

Melges Rocks Miami

Winter Series off to great start

More than 30 Audi Melges 20s kicked off the 2014-2015 Miami Winter Series with a fierce start on Biscayne Bay.

2014 JOY | IAMPCCA

The Melges 20 Winter Series kicked off with regatta No. 1 (of three) at Miami's Coconut Grove Sailing Club December 12-14. Twenty-nine boats from around the United States and Canada, plus two European entries, made the trip to south Florida for the regatta, whose two divisions accommodated both competitive/professional and Corinthian crews.

Shifty winds on Biscayne Bay made for some difficult starts, yet the race committee led by Bruce Golison persevered and a full slate of racing took place, albeit in light airs on the 14th. *Midnight Blue*, skippered by New York-based Jason Michas, rebounded from a sixth-place showing in the penultimate fifth race to finish first in race No. 6 and claim the championship. Mark Mendelblatt and Trevor Moore served as tactician and crew, respectively.

Starts were critical in the uneven breeze as Marc Hollerbach, skipper of runner-up *Fu*, could attest. "Not only having a clean start but being in the correct part of the line to be set up for pressure—along with having the boat tuned well—we were able to put the boat where we wanted, and it worked out well," he said. Hailing from Milano, Italy, Mascalzone Latino Jr. with Achille Onorato at the helm finished in third place.

In the Corinthian division, *Atlas* skippered by Brian Hill was triumphant, with Tate Russack's *Diesel* in second place and Paul Currie's *Wild Deuces* rounding out the podium in third place.

Event No. 2 in the series is February 6-8 and the Grand Finale, known as the Melges Rocks Regatta, is set for March 12-14. Registration is still open. melges20.com

Yachtsman, Yachtswoman of the Year

U.S. Sailing and Rolex Watch U.S.A. announced Terry Hutchinson, the Rolex Farr 40 world champion (Annapolis, MD), and U.S. Women's Match Racing champion Stephanie Roble (East Troy, WI) as the 2014 U.S. Sailing Rolex Yachtsman and

Yachtswoman of the Year. They will be honored at a luncheon at the New York Yacht Club on February 26th, where they will each receive a trophy and a customized Rolex timepiece.

This year's Yachtsman candidates included Laser North American champion Charlie Buckingham (Newport Beach, CA); Etchells world champion Bill Hardesty (San Diego, CA); J/70 world champion Tim Healy (Jamestown, RI); J/80 world champion Brian Keane (Weston, MA); Extreme Sailing Series champion Morgan Larson (Santa Cruz, CA); ISAF Sailing World Cup 470 men's bronze medalist Stu McNay (Providence, RI); A Scow national champion Vincent Porter (Chicago, IL); Kona world champion Rasmus Sayre (Martha's Vineyard, MA); and J/24 world champion Will Welles (Portsmouth, RI).

Yachtswoman of the Year candidates included Etchells skipper Shannon Bush (Refugio, TX); IOD Celebrity Invitational champion Heather Gregg-Earl (Boston, MA); ISAF Sailing World Cup 470 women's bronze medalist Anne Haeger (Lake Forest, IL); Sperry Top-Sider ICSA women's national champion Deirdre Lambert (Cumberland, ME); Laser Radial North American champion Paige Railey (Clearwater, FL); ICSA Women's Singlehanded national champion Erika Reineke (Fort Lauderdale, FL).

Dramatic Grounding, Rescue in Volvo Ocean Race

Team Vestas Wind was knocked out of the Volvo Ocean Race in late November when their 65-foot racing yacht foundered upon an archipelago near Mauritius in the Indian Ocean while sailing at a speed of 19 knots. They were competing in Leg 2 of the 38, 739-nm race from Cape Town, South Africa, to Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. All nine sailors survived after awaiting rescue for two days. There were no injuries but the boat had to be abandoned. 🚢

By BRIAN HARTZ