

# Laser World



September 2015

**NICK THOMPSON - LASER STANDARD  
MEN'S WORLD CHAMPION 2015**



## New Laser Standard Sail Announced

**TRINIDAD'S KELLY ARRINDELL  
AND HER HOPES FOR THE OLYMPICS**



# New Laser Standard

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*The long awaited Laser Standard Mark II sail has now been released with substantial updates!*

**"This is a quantum leap forward for our class."**

Tracy Usher  
ILCA President



© Thom Touw

*Tracy Usher*

The International Laser Class Association (ILCA) is pleased to announce the release of a completely new class-legal design for the Laser standard rig sail. The release marks the first time in over 40 years that the Laser sail design has been substantially updated.

Known as the Standard Mark II Sail, the new patented design is the result of thousands of hours of design work and on-the-water testing involving the Laser builders, the Association, two major sailmakers and some of the world's top sailors.

The Mark II features bi-radial panels, a heavier 4.5 ounce cloth and optimized reinforcement patches, all intended to maximize the sail's competitive life. The sail also features tapered battens with velcro batten pocket closures, a larger window for improved visibility and a patented re-designed luff tube to eliminate wrinkles at the mast joint.

"This is a quantum leap forward for our class," says ILCA President, Tracy Usher. "For a number of years the number one complaint about the Laser has been the outdated sail design. We've put a lot of time and effort into this new sail design and we're really happy with the result."

As with all changes to the Laser, the new sail has been carefully designed to be backwards compatible with the existing equipment, meaning it was not designed to provide improved performance. Instead, the Mark II promises improved durability and ease of use.

**The main objective of the design project for the Mark II was to create a sail with equal performance to the existing sail, but with better durability. We worked very hard to ensure that the Mark II was not a faster sail and wouldn't make all the existing sails obsolete overnight. The original Laser standard sail will continue to be available through authorized Laser dealers and we fully expect to see the two designs racing side-by-side for a number of years.**

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Clive Humphris,  
ILCA Technical Officer

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# Sail Announced



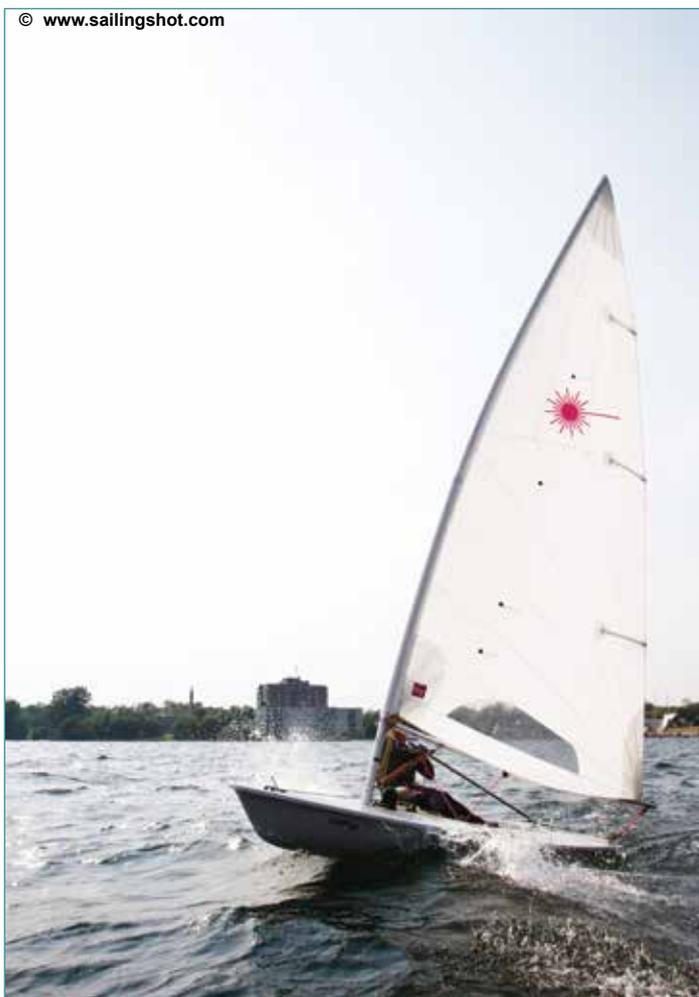
The initial run of class-legal Mark II sails is expected to be available in late 2015, with worldwide availability by early 2016. Because of the timing of the release, by agreement with International Sailing Federation (ISAF) the Mark II will not be used in the 2016 Olympic Games or any Olympic country qualifying events for 2015 or 2016.

The use of the sail will be controlled by the Notice of Race for each event until after the 2016 games. After that time, the Mark II will be allowed in all ILCA sanctioned regattas along with the original standard rig sail.

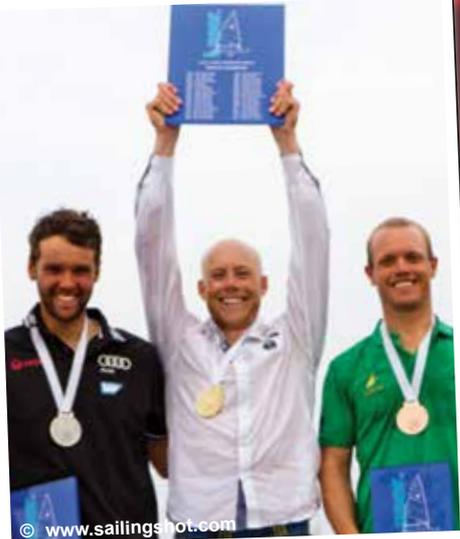
“Because many of the Olympic qualifying events have already occurred, we’ve agreed with ISAF that we shouldn’t make any major changes to the equipment for the 2016 games at this time,” says Usher. “Our goal is to have the Mark II sail available worldwide for the start of the next quadrennium, leading up to the 2020 games in Tokyo.”

In coordination with ISAF and the Laser Builders, ILCA will make further announcements on its website [www.laserinternational.org](http://www.laserinternational.org) about the availability of the Mark II sail and its use at events over the coming months.

For more information contact: [office@laserinternational.org](mailto:office@laserinternational.org)



# Nick Thompson



Nick proudly displays his winner's trophy



Looking down on Nick



2015 Laser Standard Men's World Championship in Kingston, Canada

## **Congratulations! How do you feel after your win yesterday?**

Surprisingly ok - a little bit tired and overcome with emotion rather than hung over which is a good thing.

## **Is this a big deal for you? At prize giving last night you said you had been here a couple of times before - in fact I think you were runner up last time you were in Canada weren't you?**

Yes absolutely! I've medalled in four other world championships - two bronzes and two silvers and I was saying last night that I had started feeling a little bit like 'winning is never going to happen'. To have finally done it and secure a win - I'm very relieved to get that monkey off my back.

## **You said you felt it was never going to happen - when did you start really worrying about that and how did you turn those thoughts around?**

What I mean by starting to think 'I'm never going to win a Worlds' was that to come close in so many (and I really was close in a lot of them) and to not have done it, you do start thinking maybe everything is playing against me and it's never going to happen. But I never gave up and I think I always believed I could do it. I kept believing in what I was doing, tried not to change anything drastically and stuck to what I knew best. And finally it all came together!

## **And at what point did you start thinking 'yes maybe it might come my way'?**

I think it started sinking in that I could actually win the night before last. I really struggled to sleep - lying there thinking 'wow this might finally happen and that this might just be the one!'.  
**I know you thanked your coach (Chris Gowers) who has been on the Laser scene a long time and has coached several top sailors on the GBR team. He seems to have a fairly laid back attitude or does he give you a hard time about where to put your head?**

Chris is very level - that's what's so fantastic about him. We have a great working relationship and we are close personally too. What he does well is that he never changes - his mannerisms, his everything and he never fluctuates. Everyday, whether I'm doing well or poorly, it's the same delivery of

coaching and that's my backbone. Its what I fall back on when I've had a tough or a good day. He's a fantastic coach. This is his second Laser World Championship victory - Paul won in 2009 and he also helped Paul to gold in the Olympics. He's a smart cookie that's for sure!

## **What sort of preparation did you do for this championship? Was it something special outside your normal Olympic training? You still hadn't had the nod from the Olympic team before this championship - have you now made it to the team or is it still open?**

No, it's still very open and this won't hurt for sure. The British guys are getting better and better so I've got to keep on top of my game. It's the same for me as it is for the rest of the guys. We are really trying to focus on the Olympics itself and not on the selection. So now I'm trying to put myself in the best position to win in Rio and that's really all that's in my mind.

## **And was this a must win event for you or just part of your long term training?**

A bit of each. It's a must win in that I was desperate to win a worlds. As I said earlier, I've come so close before and I just wanted to get this win. It's one of those things - your name is never taken off the trophy. You can finish second or third in as many events as you want but people don't remember that, they remember the people that win! It's something I've wanted for sometime, both for me and my campaign, not for selection for the Olympics although it will certainly help.

## **There will be a lot of young sailors out there reading this interview. Give me three tips for a youth sailor attending a big event like this or their first national championship.**

That's a good question. I've been competing from a very young age and I've got a lot of experience. I would say that the biggest thing is that you have got to enjoy it and if you aren't enjoying it then you are going to struggle. I think that's something that has seen me through a lot of my sailing - I've had times where I've not enjoyed it and things haven't gone my way and it just gets worse and worse. You need to take a step back and put things in

# Jeff Martin talks to the winner of The Laser Standard Mens World Championship 2015

Since this interview Nick has been selected for the GBR Olympic team!

*perspective - that is the thing that has helped me through big and pressured events.*

*The second thing is try not to take it all too seriously. At the end of the day you can't read too much into the conditions but go with your instincts. I think that is what Lorenzo (GBR) did this week. It is the second worlds in which he has done really well and he did a superb job. He really backed himself and his decisions and that worked out really well most of the time.*

*The third one is do everything you can to be prepared. In the lead up to this event I spent a lot of time here. Chris and I were out for a good week before training, trying to get as many hours in as possible. If you can do all those things in the lead up to an event and get them all ticked off, it makes the event more enjoyable and much easier.*

**You said you have had times in the past where you haven't enjoyed your sailing or have had a bad race. How do you get over that and pull yourself back up again?**

*It's always a tough one - if you've had several bad events in a row it starts becoming a bit painful. I've had that in my career as most guys have - it's the nature of the Laser class which is very competitive. You are never going to be always dominant. I think Chris helps a lot. His being very level helps enormously and helps me stay focused. I've also had a lot of support and help from friends and family. My girlfriend has been fantastic. She's not a sailor, she's a doctor and that puts things in perspective. I'm not out there trying to save the world, I'm just trying to sail a dinghy around a course as quickly as possible. It's just about enjoying it and why you need to love it.*

**Did you bring a book with you to this championship?**

*Yes, I read "Open" which is Andre Agassi's autobiography. It was really interesting as he really struggled with his tennis career and it talks about how he overcame his issues.*

**What's your favourite food?**

*It varies - I really like to cook but being British I like Indian food as we eat a lot of it there. Though this week I've eaten*

*a lot of oats which is very boring but it gives me loads of energy. On the water I try not to eat too much except for some energy foods.*

**And do you have a second sport?**

*Mountain biking, which the team don't love as it's not the safest sport. But I haven't had any injuries so far. I'm enjoying quite a lot of downhill at the moment, more than cross country, and it is getting more serious all the time.*

**Didn't your head coach break his wrist earlier this year cycling?**

*Yes, Sparky, our Olympic manager broke his wrist on his road bike going downhill too fast. He puts in a lot of hours on a bike so it was probably only a matter of time until something like that happened.*

**What's next for you and how does the rest of the year pan out for you?**

*Next is the test event - I'm still waiting to hear on the selection for that. The Olympic test event is the second most important event in preparation. After that I will be fully focused on the Olympic Games.*

**When will the GBR team make their decision? Will you be camped down in Rio most of the time?**

*Yes, we will - my flight is already booked so hopefully I will be selected. We are going there for a while. I think the total time out there is about three and a half weeks so it's quite a long stint.*

*I've already been out there five or six times before so I'm starting to get quite a good feel for the venue which is important because it's a tricky place to sail!*

**Trickier than here?**

*Yes, I think it is! Obviously I didn't find this week as tricky as others but it was a tough venue because there were so many different directions and things that could have happened. But I think Rio is another level with their topography and the state of the water, which doesn't help, but I'm looking forward to the challenge.*

**Well good luck and thank you for your time.**



Nick Thompson GBR



Celebrating with a beer!



Team GBR gives the new champion a lift!

# Kelly Arrindell

## Interview by Jeff Martin

*Kelly Arrindell talks about her success at the PanAm Games, the challenges of sailing in Trinidad and her quest to get to the Olympics!*

### **How did you get into sailing?**

My parents got me into sailing. My dad used to sail and has been to the PanAm Games. My mum also sailed and they got me into sailing at 6 years old. I've been sailing ever since. Now I'm 18!

### **When did you decide to map out a career in sailing and what are your goals?**

I only started mapping it out this year when I went to the PanAm Games in Toronto, Canada. I missed Olympic qualification there by one point so my aim is to get to the Olympics - maybe Rio or the next one.

### **What sort of preparation have you been doing to achieve those goals? Tell us what is it like sailing in Trinidad and Tobago? How do you get your competition?**

Sailing is very small in Trinidad. I am the only female Laser Radial sailor so I just go out by myself. We don't have any coaching. I try to go to a lot of regattas to get some training and experience. Right before the PanAm games I did three weeks training with Chris Walters from Canada. We trained in Toronto where the PanAm games were held.

### **And you won the medal race in the PanAm games!**

Yes, it was pretty cool. I didn't expect to win it. I sailed my hardest and it paid off.

### **Is that pushing you forward to higher things now?**

Yes hopefully I can get some sponsorship and then go to Oman and hopefully qualify for the Olympics in Rio de Janeiro. I'm hoping for a little bit of money from my Government or from sponsors that I can get in Trinidad.

### **Has there been a lot of positive reaction so far after the PanAm games?**

Yes, I've done a lot of interviews and the sailors are very supportive of me so hopefully they will continue to be supportive in my journey to the Olympics.

### **So a lot of work to do in the next 6 or 7 months? Are you at school or college?**

I just finished high school in June but I am taking a year off for my sailing. Then I will go to college after this year.

If I get to the Olympics it might have to be a bit later but hopefully I can make it work.

### **What's your programme looking like between now and next March?**

It's mainly strength training in the gym. I have a personal trainer in Trinidad who tries to build up my muscles as I'm a little bit light for the boat. Hopefully I can go to different countries and get some coaching with different people as we have no coaching in Trinidad.

### **Where do you think that might happen? Do you have anything lined up or any contacts?**

I have a friend in St Lucia and I'm definitely going to train with her from October to November prior to Oman. Then I'm not sure but hopefully I will travel to different places or others will come to Trinidad to train with me.

### **The ISAF Sailing World Championships take place in 2018 in Denmark. If you don't qualify for the Olympics would you consider that and maybe look forward to Japan?**

Maybe! I haven't quite looked that far ahead but hopefully I could do that. It would be a good accomplishment as well.

### **Apart from sailing, what are you hoping to study and what are your ambitions for work?**

At school I was thinking about physiotherapy or becoming a personal trainer - something involving sports as I'm so involved with sport and I just love it. I don't see myself sitting at a desk doing paperwork all day, I would much prefer a more practical job.

### **Favourite food?**

Spaghetti and mincemeat.

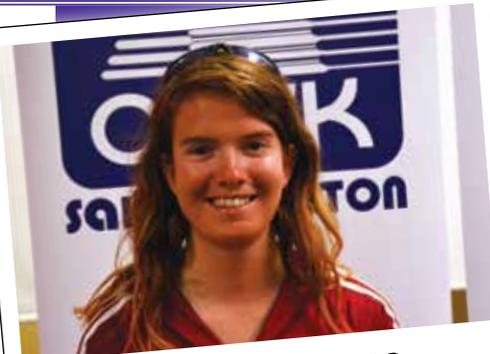
### **How do you relax at regattas?**

I like to watch movies and sleep in bed a lot!

### **What's the last good film you saw?**

Probably The Hunger Games!

Thank you for speaking to me and best of luck for the future!



*Kelly Arrindell TTO*



*PanAm Games, Toronto 2015*



*Training in Trinidad!*