470 eTIMES

ISSUE: MAY 2008

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ANDREAS KOSMATOPOULOS

HIS FIFTH OLYMPIC PARTICIPATION

“It was worth it, thank god I didn’t quit. I am so proud.”

At the Princess Sofia Trophy in Palma, 39 years old Kosmatopoulos managed to qualify himself for his fifth Olympic participation in row. That is an amazing record in the 470 class history.

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470 ATHLETES

Top players in the international 470 class. Why do they race and what makes them go for more? Maybe you can learn something from them for your own racing!

In this issue an interview with Udi Gal and Marcelien de Koning

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CALL FOR BIDS

470 Internationale invited NCA’s and their MNA’s to bring out bids to host International 470 Class Championships.

EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The Executive Committee of 470 Internationale will present a project plan, aiming at the promotion and development of the 470 brand.

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470 eTIMES

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ANDREAS KOSMATOPOULOUS (GRE)

A LIFELONG OLYMPIC AMBITION...

INTERVIEW ANDREAS KOSMATOPOULOUS

“We did it again...See you in China”, wrote Andreas Kosmatopoulos (GRE) recently on his website. He did it not once, but five times. At the Princess Sofia Trophy in Palma, 39 years old Kosmatopoulos managed to qualify himself for his fifth Olympic participation in row. That is an amazing record in the 470 class history. Just before the start of Semaine Olympique Hyeres, the multiple Olympian talked about his lifelong Olympic ambition. “But first of all, I would like to thank my crew members from over the years. They helped me to be in the Olympics for five times. They trusted me not only for my skills, but also for my ability to return safely to shore...”, said Kosmatopoulos.

He memorized his most scary moment: “As we made all those years our preparation and practice mostly by ourselves, there were many times that we experienced great dangers on the water due to bad weather. The most frightening situation was back in December 1999 in Melbourne. On the same day that disaster stroke the Sydney to Hobart yacht race, we were practicing in Melbourne’s Black Rock yacht club. As we were alone on the water training in a comfortable sea breeze, the sky turned to black... Immediately we decided to return to the harbor, which was a mile away. The wind died (not a good sign) and we could see the dark clouds running so fast. The sea underneath us turned to white, lifted up highly and was united with the sky. A wall of anger full of uncontrolled power was approaching our small 470 dinghy... Sec-ond action was to drop all the sails, but in a few seconds we were well inside a strong gale or whatever worse. We capsized and our concern was to stay in contact and keep the boat capsized during the first stroke. I said to Kostas we have to keep it like this as long as we can. The water swallowed and we could end on top of the rocks if we flip over again and again. We stayed capsized about 45 to 50 minutes, (it seemed to me a year!!) and the rain and hail were really painful in our faces. Then when the wind force stabi-lized and dropped a bit, we up righted the boat, but the jib was completely ripped. We had to reach back to the harbor, so we lifted the main till the top batten and with this small sail area we managed to return in one piece. I remember me holding the end of the top batten to control the sail and Kostas keeping the rest of the sail from the middle to keep it folded. We respect the sea and we know that nature force is well above human limits. The only solu-tion is to go with her flow, be defensive an read the signs. In the afternoon, we watched the news regarding the Sydney - Hobart fatal storm. Since then, sadness comes back in memory when we recall those days... Nature won.”

Kosmatopoulos has been on the National Greek Team since 1982 in various classes. He started his career with winning the National Optimist Championship in 1982. Athanasios Pachoumas was the first to crew for him on the 470. The two of them finished seventeenth at the Olympic Games of 1992 in Barcelona. After his Olympic debut, Kosmatopoulos teamed up with Kostandinos Trigonis. It was a successful combination, as they won the World Title in 1995 and silver at the 470 Europeans and Worlds in 2002. They leded the ISAF World Ranking in 1995-96 and in 2001. They also repre-sented their country at three Olympic Games, with an eighth posi-tion in Sydney as their best result. After Athens in 2004, it was Andreas Papadopoulos who started to crew for Kosmatopoulos.

39 years old Kosmatopoulos managed to qualify himself for his fifth Olympic participation in row.

A wall of anger full of uncontrolled power was approaching our small 470 dinghy....

‘MAGIC MOMENT’

According to Kosmatopoulos, every Olympic qualification has been a ‘magic moment’: “I always had to win the selections, as formulated by the Greek Federation or Olympic Committee. The first time was back in 1992, when we made it in the very last race of the World Championships in Cadiz. The following years, it remained something ‘magic’, but the last one was quite difficult. I changed crew after eleven years of co-operation with Kostandinos, so I had to start over again at the age of 37.” Kosmatopoulos and Papadopoulos worked hard, which was rewarded with an eleventh position in Palma at this year’s Princess Sofia Trophy. That was enough to qualify for the 2008 Olympics in Beijing. Kosmatopoulos: “When the four event selection came down to the last regatta in Palma, I said to myself: ‘Five days of competition for four years of effort’. So, I dream it first and did it next. If I look back to all the failures, tears and pain, I say to myself once more: ‘It was worth it, thanks god I didn’t quit’. I am so proud.”

The fact he didn’t quit or swap boats in all those years, is pretty unique. “In Greece there are not a lot of opportunities”, explains Kosmatopoulos. “There is only very little support for those people who switch Olympic classes.” But most important, the fivefold Olympian still believes in the strength of the 470 class. At the ISAF Year Meeting in November 2007, the Council voted for ten Events at the Olympics of 2012. They dropped the multihulls and the women’s skiff did not make it into the Olympic family. This decision was criticized worldwide. Some voices said that the skiff should replace the two person dinghy for women. However, Kosmatopoulos doesn’t think the status of the 470 is in dan-ger at all: “It is easy for the 470 to stay in the Olympics, because the class has the support of all the countries and it combines men and women. It is also impossible for most of the nations to afford the cost of a new double handed Olympic fleet.”

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE >>
**ANDREAS KOSMATOPOULOS (GRE)**

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**CHANGES AND GROWTH**

Sixteen long seasons of high level competition separate Kosmatopoulos’ first and fifth Olympic Games. However, there haven’t been that many differences between his first and last campaign: "The biggest change is my experience and deep knowledge of what the selection and Olympics are about. There haven’t been much modifications on organizational level." He describes his personal growth during that extensive period of professional sailing, as followed: “Learning, thinking, working and acting. In that order.” Kosmatopoulos considers the Olympics as a celebration: “Sports in general are a way to improve as human beings. Regarding to sailing, it is the most complete sport. It is based on experience and includes determination. In addition, sailors bring a huge knowledge of theory into practice.” After so many years, his Olympic dream has evolved into a certain life style: “I just want to enjoy every single day and I feel blessed still being able to sail and compete in high level races against youngsters.”

Back in the nineties, Benny and Jan Kouwenhoven from the Netherlands belonged to the international top of the 470 fleet. The Dutch brothers won the Worlds in 1994 and 1996. The ‘95 title went to Kosmatopoulos. Benny Kouwenhoven: “I can’t believe he qualified himself for his fifth Olympics. That’s a huge achievement.” Benny remembers those days they were battling with the Greek: "They were good in light and medium conditions. We were better in medium to heavy weather.” To the question what it takes to remain at the top for such a long time, Kouwenhoven says: “Once you are on a certain level, you need to improve your equipment continuously. It is important to have enough speed. Especially in small fleets.” The former champs are still sailing a 470: “I bought a second hand boat of only two years old, so hopefully we can compete against the national team at the Dutch Nationals.” Kouwenhoven strongly believes the 470 should stay in the Olympics: “It is a complicated dinghy and it has it all, which is great for a sailor. The crew is basically the engine, which is really important at the highest level. And racing is more tactical than in most other dinghy classes.”

"I can’t believe he qualified himself for his fifth Olympics. That’s a huge achievement.”

**UPS AND DOWNS**

Just like everybody else, an athlete experiences ups and downs throughout his or her career. Kosmatopoulos considers their gold medal at the 1995 Worlds as a highlight: ‘Now it will be my fifth Games. Winning the Worlds was a moment in time, but Olympic competition has lasted all my life.” According to Kouwenhoven, a World title means you are the best of the best: “There are more competitors. Not everybody makes it to the Olympic Games, but everybody participates at the Worlds.” Kosmatopoulos calls the Athens Olympics his worst experience so far. “We dropped from a third place after four races down to an eighteenth position. That was an unexpected result”, said Kosmatopoulos. To the question whether he will retire from 470 sailing after Beijing, he answers: “You never know what life or a wind shift will bring you...” Even at the age of 39, Kosmatopoulos has still an Olympic future full of chances. Paul Foerster for example, was in the same age (39) when he became Olympic Champion in Athens. His crew Kevin Burnham was not only the oldest competitor (48), but also the oldest Gold Medalist in the Greek capital. After the final gun, Burnham became famous for of his back-flip off the golden 470. This picture was published all over the world. The ‘old timers’ had showed the power of experience, knowledge, determination and passion.

Text: Diana Bogaards
470 Internationale Sailors Support Programmes

470 Internationale supports world wide equal competition.

470 Internationale recognizes the fact that every sailor with extraordinary talent by nature, in whatever country a sailor lives, he or she must be able to join the competition on the highest level of sailing.

Sports development is not a logical issue in all countries around the world. However, this does not mean that these countries have sportsmen that have the same enthusiasm, talent and especially: the Olympic dream.

It is therefore, that 470 Internationale started to develop Sailors Support Programmes since 2005, aiming at athletes from such countries, to support them to join the International racing scene.

Since 2005, four Sailors Support Programmes were established, with the latest, launched at the end of 2006, the 2008 Olympic Pathway Solidarity Grant (2008 OPSG).

The current Sailors Support Programmes, with the exception of the latest 2008 OPSG, have long term objectives and return annually.

Solidarity Programme

To support talented two person dinghy sailors with Olympic potential from countries where support in their home country has not been developed yet.

The 6 crews admitted receive one free set of sails and future discounts from Olympic Sails ©, the sole sponsor of the Programme.

470 Internationale has also paid the entry fee for these crews to participate in a 470 Class Championship of their choice. (Worlds, Europeans, Junior Worlds, Junior Europeans and Master’s Cup).

The André Cornu Grant

To stimulate talented and successful two person dinghy youth sailors to continue their sailing career towards Olympic levels in the International 470 Class.

Each boys and girls crew that won the Gold Medal at the Volvo Youth Sailing ISAF World Championships in the two person dinghy discipline, receive an amount of 1000 euros in cash, if they participate in either the 470 Class Junior World Championship, or the 470 Class World Championship.

Junior Support Programme

To stimulate the youngest 470 sailors, boys and girls, to follow their Olympic dream on an early age, and participate in the International 470 Junior Championships.

The Programme was originally established to stimulate the Sailing Sport for Women.

At every Junior Worlds, the two youngest Girls’ crews and the youngest Boys crew (the sum of age of helm and crew), will receive an amount of 900 euro in cash each.

Executive Committee

- Alberto Predieri
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- Marta Weöres
  First Vice President
- Alain Corcuff
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- Arthur Thüringer
- Dimitris Dimou
  Technical Committee Chairman

More information and conditions for application can be found of the 470 Class web site:
http://www.470.org | Programmes

470 Internationale calls sponsors to come onboard to support the Sailors Support Programmes

For more information about sponsorship advantages and/or information about the Sailors Support Programmes, please contact Marta Weöres: marta@470.org
2008 Olympic Pathway Solidarity Grant

In order to help 470 sailors from countries where Olympic sailing is less active, and support is not sufficient to take part in the qualifiers for the 2008 Olympic Sailing Regatta, the International 470 Class Association decided to set up a specific grant, the 2008 Olympic Pathway Solidarity Grant.

Sailors from countries that did not yet qualify themselves for the 2008 Olympic Sailing Regatta, were given a chance with financial support of the International 470 Class Association through this Programme.

Sailors admitted to the 2008 OPSG Programme were asked to write a report about 470 sailing in their country, and their experiences sailing an Olympic Class.

The full reports are available on the 470 class web site: www.470.org | Programmes

Hong Kong

"We left with a much clearer idea of what exactly we need to work on to improve our 470 sailing and racing skills. More racing experience in large fleets, and more attention to rig tuning, tactics, and starts are things we intend to focus on this year. The fun we had at the worlds and our occasional moments of success – pulling off a good mark rounding, or achieving a good start, or overtaking a boat on the final reaching leg – has provided us with lots of memories to motivate us to continue our training.”

Cathy Carroll (helm) and Rita Yau (crew)
HKG 34

Hungary

"...without the help from OPSG we should have taken some heavy loans. Therefore, we are very grateful for the generous support provided through the Intl. 470 Class OPSG Programme."

"Although we could not qualify for the Olympics, we do not consider the Melbourne World Championship as a total failure because we gained a lot of experience."

Gabor Sallai

Brazil

"I particularly am very happy that I entered this class. It is amazing what you can learn with a boat like this, and especially how much fun you can have sailing this machine!"

Bernardo Low-Beer

Chile

"During our growing process, we received the needed support of the International 470 Class Association.

Mauricio Zulueta

Belgium

"We were also extremely happy with the financial support of the International 470-Class Association. It will help us through the other expenses we had at participating the Worlds."

Bruno van Antwerpen & Pim Peeters
INTERNATIONAL 470 CLASS CHAMPIONSHIPS

470 EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS 2008
- 5-14 JUNE 2008 / RIVA DEL GARDA, ITALY
- www.470.org

470 JUNIOR WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS 2008
- 21-29 JULY 2008 / GDYNIA, POLAND
- www.470.org

470 JUNIOR EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS 2008
(combined with the 420 JEC)
- 6-15 AUGUST 2008 / ZADAR, CROATIA
- www.470.org

470 MASTERS CUP 2008
- 1-6 AUGUST VARNA, BULGARIA
- www.470.org

FUTURE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS
470 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS 2009
- 20-29 AUGUST 2009 / COPENHAGEN, DENMARK
- www.470.org

470 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS 2010
- THE NETHERLANDS
- www.470.org

OLYMPIC GAMES, BEIJING 2008
OLYMPIC SAILING REGATTA
- 9-21 AUGUST 2008 / QINGDAO, CHINA
- HTTP://WWW.SAILING2008.ORG

Full Calendar of International Events is available on the 470 Class web site: www.470.org

GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETINGS 2008
EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL ASSEMBLY - 7 JUNE 2008
The Executive Committee of 470 Internationale will present a project plan, aiming at the promotion and development of the 470 brand.

An Extraordinary General Assembly meeting will be held at Riva del Garda (Italy) on 7th of June 2008. All members (NCA’s and individual members) of the International 470 Class Association have been sent an invitation.

NCA’s and individual members may address submissions and/or questions to Mr. Alain Corcuff, Secretary General: Email: alain@470.org

CALL FOR BIDS
According to our Constitution and By-Laws, our General Assembly, in its annual meeting to be held in Madrid on 16th November 2008, will have to allocate the organisation and decide the venue of the following Championships:

- JUNIOR EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS FOR 2010,
- MASTER’S CUP FOR 2010.

At the same time, the General Assembly will have to select the potential venues for the following Championships:

- WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS FOR 2012,
- EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS FOR 2012,
- JUNIOR WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS FOR 2011 AND 2012,
- JUNIOR EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS FOR 2011 AND 2012,
- MASTER’S CUPS FOR 2011 AND 2012.

The final choice of the venues for these 2011 and 2012 Championships will be made by the 2009 General Assembly meeting after the Management Committee organises site inspections and meetings with the selected bidders.

The decisions to be made by the General Assembly on the here above listed Championships (allocation for 2010, selection for 2011 and 2012) will be based on the bids received in due time. According to the bids received at that time, decisions or preferences for the subsequent years might also be considered.

We would like also to point out that the Junior European Championships should be preferably combined with the corresponding 420 Class event. According to the agreement we have with the International 420 Class Association, the venue of the combined event should be chosen for 2010 and 2012 by the International 420 Class Association then confirmed by our General Assembly, and vice-versa for 2011. However, the choice made by the International 420 Class Association may be confirmed by our General Assembly only if we have received also a bid in due time from the corresponding organiser.

NCA’s in all nations interested organising an International Class Championship not yet allocated, are kindly requested to send an official bid to the International 470 Class Association, including proposals for dates and possible venues, and all relevant information necessary to make a decision.

A chart of allocated International 470 Class Championships is available on the official 470 class web site www.470.org

More information: Mr. Alain Corcuff, Secretary General: alain@470.org
**470 Class World Championships 2008**  
21-30 January 2008—Melbourne, Australia

Within four years, the 470 class has visited four different continents. Europe, America, Asia, and Australia this year. All top sailors were looking forward to sailing the Worlds on Port Philip Bay in front of Melbourne.

At these World Championships, the last starting places for the 2008 Olympic sailing Regatta were to be decided on. Mordialloc Sailing Club hosted a perfect event with great races just in front of the beach. People who expected heavy winds were disappointed as it turned out to be a moderate to light wind regatta. In both fleets, sailing was tight. Especially the men’s fleet Medal race turned into a thriller when 2006 World Champions Nic Asher and Elliot Willis had a big crash halfway the week, with a serious leg injury because of the incident. The injury could not keep them from fighting so close from the title, and they finally won the Championship.

Erin Maxwell and Isabelle Kinsolving, who lost the trials in the USA, turned out to be the winners of the Worlds in 2008.

**Top 10 Final Results**

**470 Men**
1 GBR ASHER, Nic / WILLIS, Elliot  
2 POR MARINHO, ÁLVARO / NUNES, Miguel  
3 ISR KLIGER, Gideon / GAL, Uri  
4 FRA CHARBONNIER, Nicolas / BAUSSET, Olivier  
5 FRA LEBOUCHER, Pierre / GAROS, Vincent  
6 ITA ZANDONÀ, Gabrio / TRANI, Andrea  
7 ESP BARREIROS RODRIGUEZ, Onan / SARMIENTO PADILLA, Aaron  
8 AUS WILMOT, Nathan / PAGE, Malcolm  
9 GBR ROGERS, Nicholas / GLANFIELD, Joe  
10 FRA BONNAUD, Benjamin / BONNAUD, Romain

**470 Women**
1 USA MAXWELL, Erin / KINSOLVING, Isabelle  
2 ITA CONTI, Giulia / MICOL, Giovanna  
3 AUS RECHI, Elise / PARKINSON, Tessa  
4 NED DE KONING, Marcelien / BERKHOUT, Lobke  
5 FRA PETITJEAN, Ingrid / DOUROUX, Nadege  
6 AUT VÖGL, Sylvia / FLATSCHER, Carolina  
7 GBR BASSADONE, Christina / CLARK, Saskia  
8 SWE TÖRGERSSON, Therese / SANTÉN, Vendela  
9 ARG FERNANDA, Sesto / CONSUELÓ, Monségur  
10 GER KADELBACH, Kathrin / ZIEGELMAYER, Friederike
**SEMAINE OLYMPIQUE FRANÇAISE**

**MEDAL RACE REPORT 470 CLASS**

The 470 men were the first one to start the Medal race’s show in front the harbour in Hyères. The wind, light and shifty, forced the race committee to reduce the course to a single windward return. The French teams were leading the ten boats fleet and rounded the top mark in first and second, but the run proved costly. Athens Silver medallist, Nick Rogers and Joe Glinfield and New Zealanders Evans/Burling passed the French on the run. The British take first place with the last two jibes to the finish claiming the Gold medal and their second title at the SOF. Early regatta leaders, Sven and Kalle Coster placed 5th for Silver. The New Zealanders are a close third on equal points with Charbonnier/Bausset (FRA) 4th.

A victory in the 470 women Medal race gives the Germans Stefanie Rothweiler and Vivien Kussatz the Silver medal in the SOF. World #2, Japanese Ai Kondo and Naoko Kamata, 6th across the line, conserve the lead and claim their first Grade 1 event title. The Japanese who have placed 2nd in the 2007 Olympic test event are among the top favourite in China. Giulia Conti and Giovanna Micol (ITA) will have to settle for Bronze after a eighth place in the Medal Race.

*Source: Press release Medal Races - Corinne McKenzie*

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**39TH S.A.R. PRINCESA SOFIA MAPFRE**

2008 was one of the most international editions in history of this ISAF Grade 2 event. All together 48 nations from five continents took part the week before Eastern. The organisations had to work hard on getting enough facilities and parking spots for the 800 olympic boats. This meant for all 470 competitors to put on their beach trousers and wear flip-flops because it became a beach event!

Double Olympic medalist Natalia Via DuFresne sailing with Laia Tutzo started with a near perfect day placing second and a victory on the first day. The crew rebirthing their campaign last year November were competing for an Olympic spot. With an overall 2nd place they did with a clear lead. In the men’s fleet the heat was on in both the Spanish and Greek camp. For the Greek team, Palma was their last event out three for a place in Beijing. The teams sailed close and the battle took until the last day. In the end helmsmen Andreas Kosmatopoulos reserved his 5th time 470 Olympic seat. That’s a fleet record!

The predictions upfront were soft. Light breeze and mostly from the sea. This is what it turned out to be as well for the two person dinghy sailors. One day the breeze picked up and turned to the north. This meant hats but mostly waiting on shore. It is incredibly tricky sailing on the Palma Bay with shifts from up to 40 degrees in 4 minutes. Every fleet started, but in the end all races got abandoned because of the big shifts. The boats turned back without results.

The Italian teams were on a roll in 470 camp. After two days the top men’s and women’s teams had taken over the leader boards. Giulia Conti and Giovanna Micol and Gabrio Zandona and Andrea Trani were not ready to make it an easy battle at all. Every tack was a hit and extended their lead during the week. On the last day the men’s team was almost out of reach for the others even in the double points scoring medal race. The girl’s team felt the hot breath from the Dutch on the last day. Strong breeze filled the bay. As the medal race was close to shore the waves were huge. The Dutch using their new Olympic boat had a tough start in the week but were ready to finish it.

**TOP 5 - FINAL RESULTS**

**470 MEN**

1 GBR ROGERS Nick / GLANFIELD Joe
2 NED COSTER Sven / COSTER Kalle
3 NZL EVANS Carl / BURLING Peter
4 FRA CHARBONNIER Nicolas / BAUSSET Olivier
5 FRA BONNAUD Benjamin / BONNAUD Romain

**470 WOMEN**

1 JPN KONDO Ai / KAMATA Naoko
2 GER ROTHWEILER Stefanie / KUSSATZ Vivien
3 ITA CONTI Giulia / MICOL Giovanna
4 ARG SESTO MARIA Ferna / MONSEGUR Consuelo
5 ISR KORNNEKI Nike / BOUSKILA Vered

**TOP 5 - FINAL RESULTS**

**470 MEN**

1 ITA GABRIO ZANDONA / ANDREA TRANI
2 ISR GIDEON KLIGER / UDI GAL
3 NED SVEN COSTER / KALLE COSTER
4 FRA NICHOLAS CHARBONNIER / NICHOLAS BAUSSET
5 ARG JAVIER CONTE / JUAN DE LA FUENTE

**470 WOMEN**

1 NED MARCELien DE KONING / LOBKE BARKHOUT
2 ESP NATALIA VIA-DUFRESNE & LAIA TUTZO
3 GBR CHRISTINA BASSADONE & SASKIA CLARK
4 ITA GIULIA CONTI / GIOVANNA MICOL
5 BRA FERNANDA OLIVEIRA / ISABEL SWAN
Every E-times we talk with one of the top players in the international 470 class. Why do they race and what makes them go for more? Maybe you can learn something from them for your own racing!

This time we are interviewing Udi Gal (ISR) and Marcelien de Koning (NED)

Udi Gal

Career in the 470 since: 1998
Profession: Professional Sailor

1. If you can describe yourself in 5 words, what would those be?
Happy, optimistic, always smiling, perfectionist and sensitive.

2. What makes you choose the 470?
Since I can remember I’m a sailor. I have lived around the sea since my birth. I can’t imagine my life without being on or in the water at least one time a week. I’m a very competitive person so it was natural for me to do races on the water.

3. What was your best regatta ever and why?
The last three 3 years we’ve gathered three bronze medals during the World Championships. Each event was one of a kind. We were always up there in top ten but always finished at a medal spot on the last day. The medal race is a good thing for us. Very exciting and very stressful but good fun. We love the performance of all those regattas.

4. Why do you want to be the helm/ crew?
Until 17 years ago I was a helm and quite good too. But my body kept on growing and I became too tall to be in the back of the boat. Automatically I had to change to crewing. Gidi was the best competitor I came around in Israel. So he was my best option and the best person I could put my faith in.

5. What’s sailing 470 like in your country?
Sailing in general, and especially the 470 class and windsurfing are very popular sports in Israel. This is because of the amount of medals the Israeli team sails together. We are pretty well-known in our country.

6. What is the hardest part of an Olympic campaign?
I think being a top Olympic athlete is all about mental preparation. Technically all the top teams and players are at the same level. So being that inch of a difference is the key to win or not to win. I like to play games but it is not always easy to be 100% all the time.

7. What is your best asset on sailing and why?
Like I said I was a pretty good helm in my younger years. I’m sure this helps in making the right choices on the water. I know what it is like in both positions. A 470 helm is not only the one who’s steering the boat. As a crew you have lots of power as well. Sometimes that’s under estimated. Also every time I’m in a race, I need to win it. That’s when I’m at my best.
MARCIELN DE KONING

SAILING RACES SINCE THE AGE OF 12
CAREER IN THE 470 SINCE: 2001
STUDY: COMMUNICATION
PROFESSION: PROFESSIONAL SAILOR

1. IF YOU CAN DESCRIBE YOURSELF IN 5 WORDS, WHAT WOULD THOSE BE?
Optimistic, down-to-earth, determined, friendly and enthusiastic.

2. WHAT MAKES YOU CHOOSE THE 470?
I tried on my own for some time but I was too small and not strong enough. Every time my scoring was up in the light but down in the breeze so I switched. Then it started to be the other way around! Now we are in balance.

3. WHAT WAS YOUR BEST REGATTA EVER AND WHY?
My best regatta ever was the World Championships in Rizhou. Our goal was the top ten and then we kept on climbing! We trained so hard before and it did pay off. We amazed ourselves. The coaches had that good vibe before already. They always know things.

4. WHY DO YOU WANT TO BE THE HELM/CREW?
I’d like to crew as well but my length and weight did not give me an option. Maybe in the next campaign. It was a big struggle to switch from Europe (former Olympic woman class) to 470. It felt like I had to learn how to sail all over again.

5. WHAT’S SAILING 470 LIKE IN YOUR COUNTRY?
Every Dutch person has been on a boat at least ones in their lives. On big national venues people go through the canals on boats and party on it. Sailing is quite popular. There are quiet some sailors but the racing population goes up and down. Lobke and I were sailing Optimist in a big fleet. Now it’s been going down some. At the Dutch championships we have about 20 Dutch teams going for the medals.

6. WHAT IS THE HARDEST PART OF AN OLYMPIC CAMPAIGN?
Being away from home is the hardest. I would like to have all the races at the same spot so I could live at that bay and take my whole family and friends with me.

7. WHAT IS YOUR BEST ASSET ON SAILING AND WHY?
I just like the game. I don’t need to win with miles. I like tight sailing and then outsmart the others. That gives me kicks. And I can’t live without any adrenaline. Otherwise I don’t know I’m alive! So best asset? Enjoying sailing!