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14th April 2008

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The best amateur sailors from nine countries line up at the BMW Sailing Cup World Final.

"Accolade" for winning team: Russell Coutts presents trophy.

Munich/Dubai. 1,800 ambitious amateur sailors competed in the BMW Sailing Cup in nine different countries. The best of them – nine five-man crews – qualified for the BMW Sailing Cup World Final in Dubai (15th to 20th April), and now head to the desert emirate for a great challenge and an unforgettable experience. In Denmark, Germany, France, Great Britain, Italy, Malta, New Zealand, Spain and the United Arab Emirates, the winning teams from the 2007/2008 season qualified for the highlight of the international amateur series, which is now fast approaching. The host marina is the Dubai International Marine Club (DIMC), the most important venue for national and international water sport events in the Middle East.

"The BMW Sailing Cup is an excellent opportunity to emotionally address and actively involve our customers and target groups", says Ralf Hussmann, head of BMW Sport Marketing. "There is no regatta series like it in the world, at which ambitious amateur yachtsmen and yachswomen can test themselves against each other in an international and professional competition. The World Final is a showplace for ambitious regatta yachtsmen and enthusiastic hobby sailors, who perform impressively in sailing competitions. After all, they have had to qualify against numerous teams in their countries."

For the first time, the World Final will play host to teams from France, New Zealand and the United Arab Emirates. Denmark, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Malta and Spain sent crews to the first World Final in Valencia in April 2007. Last year, the team from Germany triumphed just one day before the start of the Louis Vuitton Cup, making them defending champions.

Guest of honour at the BMW Sailing Cup World Final 2008 is the three-times America's Cup winner Russell Coutts. The New Zealander is one of the most successful professional yachtsmen of all time. As CEO and skipper of the BMW ORACLE Racing team, he is currently preparing for the 33rd America's Cup. Should Coutts succeed again, it would be the fourth time that he has won the coveted trophy.



The participants at the World Final will have the unique opportunity of training sessions and tactical courses with the sailing legend, who is regarded by many sailing experts as the best match racer in the world. The World Finalists will also profit from Coutts' extraordinary talent and wealth of experience at the morning 'Skippers Meeting', at which the New Zealander will reveal valuable tips.

The winning team can look forward to a very special moment: On the final day, this crew will be awarded the BMW Sailing Cup trophy by one of the best yachtsmen of the century – a real honour for any amateur sailor.

"We are delighted that Russel, who is currently preparing intensely with BMW ORACLE Racing for the 33rd America's Cup, has still managed to take the time to accept our invitation", says Hussmann. "His visit gives the BMW Sailing Cup World Final even more glamour, and the chance to meet him will certainly be a real highlight for the 46 participants."

This is not the only reason why the World Final is such a unique experience for the amateur sailors, who can look forward to more than just a challenging regatta. BMW also provides a varied support programme in an exclusive environment, and ensures that the world finalists feel like professionals at a grade one regatta in the fascinating metropolis of Dubai.

The races are run in one-design, Bénéteau First Class 7.5 yachts, which were also used in the 2007 BMW Sailing Cup in Germany. The winning team must prove its ability in seven rounds of fleet and match races if it wants to collect the coveted winner's trophy from Coutts and Hussmann. All races are sailed on an upwind-downwind course (4 legs). As at the 32nd America's Cup, the teams will be faced with interesting tactical options, as a leeward gate consisting of two buoys will be used instead of a conventional bottom mark.



The BMW Sailing Cup World Final 2008 at a glance.

Date:	15th – 20th April 2008
Venue:	Dubai, United Arab Emirates / Dubai International Marine Club
Organiser:	BMW
Participants:	Nine five-man crews from Denmark, Germany, France, UK, Italy, Malta, New Zealand, Spain, United Arab Emirates
Regatta Boat:	Bénéteau First Class 7.5
Principle Race Officer:	Brian Hooper
Chief Umpire:	Phil Mostyn

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“Our customers are looking for challenges.”

An interview with Ralf Hussmann, General Manager BMW Sport Marketing.

Mr Hussmann, BMW is staging the BMW Sailing Cup World Final for the second year in a row. Was last year's premiere in Valencia the start of a long-term commitment?

The first World Final, which we staged at the same venue as the 32nd America's Cup, was a total success. That not only applies to the World Final, but for the entire BMW Sailing Cup, which is becoming more and more popular in an increasing number of countries. We were absolutely right to initiate the BMW Sailing Cup, and our expectations have been more than met. For example: in Germany, the new season starts shortly after the World Final. This time 22 qualification regattas will be held between Kiel and Munich, with the Germany Final taking place in Warnemuende. We started just two years ago with five qualification regattas, and nine countries will line up in Dubai, with the addition of three new countries in the form of France, New Zealand and the United Arab Emirates.

Why is BMW involved in amateur sailing?

Our sport marketing strategy is a long-term one, and incorporates three levels. We support large, international sport events, such as the golf tournaments in Wentworth, Shanghai and Munich, as well as the America's Cup and Formula One. This gives us authentic platforms for the brand in the world of sport. National involvements, like Kiel Week, various motor sport events, or local activities at other professional golf events, provide further potential to address customers. Our sporting commitment is rounded off by international amateur sport series, like the BMW Golf Cup International and, since 2006, the BMW Sailing Cup. These primarily provide our dealers with the opportunity to offer customers an impressive brand experience through these sports.

We follow this strategy consistently, and all other activities are aligned with it.

The aim of all our sporting involvements is always for people to experience the BMW brand. Sailing is becoming increasingly popular. This makes the BMW Sailing Cup an excellent opportunity to emotionally address and actively involve our target groups.



In addition, our customers are sporty, dynamic, technically-minded, and looking for challenges. I think this is also the reason for the BMW Sailing Cup being so successful. By the way, we are talking about a very high level of amateur sport: the World Final will welcome regatta sailors who, although they are not professional, are fantastic yachtsmen. After all, they have had to qualify from their national heats, and are now going up against crews from other countries.

The “older brother” of the BMW Sailing Cup, the BMW Golf Cup International, will be staged for the 22nd time this year. Do you believe that the BMW Sailing Cup will also become such an institution?

I can't see into the future, but I certainly hope so. These two international tournament series – the BMW Golf Cup International and the BMW Sailing Cup – enjoy a high level of recognition, and are really something special. Amateur sportsmen and sportswomen from around the world meet at the World Final. They don't know each other, but they are brought together by sport and the BMW brand. You can see how quickly a relaxed atmosphere is created. By the end of the regatta, real friendships have been forged. For BMW it is very important, alongside its commitment to international professional sailing, to be involved in an amateur event that enjoys such popularity in an increasing number of countries.

It sounds as though you are really looking forward to the World Final...

That is true. Even though I am not a yachtsman myself, I am still a sailing fan. I am fortunate that my job allows me to follow sailing regattas, whether the BMW Sailing Cup World Final or, as last year, the 32nd America's Cup with the BMW ORACLE Racing team. Sailing is a fascinating sport, that combines high-tech, teamwork, aesthetics and dynamics. These ingredients not only suit BMW fantastically, but also attract BMW customers and new target groups.



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9 countries – 1 goal: victory at the BMW Sailing Cup World Final.

The leading actors in Dubai, in the team profiles.

Munich/Dubai. From Spain to New Zealand, Denmark to the United Arab Emirates: in the 2007/08 season, a national BMW Sailing Cup was staged in nine different countries. The winning teams now face each other in Dubai. For many of the amateur sailors, qualifying for the World Final of the BMW Sailing Cup is the highlight of their career. It offers them a chance to shine against international competition, which shares all the characteristics of a grade one regatta.

Team Denmark.

The crew:

Team:	Team Baadkommissaeren
Skipper:	Kim Haugaard (40)
Genoa trimmer:	Peter Nibe Hansen (41)
Mainsail trimmer:	Bjørn Normann (40)
Bowman:	Thomas Fauerby (32)
Genoa trimmer:	Kim Plett (32)

Qualification:

The "Baadkommissaeren" team came through against 41 other teams in the "Danish National Fleet Race", which also formed the national final of the BMW Sailing Cup Denmark.

What the team says:

"Our sailing team is part of a teambuilding project in our company. We have developed a strong team with a good team spirit in our sales department. Good preparation and common values has grown during the qualifications resulting in high performance teambuilding winning the finals."
(Peter Nibe Hansen, trimmer and CEO of Baadkommissaeren)



Team Germany.

The crew:

Helmsman:	Thorsten Hülsmann (26)
Genoa trimmer:	Christian Knoll (24)
Leward trimmer:	Maximilian Jockenhövel (20)
Bowman:	Daniela Schulte-Bisping (25, the only woman in the field)
Strategist / tactician:	Dr. Ingo Ehrlicher (38)

Qualification:

In the BMW Sailing Cup Germany, Team Münster first won one of 15 qualification regattas. These were held on the Aasee lake in Münster. In an extremely exciting Germany Final on the Outer Alster Lake (Aussenalster) in Hamburg, Team Münster finished level on points with the winner of the qualification regatta in Bad Wiessee, but progressed thanks to a better placing in the final competitive race.

What the team says:

"Probably nobody reckoned with us winning the Germany Final. Not even we thought we could win it. This meant that we were not under any great pressure. We improved from day to day, and sailed really well on the final day. Now we will give it our best shot at the World Final. We'll take it as it comes." (Thorsten Hülsmann, helmsman).

Peculiarities on the way to the World Final:

Team Münster's story is a fine example of willpower and the overcoming of challenges, which characterises the participants at the BMW Sailing Cup. The fact that Team Münster can represent defending champions Germany at the World Final is thanks in part to the extraordinary commitment of its members. However, they must also thank BMW dealer "Autohaus Hakvoort" for its efforts in organising the qualification regatta, at which Team Münster was able to qualify for the Germany Final. For the Bénéteau First Class 7.5 regatta boats to be used at all on the 40-hectare Aasee lake in Münster, the water level had to be raised by 15 centimetres.



At the Germany Final, the team then had to wait for the final race to finish before being awarded victory. Despite finishing on the same points as their closest rivals, a higher finish in the final race was sufficient to seal the win. Team Münster came through by a matter of seconds, in a race in which the lead changed hands several times.

The victory in the Germany Final marked the highlight of Daniala Schulte-Bisping's regatta career to date. Schulte-Bisping was only awarded a sailing certificate at the start of 2007 – just 12 months later she and her team will appear at the World Final of the BMW Sailing Cup.

Rather than sailing in an international regatta in Dubai, Max Jockenhövel should really be taking the German equivalent of A-levels. In order to be able to realise his dream of competing in the World Final, however, the 20-year-old was given official authorisation from his school to move his exams back until the week after the World Final. This suits his outlook on life: "I'll get it done."

When it comes to professional preparation, Team Münster are leaving nothing to chance. At the start of April, the German team were invited by Autohaus Hakvoort to complete their fine-tuning for the World Final off the coast of Mallorca. A prominent sailing coach was employed for this purpose: the reigning IMS World Champion, European hang-gliding champion, and German match race champion Markus Wieser used an intensive, 3-day sailing camp to pass on some of his tactical know-how, and optimise the manoeuvres on board.



Team France.

The crew:

Skipper:	Gaël Bigot (31)
Trimmer:	Julien Bigot (28)
N°1:	Adrien Monsempes (29)
Grinder:	Sylvain Chauvet (31)
Tactician:	David Raison (35)

Qualification:

The national qualifiers for the BMW Sailing Cup in France took place at the two-day "Spi Ouest France Bouygues Télécom" – the most important regatta event in the country. After several races, the overall winner qualified for Dubai. The regatta was actually won by a team with a professional skipper and co-skipper, but these were not eligible for the competition. The best amateur team finished second overall, and now goes on to represent France at the World Final.

What the team says:

"It is an honour and an outstanding challenge for us to be competing on unknown waters against teams we do not know and who come from all over the world." (Gaël Bigot, skipper).

Peculiarities on the way to the World Final:

Team France had to survive one critical moment in the final race of the national final. The boat almost capsized in the deciding race. However, Team France not only dealt with this critical situation, but also picked up enough points for the overall standings to secure the ticket to Dubai.



Team UK.

The crew:

Team:	BMW Ocean Torbay Team
Skipper:	Steve Birbeck
Bowman:	Adrian Peach
Trimmer:	Gary Phare
Tactician:	John Yandell
Trimmer:	Jon Dixon
Substitute:	Graham DeVal

Qualification:

The BMW Ocean Torbay Team secured qualification for the World Final with victory at the BMW Sailing Cup UK in Portsmouth. The crew, who had never sailed in this formation before, defeated twelve other teams at the two-day regatta.

Peculiarities on the way to the World Final:

The crew includes Graham DeVal (Ocean BMW Group Managing Director), who had never sailed before. DeVal was surprised about the amount of effort required on board in order to be successful on a racing yacht. However, he quickly caught the sailing bug. The rest of the crew is made up of competitive and experienced yachtsmen, who have all been long-term BMW customers.



Team Italy.

The crew:

Team:	Turbosport Imola Team
Helmsman:	Fabio Mazzoni (39)
Pitman:	Alessio Barbieri (26)
Mainsail trimmer:	Andrea Ferrari (36)
Bowman:	Jacopo Rossi (36)
Trailer:	Francesco Lattuada (34)

Qualification:

12 teams from around the country lined up at the BMW Sailing Cup Italy in Trapani. It took three thrilling regatta days to determine the victorious crew. On the first day, the teams were split into two groups using the results of a fleet race. From the second round it was a question of boat against boat in a series of match races. The final was run in perfect wind conditions (15 knots), and needed all three races in the best-of-three format before Team Imola came through with a 2:1 victory and secured qualification for the World Final.

What the team says:

"We are very happy to have succeeded in the national final of the BMW Sailing Cup. The challenge has been very close since we had a really strong and very well organised opponent in the final phases of the competition, the crew from BMW dealer "Vittoria" in Pisa. In the end, our experience in match racing enabled us to succeed. Now we are proud of taking part in the World Final in Dubai and we will do all possible efforts to represent, at best, BMW Italy in this extraordinary event. Forza Turbosport!" (Fabio Mazzoni, helmsman)

"The quality and competitiveness of our opponents, during the final phases of the Italian BMW Sailing Cup final in Trapani, gave even more value to the success of our Turbosport Imola Team. This victory developed a great feeling within our Team, which was ricing together for the first time. Now we don't want and cannot hide the emotion and pride that we feel in representing BMW Italy at the World Final. We will face international competition with sheer determination and optimism to obtain the highest result. We believe we can achieve this ambitious goal. The skill of our helmsman Fabio Mazzoni will be decisive, and he knows he can count on his crew." Alessio Barbieri (pitman and owner of BMW Turbosport, Imola)



Team Malta.

The crew:

Skipper:	Sonke Stein (38)
Mainsail trimmer:	Alex Saint Fournier (31)
Tactician:	Raymond Aguis Condachi (46)
Cook:	Gordon Bugeja (32)
Pitman:	Kurt Camilleri Burlo

Qualification:

Of all nine countries competing in the BMW Sailing Cup, the Mediterranean island is the smallest, with a population of just over 400,000. The national qualification took place from 23rd to 25th November 2007. The victorious team at the BMW Sailing Cup Malta had a special reason for celebration. In the first outing of this event, in 2006, the crew finished level on points with the eventual winners, and were awarded second place on a formality. Now they have realised their dream of competing in the World Final.

What the team says:

"The World Final is a lovely opportunity to meet new people from all around the world, who all share the passion for competitive sailing." (Sonke Stein, skipper).



Team New Zealand.

The crew:

Helmsman / trimmer:	John Melville (64)
Pitman / bownam:	Jack Melville (39)
Tactician / mainsail:	Alastair Gair (28)
Bowman / trimmer:	Michael Naulls (21)
Trimmer / helmsman:	Jonathan Rankine (22)

Qualification:

In March 2008, ten teams took part in the first BMW Sailing Cup in New Zealand. They had qualified for the event in their own boats, in their respective classes, at the BMW Auckland Regatta. All ten class-winners sailed MRX yachts in a series of eleven upwind-downwind races at the BMW Sailing Cup national final. Skipper John Melville's team had to wait until the final race to seal victory.

What the team says:

"We are delighted to be representing New Zealand, but mindful of our obligations to the standards New Zealand yachtsman set worldwide." (John Melville, skipper)



Team Spain.

The crew:

Crew:	Team Valencia
Skipper:	Javier Serrano
Mainsail trimmer:	Victor Villalba
Genoa trimmer:	Alvaro Gonzalez
Mastman:	Jose Luis Escudero
Bowman:	Javier Valero

Qualification:

All regattas in the BMW Sailing Cup in Spain were held in the form of fleet races. The victorious team initially won the qualification regatta in Valencia in September 2007, and then travelled as one of ten teams to the national final, which took place on J/80 yachts off the coast of Lanzarote. The teams had to adjust their tactics to deal with demanding light wind conditions. It went right down to the last leg of the final race before the winning team was determined.

What the team says:

"We are very happy to have beaten such highly skilled teams in the national final. We lack experience in the J/80 boat but light weather conditions and close competition helped us get the maximum from the boat in terms of speed and tactics. We are very proud of representing Spain in the World Final and look forward to competing for the title. Of course, we would like to thank BMW for the great and fun event they've created. It is having a lot of impact in Spain."
(Javier Serrano, skipper).

Peculiarities on the way to the World Final:

The crew qualified for the National Final by winning the Tom 28 Class in Valencia. The national final was sailed in J/80 boats, with which the young dinghy sailors had little experience. However, the sailing class of the team was apparent as the team quickly adapted to the J/80 boats and laid the foundation for victory with excellent trim – particularly leeward. A very poor start in the final race of the Final almost killed their chances to confirm the national title, but being the fastest boat of the fleet with the gennaker allowed them to climb to a fourth place by the finishing line. That secured them the National Final and a passport to the World Final. The skipper, Javier Serrano, is the current Vaurien Class World and European Champion. The Vaurien is a very popular dinghy boat, in that it is a natural intermediate step for young sailors who will then go on to Olympic classes, such as the 470 or 49er.



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BMW Sailing Cup World Final 2008: Regatta Format.

The winning team must prove itself worthy over seven rounds of fleet and match races.

Munich/Dubai. The road to victory at the BMW Sailing Cup is long and littered with challenges. Even if the crews have already overcome one large hurdle – victory in the national qualifiers – they still face the demanding regatta when they line up in Dubai. The best amateur yachtsmen and women from nine countries go up against each other. The five-man crews must overcome unknown waters and international competition.

The first five rounds are sailed as fleet races. From the semi-final onward, the format switches to match races, which demand completely different tactics. The top four crews will duel boat against boat to determine the World Final Champion. All races are sailed on an upwind-downwind course (4 legs). Instead of a conventional bottom mark – as in the 32nd America's Cup – a leeward gate, consisting of two buoys, will be used.

Round 1: Trials.

In the first round, the nine teams will be drawn in two groups. Each group (1 and 2) will compete in one fleet race. The two top teams in these two races qualify for the second round Group A, while the remaining teams form second round Group B.

Round 2: Qualification I.

In each of the two groups (A and B), three fleet races are staged and a final classification is determined. The winners of the two groups qualify automatically for the quarter-final (round 5). The teams placed two to four in Group A form Group C in the next round. The remaining teams from Group B go into Group D for the third round.



Round 3: Qualification II.

Second chance to qualify automatically for the quarter-final: Once again, three fleet races are sailed in each group (C and D), and a final classification is determined. As in Qualification 1, the two group winners progress to the quarter-final (round 5). All the other crews must go to the repechage.

Round 4: Repechage.

Now it is all or nothing: the five teams that have not yet been able to qualify for round 5 now sail in on fleet race to determine the final two quarter finalists. The crews in places three to five are out of the competition.

Round 5: Quarter Final.

This is the final round to be decided by fleet races. Six teams remain: the winners from groups A, B, C and D, as well as the two crews from the repechage. After three races a final classification is determined, and only the four best-placed teams progress.

Round 6: Semi Final.

The time for a direct boat-against-boat duel has arrived. The best team from the quarter-final has the right to select an opponent from the other three semifinalists. The second semi-final pairing is then also clear. In both semi-finals the first team to win two match races goes through to the final (best-of-three).

Round 7: Final.

There can be only one – now it is all about the title. The two victorious semi-finalists go head to head in a direct dual to determine the champion of the 2008 BMW Sailing Cup World Final. Like the semi-final, the final is a best-of-three series (first to two victories).



An Overview of the Format.

2 Trials (1 race)

Group 1

Boat No.	Team	Ranking

Group 2
(teams per draw)

Boat No.	Team	Ranking

Qualification I (3 races)

Group A
1st Group 1
1st Group 2
2nd Group 1
2nd Group 2

Boat No.	Team	Race 1	Race 2	Race 3	Total Points	Ranking

Group B
3rd Group 1
3rd Group 2
4th Group 1
4th Group 2
5th Group 1

Boat No.	Team	Race 1	Race 2	Race 3	Total Points	Ranking

Qualification II (3 races)

Group C
2nd Group A
3rd Group A
4th Group A

Boat No.	Team	Race 1	Race 2	Race 3	Total Points	Ranking

Group D
2nd Group B
3rd Group B
4th Group B
5th Group B

Boat No.	Team	Race 1	Race 2	Race 3	Total Points	Ranking

Repêchage (1 race)

2nd Group C
2nd Group D
3rd Group C
3rd Group D
4th Group D

Boat No.	Team	Ranking

Quarter Final (3 races)

1st Group A
1st Group B
1st Group C
1st Group D
1st Repêchage
2nd Repêchage

Boat No.	Team	Race 1	Race 2	Race 3	Total Points	Ranking

Semi Finals (best out of three)

Semi Final 1

Boat No.	Team	Race 1	Race 2	Race 3	Total Points	Ranking

Semi Final 2

Boat No.	Team	Race 1	Race 2	Race 3	Total Points	Ranking

Final (best out of three)

1st Semi Final 1
1st Semi Final 2

Boat No.	Team	Race 1	Race 2	Race 3	Total Points	Ranking

The winning team of the Quarter Final has won the right to select its opponent for the best out of three Semi Finals. The other two teams will be paired up as well.



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Competition Boat: Bénéteau First Class 7.5.



Constructor	Group Finot	Weight	1.2t
LOA (length of hull)	7.49 m	Height of mast	21.10 m
Total length (with rudder)	7.90 m	Mainsail	21.3 qm
LWL (waterline)	7.49 m	Genoa	15.3 qm
Beam	2.54 m	Gennaker	62 qm
Draught	2.05 m	CE Approval	Categoriy C
Hull speed	6.54 kn		



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Russell Coutts profile.

An exceptional skipper in the prestigious history of the America's Cup.

Munich/Valencia. Russell Coutts is regarded by many sailing experts as the best match racer in the world. It is difficult to impossible to check and justify this superlative – but it is also unnecessary. One thing is certain: Coutts is an extremely successful yachtsman.

The New Zealander's record in the America's Cup is impressive: In all 14 races as skipper and helmsman Coutts has remained unbeaten, and has won the most coveted sailing trophy three times (1995, 2000 and 2003). As CEO and skipper of BMW ORACLE Racing, he will have the opportunity to collect the mighty "Auld Mug" for the fourth time at the 33rd America's Cup. BMW ORACLE Racing is currently preparing intensely in Valencia for the match against the defending champions, which will be raced on multihull boats.

But the America's Cup is not the only stage on which the 46-year-old has enjoyed success. He was successful at the ISAF youth world championships, won the gold medal in the Finn dinghy at the 1984 Olympic Games, is three-times world match racing champion, and has triumphed at numerous international match racing regattas, as well as scores of IOR, IMS and one-design world championships.

Together with Andrej Justin, Coutts has designed a new class of boat, the RC 44, and initiated the RC 44 Championship Tour. The first stop for the 2008 tour was Dubai, the venue of this year's BMW Sailing Cup World Final: In March, Armando Giulietti and Sébastien Col were victorious at the Dubai RC 44 Cup 2008.

In New Zealand, he was recognised as "Commander of the British Empire", and holds the order of merit "Distinguished Companion of New Zealand". Coutts has already been named "World Sailor of the Year" twice by the International Yacht Racing Union.



Personal Details:

Name:	Russell Coutts
Nationality:	New Zealand
Born:	1st March 1962 in Wellington, New Zealand
Family status:	married to Jenny, father of four children
Academic background:	Bachelor of Engineering (University of Auckland)

Career Highlights:

2007	Winner, TP 52 Global Championship, Artemis
2006	Winner, Farr 40 World Championship
2005	Designs a new boat: the RC 44
2003	Winner, America's Cup, Team Alinghi
2000	Winner, Farr 40 World Championship
2000	Winner, America's Cup, Team New Zealand
1996	Match Race World Champion
1995	Winner, America's Cup, Team New Zealand
1993	Winner, Admiral's Cup
1993	Match Race World Champion
1992	Match Race World Champion
1984	Gold Medallist, Olympic Games, Los Angeles, Finn
1981	Winner, ISAF World Youth Championships

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Dubai – fascinating metropolis and fantastic sailing area.

The venue for the BMW Sailing Cup World Final offers ideal sailing conditions.

Munich/Dubai. After Valencia, the Spanish host city of the 32nd America's Cup, played host to the BMW Sailing Cup World Final last year, the highlight of the 2007/8 season moves to Dubai this year. The regattas will take place against the impress Dubai skyline. The land HQ is the renowned Dubai International Marine Club.

The emirate of Dubai lies on the Arabian Peninsula, on the Persian Gulf, and is the second largest of the United Arab Emirates, behind Abu Dhabi. The majority of the emirate may be desert, but the name Dubai is much more commonly associated with spectacular construction projects. These define the city of Dubai, which provides an impressive stage for numerous international sporting highlights, and is the venue for the BMW Sailing Cup World Final. Dubai is one of the most dynamic and innovative metropolises on earth, which has accomplished numerous ambitious construction projects and established itself as a high-tech location. An environment that suits the BMW brand perfectly.

Dubai has an excellent sailing area, which is guaranteed wind. In April the average wind speed is 10 knots, with top speeds of 13 to 15 knots in the early afternoon. These benefits are valued by professional sailing teams. Last year, two America's Cup teams set up their winter training camp in Dubai, in order to optimise their preparations for the most prestigious competition in the world of sailing. The RC 44 Championship Tour, which was initiated by Russell Coutts, the guest of honour at the World Final, and skipper and CEO of BMW ORACLE Racing, is also stopping in Dubai. From 3rd to 7th March, the 2008 season starts with the Dubai RC 44 Cup.

The host club for the BMW Sailing Cup World Final 2008 is the Dubai International Marina Club (DIMC), which was formed in 1988 with the goal of becoming the water sports centre for the United Arab Emirates. This goal has most certainly been achieved. In the meantime, the DIMC has become the most important venue for national and international water sport events in the Middle East.

BMW Sailing Cup.
World Final 2008, Dubai.

BMW Yachtsport
BMW Sailing Cup

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**Sheer
Driving Pleasure**

Sid Bensalah, who was born in 1971 in Algeria, is the General Manager of the DIMC. He was an active sailor for many years, including sailing with squad of the French Sailing Association, and is now employed by the emirate's government to promote sailing. Sid Bensalah is setting up the new RC 44 Team Dubi and has secured professional yachtsman Markus Wieser as team boss.

An exclusive ambiance is also an integral part of a BMW event. The participants in the BMW Sailing Cup World Final are accommodated in the one and only Royal Mirage Hotel – one of the top addresses in Dubai. The hotel overlooks Palm Island Bay, and has a kilometre of private coastline and sixty acres of landscaped gardens. From the resort, guests can enjoy the spectacular view of “Palm Island Jumeirah” – one of three artificial islands off Dubai. The “Palm Islands” are the largest man-made islands in the world. The One & Only Royal Mirage is within walking distance of the DIMC, and is about 20 minutes away from Dubai International Airport.

BMW Sailing Cup.
World Final 2008, Dubai.

BMW Yachtsport
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