

European Championship Micro Magic Mariánské Lázně (Marienbad), Czech Republic 19 – 20 August 2023

A personal account of the events. Since they are European Championships, I allow for a little longer story.

On Thursday 18 August, after an 8 hrs drive from Eindhoven (The Netherlands) over highways but also byways while enjoying the beautiful landscape in the eastern part of Germany and the Czech Republic, and surviving a severe hail- and rain storm, Geert and I arrived in Marienbad. Wijbrand booked a magnificent looking hotel with very nice rooms and a very useful parking lot. Jan, Jeanette, Wijbrand and Lisette and Geert and I arrived within 45 minutes of each other. It's location at the central park was magnificent as we all enjoyed chatting together, went for some walks and see the illuminated music fountain and majestic buildings. We had a rich, good tasting, buffet dinner and went to bed early.

The next morning Geert and I went to the Hacker factory to buy tools and parts for our nMM boats via winding small roads and magnificent landscapes and rural villages. What a beautiful country. When we arrived, we were very friendly welcomed by Karel Hacker himself. He did show us part of the Hacker factory which we found very interesting. We ended the tour in a well-stocked showroom. Next to the parts we needed, we were able to buy two freshly and beautiful made, high quality, extreme light, fabric and foam, boat transport bags and 2 sails transport bags of the same soft and light materials.

In the afternoon we all went to the regatta location, Senný Potok, to try out the course and to meet our Czech racing director, Jan Hyk and his assistants. He is also the MM technical expert of Hacker.

Wijbrand and Geert did conduct boat and sail measurements. Some sailors had to put in extra weight in their boats to meet regulations. Some got the message that their boats had a rather high weight. Other sailors got a (official) remark that some of their sails were a little too big so they can make adjustments for future IMM events and some that they were a little too small. But in the end all boat were approved.

Saturday, 19th of August, after clear instructions from Martin Clemens and Jan Hyk in the English and Czech language we started our first race in very low wind conditions. Also, Karel came to the regatta. Martin didn't sail the first day but instead made some nice action films on the water with his motorized buoy dropping boat called Paulinchen.

I had optimized my boat and sails for these very low to no wind conditions and I finished, surprisingly, first. I was so happy. The second race I was 2nd until 10 cm before the finish when I did hit another boat. Then I was so sad but that was soon forgotten because we had to race more regattas.

More Dutch team members were unlucky: Wijbrand ripped his best light wind A sail 2 days before the event and had to use an A sail not suited for these light wind conditions. Jan de Best got his main sail sheet stuck in the first few races, Geert had also some encounters with other boats, and I broke the main sail boom of my A sail best for a little more wind (which "luckily" never occurred). And I think I can in all honestly say, all sailors had great difficulty rounding the first buoy of the spreader because after we got a puff of wind to sail 5 seconds to head 2 meters upwind, we drifted back 2 meters when the wind died down because of a relative strong current in the lake. Many of us missed that buoy ... several times. And all had to deal with the very high temperatures and humid conditions.

Jan Hyk, who did an excellent job, had to stop 2 or 3 races because there was no wind at all. These were good calls despite that Jan de Best and I were every time in the top 2 or 3. But it was really necessary. All in all the regattas were sailed very fair by all sailors and were exciting and fun. Only a few restarts and penalty circles needed mainly due to no wind or a sudden small wind gust which were done without any protest. Only one short discussion ... that solved itself. Compliments to all sailors.

After the races on both days Martin and Geert did process the race results and Martin announced the overall standings.

On Sunday, 20th of August, we got the same conditions. There it became clear that Zdenek, Udo, Geert and Jan de Best were worthy rivals. Racing was very close.

Lunch and dinner at the regatta location were delicious: large schnitzel with potatoes, very tender pork with dumplings and of course Goulash!

The final results show how difficult conditions were. The first 8 sailors, except one, all had at least once a first position finish and all between position 8 and 16 finishes.

Geert won first place and can take the ½ MM boat challenge cup back home to engrave his name. Zdenek came in second and Jan de Best third

The Dutch won the European Championship team award and take the wooden trophy plaque home

All sailors received a MM keychain, delicious famous Czech Hazelnut spa wafers and a laser cut wooden medal. And the three winners did get a beautiful ceramic statue of a sail on a wooden base made by a famous local artist and a bottle of the famous herb-based liquor Becherovka

I would like to thank the organization members Jan Hyk and his team, Geert, Martin and Greg, the facility providers, the ladies that helped with the drinks (delicious cool, lemon and mint water) and food, all photographers, Karel Hacker for the kind reception at the Hacker factory and all the sailors and their partners. It was my first European Championship and I enjoyed it very much. Hopefully until next year somewhere in Europe.

Rian NED504

Summary

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Most of the sailors arrived at the regatta location, Senný Potok, on Friday 18th of August to test the regatta course and to meet our Czech racing director, Jan Hyk and his assistants. It became clear that these 3 days would have very low wind conditions and would be very hot.

That morning Geert and I went to the Hacker factory to buy tools and parts for our nMM boats and sail rigs. We got a small tour through the factory by Karel Hacker himself and were able to buy two freshly and beautiful made, high quality, extreme light, fabric and foam, boat transport bags and 2 sails transport bags of the same soft and light materials.

In the afternoon Wijbrand and Geert did conduct boat and sail measurements. Some sailors had to put in extra weight in their boats to meet regulations. Other sailors got an official remark that some of their sails were a little too big so they can make adjustments for future iMM events. But in the end all boats were approved.

The next day the regatta started after instruction from Martin Clemens and Jan Hyk. Martin didn't sail but made some action films on the water with his motorized buoy dropping boat called Paulinchen.

I think I can in all honesty say, all sailors had great difficulty rounding the first buoy of the spreader because after we got a puff of wind to sail 5 seconds to head 2 meters upwind, we drifted back 2 meters when the wind died down because of a relative strong current in the lake. Many of us missed that buoy ... several times. And all had to deal with the very high temperatures and humid conditions.

All the regattas were sailed very fairly by all sailors. Zdenek, Udo, Geert and Jan de Best were worthy rivals. Racing was very close and the final results show how difficult the conditions were. The first 8 sailors, except one, all had at least once a first position finish and all had finishes between position 8 and 16.

Geert won first place and can take the ½ MM boat challenge cup back home to engrave his name. Zdenek came in second and Jan de Best third

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