

Pieter Taselaar and *Bliksem* Team Crowned 2012 Viper 640 North American Champions



MARBLEHEAD, Mass. (September 9): Pieter Taselaar, Willem van Waay and Nick Thompson aboard *Bliksem* erased Saturday's two point deficit in Sunday's only race to win the 2012 Viper 640 North American Championship by four points over Glyn Locke's *Fer de Lance* program. The win is Taselaar's first in the Viper 640 NAs, having won a world championship in Melges 32s in 2009 and the Viper 640 Atlantic Coast Championship in 2011.

Heading into Sunday, five teams had a shot at the title, though the top two teams determined their own destinies. For Locke, the mission was simple: stay ahead of Taselaar to win the championship. For Taselaar, the mission was tougher: beat Locke, and put at least one boat in between the two of them, as Taselaar held the tiebreaker advantage by virtue of more first place finishes. Neither Taselaar nor Locke had any margin for error, with both teams already discarding high scores from Race 5. A second poor finish would open the door for three-time defending champion Brad Boston, lurking in third with the only string of single-digit scores in the entire fleet, and two other teams only a few points behind if either of the top three faltered.

In short, it was the type of day where if you were on top, you hoped for steady, solid breeze to allow for clean sailing. On Sunday, Marblehead had other plans: after three days of sea breeze, sailors awoke for the final day with the wind blowing from the exact opposite direction: a shifty west-northwest wind coming over land that would be anything but consistent. There was enough wind to start on time, giving competitors hope for at least two races to close the hotly contested regatta and determine the winner. Two general recalls later, the wind began to die to six knots.



The race committee's third attempt allowed competitors from the pin to tack quickly onto port, and the leaders played the winds up the beat, which trended right, but otherwise shifted through 30-40 degrees as competitors approached the mark along the shore of Marblehead Neck.

(Left: Pieter Taselaar (USA 117, first boat from left) leads shortly after the start of Race 10 with his closest competition, Glyn Locke's *Fer de Lance* team in his sights GBR 123, fifth boat from left. Photo by Leighton O'Connor)

Jason Carroll's team aboard *Argo* rounded first and never looked back to win their second race of the series. A few places back, *Bliksem* had managed a slightly better start than *Fer de Lance* and kept the British team at bay up the beat. Despite the difficult conditions, large windshifts and dying breeze, *Bliksem* managed a third in the race to *Fer de Lance*'s ninth. The RC waited to see if conditions would improve for a decisive eleventh race, but when they did not, the three guns signaling abandonment for the day meant the title would go to Taselaar.



(Right: *Bliksem* shows strong upwind form on Day 1 of the 2012 Viper 640 NAs. Photo by Leighton O'Connor)



Among the other prizes awarded at the NAs, Craig and Deborah Wilusz from Fort Walton Beach, Florida won the "Pride of the Peloton" award for the highest overall finish for a boat not finishing a race in the top quartile. Ron Schute from Ottawa, Canada, propelled by his second place finish in Sunday's race, finished perfectly midfleet and his entire crew won full foul weather gear outfits from sponsor Atlantis Weathergear. Locke and his team won the Viper 640 EFG Pan American

Championship for the second consecutive year by virtue of their strong finishes at a series of regattas from Miami to Newport and through the North Americans. The 2013 Viper 640 North Americans will be held October 10-14, 2013 at Houston Yacht Club in Texas.

Final scores after 10 races (scores include a discard – [full results posted on Yacht Scoring](#))

1. *Bliksem*, Pieter Taselaar (Scarsdale, NY): 2, 1, 7, 1, (24), 1, 4, 7, 3, 3 = 29 pts
2. *Fer de Lance*, Glyn Locke (Yarmouth, UK): 1, 2, 2, 9, (23), 4, 3, 1, 2, 9 = 33 pts
3. *Jackpot*, Brad Boston (Sarnia, ONT): 6, 3, 5, 6, 4, 7, (9), 2, 1, 4 = 38 pts
4. *Don't Forget Alice*, Rod Beurteaux (East Fremantle, AUS): 8, (12), 3, 4, 2, 6, 1, 11, 4, 8 = 47 pts
5. *Mambo Kings*, Justin Scott (Greenwich, CT): 3, 5, 4, 7, 6, 10, 5, 3, RDG/5, (12) = 48 pts
6. *Argo*, Jason Carroll (New York, NY): 19, (DNF), 8, 14, 1, 5, 10, 4, 5, 1 = 67 pts
7. *Pink Storm*, Barry Parkin (Riverside, CT): 4, 15, (35), 22, 7, 9, 2, 5, 6, 10 = 80 pts
8. *License To Kill*, Tyler Moore (Hampton, VA): 5, (36), 1, 20, 10, 2, 6, 12, 15, 13 = 84 pts
9. *Smokin*, Somers Kempe (Hamilton, BER): 13, 7, 15, (29), 21, 12, 8, 8, 7, 5 = 96 pts
10. *3 Grins*, Dave Nickerson/Moise Solomon (Mystic, CT): 14, 10, 10, (24), 8, 13, 18, 9, 13, 16 = 111 pts

For more information about the event, please visit the event website at 2012na.viper640.org The Viper 640 is a 21-foot sportboat known for its speed and simplicity. For more information about the boat, please visit the class website at www.viper640.org

The 2012 Viper North Americans is presented by EFG Bank, with additional support from Bacardi, Rondar Raceboats, Atlantis Weathergear, Ullman Sails, Doyle Sails, Evolution Sails, North Sails and Mauri Pro Sailing.

