

Kiteboard Racing North American Championships

St. Francis Yacht Club
San Francisco, CA USA
June 7th, 2013
by Eric W. Due

The Kiteboard Racing North American Championships rocked the entire spectrum of sportsmanship and media coverage for racers and spectators alike this week. Today the finals for the series went off with blue skies on the bay and a dramatic fog line flowing over the Golden Gate Bridge. The San Francisco Bay delivered perfect winds and conditions for the final races here at Crissy Field and the St. Francis Yacht Club.

The final day of racing was split into the Silver, Gold, and Platinum fleets. The Silver fleet contained thirty seven racers vying for the Silver podium. Andrew Wong from Canada pulled out some stellar racing to take top of the podium for the Silver fleet. Nico Landauer of Uruguay gave a great battle for second with local Kevin Growney of San Francisco taking third. The battle was tight as Nico and Kevin tied for points and the person with the best score in the last heat gets the tie breaker.

The Gold Fleet was split today into the Gold and Platinum fleets. Platinum riders are the top ten riders of the event at the end of the third day with the Gold Fleet riders battling for the remaining positions. What a battle it turned out to be! Wilson Veloso from Paraiba, Brasil, came out strong. His initial points lead from the prior days put him solidly in eleventh overall (separation point from Platinum). The Gold Fleet races proved to be off the charts competitive as Jhon Mora from West Bay, Grand Cayman, came out and jammed the fleet with two firsts for the day in the Gold fleet. This put him fourteenth overall, tying with Stefano Rista from Canada for thirteenth. That is how close the racing has been all week. Mora and Rista both tied in point's scores with Rista taking thirteenth due to a better last race. Second in the Gold Fleet races today was clinched by Alejandro Climent Hernandez from Valencia, Spain, putting him twelfth overall.

Erika Heineken from San Francisco powered into the final day by being the only woman in the Gold Fleet. Her power and speed on the water places her twenty ninth overall, clinching the title for the women's fleet. Nuria Goma from Barcelona, Spain, takes second. Catherine Dufour from Quebec Canada battled with Goma the whole way, separated by only five points to take third overall.

The Platinum Fleet. The top ten kite racers in the world lined up to hash out who was going to be the Kiteboard Course Racing North American Champion. The talent and athleticism of these racers means they blasted off the start line on all four heats. These racers are fast and close. This is like watching formula one auto racing wheel to wheel. Fast, close, and filled with heated competition. Johnny Heineken and Bryan Lake went into the finals both with the possibility of clinching the overall win based on points. Heineken made several mistakes but recovered to take the Platinum Bullet in each of the four heats. Lake was right on his heels making sure Heineken felt the pressure. Lake kept the pressure on for all four heats battling it out with Riccardo Andrea Leccese from Columbia. Lake and Leccese swapped out second and third for all four heats. Lake came into the Platinum Fleet with a few less points, clinching second overall, Leccese taking third. The rest of the Platinum fleet played out as Brian Kender, Adam Koch, Blazej Ozog, Joey Pasquali, Tomek Janiak, Sky Solbach, and Tybur Reed finishing out the series in that order.

The media coverage and professionalism of the entire event has been top notch. Jamy Donaldson has been providing a live feed during the entire event on LiveStream.com. Michael Petrikov has taken amazing photos all week, along with so many others. The St. Francis Yacht Club Race Office, headed by Robbie Dean, has covered all the bases and kept the racing flowing with all the heats and

racers. Jessica Barhydt deftly and quickly organizing and posting results. John Craig from America's Cup acting as Principal Race Officer continues to provide invaluable leadership.

We thank all the sponsors including RRD, Live2Kite, UltraNectar, Wind Over Water, Patagonia, friends, family, and all donators of time and effort. The St. Francis Yacht Club supports and promotes this sport and all sailing like no other. Every racer, participant, volunteer, and associated individual has built this event and the kiting community into one of the best world class competitions.

Thank you all.

St. Francis Yacht Club Race Office website:

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

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