

DMG MORI SAILING TEAM

The DMG MORI SAILING ACADEMY – based in Lorient, France – welcomes young sailing talents to grow their skills by being part of the DMG MORI SAILING TEAM.

The DMG MORI SAILING ACADEMY launches its Trainee Program and presents the young talents selected for the 2022-23 season

Knowledge transfer and fostering young people have always been part of DMG MORI's corporate philosophy. Therefore, the DMG MORI SAILING TEAM empowers talents to work in offshore sailing through a trainee program as part of the DMG MORI SAILING ACADEMY. The trainees will train and race on brand-new Mini 6.50 prototype boats from February 2022 onwards. In a multi-stage selection process, the final candidates for the 2022-23 season were chosen from over 200 applicants and will be permanent members of the team. The long-term goal is to create a sailing culture in Asia and make the sport better known worldwide. Youth development is a key element hereby.

The trainee program – empowering talents to pursue their career in offshore sailing

With the DMG MORI SAILING ACADEMY, founded in 2021, THE DMG MORI SAILING TEAM aims to empower young talents to work in offshore sailing. The trainees can train and race on two brand-new Mini 6.50 prototype boats, which are currently being built by the team. The design chosen is the “Maximum” by David Raison, a Mini 6.50 characterized by a “scow type” design with a large bow. The goal is the successful participation in the Mini Transat 2023. Sailing coaching is part of the program, starting in February 2022, as well as valuable insights into boat building, electronics, and project management. The academy builds on the solid experience and know-how of a professional offshore racing team. Skipper Kojiro Shiraishi and the crew have successfully mastered the Vendée Globe 2020 – the so-called “Everest of the Seas”. The trainees will grow their skills by being a full member of the team. The academy is based in Lorient, France.

Dr.-Eng. Masahiko Mori, president and CEO DMG MORI CO. LTD., emphasizes: *“Fostering young people have always been part of our corporate philosophy. Kojiro Shiraishi is an excellent mentor for the next generation of sailors and the DMG MORI SAILING TEAM gives the young talents the right know-how and tools to pursue their sailing career. Our long-term goal is to create a sailing culture in Asia and make the sport better known worldwide. Youth development is a key component hereby.”*

Skipper Kojiro Shiraishi was himself inspired and accompanied by his mentor Yukoh Tada in his career: *“Since a very young age, I always wondered what was hiding behind the oceans in front of my hometown Kamakura. I always wanted to venture in the oceans and see it for myself. I thought about commercial fishing as a career but the day I heard about the feats of Yukoh Tada, I knew at that moment that I wanted to be like him. Yukoh Tada became my mentor and I learnt the most important thing from him: Enjoy every moments of my life. I will do my best mentoring all the trainees and also I might learn a few things from them, too.”*

The trainee selection process for the 2022-23 season

Two young talents from Japan who already work for the team and have proven their skills were selected for the program: Federico Sampei (skipper trainee) and Hajime Kokumai (co-skipper trainee). In addition, there was one vacancy for a skipper trainee and one for a co-skipper trainee for the 2022-23 season. Highly motivated Mini 6.50 Transat Rookies with a strong academic background were sought. An engineering degree was preferred as DMG MORI is a technology-driven company and this fact is also deeply rooted in the spirit of the sailing team. Candidates could apply from July to September 2021 and were asked to show their motivation. More than 200 applications from around the globe were received. After a thorough review of all documents, a first selection of 20 candidates was made and they were individually interviewed online. Finally, the top candidates were invited to the team's base in Lorient for a applicants' weekend on 13th and 14th November 2021. The aim was to get to know the candidates better and to assess not only their professional suitability but also their fit into the team. In addition to personal interviews and diverse workshops with the sailing team, the aspirants also demonstrated their sailing skills on the water.

The decision was ultimately made in favour of Laure Galley as skipper trainee and Alexandre Demange as her co-skipper. Irene Bader, Managing Director DMG MORI Sports Marketing SAS and Director Global Marketing, DMG MORI Co LTD., is convinced that they have found the right candidates: *„I am deeply impressed by these outstanding young talents: their ambition, technological affinity and team spirit are inspiring. They are an asset to our Global One Company and we will learn a lot from each other. In addition, we had the pleasure of meeting many great applicants and look forward to staying in touch with them through a mentoring program.“*

The next generation of sailing talents: the trainees of the 2022-23 season

Laure Galley – Skipper trainee

The French woman has a long passion for sailing. After completing her engineering degree in Mechanical Engineering and Design at the University of Technology of Belfort-Montbéliard, Laure is currently working as a boatbuilding engineer. She brings a strong technical know-how to the team. Laure is a team player with a lot of enthusiasm for innovation, state-of-the-art technology and boat building in competitive sailing. She has experience in both Inshore and Offshore Sailing. As a Skipper Trainee, she will have the chance to further develop her skills.

Alexandre Demange – Co-Skipper trainee

Alexandre Demange is currently finishing his master's degree in engineering at EIGSI in La Rochelle. Working in the field of ocean racing has always been his goal. Therefore, his education covers a wide range of specialization, from mechanical design to electronics and digital simulation. He skillfully combines engineering knowledge and his passion for sailing. Alexandre has been a high-level sportsman for eight years, with French championship titles (420 and 470) and numerous international podium positions. He will join the team as Co-Skipper of Laure Galley.

Federico Sampei – Skipper trainee

Federico Sampei has been with the DMG MORI Sailing Team since its inception in 2018. In the team, the young Japanese sailor looks after all on-board aspects of the IMOCA 60, except for the electronics. He was also Kojiro’s on-water training partner in preparation for the Vendée Globe 2020. Federico’s very first time on a yacht was when test sailing for the 35th America’s Cup in the Japanese Softbank team. Sailing has become a part of his life ever since then. As a skipper trainee, he comes one step closer to his dream of sailing around the world.

Hajime Kokumai – Co-Skipper trainee

27-year-old Hajime Kokumai, who goes by the nickname “Alex”, represented Japan in the “Finn” Olympic class as a member of the Japanese National sailing team from 2018 to 2020. Before that, he studied International Culture and Sports Science at Hosei University in Tokyo. He has been working for the DMG MORI Sailing Team since June 2021 and has accompanied the IMOCA 60 during the Japan Tour. A quick grasp, affinity for technology and his experience from his Tokyo 2020 Olympic campaign set him apart. Alex will be Federico Sampei’s co-skipper and will also work closely with the technical team.

During the application process for the trainee positions, there were many impressive talents identified with whom the team would like to remain in close exchange and contact. As part of the talent pool, they will be invited to sailing sessions and coaching sessions or benefit from a mentoring program.

From spring 2022, the trainees will take part in various races in addition to their training sessions to collect nautical miles to secure the qualification for the Mini Transat 2023. The exact 2022-23 race schedule will be individually adapted to each trainee.



Laure Galley



Alexandre Demange



Federico Sampei



Hajime Kokumai

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Top candidates during the Applicants Weekend in November 2021 in Lorient, France



Laure Galley and Alexandre Demange during a workshop

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Thomas Deregnieux / QAPTUR / DMG MORI

Mini 6.50 prototypes in progress

About DMG MORI

DMG MORI is a leading global manufacturer of machine tools. Our integrated automation, digitization and sustainability solutions broaden the company's core business of turning and milling machines, advanced technologies (Ultrasonic, Lasertec) and additive manufacturing. Our customer-oriented services over the course of a machine tool's entire lifecycle include training, repair, maintenance and spare parts service.

The success of our "Global One Company" is won by around 12,000 employees worldwide. With 138 sales and service locations – including 15 production plants – we are globally present and deliver to over 100,000 customers from 54 industries in 86 countries.

About the DMG MORI Sailing Team

Established in 2018, the DMG MORI Sailing Team is a professional offshore racing team based in Lorient, France. The Japanese Skipper Kojiro Shiraishi and the crew successfully mastered the Vendée Globe 2020, which is considered to be the toughest race in the world. With the DMG MORI Sailing Academy, founded in 2021, young talents are empowered to work in offshore sailing and to grow their skills by being part of the DMG MORI Sailing Team.