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PRESS OFFICE

The Tall Ships' Races 2007 in Szczecin



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Cuauhtemoc has called at the port

Hundreds of cheering people greeted a tall ship, which had been the first one to arrive in Szczecin. It was a Mexican Cuauhtemoc. We have to admit that the ship looked really impressive despite its sails rolled up. It bore gala colours, which means that signal flags were spread from its bow to the stern, and sailors were standing on the yards. With music playing in the background, a tugboat brought Cuauhtemoc to the harbour. Assembling the gangway was not easy, so the ship had to be moved a few meters. Women were waiting impatiently to see the handsome, tanned Mexican sailors dressed in elegant white and blue uniforms.

Finally, the captain and other officers stepped down the gangway to shake hands with the organisers. Cuauhtemoc represents Mexican Navy and offers elegant guest rooms. The ship is worth visiting at night, as it's beautifully lit. The vessel has a crew of 28 officers, 48 n.c.o.'s, and 50 other crew members taking care of 116 cadets. All of them are really sympathetic. Brightly dressed, singing and dancing Mexican sailors catch an eye. All over the world the Mexican ship is called the Ambassador and Gentleman of the Seas.

The three-masted bark was built in 1982 in Bilbao. It's a training ship to cadets of Mexican Navy. Regardless of its statute tasks, the ship very often takes part in rallies (Cuauhtemoc had already visited Poland 4 years ago). The vessel has already sailed 500 000 sea miles. Cuauhtemoc means 'falling eagle', and it's named in honour of an Aztec ruler, who fought Spanish conquerors. That's why a beautiful figurehead decorates the bow.



Dar Szczecina unofficial winner!

Last night the second race finished. It has been the final stage of the tall Ships' races. We have received incredibly good news... The fight on the route from Stockholm to Szczecin was really fierce, but it's already known that Dar Szczecina is the class C winner. That's not all! Polish ship is about to win the general classification, which includes all the competing vessels. The differences between them are minimal, so we have to wait till Sunday morning when the official results will have been announced.

A lot of racing yachts are still sailing and have a long way to go, that's why all we can present now are unofficial results of the last stage. Here are the ships that fulfilled the time limits imposed on the vessels by the organisers: Christian Radich, Dar Szczecina, Dar Natury, St Iv, Akela,

Thermopylae Clipper, Esprit, Tornado, Rona II, Hansa, Sirma, Better Than, Felicity, Tomidi, Steppe and Fazisi. Out of the tallest ships Norwegian Christian Radich has won Class A classification, leaving behind Russian giant Kruzenshtern and Scandinavian Sorlandeta. Class B has been dominated by yachts from Sweden: Gratitude and Gratia (gold and bronze medals). German Wyvern von Bremen has won silver.

Polish people can be proud of their ships Class C Dar Szczecina and dar Natury did very well.

Class D to end with: British Rona II has won gold, Spanish Hansa - silver, British Sirma - bronze.

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The first Press Conference

The first Press Conference the Tall Ships' Races 2007 is over.

The organisers officially opened The Press Office with a proverbial scissors cut.

Christer Samuelsson and Corinne Hitching, Sails Training International representatives, met with the accredited journalists. Tomasz Banach answered questions on behalf of the President of Szczecin. He announced an official opening of the Tall Ships' Races in Szczecin. The opening will consist of two parts: an international conference referring to Joseph Conrad's and Herman's Melville's works, the other part remains secret for now.

STI representatives spoke about the bottom line of the organisation, which is to get young people interested in sailing. According to the STI regulations, at least half the crew must be aged between 15-25. There are vessels from 17 countries competing in this year's Baltic races (including the Republic of South Africa or Malaysia), with sailors of 35 different nationalities on board. The most precious prize of the Races is Friendship Trophy, awarded to the crew which contributes most to building up the feeling of international friendship between different nationalities.

Christer Samuelsson assured that the winner would be really proud of the trophy.

Samuelsson made sure that having the two editions of the Races at the same time, on the Baltic Sea and in Med. area, does not decrease the quality of Szczecin rally. He pointed out that Szczecin is hosting the tallest and most attractive vessels.

Tomasz Banach mentioned Mexican Cuauthemoc, which was disqualified in the last race as the crew badly wanted to call at the port as the very first one. He revealed that preliminary negotiations had taken place concerning Szczecin as the host of the Tall Ships' Races 2013. Banach pointed out that for now the Tall Ships' Races 2007 with its rich programme is the centre of attention.