



# Fullpower Melges 24 World Championship 2007

Santa Cruz Yacht Club

Santa Cruz, Calif., USA

May 3-12

April 12, 2007

## 60 Melges 24s heading for Worlds at Santa Cruz

SANTA CRUZ, Calif.---Sixty boats from seven countries are entered in the 2007 Fullpower Melges 24 World Championship May 3-12, hosted by the Santa Cruz Yacht Club---notably, two California sailors who have won three of the titles between them despite being born 43 years apart.

Vince Brun, 59, of San Diego and Samuel (Shark) Kahn, 16, of Santa Cruz will have their hands full attempting to replicate their successes against the likes of Italy's Gabrio Zandonà, driving the daunting Joe Fly for owner Giovanni Maspero, and Riccardo Simoneschi, the recent Key West winner.

Three other world champions---Australia's James Spithill (2005), France's Sebastian Col (2004) and Switzerland's Flavio Favini (2001)---have a scheduling conflict: the America's Cup at Valencia, Spain.

But there are several other contenders including the United States' consistently strong Brian Porter, sailing with a crew of 2002 world champion Harry Melges III, Andy Burdick and John Porter, along with current U.S. national champion Chris Larson, driving for Scott Holmgren, and Dave Ullman, the top American in third place at Key West.

Brun won the first two Melges 24 Worlds in 1998 at Torquay, England and in 1999 at Long Beach, Calif., about 300 miles to the south.

Kahn, soon to be 17, won his as a mere lad of 14 on nearby San Francisco Bay in 2003. This time, despite veteran tactician Richard Clarke still alongside, he could have his young hands full just holding his own against the rest of the powerful Pegasus team: Ullman, Mark Christensen and his dad and event title sponsor, Philippe Kahn. The Kahns will be sailing on home waters, and Philippe's crew is former Star world champion Fredrik Loof, Olympic silver medalist Charlie Ogletree and Shark's former sidekick, Brian Hutchinson.

Brun knows them all well, so whom does he pick?

"Joe Fly [Zandonà] is probably the guy to beat," he said.

Many will tune up in the Pacific Coast Championship April 21-22 hosted by the San Francisco Yacht Club on San Francisco Bay. Santa Cruz action will start with the Pre-Worlds May 5 and 6, followed by five days of championship racing May 8-12.

Brun gives the younger Kahn's team credit for raising the level of performance in the class.

"When Shark won the Worlds he and his crew basically invented the [new] technique, which is sailing the boat flat, a little lower, a little faster," Brun said. "That's how people sail the boat today. They do hike harder, too, but they sail with the trim a little softer and the boat flatter. In the old days we sailed the boat heeling over and the sheets hard and pointing higher. We don't point as high as we did in the past, but we go a lot faster."

Brun has had the versatility to adapt, as might be expected from a man who has won nine world titles in the Melges 24, Soling, Star, J/24 and Etchells classes, but he claims that nowadays he sails more for fun than glory.

"I sailed Bacardi Cup [for Stars] this year and we didn't do very well, but just being there is the part I enjoy the most," he said. "You enjoy a victory for the moment, but the thing that lasts is the people you meet along the way."

He won the first Melges 24 Worlds in England with Ian Walker and a crew of Brits and the second with veterans Ben Mitchell and young Bill Hardesty, who is sailing with Philippe Kahn this time. Brun will have a young team recruited by San Diego's David Hughes, 27, who with Mike Anderson are the top-ranked U.S. campaigners in the Olympic 470 class.

Brun said, "I tried to get Benny again, but it's kind of tough the way these young guys are hanging out on the lifelines these days."

Another change is the technology on the top Melges 24s.

"Most of the top boats have speedometers these days," Brun said. "Most people sailing small boats say 'we can feel it in the seat of our pants,' but the feel is never the same as having an instrument telling you when you're going 5.9 [knots] or 6.2. It's a very small change, but on the speedometer it's very clear."

"Harry Melges and Andy Burdick did a good job defining everything about the boat in the beginning, and now the boat is more refined. The jibes with the spinnaker are very sophisticated, and the Europeans in particular have done a very good job developing techniques. The rules are a little tighter [and] the class looks well-organized."

The entry lists includes 27 Corinthians---boats without pros on board---led by German legend Alba Batzill driving for Eddy Eich as the current European Corinthian champions; 2006 U.S. national champion Bruce Ayres of Newport Beach, and St. Petersburg NOOD winner Othmar Mueller von Blumencron, a Swiss national living in Great Falls, Va.



Vince Brun: the first (and second) Melges 24 world champion



Dave Ullman, top American at KW

[Regatta information](#)



[Lodging](#)

[Entry list](#)

[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](#)

Competitors and visitors 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.

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.

There also will be post-race social events, with 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](http://www.melges24worlds2007.com). Further information about the International Melges 24 Class is available from [www.melges24.com](http://www.melges24.com).

Information on Melges 24 events in the U.S. 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](mailto:richsail@earthlink.net)  
**IMCA Press Officer**

Fiona Brown  
[fiona.brown@melges24.com](mailto:fiona.brown@melges24.com)  
Mobile +44 (0) 7711 718470  
[www.melges24.com](http://www.melges24.com)

**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.**

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