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June Report 29er SCM – Kieler Woche

General Overview

June marked the beginning of our World Championship preparation block. We started with a training camp in Kiel, followed immediately by **Kieler Woche**, our final major benchmark before the World Championships.

The conditions throughout the training period were mostly light wind, allowing us to focus on refining details rather than surviving difficult conditions. Overall, the camp itself went well and I was quite optimistic before racing started. Unfortunately, once the regatta began, we simply did not perform anywhere close to the level we had shown in training. From a results perspective, this was probably our weakest event of the season, but at the same time one that clearly exposed where we still need to improve before the Worlds.

Kiel Training Camp

We spent four days preparing for Kieler Woche.

The focus was mainly on getting everyone back into racing mode after the previous training blocks. We worked on:

- boat handling, trimming, speed testing, starts, short practice races and in-race communication.

One of the biggest positives from the camp was the continued improvement in **downwind speed**. The work we had done during the spring, together with the observation habits developed on Lipno, started to come together. Even though our crews are generally heavier than most of the competition, we now seem to be very well optimized downwind. Boat setup, trimming and positioning worked noticeably better than earlier in the season.

We also spent time trying to establish a more structured communication system onboard before racing. The goal was to simplify information flow and make tactical decisions more systematic instead of reactive.

Overall, everything suggested we were ready to race.

Unfortunately, that did not translate into the regatta itself.

Kieler Woche

The racing was disappointing across the whole team.

From my perspective this was less a technical problem and much more a failure to execute what we already know. Boat speed was generally acceptable, handling was good enough, but the racing itself lacked consistency, confidence and discipline and overall game plan.

I spent most of the regatta coaching **Ondřej / Matyáš** and **Lara / Klára**, while **Kaja / Kristian** were coached by Kajetan Jabłoński on the other course.

Crew Analysis

Ondřej / Matyáš

Overall, the boys looked well prepared technically.

Boat speed was good, starts were generally solid and they looked comfortable handling the boat. However, the biggest issue throughout the regatta was their inability to maintain maximum focus over longer periods of time.

Starts worked well unless they positioned themselves directly next to crews that were around 20 kg lighter. In those situations they simply couldn't accelerate at the same rate and immediately lost control of the race. Once they started giving themselves slightly more separation from those boats, the starts became much more reliable.

Unfortunately, that was only the beginning.

Many times they would sail the first few minutes well, but then simply lose concentration.

Typical problems included:

- losing track of compass work,
- missing important shifts,
- reacting too late,
- tacking either too early or too late,
- rarely being the first boat to recognize changes on the racecourse.

Even when they managed to stay with the leading group, they often failed to play the corners correctly.

Another recurring issue appeared during long upwind line-ups. Their observation gradually deteriorated and they slowly drifted either too high or too low compared to the fleet, sacrificing VMG without realizing it.

Probably the biggest weakness, however, was mark approach

There were simply too many crashes, close calls and situations where they arrived with no plan. Too often they found themselves:

- with no room to maneuver,
- forced around the outside,
- or rounding the unfavored gate.

This is no longer a technical issue.

The limiting factor now is mental organization during racing:

- planning ahead,
- maintaining concentration,
- anticipating situations instead of reacting to them.

Speed and handling are already at a very good level. The next step is turning that into race consistency.

Lara / Klára

This was probably their weakest regatta of the season.

The biggest issue was simply lack of speed compared to the fleet.

The boat itself looked slow throughout the event. Trimming was not fundamentally wrong, but race execution was.

A typical race looked very similar every time:

- start in a highly contested area,
- lose either immediately off the line or within the first minute,
- continue sailing in disturbed wind,
- never recover.

Toward the end of the regatta, after repeated discussions on the water, they started making more attempts to sail toward clear wind.

Unfortunately, another issue immediately appeared.

They lose so much distance in maneuvers that even when the tactical idea is correct, the gain disappears almost immediately.

Even worse, several times they chose to tack away exactly during the strongest lifting shift, effectively throwing away one of the few advantages they had.

One race summarized the whole regatta perfectly.

They won the pin end start cleanly, only to bear away around twenty degrees lower than the rest of the fleet immediately afterwards and lose all contact within the first 3 minutes and then go over layline...

Overall, almost every area still needs improvement:

- starts,
 - acceleration,
 - boat handling,
 - maneuver efficiency,
 - positioning,
 - tactical discipline.
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Kaja / Kristian

Based on feedback from Kajetan Jabłoński, their overall strategy and tactical thinking were actually quite good.

The biggest problem was purely physical and technical relative to the conditions.

The wind remained very light and stable throughout most of the regatta, and they struggled significantly against lighter crews.

The heavier setup that works so well in stronger conditions became a disadvantage here.

The biggest issues were:

- difficulty climbing efficiently,
- inability to move aggressively enough,
- slower acceleration compared to lighter boats.

Another important point was trimming.

They consistently sailed with sails slightly too closed for these conditions, preventing the boat from accelerating freely.

Once behind, the stable light wind offered almost no opportunities to recover through tactics alone.

Unlike stronger conditions, there simply weren't enough passing lanes during the race.

For them as well, this was probably the weakest regatta of the season.

At the same time, I think it serves as an important wake-up call. The obvious gains have already been made over winter. From now on, we need to start searching for smaller improvements everywhere—boat setup, trimming, communication, decision-making, and execution—because at this level those details decide races.

Conclusions

Kiel was disappointing from a results perspective, but extremely valuable diagnostically.

The limiting factors are now mostly connected to execution:

- maintaining concentration for an entire race, observation, race planning, positioning, communication and making correct decisions under pressure.

These are considerably harder to develop than pure technique, but they are also exactly the areas that separate front-fleet sailors from championship contenders.

Next Focus

Before the World Championships our priorities were clear:

- Improve race planning, especially several minutes ahead of mark roundings.
- Continue developing structured onboard communication.
- Increase observation quality, particularly during long upwind phases.
- Improve mark approach planning and gate selection.
- Continue building mental consistency, so technical performance can be maintained for the entire race instead of only during individual moments.

The technical foundation is now in place for most of the crews. The challenge for the remainder of the season is turning that foundation into reliable championship racing.

Regards

Marceli Mierzwicki

