

## Final report

On Sunday June 24 the 2012 IFDS Homerus International Blind Match Racing Championship came to an end in the lovely little town of Lovere, Italy, on lake Iseo, with the final matches sailed in shifty winds, but enabling the whole fleet of races to be completed.

The six teams, from Australia, Italy, Spain and USA, raced in an experimental format with blindfolds for all sailors, including 5 sailors normally classified in the B2 category for athletes with moderate vision impairment.

This proved effective in obtaining fair and close competition, none of the sailors being able to use any residual vision to identify marks or other boats.

The “petit final” was one by the Spanish team Manuel Gimeno Ugarte - Federico Giner Albir in front of USA - Antony Bersani – Enrico Sosio after three races.

Three races were also necessary to crown the winning team of Luigi Bertanza – Elisabetta Bardella from Italy, ahead of Australia's Kylie Forth - Erin McGlew.

The depth of the water (80 meters) and unsteady wind directions, proved challenging at times to the race committee to set a good course in a reasonable time.

Also, the presence of a sighted neutral observer aboard each boat did not fulfil the objective of avoiding a certain number of little collisions between the boats.

But all the sailors enjoyed the friendly and enthusiastic atmosphere of this event, run by AVAS (Associazione Velica Alto Sebino) with the precious help of the Homerus.

All the sailors and volunteers were invited to several evening dinners, where we were treated to great Italian food.

The Technical Delegate, Henry Sleutel, and assistant TD, Bernard Destrubé, monitored a sailor's forum, race observation as well as many discussions at this event, which should aid IFDS in guiding the format for future regattas, and adjust regulations accordingly.

International IFDS sanctioned competitions for the vision impaired are to be run on alternate years as match races, or fleet races. Next year's fleet racing will be organized in Japan, from May 24th to June 1st 2013 at the Seabornia Yacht Club, Miura City.

