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EURO 23
DE PANNE
30/09 - 6/10/2023
EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS SANDYACHTING

FOREWORD

Ben Weyts

Flemish Minister of Sports



Sports make us better. Engaging in active sports improves us physically and mentally. However, even passively enjoying sports has many positive effects on us. From a winning youth swimming competition, a powerful smash in volleyball, or a flawless routine on the balance beam. Such sporting moments inspire us and bring out the best in people.

Sports are like Maizena for our society: they act as a binding agent between young and old, men and women, rich and poor. Just take a look around at any sporting event: the entire world supports together.

As the Flemish Minister of Sports, I support our (top) athletes. After all, they lead the way for all of Flanders. They inspire us. They encourage people of all backgrounds to become more active and engage in sports themselves.

Enjoy. Support. Experience sports.

Sporty regards,

Flemish Minister of Sports

Ben Weyts

THE SPEAKERS

Bram Degrieck

Mayor of De Panne

Text of speaker

I have the honor and the pleasure to warmly welcome you to the first formal gathering on the occasion of the upcoming European Championship Land Yachting on our beaches from September 30th to October 6th.

No other beach is more “Home” to land yachts and sand yachting than the beach of De Panne. We are particularly proud of our status as the "birthplace of sand yachting."

A European Championship is the culmination of the competitive year for many pilots from many countries. Throughout the year, national competitions are held to determine the best-ranked pilots in various classes who then may register for the European Championship.

When I was still active in the sport, I had the pleasure both of participating in several championships and of being part of their organization on our beach. I can testify to the remarkable and familial atmosphere that comes with such an international gathering of pilots from many countries. Make no mistake, on the beach, competition can often be fierce: it remains a sporting competition of the highest level. Pilots use their very best athletic and technical skills, combined with knowledge of the beach's morphology, the performance of the yacht, and accurate assessment of wind conditions, to complete the rounds on the beach as quickly as possible.

The beach of De Panne is extremely suitable for the sport. Conditions change every day. The beach may be full of holes, gullies, and soft sandbanks one day, and the next day lie like a freshly smoothed tablecloth. It's up to the pilots to adapt to Mother Nature!

Organizing a championship involves a lot of dedication and effort, enthusiasm, and expertise from a large group of people. As a local authority, we are proud of our local ambassadors who, championship after championship, manage to raise the bar once again. The local authority invested significantly in collaboration with the organization to achieve maximum visibility for this Championship, the sport itself, and the mighty beach of De Panne.

We wish the organization a lot of favourable winds, a splendid championship with tough competitions, and memorable post-event discussions.

Jan Leye

Vice president of the Royal Sand Yacht Club and team leader of the organising team

Text of speaker

A Unique Sport; an Exceptional European Championship.

The sport of land yachting is not an ordinary sport: it's not a daily feature in sports reports in newspapers and on TV, no superstar athletes, no professional players, no large financial streams, no masses of people donning the gear of professional athletes to show support, no betting offices taking wagers on our results, no market for outrageously expensive sports equipment, no massive crowds jostling at the finish lines.

Land yachting is different; it's a very pure sport. On the beach, amidst ever-changing weather conditions, dependent on the unpredictability of the wind, influenced by tides ebbing and flowing.

Land yachting is a beautiful sport: both spectacular and environmentally friendly. Witnessing a field of land yachts take off and seeing the pilots engage in a fair battle to become the winner is truly impressive.

It's a distinct form of sailing. Land yachts can go faster than the wind. In tacking wind, the pilots sometimes execute hundreds of sailing manoeuvres. Unlike sea-based sailing competitions, land yacht races are easily followed. It happens on the magical strip between the sea and the dunes, the beach.

Land yachting is not recognized as an Olympic sport, but its spirit is purely Olympic. Participation is crucial. Fair play is at the core of our competition regulations. Land yachting isn't a sport where physical condition is all-determining. It's a sport of experience, a mental game, an immersive activity, and even a crafty endeavour. This explains why many participants in a championship have often had a lengthy athletic career.

It also leads to the formation of friendships across different continents through regular reunions at international competitions and championships.

Land yachting has deep roots in De Panne. It's not just the Dumont family. The ordinary people of De Panne were exposed to land yachting early on. For example, my grandfather Jeroom Bruneel was friends with Marcel Comein. During World War I, they were sent to Switzerland on a 'colony' because De Panne had no place for children. When Marcel later started renting out land yachts in addition to cabins, my grandfather was allowed to ride them for free on calm days "to promote the business." He wasn't the only local involved.

It is a special honor for me to lead the organizing team of this championship. It has been (was) quite a challenge. However, I am guided by my belief in land yachting. A person must believe in order to build for the future.

I believe in the uniqueness of our wonderful sport. Through years of repeatedly engaging with the interplay of beach and wind, this sport has become a part of me.

I believe in our land yacht club, which has grown over a period of 100 years through the voluntary efforts of François Dumont and his family, to our extensive group of volunteers who make organizing a championship possible. One could say we are spoiled by the town of De Panne for the magnificent land yacht center we have at our disposal. It is the most beautiful in the world. One could also say that the town of De Panne is fortunate that land yachting originated here thanks to the efforts of the Dumont, Demuysere, Engelbrecht families, as well as the past and present boards of De Krab and the Royal Sand Yacht Club.

I believe in the enduring integration of our sport with De Panne, both in the past and the future.

This will be a special championship. It's the first time since the Covid pandemic that the land yachting community is gathering again. Many are excited. We have a splendid beach. Everyone knows that they are welcomed in De Panne and the land yacht center. We must wear the crown of our club with dignity and contribute

to a continued future. Even if De Panne is ever engulfed by the waves of the sea, it will persist in the story of the history of our sport.

I extend my gratitude to the town of De Panne, our many larger and smaller sponsors, especially our main sponsors Ford, Pla du Joer, Sport Flanders, WWSV, and Westtoer. I also thank everyone who contributes to the success of this championship in their own way.

Ellen Bruynoghe

Kust regional manager at Westtoer

Text of speaker

The European Championship land yachting is a special initiative that will give international exposure to the Belgian Coast. Westtoer is delighted to be involved and to be able to showcase our Belgian Coast in a unique way. What is top-level sport for you is a rewarding tool for us to draw attention to the Coast from the general public.

Land yachting is indeed one of the icons of our Coast. It is a sport that has been practiced here for years and is deeply rooted in our DNA.

It is therefore no surprise that international journalists are eager to capture the land yachts on camera. From renowned publications such as The Times to Algemeen Dagblad and De Volkskrant, from television channels such as ZDF to RTBF, all of them are interested in this wonderful tradition and a visit to the West Coast is always associated with a land yachting initiation. This proves that land yachting is still very much alive and has a unique appeal.

On behalf of Westtoer I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Royal Sand Yacht Club and especially Beachmasters Veerle De Gryse and Seddik Caeyzeele for their ever warm welcome of these journalists.

This shows that our region has much more to offer than just the classic assets of sun, sea, and beach. Land yachting symbolizes the active life that flourishes here.

The Belgian Coast is known for being a region where active experiences are central. Walking and cycling have become obvious activities, but beach sports are also extremely popular here. With 4 marinas, including Nieuwpoort as the largest marina in Northern Europe, 12 yacht clubs, and 26 water sports clubs, totaling more than 19,000 members, the Coast offers numerous possibilities to bring water recreation to a wide audience.

In the future, Westtoer will pay even more attention to "Vitamine Zee" (Vitamine Sea). The slogan “Vitamine Zee” stands for the health benefits one gains from a holiday at the Coast, both physically and mentally. And let's be honest, land yachting is not only a top-level sport, but also a recreational activity that contributes to both physical and mental well-being. Sailing across the wide beach with the wind in your face, is a unique and very healthy experience.

Both Ghent University and VLIZ have been conducting research in recent years to scientifically demonstrate the health benefits of the sea and the Coast. And you

know what? The seawater and sea air contain iodine which have a positive health effect especially in windy weather.

Finally, I would like to wish the initiators of this European Championship success with the final preparations leading up to the competition in October. Once again, this initiative will provide a unique exposure of the Coast nationally and internationally.

Hans-Werner Eickstädt

President of FISLY (International Sailing Yachting Association - Fédération Internationale de Sand et Land Yachting)

International contacts

The first international contacts were made at the 1958 World Exhibition in Brussels, Belgium. In 1961, on this basis, the first INTERNATIONAL WEEK in sand- and land yachting took place in St. Peter-Ording/Germany. 1962 - Foundation of the Fédération Internationale de Sand et Land Yachting - FISLY for short. This first international competition led to the foundation of FISLY in 1962 by the countries Belgium, Great Britain, France and Germany. As a result, the order for holding European Championships was established. In 1964, the second European Championships were held in DE PANNE/BELGIUM. Where today the official seat of FISLY is.

About FISLY

The world organisation of land sailing, Fédération Internationale de Sand et Land Yachting (FISLY), was founded in 1962 and is the governing body of the sport that sets the rules. Initiates and awards World and European Championships and is responsible for the approval of land sailing records.

With nature in nature

The wind is the fuel, the beach the race track. Nature changes both every day. Sometimes every hour or every minute. Speeds of over 130 km/h are reached under regatta conditions. The current world record is 225.58 km/h. It is set by Emirates Team New Zealand in February 2023. Even if sand and land yachting will not be Olympic in 2024, the European Championship of sand and land yachting in DE PANNE follows this Olympic idea.

In 2024, the 17th World Championships will take place in Asnelles/France.

FISLY European Championship 2023 - DE PANNE/BELGIUM

A European Championship like this is not possible without personnel and material support. For this, special thanks go to the municipality of DE PANNE, the commitment of the volunteers, the national federation, the local clubs and the sponsors, without whom this event would not have come about and been feasible.

PRESS RELEASE

European Sand Yachting Championship 2023 in De Panne

De Panne, August 19, 2023 – The European Sand Yachting Championship, EURO23 DE PANNE, is poised to inundate the coastal town of De Panne with excitement and speed. From September 30 to October 6, De Panne will be the epicenter of a spectacular sports event where sand yacht pilots from across Europe will gather to compete for the title of European champion.

De Panne, the undisputed sand yachting hub of Belgium and the birthplace of this unique sport, welcomes the 55th European Sand Yachting Championship, organized by the local Royal Sand Yacht Club. This historic event has a rich tradition, with the world's very first sand yacht race taking place in De Panne in 1909.

With between one hundred and one hundred twenty sand yacht pilots expected from various European countries, EURO23 DE PANNE promises to be an extraordinary spectacle. Competition will take place in four different categories of sand yachts, with pilots reaching speeds up to three times that of the wind. The event will be supported daily by fifty dedicated volunteers, performing a variety of tasks including course direction, judging, scoring, safety, and catering.



The picturesque beach, with its expansive and reliable sandy surface, provides the perfect backdrop for these breathtaking races. The sand yacht center of De Panne, a collaboration between the municipality and local sand yacht clubs, has provided the ideal infrastructure for this prestigious championship.

In addition to the competition, EURO23 DE PANNE also offers space for inclusion and education. The sand yacht school of De Panne opens its doors to anyone

interested in discovering this thrilling sport, including opportunities for people with disabilities.

This year, female sand yacht pilots will compete alongside their male counterparts in the same race. Sand yachting is not only fast and exciting but also environmentally friendly, as the sand yachts derive their speed from the power of the wind. This engaging combination of speed and sustainability has led to growing popularity worldwide.



The future of sand yachting is underscored by the commitment of the Flemish Sailing Federation Wind and Watersport Vlaanderen (WWSV) and the International Federation of Sand and Land Yachting (FISLY), who are constantly working on the development and promotion of this unique discipline. The public is warmly invited to attend the races for free and enjoy the extraordinary feats made possible by human skills in the breathtaking world of sand yachting.

For more information and updates about EURO23 DE PANNE, please visit our official website: www.euro23depanne.be

FAMILIE DUMONT

Hardrien Dumont

A brief story on the origins of sand yachting in De Panne.

Towards the end of the 19th century, the architect and urban planner Albert Dumont embarked on developing the tourist and seaside aspect of De Panne, together with his son Alexis. They had numerous villas constructed there, in the dunes and along the dike, with the specific approach of respecting the natural relief of the dunes rather than flattening them, as was often done in other coastal resorts along the Belgian coast.



A portion of these houses are currently preserved and are primarily located in the area known as "Dumontwijk". During this seaside and tourist development, Albert and his wife Maria had 13 children, most of whom invested themselves in De Panne, particularly in the development, construction, competition, and organization of recreational sand yachting.

Here are some markers related to the Dumont family.

The pioneers and first builders

1898 - André Dumont, 22 years old, built the first sand yacht in De Panne. Square sail, rear steering on a reinforcement mast, and almost entirely made of wood; the square sail only allowed downwind sailing



1902 - Photo of the 12 children of Albert and Maria Dumont in front of the family villa in La Panne.

1899 - Inspired by André Dumont's sand yacht, François Dumont, 19 years old, accompanied by his cousin Jean Hebbelynck, changed the square sail to a triangular Marconi sail and built the first 4-masted sand yacht, which allowed sailing into the sea breeze in both directions.

1900 - Babiche and Henri Dumont Babiche Dumont, 21 years old, built a small single-mast sand yacht with a bollard sail, with the possibility of adding a second sail for downwind sailing.



Henri Dumont, 28 years old, built a sand yacht with iron wheels, i.e., flat rim and wide spokes and metal hubs, but the sail turned out to be too small.



1905 - The Hebbelynck Brothers (cousins of the Dumonts) built a sand yacht by doubling the sail area, but the wooden wheels sank into the sand.

1907 - Benjamin Dumont, 18 years old, inspired by the iron wheel of the Four-Master and its large sail, built his first sand yacht.

1909 - Willy Coppens de Houthulst, Julien Michez.

That year, Benjamin Dumont became a sand yacht builder and created his first sand yacht with pneumatic bicycle wheels, inspired by the Four-Master and Willy Coppens' sand yacht, with bicycle wheels and equipped with a 3.5 square meter sail. It was for Julien Michez who won the first race organized in De Panne. Second place: Willy Coppens, third place: Henri Dumont, fourth place: François Dumont, who broke his steering and arrived very late. Benjamin is ill and does not participate.



1910 - Benjamin Dumont. The wind's push on the sail bends the wheels. Benjamin builds a sand yacht with wheels that tilt according to the wind's strength, but the centre of gravity of the mast comes too close to the leeward wheel. The sand yacht, no longer having the required stability, continuously overturns.



1911 - Benjamin Dumont creates a rental sand yacht in six copies and strengthens the wheels. Around the same time, a certain Clarysse from Middelkerke and Louis Blériot (the former aviator) from Hardelot (France) create highly competitive sand yachts. A small circle forms around the Dumont Brothers, frequented by Willy Coppens de Houthulst, Armand Naegelmaekers, and Baron Robert Sloet d' Oldruitenborgh, who build their own sand yacht. Julien Michez, Jean Hebbelynck, and many others sail on Dumont sand yachts.

1913 - Louis Blériot opens a school to train future aviators. Those who master sand yachting are admitted.

Around Easter 1913, Louis Blériot organizes a race in Hardelot and invites the Dumont Brothers. Great victory for De Panne, which takes the first three places in the 4-mast race.

The Dumont Sand Yacht Clubs in De Panne.

1924 - François Dumont creates the "Sand Yacht Club" and begins to codify the first rules of this sport.

1949 - François Dumont founds the "Belgian Federation of Land Yacht Clubs".

1951 - François Dumont creates the "l'Oiseau Bleu" club on the beach.

1974 - Pierre Nyssens (son of Bob Nyssens, grandson of Anaïs Dumont) creates the Club Benjamin Dumont.

1998 - Pierre Nyssens creates the Club Les Frères Dumont.

1987 - Pierre Nyssens creates the ACVB, Association for Belgian landsailing.

1991 - Pierre Nyssens creates the ISSA, Internation Standart Sandyacht Association.

1998 - Pierre Nyssens creates The Spirit of Bob.

Epilogue

The Dumont family is closely intertwined with the rise of sand yachting, a sport that originated in De Panne 125 years ago and was able to develop thanks to the passion of builders, the competitiveness of pilots, race organizers, clubs, members, volunteers and the town of La Panne. But above all, it thrived thanks to a spirit that can only be found in this little corner of paradise bordered by dunes and vast sandbanks, located at the end of the Belgian coast, between Dunkirk and Nieuwpoort.

The complete text of this history about the Dumont family and sand yachting is available from the championship organizers. organisatie@euro23depanne.be

ROBERT DEMUYSERE

Ambassador of Land Sailing Sport

Text of speech for the inauguration of the Robert Demuysere Path scheduled for Sunday, September 3rd at 4:00 PM.



In Memory of Robert Demuysere Robert Demuysere ° Veurne 12.04.1933 - † Home in De Panne 17.12.2020

Most members of the Royal Sand Yacht Club know Robert from the many times he sang 'Leve De Panne' at special occasions and inspired everyone to sing along. Robert was a true Panne native at heart. He grew up here and experienced remarkable situations during the war years at the hotel his parents managed. He could tell stories about it with a lot of humor. It was situations like those in the TV series 'Allo 'Allo!' - but in real life.

In 1962, Robert became a board member of the Royal Sand Yacht Club. He knew about land sailing and he knew Marcel Comein, who rented and built land sailers. We're talking about a period when sports started to democratize, a time when the 'ordinary' person gradually gained access to sports that were previously only available to the so-called 'better' citizens.

However, Robert was no 'ordinary man'. After a year of daily land sailing - his wife Jacqueline would push him out of bed if he didn't feel like training - he won the European Championship in 1968, which took place in De Panne. He sailed in Class 3 against strong European competition. It wasn't just a European victory. It was also a victory against the established order in land sailing, against the Dumont, Mulle de Terschueren, Houtsaeger families... It was a victory for De Panne. Robert instantly became a celebrity in De Panne and was also honored by the Belgian Olympic Committee. It gave him momentum.

Robert dreamed of a future where more people like him would participate in land sailing. He revitalized the leadership of the Royal Sand Yacht Club with friends from De Panne, like Julien Verdonck, who later became chairman for many years. From 1968, he received calls from the town hall whenever there was a question about land sailing.

He was also the initiator of a youth land sailing club well-known under the name 'De Krab'. He found enthusiastic members in the local scout group. In 1969, Eric Engelbrecht became the first chairman of De Krab until he became chairman of RSYC in 1987. For many years, De Krab served as a breeding ground for many local land sailing pilots, and hopefully, it will continue to do so. De Krab is also unique. Abroad, there haven't been any lasting similar youth clubs.

In 1971, together with Karel De Maeyer, Robert was the inspiration and promoter of the first polyester Class 3 land sailer. It was built by Georges Ameele from Middelkerke. It marked the beginning of Georges Ameele's professional career as a land sailer builder. The child also needed a name. When they were standing in a

row, urinating at the urinal of the local café at Crocodile in Middelkerke, they suddenly found a name for their creation: Demuysere-Ameele-De Maeyer DAD! Due to its low maintenance and weather resistance, land sailing was no longer just a summer sport. From then on, sailing was possible throughout the year.

With the new board, in 1971, a dedicated club cabin was established on the beach at the Rampe, where the Panne surf club stands today.

In 1975, Robert was the driving force behind the first "Potjesregatta," the international land sailing competition that our club has been organizing every year since. Later, he became a sponsor, organizer, and race director of the Demuysere Cup. Gradually, he passed on the pilot's mantle to his sons Pascal, Henri, and Yann, all of whom have become champions in their respective classes multiple times. When people in the Westhoek talk about land sailing, they simultaneously talk about the Demuysere family. Thanks to Robert's years of dedication to land sailing, Demuysere has become a strong brand.

A highlight of his life as a club member was the opening of the previous land sailing center and clubhouse in 1992. It marked the realization of all his dreams for which he managed to inspire so many people. On this occasion, when we raised the club flag with the board, he sang 'Leve De Panne' with full devotion - for the first time, in my memory. Since then, we have sung it many times at festive occasions or during prize ceremonies.

His enthusiasm for land sailing and for De Panne remained strong. Eventually, Robert also became the chairman of the Belgian Federation from 1992 to 1997. During that time, he was also a board member of the international land sailing federation FISLY. And that's not all. Among other things, Robert was also the chairman of the church committee of the OLV church in De Panne. Every year, he faithfully participated as Pilate in the Procession of Penitents in Veurne. He has 6 children and many grandchildren and great-grandchildren, many of whom regularly visit the club. His grandson Lucas will participate in a European Championship in De Panne for the first time this year.

Robert had a unique and beautiful marriage with his wife Jacqueline, who supported him in all his endeavors. She was his 'Cherchez la Femme.' He loved her and he said so.

Robert made real what had been smoldering for a long time. Land sailing was ready for democratization. The ideas were already alive in people like Maurice Debra, Jean-Jacques de Grave, Georges Veraert. Robert made it happen.

A second aspect of Robert's significance for land sailing is that it's important for the Royal Sand Yacht Club, together with the youth club De Krab, to remain an open club that welcomes anyone with a passion for land sailing.

INTERESTING COMMUNICATION-ITEMS

- EURO23 DE PANNE is the logo for the European Championship in land yachting to be held in De Panne in October of this year.
- De Panne is perhaps the most important land yachting centre in the world, and the local club, Royal Sand Yacht Club, is organizing the 2023 European Championship. It is the 55th European Championship. In 2010, the World Championship in land yachting was also held in De Panne.
- This year's European Championship in beach sailing is expected to host between one hundred and one hundred fifty land yacht pilots from at least seven European countries. The competition will take place in four different categories (also referred to as Classes) of land yachts.
- During the European Championship in beach sailing, fifty volunteers will be involved daily as race directors, judges, safety personnel, reception, catering, etc. The organizing Royal Sand Yacht Club receives significant support from the Municipality of De Panne.
- The land yacht school in De Panne welcomes all enthusiasts for short land yachting courses on an almost daily basis.
- Land yachts require hard sand on a sufficiently wide beach, which is only available from three hours before to three hours after low tide. Sailing is not possible during high tide.
- DE PANNE is Belgium's primary land yachting centre. It is also the birthplace of land yachting worldwide. There are 2 clubs. There is a land yacht school.
- Land yachting is an outlier in the world of sports because there are not many places where it can be practiced. For traditional large land yachts, it is only possible on a sufficiently large sandy beach or in a desert or salt flat. Nowadays, smaller types of land yachts are also sailed on smaller beaches.
- A land yacht race is a spectacular event for both the audience and photographers. No other sailing sport can achieve such high speeds. Land yachts can reach speeds of up to three times the wind speed. Pilots aim to achieve as much speed as possible and must steer their yachts over the hardest sections of the beach, ensuring they do not lose their speed.
- Land yachts are raced in Europe in Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, England, France, Switzerland, Denmark, Ireland, Spain, Portugal, Lithuania, and more. In the United States, South America (Argentina), and Australia, sailing on dried salt lakes is also practiced. There is even land yachting activity in Djibouti (Africa).
- De Panne's beach is exceptionally suitable for land yacht racing. It is wide and expansive, and very reliable in terms of drivability. On some beaches, many pits remain at low tide. Additionally, there are no breakwaters in De Panne.
- Sailing takes place during low tide. The wet beach is firm and can be up to 400 meters wide. Of course, there are puddles that need to be avoided.

- A major asset for De Panne is the land yacht centre, built by the Municipality of De Panne for land yachting, in collaboration with the two land yacht clubs of De Panne, the Royal Sand Yacht Club, and the youth club De Krab. The land yacht centre is located right on the beach and includes a hangar, technical space, and a cosy clubhouse. Pilots from abroad enjoy coming here, and non-sailing visitors are welcome as well.
- FISLY, the international association for land yachting, representing countries from all over the world, has its headquarters at the land yacht centre in De Panne. De Panne also has a youth land yacht club called DE KRAB. Young people from De Panne and the surrounding area are welcome to learn about the sport.
- The Royal Sand Yacht Club has a land yacht school where anyone can get acquainted with this fantastic sport.
- The land yacht school introduces approximately 3,500 adults and children to the sport of land yachting through introductory lessons on De Panne's beach each year. There are also opportunities for people with disabilities.

Belgian Land Yacht Pilots - Women in Land Yachting

- There are several categories or "classes" that will compete in this championship. Championships are often discussed because there is a winner in each class.
- Henri Demuysere from De Panne competes in Class 2. Over the years, he has achieved a long list of podium finishes at European and World Championships.
- Egon Plovier, who grew up in De Panne and now lives in Oostende, has been a two-time world champion in Class 3 and won the championship in the Netherlands in 2019. He is a top favorite in this class.
- Ivan Ameele from Middelkerke has also been a European champion in the past. He also has a chance to secure a podium spot in Class 3 this year, which won't be easy due to tough competition.
- Yann Demuysere competes in the Standard class. He secured a first-place finish at the World Championship in 2010.
- In the Standard class, Belgian Thierry Kaisin (Brussels) also competes. He became world champion in 2014 at the dry Smith Creek Lake in Nevada, USA.
- In Class 5, Mark Depauw, who finished 10th in the European Championship last year, will represent Belgium.
- Since the first championship in 1963, women have also been competing in the championships. In the land yacht classes participating in this year's European Championship (Classes 2, 3, 5, and Standard), they have been racing alongside men in the same competition for a long time.
- Women have a separate ranking within the overall ranking (women + men) and also have their own ranking. The first woman in a class becomes the European Champion in that class. There have been instances where the first woman was faster than the men, making her the "overall" champion. In 2003, the Frenchwoman Hélène Cazier became the European champion in Class 3, ahead of the best-performing man.

Land Yachts are Fast and Eco-Friendly

- Sometimes silently, always powered by their own energy, land yachts can reach speeds of up to 3 times the wind speed!! Their energy source is the wind! It can hardly get more climate-neutral than that.
- Land yachting has long been one of the fastest sailing sports.
- Recently, on the 14th of April 2023, Emirates Team New Zealand (4-time winner of the America's Cup, the world's most famous sailing competition) set the land speed sailing record at 225,58 km/h. This made headlines internationally.
- The land yachts in the championship will not reach such high speeds. Speeds around 100 km/h are possible under ideal conditions.
- FISLY, the international association for land yachting with its headquarters at the land yacht centre in De Panne, has validated the new speed record.

Past

- De Panne is the birthplace of land yachting. This year marks the 125th anniversary of the appearance of the first land yacht by the brothers Benjamin and François Dumont on the beach of De Panne in 1898.
- The world's very first land yacht race took place in De Panne in 1909, marking the beginning of land yachting as a sport.
- Willy Coppens learned about land yachting through the Dumonts. He built his first land yacht in 1908. He became a pilot and a hero in World War I, specializing in shooting down German observation balloons. After surviving a crash in Houthulst and being awarded the noble title Willy Coppens d'Houthulst, he became the first land yacht pilot with a disability due to losing a leg. It was considered inappropriate to pass him by pushing your land yacht.
- The ROYAL SAND YACHT CLUB will celebrate its 100th anniversary next year. It is the oldest land yacht club in the world.
- In the club, there is a section called HISTORIC SAND YACHTS INTERNATIONAL. This group maintains older land yachts in working order. The oldest still-running land yacht was built in 1913.
- The town hall of De Panne houses a restored land yacht built by François Dumont around 1925.
- The Frenchman Louis Blériot, who was the first to fly across the English Channel in an airplane in 1910, also built land yachts that could be ordered.
- A well-known name associated with land yachting is Robert Demuysere, who won the European Championship in De Panne in 1968 and became an ambassador of the sport through years of dedication to its growth. During the European Championship, the road next to the land yacht centre will be named "Robert Demuysere Path."

The Future - WWSV - FISLY

- The Flemish sailing federation Wind and Watersport Vlaanderen emphasizes the importance of land yachting within their federation.

- Land yachting is complementary to other sailing disciplines. During the winter and offseason, when there is no sailing on water, the beaches are free for land yachting. • Land yachting teaches skills that are useful on the water.
- Land yachting is a fantastic discipline with tradition, history, and many motivated athletes and volunteers.
- WWSV aims to give BLOKART sailors and sailors with other small land yachts a significant role in the development of the sport along the coast. These land yachts are very accessible and require little space.
- Land yachting offers interesting opportunities in the context of G-sport (sport for people with disabilities). WWSV is taking actions in this regard.
- FISLY Ranking. On the occasion of its 60th anniversary, FISLY is creating an international ranking of pilots called "International Ranking." The goal is to highlight major competitions and create year-round competition among pilots from around the world in each class, valuing their performance in national, international, continental, and world championships.
- The International Association for Sand and Land Yachting - FISLY - continues to work internationally to develop the sport.

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EURO 23 DE PANNE

30/09 - 6/10/2023

EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIPS SANDYACHTING

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WIND & WATERSPORT VLAANDEREN