



Fullpower Melges 24 World Championship 2007

Santa Cruz Yacht Club

Santa Cruz, Calif., USA

May 3-12

May 1, 2007

Full Throttle peaks for Fullpower Melges 24 Worlds

SANTA CRUZ, Calif.--Perhaps nobody has been sailing a Melges 24 longer than Brian Porter and few have sailed one as well, which may mean he is overdue approaching the 2007 Fullpower Melges 24 World Championship May 3-12, hosted by the Santa Cruz Yacht Club.

Porter, from the boat's backwoods birthplace in Lake Geneva, Wis., has finished as high as second with "a couple of thirds," he said, in the class's nine previous global events, and he blew away the competition in the Pacific Coast Championship with four first-place finishes in six races on nearby San Francisco Bay last month.

Not all of the major international players he'll see at Santa Cruz were there, but the event was more intense than the norm in its position as a springboard to the Worlds, where there will be 60 boats from seven countries. But Porter's confidence has never been higher and his boat, *Full Throttle*, is living up to its name.

"We started really well and had great speed," he said. "I've played with a lot of different sails over the last couple of years trying to get an edge, and I've gone back to what I know. Now we have good speed with just our standard sails and setup."

A better test will be the Pre-Worlds tune-up regatta Saturday and Sunday, May 5-6, at Santa Cruz preceding the Worlds May 8-12. Porter will be sailing with a crew of Harry Melges III, the 2002 world champion; Andy Burdick and his brother, John Porter.

Other strong contenders will include veteran Dave Ullman, current U.S. national champion Chris Larson, driving for Scott Holmgren; Italy's Gabrio Zandonna, driving Joe Fly for owner Giovanni Maspero; Riccardo Simoneschi, the recent Key West winner, and past world champions Vince Brun (1998 and '99) and Samuel (Shark) Kahn (2003).

Porter, who turned 49 last weekend, is bouncing back from what he called "my worst event ever" at Key West in January when he finished 14th overall.

Now, he said, "All the top guys are equally fast. I always feel like we have an edge downwind . . . [and] "the windier the better for me."

At 6-7 and 225 pounds, Porter said, "I should be the guy hiking out in the middle of the boat," and he looks forward to a typically windy Monterey Bay--which it wasn't when he won the North Americans there a year ago.

"We were all excited about planing downwind all weekend, but we had light air and rain," he said. "Lately they've had pretty good breeze. It makes it a lot easier in the big, tough fleets when there's breeze so you can extricate yourself from the pack."

The pack will include "the gang of four" boats from the Pegasus fleet of Philippe Kahn, the creator of the camera phone whose Fullpower company is the title sponsor. But Kahn is emphatic that nobody will be team racing, not even him with his 17-year-old son, Shark. In the PCC where Ullman placed second, Shark was third and Philippe finished ninth.

"We are racing each other," Kahn said. "He tacked on me twice at the PCC . . . and you know the story of the Mumm 30 Worlds [in 2004] and how my protest cost him the championship."

The entry list also includes 27 Corinthians--boats without pros on board--led by German legend Alba Bätzill driving for Eddy Eich as the current European Corinthian champions; 2002 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.

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. Further information about the International Melges 24 Class is available from www.melges24.com.



Brian Porter: Is he due?

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
- 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.

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.

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