

Orange Bowl Regatta 2011, Coconut Grove, Florida

The 29er class sailed at the Open Orange Bowl International Regatta this year in beautiful Miami Beach, Florida. Coconut Grove Sailing Club hosted the event. Racing took place in beautiful Biscayne Bay, a legendary location in current and past sailing history. Weather was mild from the mid 70's to the mid 80's with relative humidity.

25 teams from five countries, including the current ISAF Youth World Champion, past ISAF youth world participants, top college sailors, many new top 29er teams made up the fleet.

The regatta started off with a "safety at sea" discussion lead by LISOT's head coach, Steve Keen and the "importance of being aware of, and what could happen when flipped or turtled". Steve gave many good tips on watching out for your fellow sailors. In addition, Steve gave some excellent tips on how to avoid unnecessary mishaps in rigging and making sure your gear fits right and is adjusted correctly. His discussion was spot on.

The first day of the regatta had breeze from 14-18 knots. Three races were scored by dusk, in near perfect conditions. Day Two had lighter breeze and three races were scored in 7-10 knots of breeze. Day Three started with no wind and after waiting out the weather into the afternoon, the race committee sent the fleet out to get 2 solid races in 6-8 knots of breeze. On day four, the minimum wind speed of 4 knots was met, and three races were scored to finish off the series in light shifty and challenging conditions.

At the end of the regatta, Carlos Robles, his crew Florian Trittel from Spain won the event. 2nd place went to Johanna Sommarlund and her crew Marcus Anjemark from Sweden, followed up by the senior sailors in the fleet Judge Ryan and Hans Henken. A number of newer top teams are certainly making their marks in the results. The level of top competition was definitely apparent. A great time in Coconut Grove was had by all competitors, on and off the water. The 29er class looks forward to many more teams next year both nationally and internationally to participate in this great event.

Many thanks to regatta PRO Ron Rostorfer, the Coconut Grove Sailing Club, the club staff, the club volunteers on and off the water, and the many 29er parents who assisted in the event. Thank you to Ed Liberty from the I-420 class, and Bruce D'Eliscu for passing out water and snacks. Also thanks to Bruce for carrying many teams' spare gear on the racecourse, and towing (along with most coaches) the other teams in each day. Thanks to Todd Moody who was on the mark set boat multiple days moving buoys here and there. Thanks to Matt Pistay of Melges and Matt Wake at Sturgis for having spare parts and supplying support. Thank you to Wes Whitmyer for providing the "Skiff head T-Shirts". Finally a big thank you to John and Max Fraser for organizing the "10 boat" trailer that increased the west coast participation!