

SPEEDWEEK 2007

WRAP UP

STRONG WINDS, FLAT WATER AND RECORDS TUMBLE!

The 2007 Walvis Bay Speedweek has been one to remember. Loads of wind and massive celebrations made Walvis Bay the boiling pot of international talent. In a royal ceremony the winners of the Walvis Bay Speedweek were announced at the MWEB sponsored prize giving ceremony.

In the men's windsurfing race it was windsurfing legend Bjorn Dunkerbeck who sailed a flawless week of heats to secure the winning position. Bjorn also won the prestigious 'King of the Strip' trophy, which is awarded to the rider who gets the fastest run of the contest, for his 43.13 knots run, around 80 km/h.

In second it was Antoine Albeau and in third, Patrick Diethelm. The top finishing local rider was Hennie Bredenkamp from South Africa who finished in an amazing 6th position. Other Local riders who finished in the top 20 were; Matthias Roettcher 13th, Owen Kitchen 15th, Frank Stein 16th and Darren Barker 17th.

In the ladies race it was Valerie Ghibaudo who dominated the heats and took the winning position ahead of Karin Jaggi and Maaïke Kallenborn.

Alex Caizergues kited his way into the top position from the first day and remained there for the entire contest. Dutch youngster Rolf van der Vlugt was on top form and finished second ahead of Sylvian Hoceini. The top finishing South Africans were Sebastien Cattelan who finished 6th, Graham Lukas and Taro Niehaus who came in at 12th and 13th. In the ladies kiting race Charlotte Consorti just managed to keep ahead of Sjoukje Bredenkamp and clinched the pole position. Sjoukje did however still set the fastest speed among the ladies.

THE SPEED COURSE

All the courses used throughout the world for the Speedsurfing World tour are the same. Riders sail in an anti-clockwise direction around the buoys and in the areas set out by the race director. (as shown in the figure attached) the speeds obtained are average speeds over 500 meters. Each rider is video recorded as he crosses the start and finish lines and the average speed calculated. The race is continuous and riders are only permitted to stop in prescribed areas for equipment adjustment, changes or for resting. Heats last one and a half hours and can have a maximum of two extensions of 15 min each.

At the Walvis Bay Speedweek the kitesurfers and windsurfers all sail together in any order. The fleet is normally spread out along the entire up and downwind tacks. Once a sailor enters the one sailor zone he/she sheets in and begins to speed up. You want to hit the start line at max speed and hold it for the entire 500 meters. After crossing the finish you begin to slow down. You then jibe(turn) and sail back up to the start area where you line up and attempt the course again trying everything in your power to go faster and faster...

THE WEEK THAT WAS AND THE RECORDS BROKEN.

It was a great Speedweek, impeccable organisation made for no major hiccups and with plenty new national records being set, Walvis Bay has reclaimed its rightful position with many as the best speed sailing destination in the world. The riders enjoyed 7 heats in total. Sailing was possible on all but one of the allowed racing days.

With winds averaging around 30 knots for most of the afternoon of the 5th and 6th September Walvis Bay delivered record breaking conditions.

Ten national records were broken; all are subject to official ratification by the WSSRC (World Speed Sailing Records Council).

The new records set are:

Namibian Windsurf men – Matthias Roettcher – 40.850 knots

Croatia windsurf men – Oliver Biljman – 38.116 knots

Italian windsurf men – Patrick Diethelm – 43.053 knots

Greek windsurf men – Philip Adamidis – 40.816 knots

New Zealand windsurf men – David Macinnes – 40.645 knots

Irish windsurf men – Steve Flanagan – 37.114 knots

Namibian kitesurf women – Isabella Sardinha – 31.244 knots

France kitesurf women – Charlotte Consorti – 36.764 knots

Dutch kitesurf men – Rolf van der Vlugt – 39.253 knots

Dutch kitesurf women – Katja Roose – 31.486 knots

Sjoukje Bredenkamp equalled her existing world record and Patrick van Hoof also equalled the Belgium national record. Hard luck guys, we hop you can go that bit faster in your next event and break those records.

FINAL RESULTS

MENS WINDSURFING

1 - Björn Dunkerbeck (SUI)

2 - Antoine Albeau (FRA)

3 - Patrik Diethelm (ITA)

WOMANS WINDSURFING

1 - Valerie Ghibaudo (FRA)

2 - Karin Jaggi (SUI)

3 - Maaïke Kallenborn (NED)

MENS KITESURFING

1 - Alex Caizergues (FRA)

2 - Rolf Van Der Vlugt (NED)

3 - Sylvian Hoceini (FRA)

WOMAN KITESURFING

1 - Charlotte Consorti (FRA)

2 - Sjoukje Bredenkamp (RSA)

3 - Katja Roose (NED)