

Media Release

For Immediate Release

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Sheen holds lead in Blind Match Racing

The IFDS Blind Match Racing Championships continued at Royal Perth Yacht Club today. The final matches of round robin 1 were completed along with 10 matches in the second round in a moderate but persistently shifting breeze under sunny skies.

Vicki Sheen (GBR) maintains her lead in the event with 8 wins from 9 matches. Her loss to Russell Lowry (NZL) today is the only mark on her otherwise perfect record. Luigi Bertanza (ITA) and Lowry are the two skippers pushing Sheen. Bertanza has 6 wins from 8 matches and Lowry has 7 from 10.

"It is really competitive racing here in Perth and is becoming more intense as the days go on", said Lowry from New Zealand's Palmerston North.

"We have two more matches in this round but our confidence in our ability as a team is building and we are very happy about the way we are sailing", he said.

The International Association for Disabled Sailing (IFDS) is working towards blind match racing being included as a new discipline within the Paralympic Sailing Competition commencing in 2020. The Championships being held in Perth are the first opportunity for teams to experience the proposed format.

"This is the first time that three person crews and B3 classified sailors have been involved in a blind match racing event, and the first time using the Sonar", said the IFDS Technical Delegate, David Staley (AUS).

"IFDS will learn a great deal from the Championships in Perth. The club is delivering a very high standard event and the calibre of officials involved is excellent. The information we obtain from organisers, officials, coaches and athletes will be invaluable in shaping the future of this discipline. The objective is to provide blind and vision impaired sailors with elite, high performance racing as part of the Paralympic Sailing Competition and an event like this helps to refine the format, procedures and rules", he said.

As good progress is being made on the round robins, organisers have released sailors for the scheduled lay-day tomorrow. Racing continues from Thursday through Saturday.

Full results are available at www.rpyc.com.au

ENDS

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Photo Captions:

1. Sheen (GBR) managed to avoid contact with Lowry (NZL) but Lowry prevailed in their match in the second round
2. International Umpires Founette Pauthier (FRA) and Garry Deane (AUS)
3. Russell Lowry, Paulien Eitjes and Tom Donaghy (NZL)
4. Luigi Bertanza, Alessandro Malapiero and Elisabetta Bardella (ITA)
5. Vicki Sheen, Nicholas Donnini and Dennis Manning (GBR)