



## 2011 International 420 Junior European Championship - Nieuwpoort, Belgium, 7-15 August 2011

### 101 TEAMS FROM 20 NATIONS COMPETING AT 2011 420 JUNIOR EUROPEANS

One hundred and one teams are gathered in Nieuwpoort, Belgium for the 2011 420 Junior European Championship, with an impressive line up of 20 nations striving to deliver their best performances on the North Sea. Held consecutively with the 2011 470 Junior European Championships, the event is a great opportunity to bring both fleets together and support the transition across the classes.

Many teams have made the journey north from Tavira, Portugal where they competed at the recently concluded 420 Open and Ladies European Championships, but equally there are many new teams making an appearance. Tavira was a light wind event, but the North Sea is likely to deliver a very different range of conditions, with a breeze and steep chop expected for the start of the Championships. The form card certainly highlights some top teams to watch, but form is also impossible to predict in what has so far seen a season of twists and turns on the race course and leader boards.

Teams will be seeded for the 6-race qualifying series, before being split into gold, silver and bronze for the 6-race final series. All teams - men's, mixed and ladies' teams - will face off against each other with no separation in racing divisions.

Recently crowned 420 Open European Champions Alexander and George Kavas from Greece will be aiming for a repeat of form which saw an uncompromising scoreline and a steam roll of the competition at the 420 Open Europeans in Portugal. Helm Alexander is just 15 years old, with brother George only one year older, but they show talent and focus beyond their years and are impressively focused on their goal. After winning Gold in Tavira, Alexander concisely confirmed their intentions for the 420 Junior Europeans, "To win!" A medal upgrade to gold from the silver they achieved at the 2010 Junior Europeans is certainly on the cards for Greece.

Also in medal contention are Jordi Xammer/Alex Claville from Spain, the recently crowned 2011 ISAF Youth Sailing World Champions and defending 420 Junior European bronze medallists. The pair couldn't repeat their Youth Worlds' form at the 420 Open Europeans where they finished tenth, with a scoreline including some high double digit finishes, but perhaps having had some time to regroup they are more likely to be on pace at the 420 Junior Europeans. Xammer/Claville's teammates Luis Benitez-Inglot/Jorge Ramirez (ESP) finished ahead of them in fifth place at the 420 Europeans and will also be on the start line in Belgium. The ISAF Youth Worlds Champions will want to reverse their fortunes and stamp their usual authority as the top Spanish 420 team.

There are two non-European nations here, Singapore and Australia. Australia's Angus Galloway/Alexander Gough are competing with a bronze medal pedigree from the 2011 ISAF Youth Worlds.

France and Italy put in stunning performances at the 420 Open and Ladies Europeans, securing four medals between them, but it will mostly be different teams striving for excellence at the 420 Junior Europeans. Both nations may prove to have made a wise decision in giving their teams who competed at the ISAF Youth Worlds a rest from top end competition, before facing the start line here. Guillaume Pirouelle/Valentin Sipan (FRA) finished fourth in the 420 boys at the ISAF Youth Worlds and teammates Maelenn Lemaitre/Aloise Retornaz finished 11th in the girls' division. They will be joined by the Italian representatives Tito Rodda/Agostina Rodda (ITA) who finished 14th and Guilia Lantier/Martha Faraguna who finished 5th in the 420 girls. Inevitably, a few rivalries to be re-challenged. However, results achieved at the ISAF Youth Worlds are not necessarily an indicator of what the teams can deliver in the larger fleet size and greater number of top teams they will experience at the 420 Junior Europeans.

A different situation for the British teams, whose 2011 420 European Championship aspirations didn't quite work out as planned and are in Belgium on a mission to improve their performance from Tavira. Amongst those capable of winning medals are the two top British Ladies teams, reigning 420 Ladies World Champions Annabel Vose/Megan Brickwood, and 2011 ISAF Youth Worlds representatives Jessica Lavery/Georgina Mothersele. Similarly for Craig Dibb/Charlie Cox (GBR) who finished 7th at the ISAF Youth Worlds, and Tim Gratton/Ed Riley (GBR) who count deliveries of sixth at both the 2011 420 World Championships and the 2010 420 Junior European Championships to their credit. As part of their training, these teams competed at the 2011 Flanders Regatta which improve their familiarity with the racing area, added to which Vose/Brickwood finished second overall.

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Turkey and Israel will be represented by some of their new young teams, with four and five boats respectively, and aiming to continue their cracking performances from the 420 Open Europeans. Israel's Yoav Levi/Dan Froyliche won the 2010 420 Junior European Championship gold medals and will be competing in Nieuwpoort but in the 470 Class, in which they most recently finished 18th at the 2011 470 Junior Worlds. Taking over Israel's 420 defence are Noya Bar-Am/Rimon Shoshan who have their sights on "a top five finish."

Host nation Belgium is fielding four teams, who are certainly feeling some home turf pressure, as helm Quinten Lootens explained, "It is pretty important and we are expected to do quite well. It is our wind today, so we are hoping it will continue like this through the regatta. We want a top ten finish." Lootens and crew Stijn van Hoye recently finished 12th at the 2011 ISAF Youth Worlds.

Renowned coach Jim Saltonstall (GBR) will be on hand to provide coaching support and daily debriefings. Jim's unmatched ability to engage with the young sailors provides a unique platform to train and support future generations of sailors. Explaining his focus for the week, Jim commented, "Objectives are to improve the racing standards of sailors with a focus on boat handling, boat tuning, race strategy, starting techniques, tactics and racing rules." Responding to what motivates him, with a sparkling grin, Jim responded, "To get the best out of my ferrets!"

Racing starts with the qualification series on 9 August and concludes on 15 August. The 2011 Open 420 Junior European Championships is organised by the Royal Yacht Club Nieuwpoort in co-operation with the Royal Air Force Yacht Club, the Royal Yacht Club Belgium, Belgian National 420 Class Association and the International 420 Class Association.

#### **About the International 420 Class**

The International 420 Class dinghy is an ISAF International Class and two-person dinghy for young sailors, which is an established worldwide performance trapeze and spinnaker racing dinghy and the world's top youth training boat. The 420 is used as the selected equipment at the ISAF Youth Sailing World Championships - offering the perfect pathway from youth to Olympic sailing. There are over 56,000 420 dinghies worldwide, sailed at school, club, open, national and international levels. The International 420 Class Association is responsible for managing and promoting 420 sailing around the world in partnership with the 420 National Class Associations.

#### **More Information:**

[Championship Website](#)  
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