

3rd Asia Pacific Student Cup – Shifty weather conditions make for a tricky Quarterfinal

PUBLISHED ON SEPTEMBER 21, 2014

The top eight teams from Day 1 and 2's round robin gathered once again at Marina Bay to face off in the quarterfinals. In this round, the first skipper to score at least 3 points would then proceed to the semifinals. The matches, in which the top four teams were paired off with the bottom four teams, looked extremely promising until it was put on hold as the light winds soon faded into severe lulls, forcing the race committee to put the flights on hold. The eager sailors were forced to wait onshore; only to head out in the afternoon as the breeze started to pick up. Yet, the unpredictable conditions of the Marina Bay proved relentless once again as a storm clouds gathered on the bottom of the course, causing a huge wind shift, forcing the drenched sailors back on shore again.

Neither the race committee nor the sailors were disheartened by the poor weather conditions. By 3, breeze began to fill from the right side of the bay and racing resumed. The first flight began with a bang as the highest ranking team skippered by Pauline Courtois (FRA) raced against James Harayda (GBR). Although Harayda's team put up a valiant fight, Team France dominated all their matches to be the first team to qualify for the semi-finals.

The breeze did not last long and the race committee could only hold a total of three flights. Local sailors Collin Lim from Singapore Management University (SMU) and Darren Choy (SIN) were engaged in a close battle, each winning one match in the first two flights. Collin Lim eventually managed a second win in the third flight, bringing him closer to the next round. Similarly, in the three quarter-finals pair, University Western Australia's Will Boulden who was ranked third after the round robin also managed two wins against SMU sailor, Low Wen Chun (SIN) of who was ranked sixth, putting him at one win away from the semi-finals.

The race committee also managed to squeeze in one match in the last flight between Natasha Yokoyama (SIN) and Megat Ahmad Aslam (Malaysia) before racing was called off. Although Yokoyama's team managed to take one win against the Malaysians, it is still uncertain which of the two will advance into the semi-finals. Like Yokoyama, Megat is also an accomplished dinghy sailor with over ten years of sailing experience. He has had considerable experience sailing the asymmetrical spinnaker on the 49er and his team is comprised of experienced match-racers who have been participating in recent match racing leagues all over Malaysia.

There is still one more day of racing left before the winner of the Asia Pacific Student Cup 2014, organized by the Singapore Management University and sanctioned by the Singapore Sailing Federation, will be determined! So stay tuned!

List of Quarter-finals:

Pauline Courtois (France)

Collin Lim (Singapore, Singapore Management University)

Will Boulden (Australia, University of Western Australia)

Megat Ahmad Aslam (Malaysia)

Natasha Yokoyama (Singapore)

Low Wen Chun (Singapore)

Darren Choy (Singapore)

James Harayda (Great Britain, United World College- Southeast Asia)