

July 2014

## Denmark and New Zealand retain their crowns at the Seiko 49er & 49erFX European Championship.



Victory for the second year in a row for Peter Burling and Blair Tuke from New Zealand.

The defending European Champions held on to their crowns in both the men's and women's fleets at the Seiko 49er & 49erFX European Championship in Helsinki, Finland earlier this month.

The 49er Class renewed its reputation as the most exciting class in the Olympic regatta with over 130 boats competing for the 18th European title in a final day of theater-style racing that drew big crowds to the Helsinki shore.

In the lead up to the event, attention was focussed on the rivalry between the leading Australian crew of Nathan Outteridge and Iain Jensen and the New Zealand team of Pete Burling and Blair Tuke who, between them, had won the last five World Championships and whose rivalry will be renewed in the next America's Cup. And, true to form, these two crews were in first and second place going into the final three races. The New Zealand crew raced perfectly all day, while disaster struck for the Australians in the form of a broken wire and a capsize that pushed them back down to fourth place behind the leading European crew from Germany (Erik Heil and Thomas Ploessel) and the British team of Dylan Fletcher and Alain Sign.



The victorious Danish crews. Their Velatura watch collection grows larger.

In the 49erFX Class, the Danish team of Ida Marie Nielsen and Marie Olsen went into the three Grand Final races just a point behind the New Zealanders Alex Maloney and Molly Meech. The Danes sailed very solidly and with perfect boat handling in the tough conditions to take the win, their second win in two weeks having also won the 2014 Seiko Junior World Championship. They stayed comfortably ahead of the fast-finishing Brazilian team, Martine Grael and Kahena Kunze, who overtook the disappointed Kiwi crew for silver.

"We loved the racing here, especially the theater-style racing today. It was just awesome sailing." said Blair Tuke.

The next stop for the Kiwis and many of the other top teams in the 49er and 49erFX classes is Rio de Janeiro for the Olympic test regatta next month, followed by the World Championships in Santander in September.

Seiko has been the Class Sponsor of the 49er Association since 2007 and was proud to present Velatura watches to all the medalists. After the award ceremony, the Class President Marcus Spillane said, "With Seiko as our long term class partner, we are able to push sailing forward in ways not possible without their support. Working with Seiko gives us the profile and ambition to take skiff sailing to new heights, including our live broadcasting packages and format innovations. They are truly a wonderful partner."

The full results and more images are available at [http://49er.org/event/2014-european-championship/?event\\_id=2399](http://49er.org/event/2014-european-championship/?event_id=2399).

To see the final day's racing, visit [http://youtu.be/56hBu\\_SKGK0](http://youtu.be/56hBu_SKGK0).

Details of the Velatura collection are available at <http://www.seikowatches.com/collections/velatura/index.html>.