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special report



American Youth Sailing Force was one of two teams selected for the Red Bull Youth America's Cup.
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Teams Selected for Red Bull Youth America's Cup

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Before the 34th America's Cup gets underway, crews of youth sailors will have their chance in the spotlight. Today, Oracle Team USA announced two American teams selected to train for the event. Team America Racing will represent the USA, and American Youth Sailing Force (AYSF) will represent San Francisco. Both will now spend the next nine months training for the Red Bull Youth America's Cup under the tutelage of Oracle Team USA.

Bay Area sailor Mikey Radziejowski had more to celebrate today than just his 21st birthday, as he's the skipper of the AYSF team. "I grew up sailing on the San Francisco Bay, so I feel very comfortable in the Bay and have sailed in pretty much any condition. Everyone on our team has sailed there at one point or another," he said. "Sailing a catamaran on the Bay is definitely going to be a huge challenge, but I feel confident with our team, and I think everyone has the same appreciation for the Bay."

Six crews entered the team selection trials, which included two-day training sessions at the Oracle base in San Francisco. The trials featured physical training and instruction on and off the water, and the teams sailed onboard an AC45 for the first time under the supervision of Oracle team sailors.

"It's a massive stepping stone toward getting involved with the America's Cup," said ORACLE TEAM USA coach Darren Bundock. "We were looking for a variety of things – mainly potential – and finding those teams that gelled together and that we think can go forward and win the Red Bull Youth America's Cup."

The teams were evaluated on several factors, such as boat handling, trimming skills and crew communication. All were mentored by Oracle Team USA sailors and coaches Philippe Presti and Darren Bundock throughout the team selection process, and they will continue to receive coaching and guidance through to the finals.

"Our team is very honored – it means we performed well in the selection and are on the right track, and that they feel we have what it takes to do well in the Red Bull Youth America's Cup," said Team America Racing skipper Charlie Buckingham of Newport Beach, a graduate of Georgetown University.

The youth sailors are ages 19-24 and hail from around the U.S., including many from the San Francisco Bay Area. The crews are made up of collegiate All-Americans, youth World medalists and members of US Sailing's Development Team. Six sailors are onboard for each crew, one more than America's Cup World Series teams as the youth sailors are, on average, 40-50 pounds lighter than a Cup sailor.

Many sailors on both Team America Racing and the American Youth Sailing Force will now balance training for the Red Bull Youth America's Cup with attending university and competing on their university sailing teams, while others will balance daily professional work schedules. They will make periodic trips to train with Oracle in the coming months, with

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more extensive training to take place next summer.

“It’s a huge weight lifted off our shoulders to be selected,” said Ian Andrewes, AYSF team manager. “But, now going into this next step, it doesn’t mean it’s going to get easier. I think everyone on the team realizes how much we’ve all been working towards this goal, and we’ll continue to push hard through to the finals.”

“It’s honestly the most amazing feeling ever,” said Team America Racing trimmer and team manager Jacob La Dow of San Diego. “It’s a dream come true, and at first I couldn’t really believe we had done it. In the beginning of this process, we weren’t as organized. But, with a lot of practice and communication we really came together as a team.”

The following rosters are subject to change:

AMERICAN YOUTH SAILING FORCE

Ian Andrewes, 22, Seattle, WA, Pacific Maritime Institute (graduated)

David Liebenberg, 21, San Francisco, Tufts University

Michael Menninger, 23, Newport Beach, St. Mary’s College of Maryland

Tomas Pastalka, 22, Tiburon, UC Santa Cruz

Matt Pistay, 22, Zenda, WI

Michael Radziejowski, 21, Alameda, UC Santa Cruz

Evan Sjostedt, 19, Long Beach, Seattle University

TEAM AMERICA RACING

Charlie Buckingham, 23, Newport Beach, Georgetown University
(graduated)

Jacob La Dow, 19, San Diego, St. Mary’s College of Maryland

Graham Landy, 19, Virginia Beach, VA, Yale University

Jake Reynolds, 19, San Diego, College of Charleston

Nevin Snow, 19, San Diego, Georgetown University

John Wallace, 20, St. Petersburg, FL, St. Mary’s College of Maryland

Matthew Whitehead, 19, Tampa, FL, University of South Florida

Additional teams will be selected through the Selection Series to take place in February.

Red Bull Youth America’s Cup Schedule:

Early December 2012 – Confirmation of youth teams invited to Red Bull Youth America’s Cup Selection Series (trials for non-U.S. teams)

February 9-24, 2013 – Red Bull Youth America’s Cup Selection Series in

San Francisco (USA & San Francisco teams advance directly to finals)

September 1-4, 2013 – Red Bull Youth America's Cup in San Francisco

Watch the [video here](#), and see www.americascup.com for more info.



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