

Nord Stream Race 2017:

Team Sweden wins Leg 3 to Finland

The story so far: Kiel – Copenhagen – Stockholm

Stockholm, 3rd September 2017 –

Cape Crow Yacht Club (Team Sweden) has won Leg 3 of the Nord Stream Race, reaching the finish line in Finland before Nyländska Jaktklubben (Team Finland). There was very little distance between any of the five boats during this race from Stockholm, and in third place was Deutscher Touring Yacht-Club (Team Germany), in fourth was Lord of the Sail - Europe (Team Russia), and in fifth place Frederikshavn Sejlklub (Team Denmark).

Kenneth Tellen, skipper of Team Finland, would like to have reached home waters in first place but was still satisfied with his crew's performance. "It got windy, up to 30 knots at times, and our crew is new to the boat and some of them are new to offshore sailing. So putting in the reef and reducing sail area in the strong wind was a slow process. The Swedish found a better angle when the wind shifted 40 degrees in the thunderstorm. They sailed well, but I'm very proud of my people too."

The story so far

The Nord Stream Race is the longest and most challenging offshore race in the Baltic Sea. At the end of August, five international teams came to Kiel, Germany to start the 1,000 nautical mile Race which will finish in St Petersburg, Russia, on 6th September.

Aside from the competitive angle, the aim of the Nord Stream Race is to bring Baltic nations closer together through sport. Managing director of the St. Petersburg Yacht Club, Elena Solovyeva, was speaking at the opening press conference in Kiel: "For centuries, the Baltic Sea has been used mainly as a trade route. More recently, tourism has brought our world closer together. Sailing provides a great opportunity to develop friendship and unity among our neighbours through cooperation between the leading yacht clubs. That is very important for us."

Opening ceremony with local representatives in Kiel 25th August 2017

Other VIPs who attended the opening ceremony included Dr. Carsten Krage, Kieler Yacht-Club; Klaus Lahme, Norddeutscher Regatta Verein; and Gerwin Stöcken, Kiel City councillor for social, housing, health and sports. "Kiel is not only Germany's gateway to the Baltic Sea," said Stöcken, "Kiel is also a world capital of sailing. That is why Kiel - the Sailing City - is the ideal starting port for the Nord Stream Race."

The crew party in Kiel was a chance for the teams to get to know each other. With one of the big aims of the race being to bring Baltic nations closer together, there's nothing quite like a party for breaking the ice.

Young sailors get experience in offshore sailing

The five brand new ClubSwan 50s (CS50) are being sailed by national teams from Denmark, Finland, Germany, Russia and Sweden. Each represents the club that won the 2016 edition of the National Sailing League in their respective country. While many of the young sailors involved are extremely good at short-course racing in confined spaces, sailing offshore far from the land is a new, eye-opening experience. So the few hours of training on board the CS50s in Kiel provided a crucial opportunity for practising different manoeuvres on these powerful keelboats.

26th August: Start of Leg 1 from Kiel to Copenhagen

The breeze was light for the inshore races in Kiel, too light unfortunately. No chance for the crews to test their short course skills against each other. However, the ClubSwan 50 is such a powerful boat that even in the lightest of breeze it can pick up speed. So the start of Leg 1 from Kiel to Copenhagen was able to get away on time, as the fleet ghosted along the German coast in very little wind.

After almost 13 hours of racing, Deutscher Touring Yacht-Club (Team Germany) beat Cape Crow Yacht Club (Team Sweden) by just two minutes across the finish line in Copenhagen. It was an impressive start for the young Germans, most of whom had never raced offshore before.

Get-together for sailors and local representatives at Royal Danish Yacht Club

Hosted by the Kongelig Dansk Yachtclub (KDY), the Sailors' Party on 27th August was a big occasion, with some VIPs joining in the fun including Jim Hageman

Snabe (chairman of the board for Siemens, Bang&Olufsen and Maersk) and well-known entrepreneur Ib Kunøe. The press conference was attended by Lars Ive, commodore of KDY, and Lars Westergaard, representing Nautor's Swan in Denmark.

The breeze in Skovshoved, north of Copenhagen, was good enough for the inshore races to take place, and Deutscher Touring Yacht-Club (Team Germany) continued their winning ways, taking the first two races. The third victory went to Cape Crow Yacht Club (Team Sweden). Without any time for rest or recuperation, the fleet were straight into the start of Leg 2, a 420-mile passage from Copenhagen to Stockholm.

Volvo Ocean Race-conditions on leg 2 to Stockholm (28th – 30th August)

Leg 2, the longest of the Nord Stream Race, was predicted to last between two and three days. But when the wind kicked up to almost 30 knots, the fleet of lightweight ClubSwan 50s took off on an exhilarating rollercoaster ride. "It is not often that I get really scared on a boat, but last night I did! It was like a mini-Volvo Ocean Race," admitted Team Sweden crew member and round-the-world veteran Martin Krite, who was part of the winning crew in the 2011/12 edition of the Volvo Ocean Race.

After a wild night on the Baltic, in the morning of 30th August the Swedes emerged victorious in home waters. They completed the leg in just 43 hours, 29 minutes, and 9 seconds, far quicker than had been predicted for this long passage. While Cape Crow Yacht Club (Team Sweden) won by almost 50 minutes, there was a much smaller gap between the next three teams - Frederikshavn Sejlklub (Team Denmark), Nyländska Jaktklubben (Team Finland) and Lord of the Sail – Europe (Team Russia). Finishing some way back in last place was the Leg 1 winner Deutscher Touring Yacht-Club (Team Germany), who limped across the finish without their big downwind sail, the gennaker. Skipper Michael Tarabochia explained: "At 01:30 we got hit by a gust - we surfed down a wave and the gennaker flapped once and then it broke completely. We brought the kite down in a few minutes. We saw the damage and hoisted the jib. From then on, we tried our best, but there was no chance."

Two days of relaxing at the Royal Swedish Yacht Club and to get to know Stockholm (31st August – 2nd September)

The early arrival into Stockholm allowed the war-weary crews to catch up on sleep at the magnificent Grand Hotel Saltsjöbaden and enjoy the hospitality of the Kungliga Svenska Segelsällskapet (KSSS), the Royal Swedish Yacht Club. The

crew party was a last chance to enjoy some good beer and hot food before what the sailors expect will be the toughest leg yet.

The best yacht clubs of the National Sailing Leagues from the Baltic countries Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Finland and Russia are competing this year at the relaunched Nord Stream Race. The clubs are racing in a fleet of brand-new, one-design ClubSwan 50 racing yachts.

The Baltic Offshore Regatta - Nord Stream Race - has been held by the Saint Petersburg Yacht Club with the support of Gazprom and Nord Stream AG since 2012. The race connects Russia, Germany, Finland, Sweden and Denmark.

From 25th August to 7th September, the 1,000 nautical mile race course follows the Nord Stream pipeline from Kiel to Saint Petersburg, with stopovers in Copenhagen, Stockholm and Helsinki. The idea of this revised format for the Nord Stream Race is "Connecting Baltics through Sport".

You can follow the Race:

http://www.tracrac.com/web/event-page/event_20170822_NordStream/1139/

Five champions have qualified to participate in the Nord Stream Race 2017 via their National Leagues from the previous season: Deutscher Touring Yacht-Club from Germany, Frederikshavn Sejlklub from Denmark, Cape Crow Yacht Club from Sweden, Nyländska Jaktklubben from Finland and Lord of the Sail – Europe from Russia. Each of the five sailing clubs has send a crew with ten of their best sailors.

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