

February 2010

## Spain claims a famous victory at the SEIKO World 49er Championships in the Bahamas.

From January 2 to 9, the 2010 SEIKO 49er Class World Championships were held in the turquoise waters of the Bahamas, and the Spanish team of Martinez and Fernandez clearly felt very much at home, claiming victory by a record-breaking 27 points over their nearest rivals, the holders Outteridge and Jensen of Australia.



The short course off the coast of the Bahamas made for some thrilling and tight racing round the marks.

62 boats from 26 countries participated in the event, with the USA, UK, Australia and Denmark fielding the largest fleets, but the event was also notable for the appearance of less experienced crews from Argentina, Bermuda and Uruguay, whose presence at this, the pinnacle event of the 49er year, was made possible by the support that SEIKO gives to the International 49er Class.

The racing was particularly intense, as unusual wind directions throughout the week obliged the race officials to set an unusually short course, round which the crews had to make 4 or 5 laps, as opposed to the more usual 2 or 3. The conditions would hardly seem to have favored the Spanish crew, who had spent a large part of the year on a highly successful Volvo Ocean Race. Nevertheless, they took the lead early on and never looked like losing it, even winning the Medal Race on the final day.

The Italian crew, the Sibello brothers, took bronze, leaving the seven crews from the UK wondering where they went wrong. In an amazing display of strength in depth, UK teams finished in 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th and 10th places, but failed to make the podium.

The event provided a perfect showcase for the 49er Class and confirmed its standing as the most exciting and challenging class in the Olympic regatta. With boats capable of over 25 knots and of sailing even faster than the wind itself, the 49er fleet was a spectacular sight of the beach of Grand Bahama.



SEIKO's support to the 49er Class includes the provision of sails and other equipment to help the most promising sailors

SEIKO has been the Class sponsor of the International 49er Association since 2007 and is proud to support this exciting, challenging and fast-growing sport. SEIKO's support takes the form of both finance and equipment, targeted at assisting the Association to extend the reach of the sport to new countries and a wider audience. At the World Championships, SEIKO donated Yachting Timer watches from the marine collection 'Velatura' to the Gold, Silver and Bronze medallists and, in addition, SEIKO spinnakers and clothing were given by the Association to the up-and-coming generation of 49er crews. SEIKO's agreement was recently renewed until the end of the 2011 season. SEIKO has also extended its support to world sailing with an agreement with the 29erXX Class.



The Velatura Yachting Timer