



Maintaining the AC45's for the International Selection Series Trials

By Vince Casalaina today at 7:10 am

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Ian and Evan maintaining the AC45s inside the Pier 80 shed

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The American Youth Sailing Force (AYSF), has taken over regular maintenance of two AC45 yachts for use in the Red Bull Youth Americas Cup (RBYAC) International Selection Series.

This Selection Series determines which four international youth teams will compete in the RBYAC September 1-4 prior to the America's Cup. The two-part trials take place February 9-15 and February 18-24. The last three days of each Series include direct head-to-head competition between rivals.

Proper yacht maintenance is pivotal to competitive, safe and exciting racing especially in these high-speed 45' catamarans. AYSF Team Manager Ian Andrewes (age 22) and teammate Evan Sjostedt (age 19) are working full-time with ORACLE TEAM USA's AC45 rigger, Sam Newton, to bring the boats into full-competition mode. "It's been a while since some of these boats have gone out and parts need to be upgraded or replaced," according to Ian.



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Attention to every detail on the boats is extremely important. You really don't want something to break going 30 knots. Evan spelled out the level of detail at which they are working. "Yesterday we spliced up a full set of mooring lines and clew strops for the boats and today we worked on disassembling and rebuilding all the winches on the 45s."

Despite the formidable amount of inspection, replacement and rebuilding, the boys are enthusiastic about working with Newton. "Sam is great and super knowledgeable. It's been great getting to know him while working on the boats as well as having him as a guide to how things work around the Pier 80 base. It is also cool to work out with him and have him and the other Oracle sailors challenge us in the gym each day," says Evan.

During the International Selection Series, Ian and Evan are responsible for launching the AC45 race boats daily. According to Evan, "Once the boats are set up for sailing, not a lot goes into the program of getting the boat in and out of the water. It's usually two hours of preparation before sailing and about one hour of work after sailing." For Ian, the AC45s winged sails are

the greatest concern, "They are the most fragile and take the most abuse. I'm hoping there won't be any serious damage during the next two weeks of the Selection Series, but we will be ready either way."

Although far from glamorous work, Evan exudes enthusiasm; "This is a huge advantage to the team to be able to spend this much time on the boats, even if they are on dry land. Essentially we are learning the ins and outs of every system on the AC45." Ian adds, "Its great for us to be tasked with such an opportunity. For us its like we are part of OTUSA.



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