

North American Kite Racing Championships

St. Francis Yacht Club
San Francisco, CA USA
June 6th, 2013
by Eric W. Due

You want excitement? Get out of your chair, office, car, and get down to Crissy Field. The St. Francis Yacht club is hosting the North American Kite Racing Championships and today the action ramps up. The last two days have been qualifier heats. Today the seventy five racer fleet gets turned into a gold and silver fleet. The best kite coarse racers in the world are going head to head in San Francisco's back yard.

You want action? Thirty mile an hour closing speeds going upwind. Thirty five plus miles an hour downwind speeds. Kites the size of your SUV are being flown with precision while the riders rocket along on race boards with three 41 cm fins that will cut your steak better than most high end steak knives. Thirty plus kiters vie for the start line all at once for an absolutely impressive site that boggles the mind. How do they not tangle? It is truly a site to be seen. The racers start off rocketing towards the St. Francis Yacht Club and Crissy Field for a first hand spectator view of the best kite racing action on the planet.

The top riders in the world are here. Now. In your back yard. The world Champion Johnny Heineken from San Francisco, CA, races against the likes of Riccardo Leccese from Columbia, Bryan Lake from Fairfax, CA, Adam Koch from Bellevue, WA, Brian Kender from Westfield, NJ, Joey Pasquali from Sausalito, CA, Blazej Ozog from Poland, Tomek Janiak from Poland, and many others locally and from around the world. This is truly a race of super talented athletes competing in an amazing test of skill, stamina, determination and strategy.

Today the gold fleet blasts into action with four heats for the day. All racers carry over their qualifying standings and add their results for the day to an overall current score. Bryan Lake starts off the day by taking the first Golden Bullet, winning the first heat over Heineken, Koch, and Ozog. Lake continues his run taking first in the second heat over Riccardo Leccese, Adam Koch, Ozog, and Brian Kender. Johnny gets his head in the game and blasts back, absolutely flying to take the next two heats. Super close racing from start to finish around a course laid out by John Craig who is the Principal Race Officer for this event as well as the America's Cup.

You think this is a men's sport? Think again. The current female world champion Erika Heineken from San Francisco, CA, races solidly in the gold fleet and is currently winning the women's fleet. Nuria Goma from Barcelona, Spain, and Catherine Dufour from Quebec, Canada round out the top three for the women. All three are contending with the top half of the entire fleet.

The racing today comes right to your doorstep at the beach and St. Francis Yacht Club. It can easily be seen from shore. You can stroll along Crissy Field and gawk at the athleticism on the water. The near misses, kite tangles, wipeouts, overtakes, and incredible racing is here for you.

All of this is put on by the race office at the St. Francis Yacht Club headed up by Race Director Robbie Dean who is supported by an amazing team of individuals committed to providing the best racing possible. All the volunteers make this event happen, including boat officials, judges, coordinators, media, family, friends, and the local community. The amount of love being poured forth to promote this world class event is truly inspiring.

If you're in the area, you are definitely going to want to come down and view the action. If you can't make it, the St. Francis Yacht Club has lined up some great media coverage. See the links below for all the up to the minute updates. A huge thanks goes out to all the officials and volunteers involved.

Stay tuned for the finals on June 7th starting at 1pm!

Racing continues:

June 7th, 2013 approximately 1pm

St. Francis Yacht Club Race Office website:

<http://www.stfyc.com/Default.aspx?p=DynamicModule&pageid=379035&ssid=295833&vnf=1>

Direct link to results:

<http://sailwave.com/results/stfyc/2013kitenasqualificationseries.htm>

Livestream! By Jamy Donaldson:

<http://new.livestream.com/accounts/3511933/events/2152265?query=kite%20&cat=event>

St. Francis Facebook site:

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/St-Francis-Yacht-Club-Racing/106175099461351>

Twitter feed:

https://api.twitter.com/1/statuses/user_timeline.rss?screen_name=nakrc1

Photos from 6/6/2013:



Crissy Field and the St. Francis Yacht Club



Starting Line



Johnny Heineken, World Champion



Close Racing!