Tressler triumphs

By Michael Nsubuga

British sailor Marcus Tressler of Naivasha Yacht Club won this year's Uganda Laser Open, emerging victorious after a demanding weekend of racing in highly variable and testing conditions on Lake Victoria. This year's event saw 29 competitors racing in the International Laser Class Association (ILCA) (formerly Laser) dinghies across three rig categories: ILCA 7, ILCA 6, and ILCA 4 (previously known as Standard, Radial, and 4.7, respectively). Sailors travelled from Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, and the Netherlands, with participants representing nationalities as diverse as Estonia and Venezuela, underlining the event's growing international profile.

After nine races, Tressler secured the overall Uganda Laser Open title. Fellow Naivasha Yacht Club sailor Daniel Francis claimed second place, while Uganda's Kim Bowerman of VNSC completed the podium in third. The regatta program ran from Friday through Sunday, with sailors aiming to complete a full nine-race series.

Friday's opening two races were sailed in light, unsettled winds accompanied by rain, immediately testing competitors' patience and tactical awareness.

Saturday began dramatically as a storm front swept across the lake, bringing strong winds that eased during the morning races. Shifts of more than 90 degrees demanded constant adjustment and sharp decision-making. In the afternoon, a fading breeze raised concerns that racing might be abandoned. However, the fleet remained focused and resilient, completing two further shortened races despite near-calm conditions.

Sunday provided classic Lake Victoria variety. The first race featured moderate easterly winds that veered significantly southwards, challenging boat handling and tactical judgment.

COURTESY PHOTO



Tressler (L) & Prince Wasajja