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Olympic centenary regatta celebrations in Stockholm

Phil Crebbin reports on a magnificent event

Monday June 11th 2012, Author: [Phil Crebbin](#), Location: [Sweden](#)

Sweden hosted a most unique regatta to celebrate the centenary of the 1912 Olympics that were held in Stockholm. This was held in 6 Metres, which was one of the classes in the 1912 Games, and for a couple of the days there were also some other boats joining in, including the spectacular 95 sqm Skerrie cruisers.

The whole event was superbly organised by well-known Swedish sailor Thomas Lundquist, himself a Finn Gold Cup winner and Swedish Olympian, and now also a 6 Metre owner. It was a tremendous feat of organisation by him and his team, with many important people and organisations involved, including the King of Sweden, the International Olympic Committee led by the President himself, Jacques Rogge (a former Olympic Finn sailor for Belgium), the city of Stockholm and the Swedish Olympic Committee of course.

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Quite a number of top sailing names were present, with one day dedicated to Swedish legends in sailing. This included famous Swedish names like Pelle Petterson, the three Sundelin brothers (Olympic Gold medallists in 5.5s in 1968), round the world sailors Gunnar Krantz, Magnus Olsson and ISAF President Göran Petersson.



There were also some top international names from outside Sweden, including Torben Grael, who flew in especially from Brazil, and Paul Cayard, who is now CEO of the Swedish America's Cup challenger, Artemis Racing. Torben Grael still has a prized family possession of a classic 6 Metre that was sailed by one of his family and won the silver medal in the 1912 Olympics in Sweden.

The event was held right outside the Stockholm town hall (Stadshuset) on Riddarfjärden and the boats had quite a logistics exercise to be towed from the more usual marinas in the Swedish archipelago through bascule bridges and a lock to reach the sailing area. Floating docks were moored outside the Stadshuset to accommodate the boats.

Different racing events were held each day, ranging from the Legends Regatta to the Olympic Invitational Regatta, involving both IOC members and the Swedish Olympic Committee, a National Day Regatta (on the Swedish National Day bank holiday – in which a number of other boats participated as well) and the Pro/Am Regatta with a number of top class Olympians, including Swedish skiers and ice hockey players.

The two top international sailing names both made their presence felt. Torben Grael took the helm of Thomas Lundquist's 6 Metre to win the Pro/Am regatta day, winning all three races comfortably. Paul Cayard then won the Olympic Invitational Regatta on the last day, ahead of Jacques Rogge (who had Torben Grael in his crew).

The National Day Regatta was organised in the form of a pursuit race with a number of other boats participating. As there was a set number of rounds of the course for the race, the finishing times were then adjusted by a small amount as the race took 2 hours for the leaders rather than the 2½ hours that had been used for the starting intervals between the different boats. This made no difference to the comfortable winner, which was Thomas Kuhmann's classic 6 Metre

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from Germany, with the only British representative, Philip Crebbin, in his crew.

The beautiful 95 sq m Skerrie cruisers participated in this race as well as having their own separate race on the last day with some of the International and Swedish Olympic Committee representatives.

On the last day, the King of Sweden, Carl XVI Gustaf, was in attendance throughout the racing and personally gave out the prizes for the day. This brought this fantastic regatta to a close. It will be long remembered by all the participants.



Above: At the final Prizegiving – from left: King Carl XVI Gustaf, Jacques Rogge, Thomas Lundquist, Marcus Norlin, Jurgen Sundelin, Torben Grael



At the final Prizegiving – Paul Cayard (4th from left) and his team receive their gold medals for winning the final day's Olympic Invitational Regatta from King Carl XVI Gustaf (left)



Torben Grael and team with gold medals after winning the Pro/Am Regatta – from left: Torben Grael, Andrea Grael, Margaretha Bjork (President of Stockholm City Council who gave out the prizes), Thomas Lundquist, Pernilla Wiberg (Swedish multi-gold medal winning skier), Richard Brisius



Philip Crebbin (right) with Torben Grael and his team

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