



## **RYA Press Release**

1 December 2011

### **GBR sailing boss expecting 'fantastic' battles at Perth Worlds**

Although Olympic qualifying fortunes are already determined for a number of Britain's sailors, team manager Stephen Park is expecting a strong showing from his charges across the ten Olympic classes when the ISAF Sailing World Championships kick off in Perth, Australia, this weekend (3-18 December).

The Skandia Team GBR boss is targeting four medals from the Worlds event, where 51 British sailors will race and which forms a major part of the Olympic qualifying process for all nations hoping to compete at the Games sailing events in Weymouth and Portland next year.

As the 2012 hosts, Great Britain pre-qualified a country spot in each of the ten sailing classes and already named its Team GB picks in seven of those classes back in September. Nonetheless, Park is expecting a competitive fight across the board off the waters of Perth's port city of Fremantle, with the glimmer of a World Championship crown still as enticing even for those without the incentive of a British Olympic qualifying berth to go with it.

"Our game has got to be focussed on Weymouth at the moment as we go into the final calendar year of the 2012 Games, and with many of our sailors having already gained Olympic selection prior to this event, clearly this event isn't a key priority for them," Park explained.

"However, it is a World Championships and at every World Championship every sailor will be doing their best to try and medal so we'll look forward to seeing some of our sailors on the podium hopefully at the end of the regatta."

"I think like many of the multi-class events, if we can come away with four or five medals then we should be very happy at this stage."

Skandia Team GBR has defending World Champions in three of the ten events through Ed Wright in the Finn, Iain Percy and Andrew Simpson in the Star and Women's Match Racers Lucy Macgregor, Annie Lush and Kate Macgregor.

Perhaps the strongest British challenge will come in the Finn class which boasts five strong GBR contenders, including World Champion Wright, European Champion Giles Scott alongside triple Olympic gold champion Ben Ainslie who's in the running for an unprecedented sixth Finn Gold Cup title in Perth.

But Park is anticipating some exciting racing across the classes in Perth, and expects a tough international challenge, not least from the host nation who remain Great Britain's closest rivals in Olympic classes sailing.

"The Australians have clearly spent a lot of time here in Perth getting to know the conditions and they are known for being strong wind specialists, but at the end of the day there are going to be a lot of players from a lot of different countries who are going to be competing at the top end of the fleet.

"We can't just concentrate on the one country, we've got to do what we can do, concentrate on our own game, make sure that we take each race as it comes and if we can do that we should be there or thereabouts at the end of the regatta."

For the three classes where British Olympic berths have still to be decided – the 470 Men, Laser Radial and 49er – these World Championships will provide a duel challenge. “I think we can expect some really tough domestic competition in there,” explained Park.

“I’m sure that each one of the teams representing Skandia Team GBR will be desperate to come out, not only as top British boat but also in the medals at this event to really put down a strong marker for selection running into the spring regattas – should of course they be part of the selection process.”

The women’s match racing event kicks the Worlds regatta off on Saturday 3 December, with the Finn, RS:X Women, Laser Radial and 470 Men’s events the next to get underway on Monday 5 December.

[Click here](#) for a full list of Skandia Team GBR competitors, racing schedule and event information for the Perth 2011 World Championships.

For the latest news and information from the British Sailing Team at the Perth Worlds visit [www.skandiateamgbr.com](http://www.skandiateamgbr.com) or follow us on Twitter (@SkandiaTeamGBR).

### **Perth 2011 Sailing World Championship Racing schedule:**

Women’s Match Racing - Lucy Macgregor-Annie Lush-Kate Macgregor  
*Round Robin starts Saturday 3 December, semi-finals Saturday 17 December, Finals Sunday 18 December*

Finn – Ben Ainslie, Ed Wright, Giles Scott, Andrew Mills, Mark Andrews  
RS:X Women – Bryony Shaw; Izzy Hamilton; Claudia Carney  
Laser Radial – Charlotte Dobson; Alison Young; Chloe Martin; Hannah Snellgrove; Andrea Brewster  
470 Men – Nic Asher-Elliot Willis; Nick Rogers-Chris Grube; Luke Patience-Stuart Bithell; Phil Sparks-David Kohler; Ben Saxton-Richard Mason  
*First races Monday 5 December, medal races Sunday 11 December*

Star – Iain Percy-Andrew Simpson;  
*First race Sunday 11 December, medal races Sunday 11 December*

Laser – Paul Goodison; Nick Thompson; Alex Mills-Barton; Martin Evans; Matt Reid  
470 Women – Hannah Mills-Saskia Clark; Penny Clark-Katrina Hughes; Sophie Weguelin-Sophie Ainsworth  
RS:X Men – Nick Dempsey; Elliot Carney; Sam Sills; Tom Squires  
49er – Stevie Morrison-Ben Rhodes; John Pink-Rick Peacock; Dylan Fletcher-Alain Sign; Dave Evans-Ed Powys  
*First race Monday 12 December, medal races Sunday 18 December*

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