

Micro Magic EC 2015 Madeira

Location:

The venue was moved twice after the application. Initially, the port of Machico was planned in the northeast of Madeira. A nice port with offshore bay, beach and open on all sides. Upcoming concerns if there would be enough space for all and for all cars (in September the beach is still well attended) generated the move to the port of Funchal. And relatively shortly before the European Championship it was obvious that the construction of the large pier would not be ready in time. Therefore, the transfer to the new marina of Funchal...

This marina is ready-made incl. water and electricity, but due to political changes or whatsoever not yet handed over to the city / island. So we had the whole Marina incl. all jetties for us – a dream ☺ On the west side of the marina a very long floating pontoon was docked to the jetties, so you could run close to the boats back and forth. Just a few RC skippers had to fight on the swaying pontoon with seasickness.

Tent, catering, toilets, IT, etc. (Regatta Village) were built in the far east of the Marina. So you had quite some opportunities to exercise, although this was not always the preferred mode in the predominantly prevailing combination of temperature and humidity.

The parking (the participants had special parking permits to reach the otherwise closed off terrain) was a little further east. Reception, dinner, awards ceremony were in a restaurant in the old Marina, in the far west. So every evening another opportunity for an after-dinner walk. I could –despite the good food- in any case keep my weight, although at a high level ☺.

Weather / external conditions:

The weather situation around Madeira in September usually shows winds from north-eastern directions, which leads to predominant westerly winds in the port of Funchal, following the experiences of locals. In the week before the European Championship and in the European Championship week however, there was wind from all directions, what delivered especially for southerly winds sometimes a certain coverage in the marina. Except for one hour, when a hand full of skippers put the B-rig on, there were consistently A-rig conditions, between nothing and almost borderline, but mostly moderate, rarely upper A-Wind. If I remember correctly, only one or two runs were canceled due to too little or too much turned wind. There were even a few drops of rain, but hardly worth mentioning, because warm and vertically.

As boring as it sounds, it wasn't. Firstly, the wind strength fluctuated between runs because slight wind shifts had a significant influence on the wind force in the regatta field, on the other hand as a result of the wind force the short wind waves were changing constantly, between almost non-existent to distinctly noticeable. The whole thing was then especially in the last two days overlaid by a swell, which was strong enough to move your boat a meter backwards, if you tacked in the wrong moment. Even at the start it was not easy, to calculate this into the right distance from the line. At some distance from the outer wall the currents from the 1,5 meter tidal range were felt rather little.

The water quality was as promised by Ruben a year ago crystal clear, no jellyfish, no sea weed, almost no trash in the water. There was probably one failure by a piece of plastic and Jan de Best had very bad luck on Saturday. On really promising position both in the course as well as lying in the overall ranking, he has captured a 20 cm long piece of root wood. The stupid thing was a small notch, which had inextricably connected with the keel at one point. Actually unbelievable, but I'm sure that the piece of wood will get a corresponding place on Jan's shelf.

At a Glance: Though the weather forecast gave the organizers the day before the start of worry lines in the face, we had three days mostly very good Micro Magic sailing conditions.

Organization:

Also this year, a huge effort, whereby the control and monitoring of races have not come too short. More than 10 people were present at the race weekend and guaranteed under the direction of Nélio Sousa that there was nothing to complain about. Only a missing microphone was led by Nélio itself as a small defect.

Ruben Luis watched with two or three others the races. To avoid any team activities English was the only language allowed on the pontoon. A failure to carry out a circle was immediately punished by an additional circle and once I've noticed how someone could even turn three times. Probably there was not one overlooked early start during the event. Only in the second row some pushings from upwind to the lee side were unnoticed. That could be given to the Dutch as potential for improvement for the next European Championship. Otherwise Rubens' competent race control made sure that apart from the usual small disagreements mostly calm and friendly interaction reigned together.

Throughout the day a DJ took care of the starting procedures and the entertainment between the heats. A person sitting in the office in the Regatta Village was responsible for the live upload of images, movies and regatta results – of course, as usual with the young people, ☺ on facebook. You can find under "Micro Magic 2015 European Championship" lots of images, reports, newspaper articles, videos, television programs, etc. The television was actually there twice and we were happy to watch the first report together at dinner on Saturday evening.

Drinks were offered during the day for one euro, a water per participant for free. Lunch was a traditional Madeira bread with changing cold cuts. Dinner at restaurant Marina Terrace, which also offered in the race week a special menu for participants with very reasonable prices for different comprehensive menus. For dinner free beer or wine, a wine tasting on the first evening of a Lisbon winery ... additionally special prizes for the participants, for example for whale watching tours. It would go too far here to enumerate everything. But it might be difficult, to outperform this next time.

Incidentally, el Presidente from Los Nietos came over to pass the big trophy-board from last year - a nice gesture. He even joined a few races with the boat, which he had bought in the last year after the event from Mike Weston.

Regatta course / Result

The 29 participants were divided into an A and a B fleet scoring with HMS. The courses to be sailed were always up and down, with feeder, spreader and leeward gate, counterclockwise. The slightly

but constantly changing conditions ensured that none at all times had a fast boat and so it went up and down permanently. I remember to have fought once with 4 of the best 5 in the B-final for one of the 6 promotion places. Marcel Klein, although at the end in 11th place, has still two race wins in his list...

Clearly strongest nation were the Spaniards again. Not considered el Presidente, 10 participants, the worst at the end in 15th place that says it all. Jan de Best, NL was the first two days up front, until the encounter with the root in the last run of the second day. On Sunday he had some unlucky moments and after a relocation of the buoys also a missed start. The quickest Portuguese Nuno had shown at the friendship race one week before, that his boat is incredibly fast, especially in very light winds and so he finished a few times with considerable distance to the rest of the fleet.

The fewest points and thus again the title has collected Guilherme Beltri. This time also something struggling with the technique and the circumstances, not as predominant as last year, but good enough to be able to discard all slip-ups at the end.

Technology

I have not really asked everywhere but I could not discover a new boat (V2). The Dutch have reported that one of them (NL 717) has gone in the last national race with a new boat and sailed all the others into the ground. I am curious to see how that will continue in the upcoming event in Belgium.

Like last year, no, even clearer, VAM Sails on almost all boats. These sails are quite low profiled compared to Dirk Hiller sails or my light wind sails. They are not only relatively cheap, they work very well between very light and B-Wind, an adjusted trim provided of course. Self-made sails as from Klaas or me were the absolute exception.

At the very light winds some of the fastest run their VAM main very close-hauled, sometimes almost in the middle of the cockpit. The Jib still not much closer than the middle mast/deck edge. This requires a mainsheet which opens earlier and more than the foresheet, of course. In a moderate swell this trimming of low profiled mainsails allows obviously to go a bit faster upwind than with the classic more open sail setup. However, one must not be too thrifty with the twist, otherwise you choke off the boat. The same thing happens if you try this setup with deeply profiled sails.

Then, when looking at a used Tushingham rig, I have noticed how easy it can be to set almost as much mast rake as you want. You simply use a mast, which does not go down to the bottom of the hull, but already ceases 3 cm below the deck and is supported on the mast plate with an inserted pin. In conjunction with a reduced mast diameter this construction allows to tilt the mast in any desired way to the stern. That is obviously longer in use. Since I participated over the last months in the revision of the class rules, to me, however, was clear that this construction is not in the sense of the inventor of the class rules. I therefore asked during the ambassadors meeting and learned that also some Spaniards have this in their boats. Also from other nations came no contradiction ... I personally think it's at least borderline.

Ambassador Meeting:

Tom from Spain was due to bereavement in the family not coming to Madeira. He was represented by Max Kettner. Otherwise were present Ruben for POR, Jan for NL, Christel for BEL, Vasco for CH and I for GER.

The next European Championship has been given in the hope of a large field of competitors to NL. Time and place are not yet fixed, but will soon be submitted. There was also a firstly very welcomed application from Belgium. Unfortunately there were a few details around the Regatta mode, the duration of the event and the max. number of participants not as usual and desired and could not be clarified before the decision.

I also have to mention that not only during the meeting and not for the first time from several sides and also from Spain and Portugal, it was asked when we organize a European Championship in Germany. We are centrally located and can be reached from anywhere in Europe at comparatively low costs. Since we are only a small group concerned with MMi sailing, I see little chance to organize something appropriately. But if anyone has a suggestion or wants to actively participate ... a large participation of sailors seems to be almost certain.

Since no objections have emerged, the reformulated MMi class rules by Dirk-Jan Kann have been adopted.

With the departure of Magnus (SWE) and Peter (HUN) from the MM scene a renewal of the MMi class management was required. After a brief consultation, it was decided on the spot to elect for the next three years a new management team. For this were proposed and adopted unanimously Tom Duysens from Spain, Frank van der Zwan from NL, Ralf Bohnenberger from GER and as host of the new forum Martin Clemens GER.(Ralf and Martin together will use one vote only).

We have then discussed the situation boat/Graupner. I had communicated with Graupner over the past 12 months on behalf of MMi, created several tables with deficiencies and suggestions for improvement for the V2 versions from China and hoped in vain for revised samples. These were indeed repeatedly promised but just as often not delivered. There is now a final date promise for October, which is still awaited. If that is broken again or nothing useful will be presented, the management team has been appointed to look for alternative solutions.

Some videos to come..

Regards

Ralf