



A flock of the 88 boats that raced in the SAP 505 Worlds Thursday glide downwind to the reach mark



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Holt/Smit take charge as Martin/Nelson falter

SAN FRANCISCO, CA

The scenario has shifted in the 2009 SAP 505 World Championship, hosted by the St. Francis Yacht Club.

Mike Holt and crew Carl Smit---formerly of the UK now living in nearby Santa Cruz---seized control from Mike Martin and crew Jeff Nelson from Newport Beach, Calif., who suffered a 12th place in the first of two races in uncommonly light wind fluctuating between 8 and 11 knots Thursday.

Martin/Nelson, previously invincible through five races in breeze as strong as 25 knots except for the first day when their mast broke, rebounded with a second place, but by then Holt/Smit had scored a third and a fourth and now lead with 12 points to 18 for Martin/Nelson.

That means that Holt/Smit, whose worst finish has been the fourth place, may not have to sail Saturday's last race if they can hold their lead through Friday's next-to-last eighth of nine races overall. There are two throwouts and they haven't needed any, although Martin/Nelson can drop their 12th after today, leaving the door open a bit.

The way the week's competition has developed, Thursday's race winners were slightly surprising and are-you-kidding-me stunning: Dalton Bergan and crew Fritz Lanzinger of Seattle by 24 second, climbing from sixth to fifth place, and Australia's Malcolm Higgins and crew Nick Johnston, who are in 32nd place with a previous best finish of 13th, by a startling 48 seconds.

Views from the Worlds – Day 5



Mike Holt and Carl Smit took over first place Thursday



Dalton Bergan and Fritz Lanzinger (l.) lead Germany's Jens Findel and Johannes Tellen past reach mark

Holt said, "We just plugged along . . . didn't take any risks. We didn't want to get any [results] we needed to drop."

So Friday's strategy will be . . . ?

"We've got to make sure Mike doesn't get any good scores."

So, with two throwouts to give, does this mean there will be some match racing going on Friday?

"There's a possibility of that," Holt said.

Racing on the East Bay course was delayed an hour and five minutes with a light easterly wind---a headwind that prompted most boats to be towed out---that transitioned through a lull into a normal westerly from the Golden Gate Bridge seven miles away. It grew to 10 knots through the starting sequence but remained so fluky that the first start was called with a general recall---rare for a Gate (a.k.a. "rabbit") Start but necessary when a wind shift scrambled the starters in front of the rabbit---in this case, Australia's Peter Chappell and crew Ian Davidson.

The second try worked, except for Martin and Nelson.

"We got pinched off by another boat and then rolled," Nelson said.

Martin said, "That wasn't too bad, but halfway up the beat we were moving OK and this huge [wind] hole developed, and all the guys on the left sailed around it."

That put them 24th at the first windward mark of the three-lap course, and the best they could do was to cut that deficit in half.

"That means we'll have to sail both days," Martin said. "Holt is definitely in a controlling position."

With 36 points, Bergan and Lanzinger are out of title contention, but "we're pretty psyched," Bergan said. "I've never even led a race with a spinnaker in my life."

Bergan, 31, is a relative rookie in the 505 class with only a year and a half of sailing in the tricky 16 1/2-foot dinghy, although Lanzinger, who owns the boat, once sailed with Howie Hamlin in one of his five 505 Worlds second-place finishes.

But Lanzinger, 48, said, "The guy's more than a rookie. He just got fourth in the Moth Worlds [at the Cascade Locks on the Columbia River earlier this month], and he has plenty of experience in big regattas."

Bergan also has placed second in the 2004 and 2008 U.S. Olympic Trials for the 49er class, and he feels that his first 505 Worlds is special.

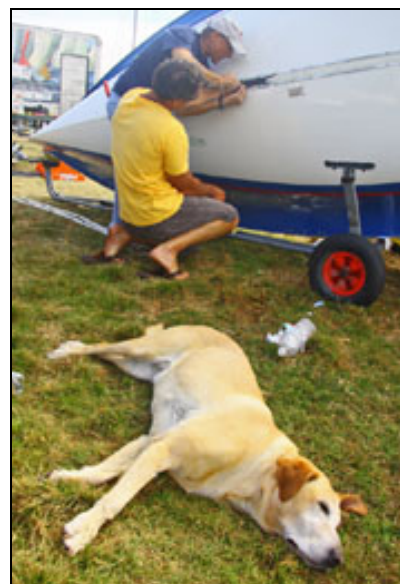
"It's a rite of passage . . . sailing the Worlds in a windy spot is a classic thing to do. We're pretty surprised to be in the top group."



Mike Martin and Jeff Nelson couldn't catch Aussies Malcolm Higgins and Nick Johnston



Holt/Smit (SAP kite) are locked in close downwind free-for-all



Poppy, Paul Cayard's Lab, is off watch as master and Howie Hamlin fix centerboard gasket on lay day

The win by Higgins and Johnston was even more impressive. They led at every mark, with Martin/Nelson unable to chip away despite outrunning everybody else.

"The boat's going well," Higgins said. "We just keep bashing through. It's pretty awesome. We've just tried to keep a cover on everyone."

Johnston: "Just fantastic. All that running and cycling [training] in Tasmania paid off."

SAP is the naming sponsor and APL is the presenting sponsor. Marine Media Alliance, Drystone Berridge Vineyard Estates, Lindsay Art Glass, North Sails, Ronstan and 505 American Section are supporting sponsors.

The leaders

(after 7 of 9 races)

1. Mike Holt/Carl Smit, USA, (2)-1-2-2-2-3-(4), 12 points.
2. Mike Martin/Jeff Nelson, USA, 1-(DNF)-1-1-1-12-2, 18.
3. Chris Nicholson/Casey Smith, Australia, (4)-3-3-3-3-7-8, 23.
4. Jens Findel/Johannes Tellen, Germany, (72)-5-6-15-12-2-3, 33.
5. Dalton Bergan/Fritz Lanzinger, USA, 8-8-4-10-(15)-1-5, 36.
6. Nick Adamson/Steve Bourdow, USA, 9-2-13-4-4-4-(17), 36.
7. Howie Hamlin/Paul Cayard, USA, 5-6-(RAF)-7-14-5-10, 47.
8. Ryan Cox/Stuart Park, USA, 12-11-12-6-8-6-(15), 55.
9. Ian Pinnell/Carl Gibbon, Great Britain, 7-14-8-13-(20)-10-11, 63.
10. Tyler Moore/Geoff Ewenson, USA, 11-13-11-15-(16)-8-6, 64.

MEDIA CONTACT

Rich Roberts
310.835.2526
cell 310.766.6547
richsail@earthlink.net



Anyone looking to race a 505 is advised to take a primer on the technical applications

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