



Midwesterners Strike Back, Championship Up for Grabs

DETROIT, September 21, 2007 - Typically shifty Lake St. Clair conditions spelled solid finishes for many Midwestern Melges 24 sailors for three races on Day 2 of the 2007 Audi Melges 24 US National Championship. 8-12 knots of unpredictable wind frustrated many teams, and with lighter breeze forecasted for Sunday there is little doubt that a tough final day is in store for the fleet.

Overall leader Brian Porter is undoubtedly used to these conditions, as *Full Throttle's* home port of Lake Geneva, Wisconsin is known for some of the most unpredictable wind in the nation. Porter, with tactician Harry Melges III, scored two first place finishes on their way to a 5-point lead. World Champion Dave Ullman aboard *Rosebud* couldn't keep up with the shifts as well as Porter, with scores of 7, 10, and 2 on the day. Long time Corinthian competitor Othmar Von Blumencron's *Gannet* sits one point behind Ullman. *Gannet* has had the help of professional French sailor Thomas Allin - formerly of *Partner & Partners*, one of the top Melges 24 programs in the world. "This is a great place to sail" said Allin, who is visiting the Great Lakes for the first time. "I like the wind to be a bit more predictable, though." Yesterday's leader, *Lightwave Nano*, had a hard day today with an 11,11,6 score line. Tactician Brian Hutchinson explained: "We had one start where we didn't get up to speed for about a minute, and by then we just couldn't find a route to the side we wanted. Then we picked decent sides instead of great ones in the other races."

LOCALS BATTLE TO THE WIRE

Race Chairman Paul Hulse's *Hoodlum Racing Team* is showing its mastery of the lake, with an overall position of 7th place. "Our goal for this great fleet is a top ten finish, so we're feeling really good about ourselves," said Hulse. Hoodlum is also winning the Corinthian (amateur) fleet, and looking forward to using their boatspeed to keep their competition back. "The shifts were so big and so frequent that you just couldn't tack on all of them - you had to go fast and look for the right one to use." Hulse's sentiment was echoed by the Traverse City, MI team that's hot on his tail; Mike Dow's *Flying Toaster*, with a score of 53 to Hoodlum's 51. The always-stoic Dow said "We just kept putting the bow down in every lift to speed to the side we liked. Then we hoped for the best." While Dow battles Hulse for the Corinthian title, fleet newcomer Peter Shumaker's *Marianne* is tied with *Toaster* in only their third regatta aboard the Melges 24. It helps to have two-time World Champion Vince Brun aboard. Vince had a different take on the day than many: "I just don't think so much about winning a side. That's a common mistake with many one-design racers," said Brun. "You have to play with what you have, and that's all we did today." Interestingly, Shumaker's college 470 crew was Jim Reichel, one of the designers of the Melges 24. "I haven't spoken to Jim in probably 20 years, but I really need to give him a call. I've raced on so many boats, but this is the first time I've raced on a Reichel/Pugh boat. I love it."

COMPETITORS TAKE OVER THE 'VIEW

With a live band and massive spread set up on the grounds of Bayview Yacht Club, the sailors are likely to party well into the night, especially those that are staying on cruising boats and RV's in the club. Aged rum bottles etched with the Championship logo will be awarded to the day's top boats,

while special prizes courtesy of RejeX polymer hull coating and Sailing Anarchy will be awarded to competitors who accomplish other unnamed goals.

“This is better than San Diego,” Vince Brun said, looking out over the Detroit River. “The weather is perfect, the sailing is tough and competitive, and the party is wonderful.”

About Audi of America, Inc.

Audi offers a line of premium vehicles through a network of 270 dealers including the Audi A3 compact; the sporty A4 sedan, Avant and Cabriolet models; the high performance S4 sedan, Avant and Cabriolet models; the high-revving RS 4 sports sedan and Cabriolet (November 2007 launch); the all-new S5 coupe (November 2007 launch) with 354 hp; the design-leading A6 sedan and Avant; the V10-powered high performance S6 sedan; the Audi Q7 performance SUV; the new all-aluminum Audi A8; the S8 with V10 power; the all-new 2008 TT Coupe and Roadster models; and the all-new all-aluminum R8, one of the most exclusive sports cars in the world. More information is available at www.audiusa.com.

About Barefoot Cellars Wines

For over 20 years, Sonoma-based **Barefoot Cellars Wines** have received critical acclaim for their popular wines. Barefoot is a proud Sponsor/Partner of the championship and their Gold-Medal winning wines will be available throughout the event. More information on **Barefoot Cellars Wines** is available at www.barefootwine.com.

About the 2007 Audi Melges 24 U.S. National Championship

The 2007 Audi Melges 24 U.S. National Championship is hosted by **Bayview Yacht Club**, with the support of Sponsor/Partners **Audi of America, Inc.**, the **Detroit-Area Audi Metro Dealers**, **Barefoot Wines**, **Yachtscoring.com**, **Latis Yachting Solutions**, the **Detroit Medical Center’s Rehabilitation Institute of Michigan**, **Rock City Marine**, **Tim Wilkes Photography**, **Penalty Box Productions**, **RejeX by Corrosion Technologies**, **News Talk 760 WJR**, **West Marine**, and **Moosejaw**.

The **Melges 24** is the most unique one-design sportboat in the world, and one of the fastest-growing one-design race classes in the world. More information on the **U.S. Melges 24 Class** is available at www.usmelges24.com. The Midwest Region’s home page is www.melges24racing.com. Check the official website for daily reports, pictures, and exciting video from the course at www.melges24racing.com/nationals. Full results are available at http://www.yachtscoring.com/event_results_cumulative.

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EVENT PRESS OFFICER

Alan Block
(248) 563-0657 – mobile
alan@blocksail.com

USMCA CLASS OFFICER

Joy Dunigan
(912) 398-5776 – mobile
joy.dunigan@melges24.com