

The SB20 has a long and rich history in France following the launch of the Laser SB3 in the UK in 2002. There were four people responsible for the launch of the Laser SB3 class in France that was formalized by the creation of the *Classe Laser SB3 France* on 23rd of November 2005.

Luc Videau as President, Patrick Jeandot as Secretary, Yann Floch as measurer and Nicolas Honor builder representative.

Luc Videau was an active racer in the J24 and Melges 24 classes before joining the SB3 class and had impressive results already in 2005: 2nd at the UK Nationals in 2005 with 52 boats and 2nd at the first European Championships for the SB3 class in Lake Garda with 57 boats.



Luc was not only successful in performing on the SB3 circuit but he managed to have the 2nd European Championship in France at La Crouesty in June 2006. With 48 boats from Great Britain, Ireland, France, Portugal, Italy, Russia, Ukraine and Australia, France has 4 boats participating.

Following this successful European event in 2006, the SB3 began a successful period of Grand Prix de l'École Navale (GPEN) in Brittany appearances through 2010. Up to 30 boats participated at each of these GPEN events during this period from 2007-2008 with most coming from the UK to enjoy an incredible long weekend in Morgot where the SB3 class had its racing.



Despite these successful events in France, the SB3 class had difficulty taking off and there were no more than 10 SB3 boats in France in the 2008-2010 period with no strong consolidation of the fleet in any one harbor. The *Classe Laser SB3 France* was quiet for a couple of years before being relaunched in 2010.

With the strong support of Nutriset as a partner, 20 sailors from Normandy participated in a Hamble Winter Series SB3 event in March 2010 and came home with 4 used SB3 towed behind their cars. By the end of 2010, there were 15 SB3 in Normandy of which 8 were in St. Valéry en Caux in Seine Maritime and the rest between Granville and Dieppe.



Ed Russo, who was President of the *Classe Laser SB3 France* was named Chairman of the SB3 World Council in May 2011 during the 2011 Zhik SB3 World Championship. There were 103 participants at that Worlds including an Australian boat with this crew: Moth World Champion and twice 49er World Champion Nathan Outteridge (AUS) at the helm and crewing for him was 470 Olympic Medallist Ian Brown as well as 2010 ISAF Sailor of the Year and 2010 Laser World Champion Tom Slingsby.

At this same event, the 2013 World Championship site was awarded to Hyères, France for early September 2013. Shortly after this announcement, SB3 boats begin to be purchased in southern France between Marseille and Monaco and during the period leading up to the 2013 Worlds, another 15 boats arrived in France for a fleet of 30 SB3s in total.

In 2012, the distribution agreement with Laser Performance came to an end and the SB3 architect, Tony Castro, decided to award the worldwide distribution to SportsBoatWorld, run by Jerry Hill and Alan Hillman. This created the need to change the name to SB20 (dropping the Laser SB3 name) and the production of the SB20 moved from Malaysia (Laser Performance) back to White Formula in Essex England where the first 70 SB3 were built. The last boat produced in Malaysia was a number between 3656 and 3658 (the 656th to 658th built boat) and when production restarted in Essex in August, 2012, the new numbering sequence began at 3700.

The 2013 Worlds in Hyères was a high point for the class in France with 20 French boats including Sébastien Col (4ème), Jean-Baptiste Bernaz (5ème) and Thomas Rouxel (7ème).

Following the 2013 Worlds, two major evolutions happened that would orient the French SB20 class for the years to come. First of all, the core fleet of SB20 moved to Hyères with roughly 15-20 boats in or around the Hyeres area and the remaining 10-15 boats scattered between Monaco and Marseille.

Secondly, the SB20 classe France negotiated an agreement with the FFVoile to include the SB20 in the annual selection French Youths that are outside of the official Olympic preparation team. This program was to offer a bridge for youths leaving the dingy competition and looking for a bridge to the sportsboat world or other youths looking to complete their dingy experience with a sportsboat experience in order to improve their overall performance through diversity of boat experience. This SB20 France Youth program still exists and funds 2 to 3 teams each year to compete competitively in the SB20 Worlds.



The first year of this program with the Worlds in St. Petersburg Russia saw the team of Quentin Delapierre, Matthieu Solomon and Kevin Peponnet on the podium in 3rd place as one of the French Youth teams, and Robin Follin in 7th place as the second French Youth team.

In 2015, the SB20 World Council created the Nation's Cup awarding a trophy to the best nation as defined by the first 3 boats from each nation at the Worlds. At the 2015 Worlds in Lake Garda, Robin Follin, who was in his second year of the French SB20 Youth program won the World Championship and Russia won the Nation's Cup.

Since the 2015 Worlds, France has won the Nation's cup 4 times out of the total of 6 years that the Nation's Cup was available:

- 2015: RUS
- 2016: FRA

- 2017: GBR
- 2018: FRA
- 2019: FRA
- 2020: no worlds
- 2021: FRA



Today's SB20 fleet in France is centralized in the South, in Hyères, where there are 15 to 18 boats in Hyères or the immediately surrounding area (Carqueiranne, etc.). There is a monthly training session throughout most of the year and there is usually a trainer on a rib for these training sessions.