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Annapolis windsurfer qualifies for Olympics

By BILL WAGNER, Staff Writer

Published 03/29/12

Annapolis sailor Farrah Hall has officially qualified for the 2012 Summer Olympics, being hosted by London.



Farrah Hall

Hall had already earned the right to represent the United States in female RS:X Windsurfing class through her performance at a series of regattas. However, the U.S. had not secured one of 28 slots in the Olympic sailing regatta in that particular discipline.

The Broadneck High graduate took care of that snag during the RS:X World Championships, which concluded Tuesday off Cadiz, Spain. Hall placed 40th overall in a fleet of 80 entries at worlds and second among countries that had not qualified for the Olympics.

"I feel that I've met my goals for this event and I'm really excited to have finalized my Olympic spot. We had a really tough event and I'm relieved that it's finally over!" Hall told The Capital via e-mail from Spain on Wednesday.

"I'm glad the USA now has a full Olympic sailing team. This quad was significantly harder than the last in terms of qualifying, and the level of the fleet has gone up exponentially. Going to the Olympics this round really means that I've found some success. I'm excited to be representing the USA at the Olympic Games and feel I have the chance to make a real impact in terms of results."

Hall sailed the finest race of her career on the final day of qualifying portion of the series, which split the women's windsurfers into Gold and Silver fleets. The St. Mary's College got a great start and sailed flawlessly in strong winds to finish seventh. That result qualified her for the Gold fleet and guaranteed she would be one of the top seven finishers among nations that had not qualified for the Olympics.

"I'm happy that I've made a real breakthrough in heavy air and planing conditions. I've fought really hard to improve my program, and feel that I've made a lot of progress in the

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last few months," Hall said.

Lilian De Geus of The Netherlands was the top finisher among countries that had not secured a spot in the Olympics, placing 32nd overall with 200 total points. Hall, who is sponsored by Compass Marketing of Annapolis, was 22nd in Race 1 and 25th in Race 2 and 3 en route to totaling 273 points.

"Our team is excited that we have now qualified for the Games in all Olympic and Paralympic Classes," said Dean Brenner, Chairman of US Sailing's Olympic Sailing Committee. "Farrah did a great job, and we're proud of the fact that we'll have a full squad in Weymouth."

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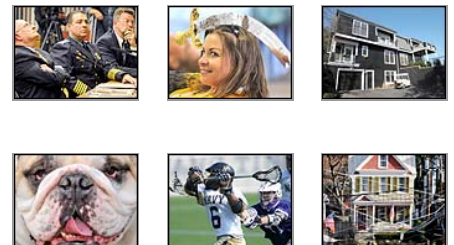
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