

TOPPER – World Championships : Loctudy, France

The 2017 Topper World Championships were held at Loctudy, France 22-28th July. The location was excellent, based at the Centre Nautique in the middle of a broad sandy bay. The weather conditions were good throughout, with all 5 days sailable, characterised as 3 days Force 3+; 2 days Force 2, which made for a great competition across the fleet of 211 competitors. The Toppers were divided into two world fleets : 156 entries in the 5.3 class and 55 in the 4.2 class

The competition was organised around 3 days of qualifiers, with the final 2 days for championship racing within Gold, Silver and Bronze flights.

Competition on the water was fierce with hi-activity onshore and for the first time a China night, giving a preview of what to expect in Shenzhen, China 2018. Notably, 43 of the entries in 2017 came from China, who are now gearing up for their hosting in 2018

Ireland was well represented in the 5.3 class, with a total of 31 (20% overall) competitors, 18 from ROI and 13 from NI, and with Eoghan Turner unfortunately having to sit it out after an earlier leg injury. In the 4.2 class, 4 competitors from the North took the overall Irish representation up to 35.



At the end of the event, honours went to GBR's Scott Wilkinson. Dan McGaughey, who had been in contention for a top three finish, suffered broken mast at the start of the final stage and having to use this as his discard, still ended up with a well deserved 3rd place. Overall, the Irish had a great event with a number of top 3 places in the both the qualifiers and finals, with overall gold fleet finishes for Rob Keal (8th), Jenna McCarlie (11th), Erin McIlwaine (12th) and Conor Horgan (14th). In the Silver fleet, Evie McLaughlin took a well deserved overall first place.

Well done to everyone who travelled to France to take part in the event and to the coaches and parents for their support during the week.

