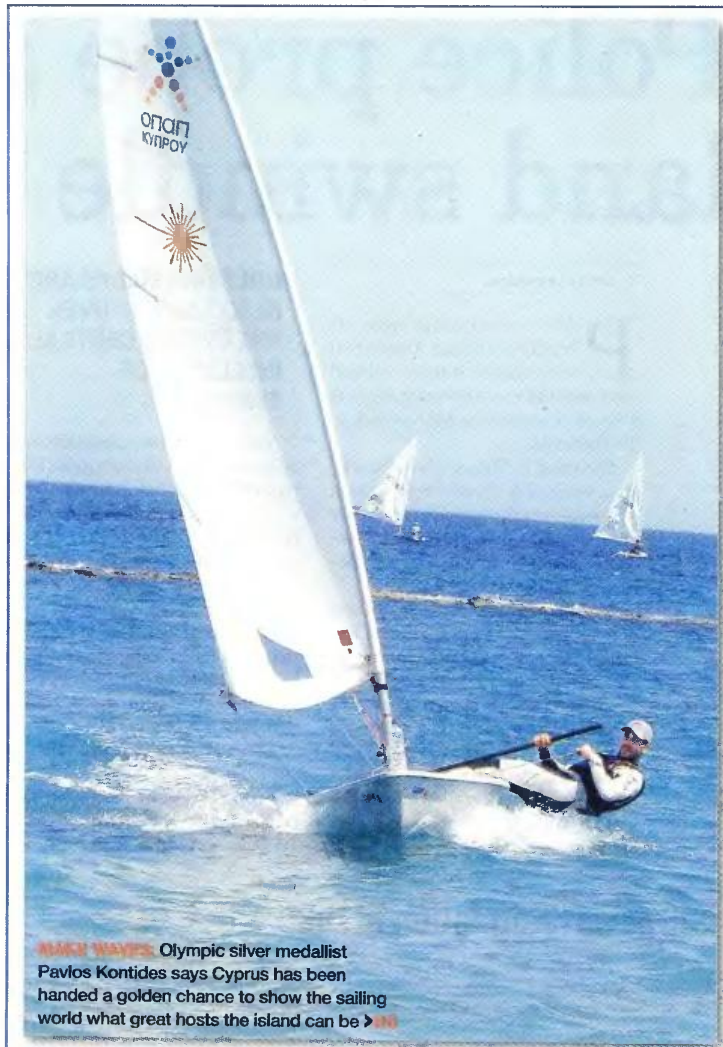


# Sailing history



**WAVE WAVES** Olympic silver medallist Pavlos Kontides says Cyprus has been handed a golden chance to show the sailing world what great hosts the island can be > 86

## OLYMPIC HERO SAYS CYPRUS MUST SHINE IN WORLD EVENT

Olympic silver medallist Pavlos Kontides says the Cyprus Sailing Federation must ensure a good 2013 ISAF Youth Sailing World Championship or risk never hosting a major international sailing event again.

His warning comes on the same day the world championships are officially launched in Limassol.

Organisers have described the international sailing competition as one of the biggest sporting events ever hosted in Cyprus.

"It is very important for the Cyprus Sailing Federation, which is organising this event, to show that we are capable of handling such major competitions, with more than 300 athletes from over 60 countries," Kontides told The Cyprus Weekly in an exclusive interview.

"The numbers speak for themselves. If they don't, then they will not get the opportunity to host similar events like these in the future."

Kontides made history for Cyprus last year with his second place finish at London 2012 after he became the first Cypriot athlete to win an Olympic medal for the island. A former youth world champion of this event himself, Kontides knows only too well what a major event like this could mean for debt-ridden Cyprus.

"Events like this one not only promote sailing in Cyprus but also the island around the world."

"At the same time, it offers the chance for the federation to raise a decent amount of money which could be used to expand sailing further in Cyprus. More funding is also necessary for our current world class sailors." > 86

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# A big day for your big sailors

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With the 2013 ISAF Youth Sailing World Championship set to get underway today in Limassol, The Cyprus Weekly takes a look at the young sailors hoping to make waves for Cyprus

By **John Leonidou and Aphrodite Georgiou**

**E**xcitement and confidence are the main sentiments at play for the Cyprus team taking part in the 2013 ISAF Youth Sailing World Championship this weekend in Limassol.

The event represents the biggest day in the lives of the young Cypriot sailors, but also a famous milestone for Limassol that plays host to a famous international sailing competition. "I have a big advantage because the championship will take place here in Limassol and I know these waters like the back of my hand," said 17-year-old Joseph Herodotou who will be racing in the Laser Radial category. Herodotou represents one of the more experienced in the Cyprus team, having been taking part in sailing competitions since he was seven years of age. He added, "I have been training here since I was little and I will have my family

and friends close by giving me support."

Cyprus' other Laser Radial racer, 18-year-old Eleni Kyriakidou, admits that she feels nervous despite having taken part in international events in the past.

"Although I have been sailing for around 11 to 12 years, I do feel nervous because representing your country is a big responsibility. The only thing that I can say for sure is that I will do my best." Despite being set to make her debut in the youth world championships, Kyriakidou has in the past taken part in the 2007 and 2008 Balkan Games, the Games of the Small States of Europe in 2009 where she finished fourth as well as the Island Games in Mallorca.

Haris Papazoglou and Orestis Germanos make up the 29ers team of Cyprus. Both 13-year-olds - who belong to the Limassol Nautical club - will also be making their debut this weekend and know they will have a lot of ground to cover especially because they will be racing in new boats. "I believe we have the ability to do well even though it's hard to race in this par-



ticular boat," said Papazoglou whose father is also one of the sailing coaches.

"We haven't used it or even seen it and we will only have a couple of days to prepare and learn its manoeuvres. Both my parents are sailors and as a child I have loved the sea but, above all, I am having the time of my life." RSX racer Yiannis Vyrides may represent one of the older athletes in the team but admits that he got

his first taste in sailing late in life. He believes it was fate that got him into sailing and is confident that he can secure a top ten finish in Limassol.

"I got into sailing late compared to the other sailors. Everything started when we were going to go to Rhodes on holiday and I wanted to take up sailing.

"When we got back I bumped into my coach in a shop and we got talking about my wanting to race.

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“That is basically how everything got started about four years ago. I feel very proud to be representing my country in a world championship.

“I hope I can finish in the top ten.” Fellow RSX racer Ioanna Avraamidou, who is just 13, has been sailing for even less time. She got into the sport at just 11 and despite only having two years of experience to her name, she too is confident of success off Cyprus’ shores.

“I suppose sailing for me started completely by accident. I started it up one summer just for fun but I soon realised how much I like it and I began to take it seriously. Two years later, I am now representing Cyprus in an international competition and I couldn’t be happier. I believe I can do well because I know the sea here, the wind and how much I need to push myself to do well.” Anna Constantinou, Tatiana Avgousti, Michalis Panayiotou and Rafael Theodorou will make up the 420 racers for Cyprus and Panayiotou believes this event will showcase the sport of sailing for Cypriots.

“The aim of the Cypriot team is to try and promote the sports as much as possible. We also want to try and attract more people to the sport.”

In the SL 16 event, Onisiforos Neophytou and Soteris Fanaris make up the other Cypriot representatives and they too will be aiming high.

“I may be from Larnaca but I am always excited to visit Limassol for training”, said Fanaris.

“I have also made many friends here. My love of sailing was born from going to the beach when I was little and watching all the sailing boats. Personally, I believe I will be in the top ten.”

By **John Leonidou**

**With the** biggest watersport competition ever to be hosted in Cyprus set to get underway today, local organisers are hoping that the week-long event will inspire generations of young sailors.

The Cypriot youngsters also have only to look to sailor Pavlos Kontides who last year became the first athlete to win a medal for Cyprus when he scooped up the silver. The 2013 ISAF Youth Sailing World Championship will take place in the sea area of the Cyprus Sports Organisation (CSO) and St Tychonas. “This competition is good for Cyprus for two reasons,” commented Organising Committee Member Vanessa Kyprianou.

“Firstly, we want to promote the sport of sailing to locals and this competition is great advertising. Secondly, we want to promote Cyprus to sailors abroad and show them that we have great conditions for them. Cyprus is expected to get great exposure from hosting this international event.”

She added, “These games are seen as a stepping stone for all sailors and Olympians aspiring to have professional careers in the sport. Every-





The young Cypriot sailors are in for an almighty challenge

## Limassol braces for big games

thing starts from this competition in terms of sailing stars of the future.

“That is why the ISAF takes this competition very seriously and this year’s event in Cyprus will be one of the biggest ones yet in terms of numbers as we will be hosting 61 nations.”

The level of competition for the young athletes will be unprecedented for them explains John Papazoglou, who is one of the team coaches and whose son Haris is also in the team.

“Things will be difficult for our young athletes because they are up against high level opponents. The level of competition will be something else.

For example in the 29er and the SL16 categories, we will be taking part for the first time while we are only familiar with the 470 category but will instead be taking part in the 420 category.” He added, “Despite the difficulties, these young sailors are ready to represent Cyprus in the best possible way.”

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# Kontides tells sailors to learn

By **John Leonidou**

Cypriot sailing star Pavlos Kontides says the island's young sailors taking part in this week's 2013 ISAF Youth Sailing World Championship will learn more in seven days than they could in a year.

Speaking exclusively to The Cyprus Weekly, the London 2012 silver medallist has told the Cyprus team to watch and learn from their peers when the competition gets underway in Limassol today.

"What they can expect is that they will probably learn more things in a week's time from this event than they could in a whole year. I advise them to be ready to learn and to try and 'steal' as much as possible from the top sailors.

"Obviously they shouldn't be nervous or scared of the sailors from countries with big traditions in the sport but to just give their best. Definitely, they will find things tough."

Last year, Kontides secured the island's first ever Olympic medal and knows just what the youth world championships are about having competed and one in such events in his younger days.

"These games are like youth Olympics due to the unique format and structure of the event. One sailor is competing from each country, in each class.

"All classes are berthed at the same venue. Sailors are accommodated all together in hotels offering Olympic village spirit.

"So it was a great experience which helped me a lot in getting a picture of the sailing world and a taste of what the Olympic Games are all about."

***(See page 22 for a look at the Cypriots taking part at the championship)***

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