FINN CLASS
RIO 2016
PREVIEW
The road to Rio is almost at an end. For most of the 23 Finn sailors who will race for the ultimate prize in August, it has been a long and winding road, with many pitfalls, dead ends and road works.

There is not much doubt that Rio’s waters will provide perhaps the biggest challenge of the sailor’s careers. The unseen currents, the changeable winds, and the hidden dangers beneath the surface will all conspire to create a fascinating Games that even the favourite, four times World Champion Giles Scott, will not take for granted.

Sailors have spent longer training at the venue than at any previous Olympics, many starting three years ago to familiarise themselves with the conditions. Many have based themselves there for protracted periods to get to grips with Rio’s idiosyncrasies. Most are fully aware it won’t take much for everything to go horribly wrong for them.

That Scott has won almost everything in sight since his failure to beat Ben Ainslie for the British place at the London 2012 Olympics means very little. Rio 2016 is just one more regatta he wants to win; perhaps more than all the rest put together, but he knows it will not be easy. The others know he is the favourite, but they also know he can be beaten, and that is the challenge facing them.

Scott has lost two Finn regattas since the 2011 British trials. That’s a record of some 19 wins in 21 regattas starting with the 2011 European title. But the unexpected can happen, as it did in Palma in April of this year, when an unforeseen rudder pintle breakage probably cost him another regatta win.

The man to take advantage of that was Josh Junior, who goes into the Games as the only man in Rio with bragging rights over Scott in more than five years. It may not be much, but it is something to grasp with both hands.

Mid-cycle Scott was about an unbeatable as it was possible to imagine, winning regattas with two races to spare and sometimes by as much as 50 points. He was clearly a cut above the rest and his smooth, almost casual style spoke volumes of an innate skill in the boat that transcended his previous training partner and mentor, Ainslie. He was bigger, stronger and fitter. He was making it look too easy.

Wake up call
That success was also a wake up call to the rest of the fleet. They realised that unless they started to catch up, and quickly, the gold medal in Rio was as good as gone.

Over the following two years Scott continued to win every regatta, but just occasionally the winning margins became less. Several times he had to fight himself back into a regatta. Nevertheless, in this cycle he has won three world titles from 2014 to 2016, the European title in 2014 and perhaps more significantly, both Olympic test events in Rio. At last year’s test event he struggled all week only to get break in the medal race and snatch the gold at the last possible moment.

Qualification
Qualification for Rio started at the 2014 ISAF Sailing World Championships in Santander. Apart from BRA as host nation, 12 nations qualified there: GBR, CRO, FRA, NZL, USA, NOR, SWE, DEN, SLO, AUS, HUN, FIN. Next CHN won the Asian place at the Sailing World Cup Qingdao, NED, GRE, EST, URU and ITA qualified from the 2015 Finn Gold Cup in Takapuna, CAN and ARG won the North and South American places at the 2016 Sailing World Cup Miami, and finally at the 2016 Princesa Sofia Regatta, TUR won the final European place, with SEY winning the African place. It was the most complicated and long drawn out qualification system ever used for sailing.

For a change, all those who qualified met their
National criteria and were given their tickets to Rio. Of the 23, just seven are sailing their first Olympics, seven are sailing their second, five are sailing their third, two are sailing their fourth and two are sailing their fifth: Vasilij Zbogar and Allan Julie. Zbogar is the oldest sailor this year at 40, though the average age has dropped from 30 in 2012 to 29 in 2016.

Looking at it quantitatively, based on recent performance, about 10-12 sailors have the capacity to medal, and around 18-20 have performed well enough to make the medal race on August 16.

Junior is uppermost in most people’s mind as a possible toppler of the great Scott. He only moved into the Finn in 2013 after a failed attempt to win the 2012 Laser campaign from Andrew Murdoch, who also moved into the Finn after 2012. Junior’s biggest problem used to be consistency, but having won the NZL trials against Murdoch, one of the most conservative sailors in the game, perhaps he has now got that under control.

Junior has spent much of the past year training with Pieter-Jan Postma, perhaps the most flamboyant, risk taking sailor in the fleet. The partnership has clearly worked though as both sailors have benefitted from each other. Postma has lurked near the top for years, but always failed to convert potential to gold. That changed in 2014 with his first major victory at the Hyères World Cup, but it took another two years before he would win his first title, the 2016 European Championship.

While NZL qualified in the first round at the 2014 ISAF Worlds in Santander, Postma had to wait until the Finn Gold Cup in Takapuna to win his place.

Of the 23 sailors in Rio, only 11 sailed the Finn at London 2012, including two of the medallists, Jonas Høgh-Christensen and Jonathan Lobert.

After winning silver in London, and narrowly missing the gold, Høgh-Christensen stepped away from Finn sailing for two years. He returned in the summer of 2014 to qualify Denmark in Santander, though was still unsure whether he wanted to do another Olympic campaign. However, he didn’t take much persuading and by Palma in 2015 he had a full programme running, culminating in a second place at this year’s Gold Cup.

In contrast, Lobert never stopped. However it took him another three years to win his first major championship medal, silver in Takapuna in 2015. Lobert is part of the group that has probably spent more time in Rio than any other foreign sailor. Together with Max Salminen and Tapio Nirkko the group should know the conditions well enough, but have sacrificed that knowledge against regatta experience.

If local knowledge proves key, then the fleet also includes Brazil’s 2013 World Champion and winner in Miami this year, Jorge Zarif, who should be pushing the front.

Other experienced sailors include three time European champion Ivan Kljakovic Gapsic, third time Olympian, Deniss Karpak, and for the second time Giorgio Poggi.

**Rising stars**

Of the new young group sailing their first Olympics, Jake Lilley is perhaps one of the brightest stars. He towers over most of the fleet and has been steadily rising through the ranks over the past three years and could pose a threat at the front. Caleb Paine and Anders Pedersen are equally promising and are all capable of a result. In contrast, Tom Ramshaw has spent less than a year in the boat, but has achieved some phenomenal results in that short time. If these sailors continue progressing at the same rate, they are going to be the front runners in Tokyo.

One of the success stories of the last cycle has been the establishment of the Dinghy Academy in Valencia. That success is reflected in the number of sailors based there that qualified for Rio, or have used it as a training venue on their road to Rio. Nine of the 23 sailors have benefitted from Luca Devoti’s experience and training methods including Zsombor Berecz, who won silver at this year’s Europeans and double Olympic Laser medalist Vasilij Zbogar. In addition, two of those sailors – Facundo Olezza and Alejandro Foglia – have also been directly funded through the Finn class development programme to train in Valencia.

**Form book**

However, what all the sailors are saying, whatever their past results would otherwise indicate, is that this will be an Olympics where past form means very little. They all agree that these Games will be very tough to manage, and very difficult to predict, and to win you have to be the best all round sailor - and perhaps a little lucky.
Facundo Olezza (ARG)

Age: 21
World Ranking (highest): 64 (61)
Previous Olympics: None
Recent results: SWC Miami 2016 (10), Europeans 2016 (69), Palma (58), Silver Cup 2015 (8)

Facundo Olezza is the youngest of the Finn sailors competing in Rio. He started sailing the Finn in February 2015, when he grew too big to sail the Laser, also after some 49er sailing in Argentina. When he switched to the Finn he joined the Dinghy Academy in Valencia and has not looked back. He has only competed in six major events in his Finn career, but his coach, Luca Devoti, sees enormous potential in the young sailor. Having spent most of the year recovering from injury, he sailed the Sailing World Cup Miami with a partially healed broken hand to qualify Argentina for the South American place in Rio, practicing and learning new techniques over the New Year to be able to race.

Jake Lilley (AUS)

Age: 23
World Ranking (highest): 5 (2)
Previous Olympics: None
Recent results: Finn Gold Cup 2016 (4), Hyeres 2016 (1), Europeans 2016 (37), Palma 2016 (4), Miami 2016 (4)

Jake Lilley stands head and shoulders over most of the fleet and is beginning to show a lot of potential on the race course with several top results in the past year. He qualified Australia for Rio in 2014 but then had an extended trials against Oliver Tweddell that only ended after the Gold Cup this year, after both sailors raised their game enough for a 1, 2 finish in Hyeres. An intensely physical sailor Lilley started sailing Finns in 2012, when at 2 metres tall and 96 kg he had outgrown the Laser. He soon found his way in the Finn and early on set himself some very high goals, and with his then coach, John Bertrand, won the 2014 Junior European title.

Jorge Zarif (BRA)

Age: 23
World Ranking (highest): 7 (6)
Previous Olympics: 2012 (20)
Best Results: Finn Gold Cup 2013 (1)
Recent Results: Finn Gold Cup (17), Hyeres (7) Palma (9), Europeans (7), 2015 Finn Gold Cup (7)

Jorge Zarif was the youngest sailor in the Finn fleet at 2012 Olympics, just 19, but one year later went on to win the world title in Tallinn, Estonia. He has been mainly coached by Rafa Trujillo during this cycle, and has had moderate success at some regattas, notably winning the Miami World Cup in 2016 against a top class field. Zarif has been competing in the Finn since 2008 when he was just 15. Though he sails from the late Clube do Rio de Janeiro, his hometown is São Paulo, where he won his seventh Brazilian national title in February. He is now just two short of the record set by his father, the late Jorge Zarif Zeto, who competed in the Finn in the 1984 and 1988 Olympics.

Tom Ramshaw (CAN)

Age: 24
World Ranking (highest): 27 (27)
Previous Olympics: None
Recent results: Finn Gold Cup 2016 (8) Europeans 2016 (10), Miami 2016 (13) Palma 2016 (31)

Tom Ramshaw only took up Finn sailing at the end of 2015 after taking a break from the Laser, when it was suggested he try the boat. He immediately knew it was the boat for him, qualified Canada for Rio at the SWC Miami in January 2016 and then produced an outstanding 10th place at his first overseas Finn event at the Europeans in Barcelona. He followed that with six weeks training at the Dinghy Academy in Valencia before placing eighth at the Finn Gold Cup in Gaeta, to be selected shortly after. His progress after just nine months in the boat has been nothing short of astonishing.
Lei Gong (CHN)

Age: 33
World Ranking (highest): 56 (56)
Previous Olympics: 2012 (24)
Recent results: Hyeres (27), Miami (7), Finn Gold Cup 2015 (52), SWC Qingdao 2015 (1), Rio Test Event 2015 (17)

Lei Gong is sailing his third Olympic campaign and Rio will be his second Olympics. His best result of this cycle was a seventh at this year’s Miami World Cup, including a string of top seven places. While China does have a strong fleet of Finn sailors, they rarely appear at international events. Gong is no exception having sailed only eight ranking events since 2012. He goes into the Olympics as one of the lowest ranked sailors, but three places higher than in 2012. His first international event was the Europeans in 2004 where he picked up the bronze medal in the Junior European championship.

Ivan Kljakovic Gaspic (CRO)

Age: 32
World Ranking (highest): 12 (1)
Previous Olympics: 2008 (8), 2012 (5)
Best results: European Champion 2009, 2010, 2015; 2009 Finn Gold Cup (3)
Recent results: 2016 Europeans (8), 2016 Finn Gold Cup (20), Hyeres (9), 2015 Finn Gold Cup (20)

Ivan Kljakovic Gaspic is one of the most experienced sailors in the fleet with an excellent record of regatta wins and top finishes. However since claiming his third European title last year he has failed to live up to expectations, as seen in his drop from world No 1 in October 2015 to his current 12th. This is perhaps largely due to a tense and often heated Olympic trials against Milan Vujasinovic, which was only settled at the Finn Gold Cup this year. However Gaspic is a formidable sailor in all conditions and generally one of the most consistent sailors on the circuit.

Jonas Høgh-Christensen (DEN)

Age: 35
World Ranking (highest): 6 (1)
Previous Olympics: 2004 (9), 2008 (6), 2012 (2)
Best results: World Champion 2006, 2009
Recent results: 2016 Finn Gold Cup (2), Hyeres (6), Palma (16), 2016 Europeans (12), Miami (2)

Jonas Høgh-Christensen has the knack of peaking at just the right time, and is one of the smartest sailors on the circuit. After a disappointing 2008 Olympics where he was one of the favourites he took several years off. He won his second Finn Gold Cup in 2009 after a year out of the boat, before coming back a year later with a superb campaign for London 2012. After that he went back to the music industry in Denmark before coming out of retirement for a second time in 2014. His results over the last year show a familiar upward trend as he heads into his fourth Olympics in the Finn.

Deniss Karpak (EST)

Age: 30
World Ranking (highest): 19 (1)
Previous Olympics: 2008 Laser (24), 2012 (11)
Best results: 2011 Finn Gold Cup (8)
Recent results: 2016 Finn Gold Cup (13), Europeans (40), 2015 Finn Gold Cup (11), Kiel 2015 (1), Kiel 2016 (4)

Deniss Karpak moved into the Finn after the 2008 Olympics after he got too big for the Laser and has been a regular in the top 20, occasionally top 10 ever since, including winning races at all levels. He led the 2016 Finn Gold Cup early on before suffering on the windier days at the end. Even though he is one of the tallest and biggest sailors in the fleet he seems to produce his best in the lighter, trickier winds, which could bode well for Rio. Karpak has won the Sailor of the Year in Estonia on numerous occasions and was the Best Young Athlete of the Year in Estonia in 2007.

Tapio Nirkko (FIN)

Age: 31
World Ranking (highest): 13 (7)
Previous Olympics: 2008 (18), 2012 (10)
Best results: 2015 Test Event (2), 2009 Europeans (2)
Recent results: 2016 Palma (3), 2015 Finn Gold Cup (10), Hyeres (34), Weymouth (4)

Tapio Nirkko is a very tall and strong sailor, as well as a very hard to predict sailor. He is clearly capable of beating everyone on his day but has often struggled with consistency when it counts. For many years he has been the only competitive Finn sailor in Finland. On the occasions when he has put it all together he is a force to be reckoned with, and picking up the silver medal at the 2015 Test Event in Rio was not only the best regatta he has ever sailed, but also a sign of his true potential. He is one of a few sailors who have spent huge amounts of time training in Rio, so should have a good handle on the conditions to remain consistent.
Jonathan Lobert (FRA)

Age: 31  
World Ranking (highest): 2 (2)  
Previous Olympics: 2012 (2)  
Best results: 2015 Finn Gold Cup (3)  
Recent results: 2015 Test Event (4), Palma (8), Hyeres (3), Weymouth (2)

Jonathan’s Lobert’s bronze medal at the 2012 Olympics was until late in 2015 his only major medal in the Finn class. For many years he failed to convert his potential into a medal, except at Weymouth and he has a very athletic style in the boat, especially downwind. Now that he has overcome his medal shortage with a silver at the 2015 Finn Gold Cup, his confidence has blossomed and he is one of the top favourites in Rio. His selection for Rio was almost assured after long time training partner Thomas Le Breton dropped out of the race, allowing Lobert to focus on training in Rio, and he has done a lot of that.

Giles Scott (GBR)

Age: 29  
World Ranking (highest): 1 (1)  
Previous Olympics: None  
Recent results: 2015 Test Event (1), Weymouth (1), Palma (2)

Giles Scott goes into the Olympics as the absolute favourite after only being beaten twice in the last five years. Apart from gear failure in Palma this year, he is unbeaten since April 2013. He has spent considerable time in Rio training and has only competed in four major regattas since last year’s test event. Many thought he would have won gold at London 2012 given the chance, but he lost out to Ben Ainslie for selection. Now he finally has his chance and following his win at the Weymouth World Cup he will go into the Games as reigning world champion and World No. 1.

Ioannis Mitakis (GRE)

Age: 26  
World Ranking (highest): 10 (6)  
Previous Olympics: 2012 (14)  
Best results: Europeans (1)  
Recent results: 2016 Finn Gold Cup (6), Hyeres (11), Palma (6), 2016 Europeans (9), 2015 Finn Gold Cup (9), 2015 Test Event (16)

Ioannis Mitakis first appeared in a Finn in 2009 and took the Junior European title twice before moving on to taking the 2012 senior European title in very light and shifty winds. A clearly talented sailor, he has upped his game since London 2012 and is regularly in the top ten at major events, including winning many races but has yet to take a medal at a major event since the 2012 win. Though historically better in lighter winds, he has also improved in a breeze to become a great all round sailor and should be challenging the front in Rio.

Zsombor Berecz (HUN)

Age: 30  
World Ranking (highest): 38 (14)  
Previous Olympics: 2008 Laser (29), 2012 Laser (21)  
Best results: 2016 Europeans (2)  
Recent results: 2015 Finn Gold Cup (23), Palma (7), 2015 Test Event (11)

Zsombor Berecz moved into the Finn after two Olympics in the Laser and immediately started producing results. Coming from Lake Balaton, he made the decision early on to join the Dinghy Academy in Valencia and has clearly benefitted from training there ever since. Going into the Games he perhaps lacks regatta practice, preferring to train in his Valencia group, having only competed in three events since last year’s test event, but picked up silver at the Europeans this year, the highest placed Hungarian ever at an International Finn championship.

Giorgio Poggi (ITA)

Age: 34  
World Ranking (highest): 16 (6)  
Previous Olympics: 2008 (11)  
Best results: 2016 Finn Gold Cup (5)  
Recent results: Hyeres (13), Palma (27), 2016 Europeans (33), Miami 11, 2015 Finn Gold Cup (24)

Giorgio Poggi won perhaps the most intense of all the Olympic trials to earn his space in Rio, fighting the way to the Finn Gold Cup this year when a fifth place earned him his ticket. After sailing in 2008 and narrowly missing the medal race, he lost a close 2012 trials. This time around he has been coached by Emilos Papathanasiou, and is sailing as well as he has ever done. He has certainly raised his game for the selections, producing his best ever result at the Finn Gold Cup, the question is whether he can continue this form through to the Games. Between 2002 to 2008 Poggi won six gold medals in different classes at the Italian national championships.
Pieter-Jan Postma (NED)

Age: 34  
World Ranking (highest): 3 (2)  
Previous Olympics: 2008 (14), 2012 (4)  
Best results: 2016 Europeans (1), 2011 Finn Gold Cup (2), 2016 Finn Gold Cup (3)  
Recent results: 2015 Test Event (3), Palma (5), 2016 Europeans (14), Miami (8), 2015 Test Event (1)

Pieter-Jan Postma is undoubtedly the most popular sailor on the circuit with a very positive and introspective outlook, but this has been as much hindrance as a help, as he has been prone to taking unnecessary risks. He was heading for a medal in London 2012, but for a last minute rash move. Since then has refocussed and is more calm than ever before. His European title win this year comes amid a string of podium potential performances over the last 12 months, including leading the 2015 Test Event every day, only losing gold on the punishing medal race, something that he intends to rectify this year.

Anders Pedersen (NOR)

Age: 24  
World Ranking (highest): 11 (10)  
Previous Olympics: None  
Best Results: 2014 Finn Silver Cup (1), 2014 Finn Gold Cup (8)  
Recent results: Hyeres (5), Palma (14), 2016 Europeans (14), Miami (8), 2015 Test Event (1)

Anders Pedersen is one of the rising stars of the Finn fleet. After a seminal 2014 season in which he won the Junior Worlds and qualified Norway for the Olympics at the ISAF Worlds in Santander, he has improved to the point where he is regularly at the top of big fleets and challenging the big names. Coached by Peer Moberg, since 2015 he has also trained alongside Jonas Høgh-Christensen and hopes learn more from the Dane’s experience. Pedersen started in the Optimist aged six and found he could overcome a fear of sailing by himself by practicing, so has been practicing for this ever since.

Josh Junior (NZL)

Age: 26  
World Ranking (highest): 3 (1)  
Previous Olympics: None  
Best results: Palma 2016 (1), 2015 Europeans (2)  
Recent results: Hyeres (4), 2015 Finn Gold Cup (14), 2015 Test Event (5), 2016 Europeans (4)

Josh Junior is from Wellington and has been sailing since he was five years old. He won selection to in the Laser class in 2012. Junior is one of the brightest talents in the fleet and the only sailor in Rio to have bragging rights that he has beaten Giles Scott since 2012. His win in Palma this year was a career highlight and his first major win in the class. A former New Zealand match racing champion, he goes into Rio as a firm favourite for a medal as long as he can keep consistency, which has often been his downfall in the past. Junior is coached by John Cutler, who took bronze in the Finn at Seoul 1988.

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*Nations competing in 2016

Provisional schedule

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Race areas

Pão de Acucar  
Niterói  
Escola Naval  
Copacabana  
Pai  
Ponte  
Aeroporto  
Marina da Glória
Allan Julie (SEY)

Age: 39
World Ranking (highest): 89 (89)
Recent results: 2016 Finn Gold Cup (45), Palma (56), Hyeres (32), 2016 Europeans (62)

Allan Julie sailed four Olympics in the Laser and is a national sporting hero in his native Seychelles. He was tempted back to the Olympics by the opportunity of winning the African nation place and duly qualified in Palma this year. A product of the SailCoach programme he has been helped by his good friend Vasilij Zbogar, from the days training together in Lasers. Julie won gold in the Laser at the 2011 All-Africa Games in Maputo, Mozambique. At the 2004 Olympics, as the most experienced member of the Seychelles team, Julie was the flag bearer for Seychelles at the opening ceremony. He has also been Seychelles Sportsman of the Year five times.

Vasilij Zbogar (SLO)

Age: 40
World Ranking (highest): 35 (4)
Previous Olympics: Laser: 2000 (19), 2004 (3), 2008 (2); Finn: 2012 (6)
Best results: 2013 Europeans (1), 2015 Finn Gold Cup (3), 2015 Europeans (3)
Recent results: 2016 Europeans (6), Test Event (13)

Vasilij Zbogar is a four time Olympian already and has the dubious honour of being the oldest Finn sailor in Rio. After a tough trials for 2012, he was selected early for 2016 and like many has focussed on training in Valencia rather than travelling, having competed in only three events in the past year. He lost much of the 2015 season after a cycling accident, but recovered to take his first world championship medal at the 2015 Finn Gold Cup. He is one of the most famous sportsmen in Slovenia, was Slovenian Sportsman of the Year in 2004 and will be the flag bearer for Slovenia at the Opening Ceremony in Rio.

Max Salminen (SWE)

Age: 27
World Ranking (highest): 4 (4)
Previous Olympics: 2012 Star (1)
Best results: 2015 Finn Gold Cup (5), 2013 Europeans (7)
Recent results: Weymouth (3), Hyeres (10), Palma (10), La Rochelle 2015 (1), 2015 Test Event (6)

Max Salminen moved into the Finn class after winning the gold in the Star class at the London 2012 Olympics, along with his helm Freddy Lööf. For Rio he won a fairly tense and close trials against Björn Allansson and has improved year on year to the point where he is now regularly qualifying for medal races. He has spent more time training in Rio than most of the fleet – he says 150 days – and less time at regattas. Coached by Dayne Sharp, he is a quick and tactically astute sailor and stands a good chance at claiming a medal to add to his London gold.
Alican Kaynar (TUR)

Age: 27
World Ranking (highest): 20 (17)
Previous Olympics: 2012 (18)
Best results: 2013 Europeans (10)
Recent results: 2016 Finn Gold Cup (21), Palma (18), 2016 Europeans (27), Miami (17), 2015 Finn Gold Cup (34)

Alican Kaynar has been the only internationally competitive Finn sailor in Turkey this cycle and has largely been based at the Dinghy Academy since 2012, but more recently has been training alongside Giorgio Poggi. He qualified Turkey for the Olympics at the last possible chance, in Palma this year. He has always shown far more promise than he has delivered, winning races at major events, but rarely finishing inside the top 10 at the end. However he is a skilled and intelligent sailor who is more than capable of being in the medal race come 16 August.

Alejandro Foglia (URU)

Age: 32
World Ranking (highest): 45 (36)
Previous Olympics: Laser: 2004 (34), 2008 (17), 2012 (8)
Best results: 2016 Europeans (12)
Recent results: Palma (22), 2015 Finn Gold Cup (17), 2015 Europeans (13)

Alejandro Foglia is the first Uruguay Finn sailor to compete at the Olympics since 1968 and only the second athlete in the history of Uruguay to qualify for four Olympic Games. At the 2008 Olympics he was the flagbearer for the Uruguay team. He qualified for the final open spot at the Olympics during the 2015 Finn Gold Cup in Takapuna. Since he joined the Finn class in 2013 he has been supported by the Finn class development programme, FIDE, and moved to Valencia to train at the Dinghy Academy. In spite of a series of injuries setting back his campaign he remains one of the fittest Finn sailors in the fleet.

Caleb Paine (USA)

Age: 25
World Ranking (highest): 9 (1)
Previous Olympics: None
Best results: 2012 Delta Lloyd Regatta (1), 2015 Finn Gold Cup (12)
Recent results: Hyeres (8), Palma (13), 2016 Europeans (24), Miami (6), 2015 Test Event (15)

Caleb Paine is described as the most hard working sailor on the circuit. He says it’s because he needs to train to make up for lack of talent. That hard work paid off earlier this year in Barcelona when he overcame double Olympian Zach Railey to earn his chance to represent the USA in Rio. That regatta of course included the now famous mark trap incident from Railey that so nearly cost Paine his Olympic dream. Paine was introduced to the Finn in 2008 and has been moving in one direction ever since. Following a brief period in 2012, when he won the World Cups in Medemblik and Miami, he became the World No. 1.