Andy Sinopoulos

Youth World Champion continued

During lunch, the wind had again shifted left toward the beach. The fourth race appeared similar to the second race the day before a long windward leeward was set. Again, the fleet split and Derek Marston from Peru led from the left, followed closely by a group of North Americans and then us in fifth or sixth. The top five began reaching slightly and Karl was able to keep us going low and fast. We gained an inside overlap on the mark on everyone excluding the team from Peru who were launched ahead. In the end, it was Marston Peru, Carroll USA, and Boxberger USA. Our Shore Sails appeared quite fast in the chop as we had won the day and John Boxberger took the overall lead. The fleet was close with the top five within five points.

The final day boasted similar conditions to the rest with a slightly overcast sky keeping things a little cooler. It was clear that this championship would not be decided until the final bell was rung as everyone excitedly went through their pre race maneuvers. A hard left shift as the start gun sounded caused chaos at the pin end of the line as everyone struggled to get clear. We were able to tack onto port half way up the line and cross everyone who started above us. By taking advantage of the first shift, things looked good for us headed up the beat. There was certainly too much racing left to start counting boats though. We arrived at the weather mark second behind Derek Marston of PER who led the group from the left. A quick jibe under the fleet around the offset cost us a few boats and we were stuck in the middle of the run. All we could do was watch as the team from Peru reached the mark a full minute ahead of the next boat. Rounding about eighth at the leeward mark, we saw our dreams slipping away. We were able to pass a few boats over the course of the windward leeward and finished sixth. Congratulations to Derek and his crew for a most impressive win. Merentitis from Greece captured second and with that tied Boxberger for the lead headed into the last race.

After doing all the math we could on the dock, it was time for the last race. There were still five boats with the chance to win. With a clean start and a few smart calls by my crew we, for the first time this championship, were leading a race. The long Olympic course gave us plenty of time to lengthen our lead around the triangle. Applying a loose cover while heading up the second beat we were beginning to count our chickens and see where everyone, especially Greece, was. Suddenly our jib wire let go and our jib hit the deck. Boy was I a little surprised. We were able to make

repairs quickly and continued sailing. Unfortunately our lead had been squashed and we rounded the weather mark third. I had quickly seen my dreams begin to slide away but my crew kept me focused and we were able to pass Carlos Plaza ECU down wind. The long beat to the finish gave us time to get an understanding of what was going on behind us. Bruno Ficker BRA won the race and we crossed second, Plaza did not receive a finish bell because he was over early. With the Ecuadorians not counting, we began to see that we might not have enough points on the team from Greece. Thankfully, our two friends from Canada were locked in a firm battle with Merentitis GRE for third through fifth. The two Canadian teams beat him out to the finish and our dream became a reality as our team from America came away the champions.

I hope everyone reading this report realizes what a special event this Youth World Championship is to Lightning sailors. If you have never participated in one, please try to get a local team together and work towards Greece in 2000. This was my second world championship and my final event as a youth. On behalf of my crew, I would like to personally thank the Salinas Yacht Club for being such gracious hosts. In addition I would like to thank Paco Sola, Miguel Plaza and their families for their efforts during this regatta and their continued support of youth sailing. Thank you all, we look forward to seeing you on the water.



A Canadian Perspective of the Lightning Junior Worlds

—MATT SIMPSON

On the twentieth of November 1998, three youth sailors from Toronto boarded a plane for the 1998 Lightning Youth World Championships. The event was to be held at the Salinas Yacht Club, Salinas Ecuador, where the regular Worlds will be held in the fall of 1999. As we arrived at the club we were warmly greeted and given a tour of the club. All the male competitors were taken to the dorms right on the yacht club property while the girls were shown to their hotel rooms a few blocks down the beach. The girls certainly lucked out with their accommodations but we didn't complain.

While the rest of all the international sailors were arriving, the club was hosting their annual, Ecuador vs. Columbia Regatta. This meant that all the boats, which were to be used for the Junior Worlds, were in use. This gave us a little bit more time to become acquainted and acclimatized.

There were 16 teams from eight countries and three continents. Representing Canada were two teams, one, ours,

from Toronto and one from Montreal. The team from Montreal consisted of Andrew Allen, Brent Basserman and Oliver Bone, while the team from Toronto was made up of Matt Simpson (RCYC), Dan Sprague (Boulevard Club) and Jessica Simpson (RCYC).

There was one practice day and an informal practice day before the regatta started. For the Worlds two races were scheduled for each of the three days for a total of six races. At the beginning of each day, every team was assigned the two boats they would be sailing in the day's races. Racing started at one giving the competitors time to set-up their boat. After each race you would sail to shore, de-rig your boat and go to the next boat you were assigned. Once rigged you would head back out to the racecourse for the next race. There was approximately an hour and 45 minutes for you to complete this from the finish of the first boat to the start of the next race. This system worked well and made sure the boats were as equal as could be. It seemed to work based on the results.





Photos: the Canadian team practicing in Toronto for the Youth Worlds. Photos by David Sprague

One major factor in the racing was the extreme heat. The average temperature was around 30 - 34 degrees, with intense sunshine and high humidity. Many teams, including us, found dehydration was a major concern.

The conditions, though warm, were near perfect for racing. The first day we had the predominant breeze out of the SW at about 10-15 knots. For the next two days we had an unusual breeze (that's what regatta organizers always say) out of the NW with wind speeds ranging from 5 to 15 knots with moderate chop. Along with the puffs came 30-degree shifts with no noticeable pattern. This made the racing very challenging and the top sailors began to emerge. However, no one boat won more than one race and of the six races five different countries each won a race. In the end the racing was incredibly close with a three-way tie for fourth and only 12 points between 1st place and us. The winning boat was from the US, followed by the Greeks and then the Colombians. The boat from Montreal ended up fifth while we were seventh (and only 4 points from 4th). The highlight of our regatta was the last day when, overcoming our internal issues, we scored two thirds.

The intense competition, relaxed atmosphere on shore and lively festivities made this an event to remember. We all made a lot of new friends from all over the world and saw in addition to good racing they all knew how to party well. In fact I think that the South Americans had an edge in that area and it wasn't just that they spoke Spanish better! I would personally like to thank my two teammates, Jessica (my older sister) and Dan (he won a trophy as the youngest crewmember in the regatta), it was their dedication and per-

sistence that held us together. As a team, we would like to thank the dads, Tom Simpson and David Sprague who took on the role of team managers and made the trip the success it was. Without their guidance, love and support, as well as the odd kick in the behind, none of this would have been possible. We would also like to extend our thanks to our sponsors, Sperry Top-Sider, and Rector Foods Inc. your support was greatly appreciated. Thank You.

After the regatta, we all played tourist and went travelling to take advantage of the distance we had come and to learn more about the country of the people who had done a magnificent job of hosting the Worlds. Dan and his dad, David went off for a 9-day sail in the Galapagos Islands and found them a truly enchanted group of islands. Jess and my dad, Tom went off to the interior of Ecuador and a 200-mile canoe down the Amazon. Here we learned an incredible amount about a unique area of the world. We all then met up in Quito for the flight back to Canada. As we flew back to civilization we all reflected on the fantastic trip we had all been on. Wonderful sailing, great people, an unbelievable country and we got to miss school too!

I look forward to the next Juniors in Greece. This was my first year sailing Lightnings and it was a great learning experience for all of us as well as a chance to meet some great people at the regattas we travelled to, in preparation for the Ecuador. At each regatta someone was kind enough to put us up at their house, showed us where to go and helped us improve. Thanks to you all you know who you are. This is a great class and I look forward to sailing the Lightning Class next year.



Start of 1st Race. Photo Tom Boxberger

Youth World Championship Sailing Action at Salinas Yacht Club

-DAVID SPRAGUE



1998

November 23-28 YOUTH WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

SALINAS YACHT CLUB, SALINAS, ECUADOR

November 23-28, 1998, 16 Teams, 6 Races, 1 Throwout

Country / Team	Races						total points	Final Points
	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6		
1 USA / Sean Carroll Karl Schutte, Kate Sheahan	dsq	9	1	2	6	2	38	20
2 Greece / Constantinos Merentitis Hilias Manolakis, Michalis Koulianos	7	5	2	13	2	6	35	22
3 Colombia / J. Camilo Bustos Camilo Salcedo, Nicolas Deeb	3	1	12	9	5	7	37	25
4 USA / John Boxberger Jim Ward, Allison Stevens	1	6	5	3	13	ocs	46	28
5 Canada / Andrew Allen Brent Bassermann, Oliver Bone	8	2	6	8	15	4	43	28
6 Ecuador / Sebastian Meira Octavio Jarrin, Francisco Soriano	5	3	14	6	9	5	42	28
7 Canada / Matt Simpson Daniel Sprague, Jessica Simpson	6	12	9	11	3	3	44	32
8 Peru / Derek Marston Juan Andres Marchini, Gianfranco Martinell	ocs	13	7	4	1	8	51	33
9 Brazil / Bruno Ficker Marcos Biekarck, Patrick Fleury	2	7	dsq	16	10	1	54	36
10 USA / Nicolas Mercier Pike Severance, Kat Ward	dsq	8	3	10	4	11	54	36
11 Brazil / Fernando Bocciarelli Richard Zietemann, Martin Zachne	4	11	8	7	11	9	50	39
12 Chile / Pablo Herman Varella L. Philippe Herman, Andress Guevara	ocs	4	4	14	12	10	62	44
13 Colombia / Loreana Jacob Pedro Latill, Jessica P. Jacob	11	10	13	5	8	12	59	46
14 Ecuador / Carlos Andres Plaza Miguel Macias, Alfredo Marin	10	14	11	1	16	ocs	70	52
15 Colombia / Alvaro Bustos A. Maria Bustos, Susana Salcedo	9	15	15	12	7	14	72	57
16 Ecuador / Juan Carlos Vidal Juan Rafael Santos, Juan Jose Ferreti	12	16	10	15	14	13	80	64



Photos David Sprague

This Year's Events