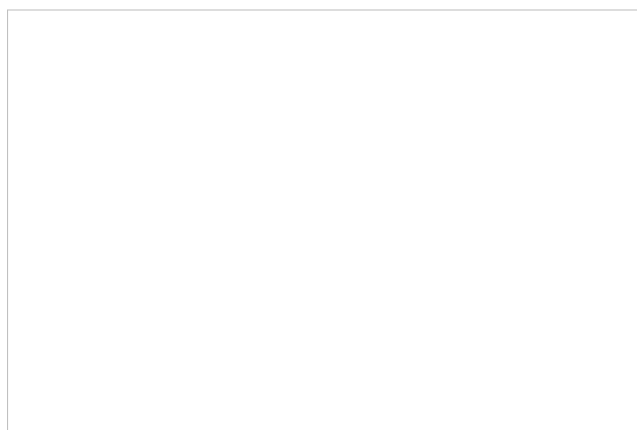


On Deck: Andrew Lewis



Three-time Laser Olympian in sailing Andrew Lewis has been named ILCA 7 Canadian National Team Coach. "On Deck" conversation with the former athlete from Trinidad and Tobago who has now turned to coaching.



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Congratulations on your nomination Andrew! How does it feel?

You never know when is the perfect time to retire as an athlete. If you do it too early, you may miss out on medals and if you do it too late, then you end your career on a low. You just never know. But for me, I knew this was the perfect moment. I've envisioned this for a while, so it really feels amazing. I am stoked for this new chapter of my life, and the nice thing is that I can always just go back in the boat for a fun sail, as I did with Sarah Douglas and the ILCA 6 girls a couple of weeks ago to enjoy the boat I love to sail so

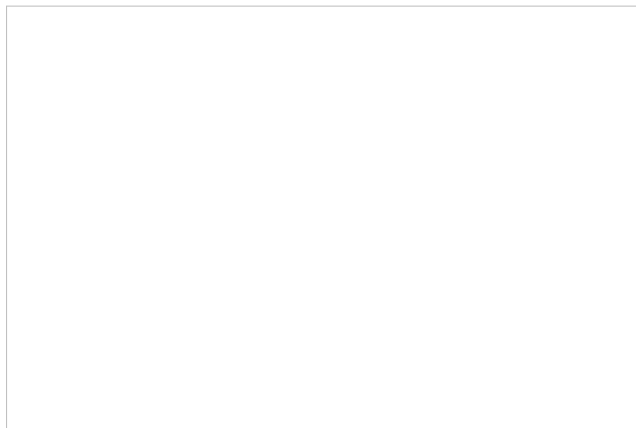
much.

You've taken part in three Olympic Games, including Tokyo 2020 last summer. What are your fondest memories as an athlete?

To be honest, my first Olympic Games took place at a time when so much of my life's mysteries and mental confusion all came into alignment and things became clearer. So, really, qualifying for London 2012 and then having that experience was something like no other. It just made life on this planet make so much more sense.

How did you come to the decision of retiring and becoming a coach?

I have built up a very large database of information, contacts and skills that if I was to go on any path other than becoming an ILCA 7 or 6 coach, they would not have been utilized to their truest potential. I wanted to see my 20-year investment in sailing go back into sailing, so coaching was simply the best way.



When did you start coaching?

I've been coaching since I was 13 years of age. Back then, I would coach Learn to Sail at my yacht club for the Optimist program. So I've been coaching for a long time at many different levels, but it had never been my main focus until now.

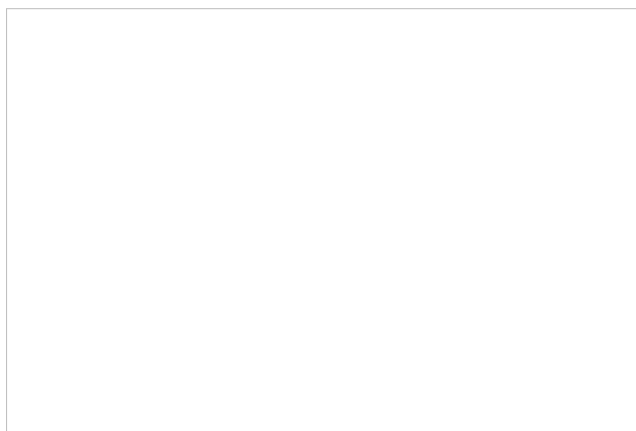
Why did you decide to work with the Canadian team?

We have a bond that goes way back. I have been training with the Canadians since 2011. Canada is a beautiful country, my wife is a Canadian citizen, my

daughter was born in Canada last year and I love sailing in Canada in the summer. There are so many reasons but when the ILCA 7 team needed a leader, I saw that opportunity to be a perfect fit.

Aside from teaching the skills you have acquired through the years, what will you bring from your athlete's background to your work as a coach?

I have built a strong base in terms of networking, marketing, media and personal brand. My background is based on overall leadership. I believe I can lead a generation of sailors to a place of purpose and passion in life, and I believe that will bring them to achieve great results in their sailing.



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You will be coaching Sail Canada Development Squad members in ILCA 7, as well as Tom Ramshaw who just switched from Finn. How is he doing?

Tom is an amazing human being. He was actually my training partner up to 2015. He has even been to Trinidad and Tobago to train with me. We really go way back and we share great memories. Working with Tom has been really cool. He is a world-class sailor, which makes the process very exciting as I think he is still full of so much potential, even at this late stage of his Olympic career. I look forward to helping him explore it and bring it to light.

What are your fondest memories from Canada?

I have been to Canada more times than I can count. The Pan Am Games in

Toronto in 2015 were definitely a big highlight for me. They put on an amazing competition, and I was also able to qualify for my second Olympics at that event.

Leading up to the 2016 Olympic Games, you had an accident in Rio and suffered life-threatening injuries. How much of a scare was it?

I was fearful at times, mainly every time I went into major surgery. But I was more concerned about questions like will I ever walk properly again, breathe normally again and be able to chew food again.

What's next for the Canadian ILCA 7 athletes?

We are now in Europe; Palma, then Hyeres.

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