

Formula 16

THE F16 WAS FOUNDED IN 2001 AND THERE ARE NOW A NUMBER OF FULLY OPTIMISED DESIGNS. LEARN MORE ABOUT THE BOATS. FIND OUT WHAT'S HAPPENING ON THE CALENDAR OR THROUGH YOUR CLASS ASSOCIATION.


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Sep
19

Keeping the Faith: F16 European Championship 2019

Posted by [Gill De Bruyne](#)



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F16 EVENTS CALENDAR

Event report by Beau White – Australia.

Top 3 podium:

1st: Lou and Armand – Viper F16 – 1st mixed – 1st youth

2nd: Andi & Andi – Falcon F16 – mixed – 1st masters

3rd: Emmanuel and Eric – Bimare F16 – men's
13th: Teuntje and Doortje – Nacra F16 – 1st women's

33rd: Brian Hillesdon – Falcon F16 – 1st solo

Report:



From the day we began crashing less, sailing faster and moving up the mixed fleet races we have dreamed of racing in a big fleet of F16s. The Australian National in Rye in 2018 was the most perfect regatta, we tasted the high of blasting around in sunshine, strong sea breeze and flat water with 14 other edgy thrill seeking teams. The fleet were young and old. There were muscular young men, pretty girls in bikinis, old

F16 international calender

Heute

Januar 2020 ▼

Mo	Di	Mi	Do	Fr	Sa	So
30	31	1. Jan	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31	1. Feb	2

Terminanzeige in
der Zeitzone:
Mitteleuropäische

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sea dogs and solo steely eyed missile men. We were hooked, caught in the talons of F16 racing. We became class evangelists, we preached to anyone within ear shot about how wonderful our Viper was, how exciting the cut and thrust of racing such an agile craft was. We bounced off the walls with excitement. We were frothing like Jack Russells at the hamster cage when Brett Goodall rolled out the newly massaged and chiseled Viper II. The finest looking sailboat we have seen – bar none.

Folks seemed to dismiss our sermon, they would not believe, they would not see the vision or wade into the clutches of the F16 euphoria we were swirling in. We were oblivious to the imploding fleet in Australia. We just sailed, grinned our faces off and sailed more. We sailed with the F18s in NSW. We headed to Victoria and Sailed the state titles. We bought more boats, we gave our friends that were brave enough a hit of the newfound temptress and they too were under its spell. Sailing our little 16 foot rocket/s as a family become all consuming. Faster and faster we went.

The detractors continued to try poison our pure love, the boat is too short, the boats soft, its too twitchy, the fleet is dead. When we look up we saw our fleet decline and crumble before our eyes. Youth teams that had the capital and commitment required to enter our class dug deeper into their pockets and joined the Nacra 15 pathway and disappeared from the catamaran

Duma

Duma

Falcon

Falcon Marine LLC

Nacra

Nacra Sailing

Viper

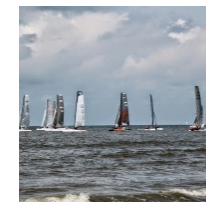
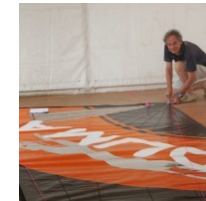
Goodall Design

PHOTO GALLERY

community. The existing youth sailors grew and became too heavy for the little pocket rocket. Fleets dwindled, our national although a great event with close racing and tons of fun saw the fleet drop by almost half. The sceptics nodded and the implosion happened. Our world looked like the shining mansion about to topple over the cliff edge, smash on the rocks below and wash away into the sea.

When the European championship in Bordeaux started gaining momentum it was written in the stars that we should blow the budget, charter a boat, cheat the Australian windless cold winter fingers strangling the last of our enthusiasm and head to magnificent summer in France. Sunshine, different culture, great food, unpasteurized cheese, ski lift downhill mountain bike parks, saucisson, and a Mecca like pilgrimage for two F16 faithfuls to restore their wavering faith.

The key part to making it to an event of this proportion is commitment, you have to just commit. Same as marriage, or approaching that pretty girl in the bar. A bit like clearing a gap jump on a bike. If you dilly dally, hesitate and worry about all the things that could go wrong you will never achieve anything. So we took a page from Richard Brandson's book "Screw it Lets Do it" and dived into the mosh pit, threw in everything we had, booked, paid and went.





Arrival at the club and wandering through the boats being rigged on the beach we felt the energy return. Like a salesman that has been having doors slammed in his face for the whole week and on his return to his office his co-workers pat them at on the pack and hand them the phone message that the big order is about to break. Everyone in the office is excited, you are with your people now and the Gee-up is happening. They understand the challenges, they share the passion, the intricacies and they understand the rewards of these pocket rocket catamarans.



Teams after opening ceremony – the beginning of a ripper regatta

F16 ON FACEBOOK

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The mix was insane....everything. White rum with bananas, ginger and oranges. Teams with 40 kg kids. Old dudes that would look dodgy on an Etchell. Young moms and dads. Moms and Dads supporting kids racing. Dads racing with kids. Belgians, Dutchmen, Germans, Spaniards, Pommies, Suisse, a S ton of Frenchmen, Austrians, Swedes, Saffas from Australia, Australians from Spain the list went on and on. It was a mixing pot of F16 frothers and gun teams that made end of month bubble and squeak stew look compartmentalised. Although they were a diverse bunch, we were with our people, true believers and practicing evangelists of the enlightened way.

The machines were as diverse as the languages and demographics. Nacra F16s were unmistakable with the BIG BLUE NACRA. The factory even bust out three brand new versions built from gods gift to sailing and money lenders....carbon. More on that later.

Beefy looking Goodall Vipers were almost as ubiquitous as the Hobie 16 rentals parked on the beaches nearby. The flexed up younger brother Viper IIs dotted about the place looking for a bit of trouble.

Falcons with their light and sleek build were formidable and there were heaps and heaps of them. Everytime we were on port they appeared like snakes on a plane.

A lone Cirrus with the fattest pear shaped bum we have ever seen zipped around, bristling for a bit of a skirmish.

Then there were Bimares, they seemed to have a similar look to a Wildcat. With the chine on the front and a severe bow piecing bow angle. They slinked about, slipping through the water effortlessly and every bit as fast as everyone else.

There's nothing between any of these boats.



After sail measurement we took our forms to registration where the insurance mafia extended their evil tentacles into our sport. Our usual throwing hands in the air and huffing and puffing about the financial services Nazis was quickly quelled when our very efficient race organisers, advised EURO 10 per person would keep the racketeers at bay. We paid the blood money took our goodie bag of gifts and left, happy to be going racing on our rental from Goodall Design

complete with new sails...who doesn't like new sails yum yum!! And nothing rides like a rental.

Our goodie bag was Christmas in a big brown bag. Magazines, F16 tattoos, waterproof torches, stickers, pens, two F16 branded "you can't take that on a plane" blue flame rope burners and more. A goodie bag is almost as good as new sails, almost.

On the subject of new sails yours truly is not that experienced. We showed our naivete by sticking our numbers on our sail in one straight stripe. AUS333 yeah man! It was pointed out after the first lot went down that it's not to world sailing standard, but so what, they can read it, we can't change it now, and we are not racing for sheep stations. We were here for the vibe, beer, bikini sailing goddesses, a bit of downwind spinnaker action and local duck (Margrite Carnard) speciality right?

Yeah ...But..... We did get protested by the race committee though after Day 3. To which our initial reaction was a hand flapping tantrum similar to the insurance effort we put in at registration. When the dust settled and after a very official meeting with the jury. I have to admit I understood their point. It's a professional race, people are paying a lot of money and putting in huge effort to be here. A level of professionalism needs to be maintained. It's all shifts and giggles on the beach and between the races but we race hard, this is the European

Championship – capital letters and all. Some spare lettering from Goodall and black ductape AUS333 transformed to AUS
14

Training race:

Sea breeze is in, we are late for the start. Nothing new here, just keeping things consistent. Fortunately three general recalls (an omen for the regatta) later we make it to the line and charge off with a tsunami of boats. We are not used to these monster fleets and get buried in what felt like the fifth row. There's swirling limp air left where we are in the wake of the charging fleet, so we swerve to port and go offroad. We have performance tuned our little Aussie rent a racer with Dr Brett Goodall like Dr Ferrari did Lance Armstrong's blood. We go searing through the fleet like a hot knife through dyneema and pull a 5th!!! "That'll do pig that'll do". Next race and another General recall later, the fleet launches off again, and we are left in the turbulent wake again. Same trick, this time we pull a 6th or 7th. Its blowing nicely, its flat, there are boats everywhere, our Viper is working well. We are elated with everything other than the cunningham take up which leaves the slack on the excess rope lying in wait. Waiting viciously to python around my foot on the odd tack. As I'm going round the front of the mast I'm wiggling my foot like a Mexican trying to wriggle a leg humping chihuahua loose.



Proof that leg humping ropes exist on almost every boat. The Dutch team of Robin and Sander Mineur dancing through the fleet on day 1. All said, we love our boat, we are obsessed with the fleet, we like the people, we are in a country that's truly special and we are exceeding our expectations. Our pilgrimage is going well.

Now when you go this far for a regatta, you need to be sure you don't go to win. ? huh? What? all that cash, time off school and work, and you don't intend to win?

Dat's right son!

Going to a regatta with 54 teams all with the intention to win will result in about 100 deflated and frustrated people. So in keeping with our objective to have the most fun possible. Post race we head to Maubuisson for dinner with a bit of a beer buzz going and a fistful of Euros. A great little town with lots of restaurants, bars and a bumping holiday vibe.



Heading into town for Speciality Duck Marghrite. Koala Kevin II still partying like a rockstar with his mates.

Monday had a bit of a hazy start after Sunday's exuberance. What I can tell you is official racing was thwarted by the limp lackluster breeze. Fortunately Goodall design bust out their latest creation that caused a stir to rival lady Gaga's meat dress at the Grammy's.

Is it a boat?

Is it a plane?

Noooooooo! it's a F16 Viper foiler!

Yaaaaaaay!!!! Goes the crowd, the heads turn to watch it zoom past.

Ah the pilgrimage was reaching fever pitch as we cruised about waiting for the race officials to set a course. They were trying to talk down their speed tripping weather vane that was doing a good impression of a breakdancer busting 360s and backflips. At this point anyone with a trap harness and a heartbeat queued up to get on the Goodall flying Viper for a zip and splash about in the swirling air.

The beast would build speed in a zephyr of breeze, rise from the water and build more speed. Stability was fleeting for most teams, the roll would start as the teams now grappled with the balance of foiling. The corrections getting wilder and wilder as the fickle breeze poked about the sails. Faster and faster they went, instructions coming at the sailors machine gun style from the chasing Goodall rib, pinned to stay with the flying fledgling, foils start whistling. Eventually the inevitable pre-puff lull, splash down, then the puff arrives and back up, BIG splash, repeat.



Yours truly and Hellboy looking composed on Brett and Laurent's coolest new toy. Some teams nailed it, some never got it. As the week went on between races teams jumped on

for a burn, at the end of each day, Laurent from Goodall would arrive with a RIB full of punters young and old, ready to take the stocky little two man foiler/F16 racer for a zip splish splash session. Everyone survived unscathed, smiling and grateful for a free joyride on a EURO twenty K something rocketship. Tame the dragon they must. Orders went in and my skipper keeps blurting out how fantastic foiling the boat is and what he will do next time he gets in the pilot seat. Roll on September!

Monday night was country dinner night. No not lamenting cowboys, barn dancing and hats. Teams brought speciality foods from their region or country. There were delights from all over Europe. Cheeses, Pate's, Cured meats, Sausages, Beers, Wine. Smiling faces and friendly banter. We dropped off Koala Kevin II*, a bag of baguettes, butter and Australia's finest. You guessed it – Vegemite in a plastic toothpaste style tube.



Countries laying out the delicious treats. Each person is so proud of their heritage and what their culture has to offer.

We ducked out to fetch our Aussie mate from Bordeaux who was arriving on a train, leaving the Booths to take the fallout from the Vegemite

tasting. In our absence Koala Kevin II was unceremoniously kidnapped and along with the tubes of Australia's finest never seen again.



Koala Kevin II hanging out in France. He is the one with the flag.

Tuesday brought breeze and we slammed in 4 races in varying breeze. The spanner work on the diamond wires was almost as much as trimming the spinnaker. The conditions varied between races from 15 knots to 5. The start lines were a million miles wide, apparently it's a world sailing thing. But to keep things real, the lines were very starboard favoured and more general recalls ensued. The line bias created massive gang banging sessions at the boat end. Boats writhed together, bumped and ground. There was shrieking, guttural shouts and moans emanating from the mass of intertwined craft. We tried throwing our keys in the fish bowl twice and decided it really was not our scene. Instead we opted for a quieter lifestyle, we decided to start lower on the line, search for cleaner air and hopefully make up the lost ground on whoever the triumphant gangbanger would be later on the

course.



Our first race we literally stole a 3rd when the race was shortened. More breeze in the ensuing 3 races ensured more consistent results.

Remember those carbon Nacras? Hmm well a Dutch crew armed with one was killing it! The breeze built, our mouths parched from the adrenaline milking tight racing. One slipped tack and 4 places went begging. A wrong call on a switch and 10 boats went through you or you through them. Ah it was marvellous.

The other Aussie team of Ruben and Rita booth were going well and on one particularly close crossing an "AUSSIE AUSSIE AUSSIE" shout from us was answered with the correct volume and gusto of "OI OI OI" we expect from them.



Aussies from Spain Rita and Ruben Booth on a Bimare X16
Wednesday

Ah the fickle breeze, it sighed, it spluttered, it stalled, it rolled backwards, coughed and we managed one hardback 600 page novel of a marathon three lap driftathon. It was interspersed with an odd cough and flat battery crank but was not the stuff of F16 frothing, wide eyed, downwind sled riding speed freaks.

Then it got hot, oh my sweet Jesus! We held the AGM in a makeshift sauna that was the clubhouse. Key takeaways from the AGM that I can read through my sweat drenched notes.

1. Stephan and Thomas have swapped jobs (Secretary and President)
2. The class is growing everywhere – except Australia and the USA. I have a theory that the F16 class expansion is inversely proportional to the spread of Maccas, KFC

and Burger King outlets in a country.

3. Australia needs to collect some association fees and contribute towards the international organization so we get some feedback to the international organization. Calm down its still a world cheaper than the parking fine I received on my arrival home to Sydney this morning.
4. F16 Worlds are confirmed for Italy on Lake Como at Gravadone next year. More on this to come soon. Thermal breezes, wine, rissotto and more chair lift mountainbiking – its gonna be MAD!!!



Thomas König steps down as president and into the secretary role



Stephan Etienne new class President leading from the front serving alcoholic punch – nice work!

After the AGM, free Pizza was handed out by a rather overworked Frenchman in a pizza van. Builders Q & A was postponed due to the

thermostat for Maubuisson being jammed to MAX and Jacques Pierre accidentally breaking off the knob. We retired to bed in the pressing thermonuclear oven that was our chalet and proceeded to slow cook overnight.

Thursday

Heat brings mist then wind.

Four more races in swinging breeze, yes we had wind, but from everywhere. Starboard favoured start lines once again ensured maximum participation at the boat end orgy and a heap of general recalls. Ultimately we ended up with a heap disqualifications under black flag for folks with premature starting disorder. You can't have that stuff going on at a do like this you know.

Now back to those carbon Nacras.

These boats are fast, but look very similar to the Nacra 15 and 17. The same boats that beat F16 to the Olympics and created the "pathway". Some F16 Sailors are a little sensitive on this. The F16 class has had a hard time competing for youth teams as a result of the Olympic boats over the last few years.



So.....here's the story.

A Kiwi team of kids arrived at the 11th hour fresh from the Nacra 15 youth worlds (which I will go on to gloat about was won by an Aussie ripper from our home club) Now whilst the Kiwi's were getting a bit of a hosing by the F16 rabble, they may have had their charter carbon Nacra F16 machine of speed mistaken for possibly being a foot shorter. The heated battle that is the mid pack can get ferocious. Some of the F16 hardmen are getting long in the tooth and possibly their eyesight is not so sharp and even though NACRA F16 is plastered in bold black 300mm high letters down the side. See exhibit above. I put it to you, that the sight of a fleet depleting Nacra 15 bobbing along on port may have just been too sweet of a target for our F16 fundamentalist. The froth levels at Defcon 5, red mist blasting from his ears, adrenaline oozing from every pore – the story goes that he was lit up on starboard, dropped his head and charged. (well my story goes that way for dramatic effect

anyway)

Or

Was it the extra turn of speed of the charging Bimare F16 compared to the lackluster N15s from the week before that caught our young team's judgement out as they trundled along on port? As an aside – I did notice the kids with N15 experience in the fleet did seem to yell a lot on the race course when they were on Starboard. Whenever we closed in for a flyby they would yell and froth about terribly...hmmf millennials..... anyway I digress. The aftermath of the Nacra/Bimare collision was an interesting destructive investigation of the carbon layup in the new Nacra F16 . Impressive workmanship by the builder was visible in the scything gash that tore deep into the side and across the deck through the antiskid. It was a solid effort by the starboard charger. Unfortunately the beautiful carbon Nacra was done and we lost a good youth team from the regatta.

On the subject of broken boats, another tip is to check the old dophin striker nut after a long trip. A Falcon flying pilgrim to the holy epicenter of F16ship snapped his front beam after the dolphin striker bolt came loose. Following a number of failed bodge job attempts at getting the boat functional, they conceded defeat and their pilgrimage was over. When you are this far from home, a big technical fault is the end of any campaign as is an injury (yes I tripped over a

bollard in the dark after one beer too many but soldiered on bravely). We shudder at the thought, but charge on hoping it won't happen to us and if it does someone will have bits n bobs to bail us out.



Gilles Du Bruyn on his Falcon – He finished well as did all the other Falcons.
Back to Thursdays racing – sorry for the interruption

The course was snakes and ladders, most of the time the right paid until it didn't and the left handers headed for the top mark with their spinnakers up? The for the second race of the day we decided on going up the middle trying to work shifts. We found ourselves flopping about deep in the back end of the huge fleet with a swearing bad tempered helmsman who with every notch up of his temper tantrum lost another 5 positions.



Allyson and Olivier working the light breeze hoping the left was going to pay.

Everyone was getting frustrated, there were protests and downturned faces all around.

Eventually my rude tantrum throwing teenage

HELLmsman from hades was relieved of his

duties and sent to the front of the boat for some

quiet time while I tried to salvage what we could

from the race. My cool calm nerves of steel held

and we clawed back to 20th. The next race

fortunately was abandoned as I steered our craft

around the top mark in last spot combined with

an OCS.

The breeze returned and suddenly began to fill in, the mist lifted.



F16s out of the mist

Sense prevailed and steering was handed back to hell boy who now was displaying a far better demeanor, as was the rest of the fleet. The building breeze was certainly helping extinguish the blazing raw nerves. Hellboy's improved temperament brought us another 3rd place in a particularly exciting finish.

A class dinner was held, the heat was gone and the clubhouse was abuzz and comfortable again. Representatives from the major manufacturers that were in attendance – NACRA (Bob), Goodall Design (Brett and Laurent), Falcon (Gilles) were asked a number of key questions. Answers were conservative but positive, the class is in a good place and we have motivated builders. I kept quiet so as not to start a riotous food fight about deck sweepers and mandatory stripper poles to be installed on all mixed team boats. Both seem as inflammatory.

Then the storms arrived, the same storms that

opened the opportunity for Ergan Bernal to sweep to Tour de France victory amongst the landslides and hail in the Alpes. We left the club as it poured with rain, thunder and lightning. This continued all night and Friday morning. By 10am Friday the rain was easing but the wind had eased with it. At 12 the European Championship 2019 racing was over and the 9 races with two drops was the scorecard.

The bittersweet melancholy that rolls in at the end of a regatta was palatable as the teams starting stripping boats, loading trailers and reminiscing over a great week of racing, vacation and travel.



The podium – we told you it was diverse class! The winners Lou and Armand were the top youth team and top mixed team.

Presentation was an uplifting event, with everyone bar one or two teams attending, everyone was given a random number draw prize. I missed the big box of wine and the packs of Gallette Biscuits, which I rate right up there with Australian coffee. We received our box of

cookies, and I did a quick thank you to the folks that made this event possible. This is apparently referred to as "Flexing" by the millennial downhill mountainbiker twin brother of "Hellboy the Hellmsman "

As part of my "Flex" I would like to:

Thank Goodall Design – this outfit produce beautiful boats, support everyone at the regattas. They put the winning team on a charter Viper II and us on a very schmmick Viper 1. They are supporting our East Coast Grandprix with a charter for the Worlds next year. They brought down a foiler that set the F16 fleet abuzz and opens a new era of F16 sailing, centerboards on race day foiling on training day. One day some of the fleet will race foiling F16s, the young will definitely race foiling somethings. This is the beginning and realisation of what will be inevitable. Maybe this will keep our families racing together and out of the clutches of the Olympic pathway circus.

Rooster sailing

Kit www.roostersailing.com.au although Hellboy had a bad day on Thursday it was never because of the gear he wore. We love the kit and we get great support from Simon who helped us with the Worrell 1000 and is supporting the East Coast GP. We should return the favour.

We want to acknowledge the F16 international association, it's a voluntary group that have

weathered the storm that the N15 and N17 pathway unleashed upon a class in a sport that is already having trouble attracting participants. They have stayed the course and shown resolve. F16 has emerged into the fresh day after the storm with a strong fleet, good builders, a killer event, friendly wonderful motivated people and a lot of very fast sailors.

This is a great class to sail in, the worlds 2020 are set for the third week in July and only the foolish will miss it.

Our faith is restored, we are confirmed F16 frothers. Amen!



Notes:

* Koala Kevin the 1st was lost a few months back on a particularly rowdy night in Val d' Isere. What is it with the Europeans and kidnapping our mascots?

Full results can be found here

: https://www.cerclevoilebordeaux.com/regates/resultats-2019/european_f16_g.htm

Words by Beau White, photos from the F16
Whatsapp group and Beau White.



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