



Santa Cruz Yacht Club

Fullpower Melges 24 World Championship 2007

Santa Cruz, Calif., USA

May 3-12

March 13, 2007

M/24 Corinthians concede little; entry deadline April 6

SANTA CRUZ, Calif.---Professionals and amateurs can co-exist competitively, as they will in the 2007 *Fullpower* Melges 24 World Championship May 3-12, hosted by the Santa Cruz Yacht Club.

The entry deadline, by the way, is Friday, April 6. Racers may [register online](#) .

Competitors and visitors also are urged to check out the [Travel and Lodging](#) area on the web site to get the best deals before they're sold out. Local hotel and vacation rental sponsors are offering the best accommodations Santa Cruz has to offer at special rates.

Sailing into its 10th world regatta, the class has matured into an elite troupe that includes many of the best professional and amateur sailors on the planet, competing alongside one another as a single fleet. From the first world championship the amateurs---designated "Corinthians," as determined by ISAF classification codes---have raced for honors among themselves, as well as overall success. None has won the Worlds, but several have the potential.

Those will include [reigning European Corinthian champion Alba Batzill](#) of Germany, at the helm for owner [Eddy Eich](#); [Bruce Ayres](#) of Newport Beach, Calif. and [Othmar Mueller von Blumencron](#) of Great Falls, Va. They concede little to the pros. Von Blumencron was second overall among 45 boats in last month's NOOD regatta at St. Petersburg, Fla.

Following ISAF codes, no Group 3 (full professional) sailors are allowed on Corinthian boats. Helmsmen must be Group 1 (pure amateur). Crew members may be Group 1 or 2 (incidental connection to the sailing industry).

Ayres, whose family runs a group of California hotels, was eighth in the first Melges 24 Worlds at Torquay, England in 1998.

"I have a core group of Jon Pinckney, who's a college all-American, and Don Smith and Dave Shelton, who are dinghy 505 guys," Ayres said. "The reason I sail with these guys is we really have fun, on and off the water."



Bruce Ayres (l) on Monsoon is a top Corinthian contender, as are . . .



Othmar Mueller von Blumencron



Eddy Eich

Regatta information

Ayres added, half-joking, "Sometimes if you bring a pro on board, gosh, they start telling you what to do. But the reason I'm sailing the Melges is you sail against the best in the world. It's good to compete against 'em. It's fun . . . and sometimes we'll win a race or two."

Von Blumencron, 41, sailed a singlehanded Finn in the Olympics for Germany at Pusan, South Korea, in 1988 and for Switzerland at Barcelona in 1992. He said, "For me it's slightly different because I sailed against some of those guys in other classes and we're on the same level."

But in the end the most important differences are training time and campaign budgets.

"We [Corinthians] all have jobs to take care of," said von Blumencron, who describes himself as an entrepreneur and consultant. "We know how valuable it is if you are a pro to have a couple of extra days of training. It would be nice to have a little more time to train."

"Money is also an issue. They come with new sails every time. We try to run sails for a season."

With all that, von Blumencron also relishes sailing among the pros.

"It's not a separate start," he said. "If it was I wouldn't sail in it. Most good Corinthians wouldn't do that. I still consider myself as competitive enough to beat those guys. The thrill is that while we fight with different weapons, if you get them it's great."

The Worlds fleet at Santa Cruz figures to be about one-fourth Corinthian, as it was with 119 boats at Hyeres, France last year. On familiar waters, Ayres' Monsoon---third overall in last year's Long Beach Race Week fleet---should be in the hunt, even if Monterey Bay lives up to its reputation as rough and windy.

"We're looking forward to the wind and the waves and the surfing," Ayres said. "We feel very comfortable in windy conditions. These guys that have been with me can get the spinnaker up and down, and we can do jibes."

The event starts with registration on May 3. Four pre-Worlds races will be run on May 5 and 6, and five days of championship racing, with two races a day, are scheduled May 8-12.

The Santa Cruz YC hosts have a full schedule of activities planned ashore. The hospitality will include on-site concessions run by local businesses offering specialty coffee and pastries by Java Junction, pre-ordered race lunches by Erik's DeliCafé and bottled water by Crystal Springs, available by the case.



[Register Online](#)

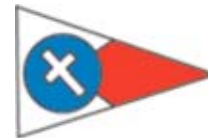
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[International Melges 24 class information](#)



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[Melges 24 world champions](#)

[2006, Hyeres, France](#)
[Nicola Celon, Italy](#)

[2005, Key Largo, Fla.](#)
[James Spithill, Australia](#)

[2004, Marstrand, Sweden](#)
[Sebastian Col, France](#)

[2003, San Francisco](#)
[Samuel \(Shark\) Kahn, U.S.](#)

[2002, Travemunde, Germany](#)
[Harry Melges, U.S.](#)

[2001, Key West, Fla.](#)
[Flavio Favini, Switzerland](#)

[2000, La Rochelle, France](#)
[Georgio Zuccoli, Italy](#)

[1999, Long Beach, California](#)

Vince Brun, U.S.

1998, Torquay, England
Vince Brun, U.S.

There also will be post-race social events, with a complimentary beverage most evenings provided by sponsors like Sierra Nevada, Pusser's Rum and Seabright Brewery. Hors d'oeuvres will be available each night, with dinners on two nights, featuring Polynesian specialties from Aloha Grill and BBQ'd tri-tip by club member/restaurateur Walter Oliveri of Aldo's.

There will be daily prizes for top-place finishers, sponsored by Harken, and giveaways from Pusser's Rum, West Marine, Starbrite and New England Ropes. There will also be some great raffle prizes, including a custom M/24 transport cover from Lohmann Sails and Covers. North Sails is providing skipper's bags, and all participants will receive discount tickets to the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk.

Full information, including Notice of Race, entry form and media info and registration, will be available at www.melges24worlds2007.com. Further information about the International Melges 24 Class is available from www.melges24.com.

Information on Melges 24 events in the U.S., including the weekend's U.S. Nationals, is available at <http://www.usmelges24.com/>

[Fullpower Technologies](#) is a new wireless nanotechnology biotech company based in Santa Cruz.

Event Press Officer

Rich Roberts
(310) 835-2526
Cell (310) 766-6547
richsail@earthlink.net

IMCA Press Officer

Fiona Brown
fiona.brown@melges24.com
Mobile +44 (0) 7711 718470
www.melges24.com

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