

# UBC Students prepare to Defend their Championship at Sailbot 2013

BY DAVID RAHN

A large team of science and engineering students at the University of BC is preparing to defend its title at the 7th International Robotic Sailing Championships to be held at Olin College, Boston MA, June 9 through 13. Last year's UBC team won the event on home waters (jointly sponsored event by UBC and the Royal Vancouver Yacht Club) with a new record 47 out of 50 possible points scored over several days of challenging racing and manoeuvring designed to test the abilities of the boats in both PC and autonomous modes. This year's crew, under returning team captain Krisstoffor Vik Hansen and team advisor Don Martin, includes 31 first- through fourth-year UBC students in Electrical, Computer and Integrated Engineering, and, Computer and Allied Science.

Construction of THUNDERBIRD 2013 was completed in early spring and on-water testing and programming development continues until May 25 when the boat will be packed and shipped to Boston. For more on the International Robotic Sailing Championships and the UBC team's progress, visit [www.ubcsailbot.org](http://www.ubcsailbot.org) ◀



PHOTOS COURTESY OF UBC SAILBOT

THUNDERBIRD 2013 on a shakedown sail in English Bay. Fine-tuning the rigs and computer programs takes weeks of testing in real conditions. At the competition, the boat will be required to race long and short courses without any operator assistance, using its own sensors, mechanical systems and computer programming to manoeuvre through the courses and competitors.



THUNDERBIRD 2013 mixes it up with a fleet of 49ers and Lasers during the Wednesday evening race series on English Bay.

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