

## Qajaq Aviisii

July 6 2015 Sisimiut, Greenland

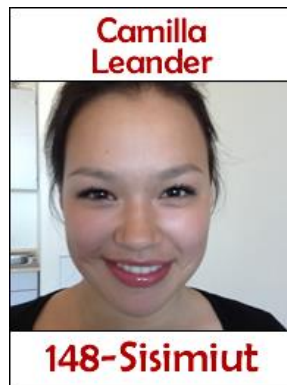
Today the competition will start. Weather forecast calls for sunny and dry, and a good deal warmer than yesterday, which got up to 10 C. The spring/summer season got off to a late start here. There was snowfall in early June. In fact there are still a few patches of unmelted snow by the roadways but they are disappearing fast. The mountains and hillsides still have large areas of snow on them.

The morning is scheduled to begin with the arrival of the ferry from the north, bringing the Ilulissat team just in time for the opening procession to the church, for service and following that the laying of flowers at the grave of those who dies at sea – many kayakers included. In the afternoon the naatsumut parrunneq (short distance race) will be held, starting with the children's age categories, followed by the teens, and adults.

Looking at the lineup, we have the latest information on last-minute changes.



1-Jørgen Leander at the Qajaq Sisimiut clubhouse, preparing his daughter's qajaq



2-Camilla Leander ready for QU15

Kunuunnguaq Davidsen, the 2012 champion, who regularly finishes in the top three, has dropped out of the competition this year. He certainly would have been one to watch, as he holds the record for highest rolling score, and can often succeed at nusutsinneq (the walrus pull). He grew up with Maligiaq, both of them competing as teenagers.



3-Kununnguaq Davidsen in QU13 Ilulissat

Jorgen Leander another of Maligiaq's peers from Sisimiut has also dropped out. Jorgen has been one of the faster kayakers in the races. His daughter, Camilla, will however compete – in a qajaq that her father build for her - she won 2 gold and 2 bronze medals last year.

Another disappointing cancellation is Heine Biilmann, now 15 years old. Last year he made an impressive entry into kayak competition by winning most of his races. He also had such a dependable roll, he was doing victory rolls at the end of races, like many of the top men do. This involves rolling without a tuilik on and in the frigid arctic water takes considerable nerve.

Looking at the men's 20-34 lineup there are ten entrants – and it is in this group that Qajaqer of the Year will be found. Jens Peter Jeremiassen, last year's champion could be the favorite, but watch out for Erik Amondson from Nuuk. Erik is a very skilled skier in the winter time, and was last seen in a qajaq in 2010 where he came in second place. Has he been practicing? We will find out. Naatsumut, the short distance race, makes a good initial evaluation of speed to sort out who the top competitors are, so today's results will reveal a lot. Also important will be how Erik does allunaariaqattaarneq - the ropes - scheduled for Tuesday. In 2009 he scored over 500, something very few others have done. Jaffet Davidsen, of the



4-Ulloriaq Davidsen in allunaariaqattaarneq in Qaqortoq 2014

Sisimiut team has long been a strong component of the 20-34 men's group, but the new arrival in the 20-34 category is Ulloriaq Davidsen who just turned 20.

Several of the other entrants are familiar names – Angut Davidsen (Jaffet and Kununnguaqs’s little brother), Kaasparaq Petersen and Martin Skade Jensen from Iluissat. However none of these, nor the two men from Qaqortoq are signed up for rolling. Missing the two rolling events, individual and team, doesn’t necessarily mean they can’t win the title, but it doesn’t put them at an advantage. We will analyze scoring in more detail later.



For the women’s 20-34 group, we can see right away that Marie Kristine Samuelsen, a four time champion (2005, 2007, 2008, 2012) is going to be competing in the 35-49 group. Likewise for Ulunnguaq Josefsen, the champion in 2004 and 2006. Ulunnguaq in recent years has been handling the competition administrative tasks. She also became a mother last year and is pregnant again (congratulations [bischluarit] ) yet still intent on competing this year. Her husband Kristian David Josefsen, the champion 2006 and 2010 is competing this year but in the 35-49 group.



6Karen Marie Jensen doing the "Palluussineq aapaa sakissap" on the ropes, all the way back in 2011 in Sisimiut.

So the field of 20-34 women is down to nine. The standouts are Karla Reimer from Ilulissat, last year’s champion, who has her work cut out for her with the return of Malina

Amondsen (Champion 2009. 2001) who, like her brother Erik, has not appeared in competition since 2010. Karla Reimer has not signed up for

kinngusaqattaarnek / rolling. In fact only three of the women are signed up for all eight events: Malina, Ulunnguaq (we are not sure about letting a pregnant women do ropes) and Karen Marie Jensen. Karen will be exciting to watch. She has participated in the kayak competition for years and has placed in the top three a few times since becoming 20. For years she has held the women’s record on ropes, and it is known that she has strong rolling skills. We have not seen here the last two years due to the fact that she became a mother (congratulations). Karen Marie’s little sister Pia is also a contender. Pia has been attending for many years and has also finished in the top three more than once.



5Malina Amondsen in Paamiut 2012, ready for individual rolling / Iligikkarluni kinngusaqattaarnek.

This is the end for now, we’ll return when there’s more to tell.



7Karla Reimer doing a great harpoon throw in Qaqortoq 2014