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May Report 29er SCM – Wolfgangsee Camp, Wolfgangsee Regatta & Lipno Test Event

General Overview

May was split into two very different but equally valuable parts. First we attended Wolfgangsee as part of the Czech–Austrian–Hungarian cooperation program, where we completed one training day and two days of racing. Immediately afterwards we moved to Lipno for a focused training block followed by Lipno Test, which served as one of the last checkpoints before the main championship events.

What both venues had in common was that they exposed the same weakness from different angles: **observation and decision making when leading races**. The team is becoming increasingly capable of getting to the front of the fleet, but we are still not good enough at staying there.

Wolfgangsee Camp

The training itself was relatively short.

We started introducing more structured start maneuvers and static boat control, but the local thermal wind quickly built into its typical violent pattern, making detailed start work difficult. We switched focus toward:

- maneuvers,
- trimming,
- acceleration,
- and adapting to rapidly changing pressure.

Nothing revolutionary happened technically, but it was a useful introduction to the venue and its very specific wind system.

Wolfgangsee Regatta

19 Boats

Strategically, Wolfgangsee was actually relatively simple.

The thermal entered the lake through specific areas and channels, making the general racecourse pattern fairly easy to understand. Our sailors understood this immediately.

In fact, during the first race we rounded the first windward mark:

- Lara / Klára – 1st
- David / Ema – 2nd

And similar situations repeated throughout the regatta whenever the starts worked.

The problem was not understanding where to go.

The problem was everything that happened afterwards.

Leading vs Chasing

The biggest theme of the entire event was the difference between sailing from behind and sailing from the front.

When our crews were in the midfield:

- they made good comebacks,
- took smart risks,
- and often gained places.

When they got into leading positions, everything became much less convincing.

There was:

- insufficient confidence,
- weak observation,
- delayed reactions,
- and poor decision making under pressure.

Many times crews would lose places simply because they failed to identify where the next pressure line was forming.

Downwind Problems

This was particularly visible downwind.

Wolfgangsee created a very unusual situation where:

- some boats received pressure,
- while boats only a few meters away received almost nothing.

The fleet often sailed in completely different winds despite being very close together.

Our teams struggled with this.

The biggest issue was not necessarily choosing the wrong place.

The biggest issue was recognizing that we had already sailed out of the pressure.

Usually by the time the realization came, the gust was already somewhere else.

The Austrian teams were generally much better at:

- staying connected to pressure,
- anticipating movement,
- and positioning themselves before the gust arrived.

Our teams often reacted only after the situation had already changed.

VMG

Another major weakness was downwind VMG.

The conditions required very dynamic sailing:

- constant ballast movement,
- active trimming,
- aggressive adaptation to changing pressure.

Instead, we often sailed too passively.

Typical example:

- boat exits the pressure,
- crew remains in trapeze mode,
- bow points too high,
- VMG collapses,
- boat effectively sails away from the gate.

These situations happened repeatedly throughout the regatta.

Crew Notes – Wolfgangsee

Ondřej / Matyáš

The most extreme example.

On the second day they won every start and every first upwind.

That alone shows the progress they are making.

Unfortunately they then lost places almost every race on the downwind legs.

The reasons were:

- poor pressure positioning,
- weak observation,
- reacting too late to developing situations.

The Austrian boats around them always seemed to stay inside the pressure system while our boys repeatedly found themselves outside of it.

Still, this was a very valuable learning experience because it exposed exactly what needs to improve next.

Lipno Training Camp

After Wolfgangsee we moved directly to Lipno.

Karolina and Kristian joined after returning from a very successful Malcesine Eurocup campaign.

The focus here was very clear:

Start Systems

During five sessions across four days we worked extensively on:

- static boat control,
- drift management,

- crabbing,
- double tack routines,
- distance perception,
- transit usage,
- time-on-distance,
- acceleration systems.

The progress was huge.

Especially:

- Karolína / Kristian
- Ondřej / Matyáš

made enormous improvements.

Lara / Klára and David / Ema improved as well, particularly in static positioning, but they are still not yet operating at the same level.

Practice Racing

We also conducted several practice races in stronger south wind.

Since everyone knows these conditions well, not much new information was collected tactically, but it provided useful repetitions for the new starting systems.

Lipno Test Regatta

23 Boats

The regatta immediately surprised everyone.

Instead of the expected south wind, we received a difficult northeast pattern.

Day One

The first day was essentially a cloud-reading competition.

Observation was everything.

Whoever could identify cloud movement and understand where the next pressure would arrive was immediately consistent.

Whoever ignored clouds was racing randomly.

Unfortunately our team struggled to make that switch.

The sailors relied too heavily on what normally works on Lipno instead of adapting to what was actually happening.

Day Two

Even more confusing.

The wind direction remained similar, but the clouds moved from the opposite direction.

Instead of reinforcing each other, cloud movement and lake effects often pointed toward different solutions.

Again, this created a situation where observation became more important than historical knowledge.

The team struggled with this adjustment.

Day Three

The third day was much simpler.

Clear skies.
Land shifts only.

Everyone immediately knew what was happening and the results reflected that.

This was probably the strongest day of the regatta for the entire team.

Crew Analysis

Karolína / Kristian – 2nd Overall

Very difficult regatta for them because conditions ranged mostly between 4 and 10 knots.

Weight becomes a significant disadvantage in those conditions and every mistake becomes extremely expensive.

Positives

Starts are becoming a real strength.

They now:

- control distance well,
- accelerate strongly,
- and usually start exactly where they intend.

During races they almost always gain places rather than lose them.

They are sailing much more patiently and intelligently than last season.

This maturity is becoming a major reason behind their consistent finishes.

Areas to Improve

The biggest issue appears when they reach the front.

Some leading decisions are still not based on sufficiently strong observations.

Otherwise they continue to show impressive consistency despite conditions that are not ideal for them.

Ondřej / Matyáš – 3rd Overall

Probably the crew with the steepest development curve right now.

Physically they have all the tools necessary to become extremely competitive.

They are:

- fast,
- physically strong,
- starting exceptionally well.

In many situations they had the best starts in the fleet.

Problems

The issue is no longer getting to the front.

The issue is staying there.

They still:

- rush decisions,
- lose composure,
- struggle with downwind observation,
- and fail to maximize VMG consistently.

What they need now is not more speed.

They need structure.

If we can organize their thinking and observation systems, they will become very difficult to beat.

David / Ema – 6th Overall

This temporary crew worked dramatically better than in Balaton.

Both sailors:

- think well,
- understand the boat,
- and communicate reasonably.

For the amount of training they had together, the result is excellent.

The limitations remain:

- starts,
- VMG,
- observation,
- and risk management.

Sometimes they take too much risk for too little gain.

Still, both sailors learn quickly and immediately recognize mistakes afterwards.

With sufficient training time they could become a very competitive crew.

Unfortunately both have limited sailing time this season.

Lara / Klára – 15th Overall

This was not a good regatta for them.

The biggest issue was starts.

Static positioning improved significantly compared to previous events, but after that:

- acceleration was weak,
- recovery mechanisms were missing,
- and they repeatedly lost contact with the fleet.

The root cause remains technical.

Boat handling in unstable conditions consumes too much attention.

There is simply too much happening onboard for them to simultaneously:

- keep speed,
- observe properly,
- and make good decisions.

The frustrating part is that they often think very well strategically.

In the midfield they frequently gain boats because of smart decisions.

But they lose too much distance:

- in maneuvers,
- after maneuvers,
- and in straight-line sailing.

At the moment technique is still limiting race craft.

Main Conclusions

The most important takeaway from May is that the team is increasingly capable of getting into strong positions.

Winning starts, leading races, and rounding in front is no longer unusual.

The problem is what happens next.

The recurring weaknesses are:

- observation in unstable conditions,
- pressure recognition,
- leading the fleet,
- defending positions,
- downwind VMG,
- and structured decision making.

The positive side is that these are much better problems to have than last year.

Last year we struggled to get to the front.

This year we are struggling to stay there.

That is a much healthier stage of development and exactly where we should be heading into the main championship period of the season.

