



2015 Para World Sailing Championships Media Guide

Highlights

- In late November, the best Paralympic sailors from around the world will be heading to the Royal Yacht Club of Victoria (RYCV) in Williamstown for the 2015 Para World Sailing Championships (26 November – 3 December 2015).
- A total of 136 sailors are registered for the event, from 31 countries.
- Host-country Australia will have their entire Paralympic Australian Sailing Team & Squad crews at the start line. Australia won the nation's ranking at last year's Para World Sailing Championship and also qualified all three Paralympic boat classes for the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games. With less than one year out from Rio 2016 the Australian Sailing Team is looking strong again after multiple top podium finishes across the international season.
- Australia's London 2012 Paralympic gold medallists Dan Fitzgibbon and Liesl Tesch (AUS), the current World Champions in the SKUD18 class, will be aiming to defend their World Championship title with less than year to go to the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games (8-17 September 2016).
- The who's who of Paralympic Sailing will be racing, including London 2012 gold medallists Helena Lucas (GBR) in the 2.4mR and Daniel Fitzgibbon and Liesl Tesch (AUS) in the SKUD18, and a distinguished list of Paralympic medallists and former world champions.
- Sailors will compete in three classes: the one-person keelboat, the 2.4mR class; the two-person keelboat, the skiff-like SKUD18 class for a mixed crew; and the three-person keelboat, the Sonar.
- The 2015 Para World Sailing Championships is the final opportunity for countries to qualify for the Rio 2016 Paralympic Sailing Competition. Seven 2.4mR, five SKUD18 and six Sonar spots are up for grabs.



- The event includes sailors with a wide range of disabilities but all with the ability to race yachts at a high competitive level. Sailing is one of the only sports in which athletes of many different disabilities compete against each other on a level playing field.
- Most sailors competing at the Para World Sailing Championships have an inspirational story to tell about overcoming the challenges of a wide range of physical impairments, including high level disabilities such as quadriplegia. Allowing sailors to steer and control boats using just a finger, toe or breath provides unique opportunities for athletes with a disability to get involved with and participate in high performance sport and to compete on a world-class and Paralympic level.
- Sailing was first seen at the Paralympic Games in 1996 as a demonstration sport. Four years later, it was included as an official Paralympic Sport with two events on display at Sydney 2000. A one-person and three-person keelboat event were chosen to demonstrate the sport in Australia. The 2.4mR and Sonar remained through Athens 2004 before the introduction of a two-person keelboat, the SKUD18, for Beijing 2008. All three events and equipment will be on show in Williamstown.
- Paralympic Sailing faces an uncertain future after having been excluded from the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games. The International Association for Disabled Sailing (IFDS) merged with World Sailing, the governing body of the sport, in 2014. Since then, significant investments have been made to develop and enhance the sport. Para World Sailing is reviewing disciplines, equipment and qualification systems for future Paralympic Games to ensure maximum global participation. The promotion of Para World Sailing is now a vital component of World Sailing's global marketing and media activities to drive exposure of the sport.
- Many of the competitors will stay on for the Sailing World Cup, also run on Port Phillip, which follows on from the Para World Sailing Championships at RYCV.

Key Information

Dates	26 November – 3 December 2015
Location	Royal Yacht Club of Victoria, 120 Nelson Place, Williamstown, Vic
Contacts	Media Manager: Daniel Smith (mobile +447771 542 131, email Daniel.Smith@isaf.com) Regatta Chair: Michael McLean (mobile 0419 309 786, email mcleans@ozemail.com.au)
Website	www.ifdsworlds2015.com
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Facebook	www.facebook.com/ParaWorldSailing



Event Background

Paralympic Sailing

Sailing is truly a sport for everyone. Regardless of physical or mental abilities, sailing provides a challenging, rewarding and fulfilling experience.

Sailing is one of the only sports in which athletes of many different disabilities compete against each other on equal terms.

Sailing caters for athletes with a wide range of physical impairments, including those with high level disabilities such as quadriplegia. Allowing sailors to steer and control boats using just a finger, toe or breath provides unique opportunities for athletes with a disability to get involved with and participate in high performance sport and to compete on a world-class and Paralympic level.

Para World Sailing



The International Sailing Federation (ISAF) is the world governing body for the sport of sailing, officially recognized by the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

ISAF's Para World Sailing Committee is responsible for sailing for people with disabilities worldwide. The Committee is responsible for the Paralympic Sailing Programme including Events and Equipment selection. They promote, assess and support programmes for disabled sailing run by their ISAF Member National Authorities (MNAs).

The Para World Sailing Committee promotes all types of sailing for people with all types and degrees of disability. The values of the Committee are equity, opportunity to excel and empowerment for sailors with disabilities.

Royal Yacht Club of Victoria - the Host Club



The Royal Yacht Club Victoria (RYCV) was initially founded as the Port Phillip Yacht Club in May 1853, and is one of the oldest yacht clubs in Australia.

The Club is situated in Williamstown, Victoria, just 13 km away from the centre of Melbourne with a stunning view of the city skyline and is steeped in decades of yachting history and tradition.

Today RYCV boasts more than 900 members and over 300 yachts on the register making it an ideal club for sailors with all levels of experience.

Williamstown - the Host City

HOBSONS
BAY CITY
COUNCIL



Williamstown, in the inner west of Melbourne, is going to be a wonderful home for the Para World Sailing Championships in 2015.

Williamstown served as the city's first anchorage, and as the major centre for port facilities until the late 19th century.



It retains the charm of a seaport, and its strong maritime heritage is reinforced by many attractions including the Timeball Tower at Point Gellibrand Coastal Park, HMAS Castlemaine Museum and Seaworks. It has been a shipbuilding site since 1913, while Blunts Boatbuilders in Nelson Place has been in business for over 150 years.

Specialty shops, restaurants, cafes and pubs line Nelson Place and other shopping precincts are within an easy stroll along the waterfront. The Hobsons Bay Visitor Information Centre is located at Commonwealth Reserve where the city ferries come in, just metres from the race hub of Royal Yacht Club of Victoria. Williamstown is a great place to visit year round, and a perfect home for this exciting sporting event.

Victoria – the host State



Victoria is Australia's major events capital. Victoria lives and breathes sports.

We're home to some of the biggest events in the world including the Australian Formula One Grand Prix, the Australian Open tennis grand slam, and our world-renowned Spring Racing Carnival.

The delights that Victoria has to offer include an enviable array of world-renowned restaurants, hotels and galleries, accompanied by stunning parks, open spaces, and family friendly beaches to enjoy.

The Event



The 2015 Para World Sailing Championship will be hosted by the Royal Yacht Club of Victoria (RYCV) in Williamstown, Melbourne, Victoria.

The dates for the event are 26th November - 3rd December 2015. The event is the final country qualifier for the Rio Paralympics in 2016.

More than 30 countries will be represented, with over 200 sailors and coaches registered for the event.

In advance of the Para World Sailing Championships, an ISAF Paralympic Development Program clinic is taking place out of RYCV.

The Paralympic Development Program aims to support the development of national Paralympic programs, increase the attendance by nations at the Para World Sailing Championships and enable ISAF members to develop a sustainable grass roots program for Para World Sailing.

Throughout the clinic, sailors will benefit from on-water expertise, sailing in the Paralympic one-person keelboat, the 2.4mR, as well as daily on-shore briefings.

Many of the competitors will stay on for the ISAF World Cup (7 – 13 December), also run on Port Phillip, which follows on from the Para World Sailing Championships at RYCV.

The Organising Committee estimates that the event will have an economic impact in the vicinity of \$7 million for the Victorian and local economies. The Victorian State Government along with Hobson's Bay City Council are supporting the event.

The Paralympic Boats

Sailors will compete in three classes: the 2.4mR class for solo sailors, the skiff-like SKUD-18 class for a mixed crew of two, and the Sonar class which is for a three-person team.

2.4 mR



Photo: Tim Wilkes

The International 2.4mR is a one-person keelboat. As a sister to the bigger 12 metre class boats used for America's Cup yacht racing from 1958-1987, she possesses the same sailing style.

As the helmsperson sits down in the boat facing forward with all controls within arms-reach, the boat is not physically demanding to sail. Instead, 2.4mR racing focusses on sophisticated sail trim, tactics and strategy.

Some sailors to watch in Melbourne:

- Heiko Kroeger from Germany is the reigning World Champion, having won the 2014 event in Halifax, Nova Scotia and the 2013 event in Kinsale, Ireland.
- Helena Lucas from Great Britain, the gold medallist from the London 2012 Paralympics, will be competing in Melbourne.
- Australian Sailing Team's Paralympian Matt Bugg finished fifth in the 2.4mR at last year's IFDS World Championships and has continuously worked his way up the ranks over the international competitions this season. Matt Bugg won a silver medal at the 2015 ISAF Sailing World Cup in Hyères, and went on to win bronze at the Delta Lloyd Regatta, making 2015 his best European season so far.
- France's Damien Seguin, the gold medallist from the Athens Paralympics and silver medallist from Beijing, is also registered to attend.

SKUD-18



Photo: Marina Hobbs

The SKUD-18 is an innovative 'lead assisted skiff' design that provides an exciting challenge for able-bodied and disabled sailors alike.

For Paralympic competition, the two-person crew must comprise one male and one female, and one of the crew must be severely disabled. Both sailors are seated on the centreline of the boat. There is a spinnaker used in this class.

Some sailors to watch in Melbourne:

- The gold medal winners from the London 2012 Paralympics, Dan Fitzgibbon and Liesl Tesch of Australia will be in action on their home waters, aiming to retain their 2014 World Championships title, which they won in Halifax, Nova Scotia. They have presented themselves in top form this season with the pair winning both World Cup regattas in Melbourne in December and Miami at the end of January as well as the Delta Lloyd Regatta in the Netherlands in May.
- Alexandra Rickham and Niki Birrell (GBR), the bronze medallists from the London 2012 Paralympic, will be competing in Melbourne.
- 2008 World Champions Jovin Tan and Desiree Lim will be back in the boat for the first time since Sailing World Cup Melbourne 2014. The Singaporean team will be preparing for their third consecutive Paralympic Games
- In addition to the above, a whole host of Paralympians are making the trip to Williamstown, including Tim Dempsey and Gemma Fletcher (NZL) and Italy's Marco Gualandris and Marta Zanetti (ITA). Both teams will have an eye on a podium finish.

Sonar



Photo: Delta Lloyd Regatta/Laurens Morel

The Sonar has three sails - main sail, jib, and spinnaker, but when used for Paralympic sailing, the crew uses the mainsail and jib only.

The Sonar provides the option of sailing together with a crew of various impairments. Its size and flexibility allows many different adaptive aids to be incorporated into the boats to assist those sailors with more severe impairments.

To ensure the participation of athletes from all classes of impairment, there is a maximum point count, which a crew of three persons must not exceed. The total crew is allowed a maximum of 14 points.

Some sailors to watch in Melbourne:

- The current world champion team is from France – Bruno Jourden and crew Eric Flageul and Nicholas Vimont-Vicary won the title last year in Halifax and in 2013 in Ireland.
- Australian Sailing Team's 2014 World Championship bronze medallists Colin Harrison (WA), Russell Boaden (WA) and Jonathan Harris (NSW) qualified the Sonar for Rio 2016 last year and have continuously finished on the podium since then. The team took home the silver medal at the ISAF Sailing World Cup in Hyères in April and gold at the Delta Lloyd Regatta in May. They were the only Australian Paralympic boat to compete at the ISAF Sailing World Cup in Weymouth in June, where they came away with a win.
- Beijing 2008 Paralympic Games gold medallists and London 2012 silver medallists Jens Kroger, Siegmund Mainka and Robert Prem from Germany will be heavily favoured in Williamstown. The trio haven't finished on a Para Worlds podium since 2010 but have a history of upping their game when it matters, evident in their Paralympic Games success. In 2015 the Germans won World Cup Hyeres bronze and had a Delta Lloyd Regatta fifth place finish.



Regatta program

Saturday 28 November	Races 1 & 2	First warning signal 1300 hrs
Sunday 29 November	Races 3 & 4	First warning signal 1300 hrs
Monday 30 November	Races 5 & 6	First warning signal 1300 hrs
Tuesday 1 December	Races 7 & 8	First warning signal 1300 hrs
Wednesday 2 December	Races 9 & 10	First warning signal 1300 hrs
Thursday 3 December	Race 11	First warning signal 1100 hrs

Uncertain weather may change this schedule through the week. Racing can be postponed or cancelled for the day if there is not enough or too much wind.

The target time for each race is approximately one hour.

Regatta Committee Information

Chair: Michael McLean (mobile 0419 309 786 or email mcleans@ozemail.com.au)

Media Information

Journalists are welcome at the media centre. We will aim to provide you with contacts and any other services you need to cover our event. The contact at the media centre is:

Dan Smith
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For Australian Sailing Team enquiries contact:

Cora Zillich
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Wi-Fi Internet is available.

Updates and results

We plan to post daily updates on racing days in the late morning which will outline the day ahead and review results so far. These will be available on Facebook: www.facebook.com/ParaWorldSailing and on our website: www.ifdsworlds2015.com

Results are published to the website as soon as they are available.

A daily update with links to the media photos will be sent to our accredited media mailing list each day when results are complete for the day. A final release will be issued to outline the final regatta results.

For inclusion on the mailing list please email Daniel.Smith@isaf.com.



Photos:

Our official photographer Teri Dodds will release several pictures of the racing each day.

These stills are available editorial rights-free for the media via Dropbox. Please register by emailing Daniel.Smith@isaf.com to receive the daily updates with links to download these photos.

Should you need photos other than for editorial purposes, please contact Teri Dodds directly to discuss your needs and her rates.

Teri Dodds Photography
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Spectator and Photo Boat Information:

A media boat will follow the racing. Please contact the media centre to discuss your requirements.