

M24 USA

The Official Magazine of the US Melges 24 Class Association

Volume 5 ★ Issue 3 ★ Summer 2008

www.usmelges24.com

**2008**
MELGES 24
NORTH AMERICAN CHAMPIONSHIP

North American 2008 CHAMPIONSHIP

26 October-2 November
Eastport Yacht Club; Annapolis, Maryland
www.annapolismelges24.com

*“Autumn racing in Annapolis
on the Melges 24 is bound to be spectacular.
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for a continental championship event, let
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sportboat like the Melges 24.”*

*- 2008 NAC Class Coordinator,
USMCA Vice President and
IMCA Executive Committee Member
(North America) Bill Carleton*

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FEATURES & EXCLUSIVES

MIDWEST MAYHEM

The USMCA Midwest Melges 24 District is the largest in the U.S.A. and backed by some great 2008 events and the best competitive racing in the country. Five major events make up the schedule with much, much, more intense Melges 24 racing to come.

GOLD

In early June 2008, five of America's top teams traveled to Sardinia, Italy to compete in one of the Class' most amazing World Championships. Six days of competitive racing and

twelve races completed, they made the grade amongst some of the world's best sailors.

CLASS ANNOUNCEMENTS

Summer time brought on a full changing of the guard, new president, vice president and executive secretary.

2008 MELGES 24 NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

September 18-21 ★ Charleston, SC ★ www.m24charleston.com

INTERVIEW: ALAN FIELD, USA-587 WTF

Alan Field and his infamous *WTF* Melges 24 first came into the U.S. Class a little more than a year and a half ago. With him, along came one of the most charismatic teams the National fleet has seen in a very long time.

IN EVERY ISSUE

2008-2009 NORTH AMERICA SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

2008 HALL OF FAME

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CREDITS AND CONTRIBUTORS: Concept/Design/Editorial: JOY On The Cover: Simon Strauss sports the GBR sail designation, but none-the-less the USMCA's greatest foster child, sails fast on his *Sevenstar SLAM* Melges 24 in Sardinia Italy at the 2008 Worlds. **Photography:** Joy Dunigan, Paul Todd c/o Outside Images **Contributing Writers:** Joy Dunigan **Advertising and Sponsorship Inquiries:** Contact JOY for a Media Kit at (912) 756-6706 or via email at joy.dunigan@joysavannah.com



outside images

Paul Todd | outsideimages.co.nz



Midwest Mayhem

Now eight months into the 2008 U.S. Melges 24 racing schedule, the class would like to reflect on a very successful Midwest summer season. The Midwest District is the largest Melges 24 region in the U.S. — not only do these hard core Melges 24 fanatics know how to race, they also know how to party! Leading the charge is Mike Dow *USA-613 Flying Toaster*, long-time and forever dedicated Midwest District Governor. He has lead the fleet with massive amounts of fervor and enthusiasm that is contagious. Dow, after a short hiatus is back and ready to race the fall season. “We are so excited. I’ve sent my daughter off to college, so now I can spend a little more time racing. We’ll be doing a number of events in the Midwest such as the Fall Championship in Lake Geneva — which is amazing — always,” says Dow. “The conditions are the best, LGYC is magnificent. Big fleet, great parties. We’re also traveling a little this year. We hope to see everyone in Charleston at Nationals. Always fun, always fast!”



SPERRY TOP-SIDER DETROIT NOOD REGATTA | MAY 31 - JUNE 1

Alan Field from Los Angeles, Calif. and his *WTF* Melges 24 took honors in Detroit. The fleet was once again, an impressive 26 strong. The conditions were primo, as were the parties! Detroit is a pinnacle event for the Midwest region as this is where the fleet has the first real opportunity to blow the snow off the boats and race in some of the most tactically challenging and tricky breeze. Following Field in second place was Hans Brieden *USA-625 Zig Zag* from Grosse Pointe Park, Mich. and Mike Dow from Traverse City in third.



CHICAGO VERVE CUP | AUGUST 9-10

The largest regatta of its kind in the USA during the month of August is the famous Chicago Verve Cup. This event was a new one for the fleet and Shane Vowels *USA-624 I'm With Stupid* from Chicago, Il. gave it his all and won. Another Chicago native — August Hernandez on *USA-533 High Voltage* came in second. Plan on making this part of your program in 2009.



RED FOX REGATTA | AUGUST 30-31

Another annual regatta that everyone looks forward to is the Red Fox Regatta held over the course of Labor Day Weekend in Charlevoix, Mich. You can always depend on a great fleet of 10 boats +, making this one of the best events to do in the Midwest. Congratulations to Mike Dow as he has gone undefeated since 2005!

LAKE GENEVA FALL CHAMPIONSHIP | OCTOBER 4-5

The finale to the Midwest racing season happens with the annual Melges 24 homecoming in Lake Geneva, Wisc. This event is one, of eleven International Melges 24 Class North American Ranking events that guarantees fun, excitement and world class competition. More than 30 Melges 24s travel to this very beautiful locale to race, and enjoy one of nature's most spectacular events - the changing of the leaves. It's the perfect backdrop to a regatta that delivers tons of camaraderie and demands the presence of some of the world's greatest sailors!

GRAND TRAVERSE INVITATIONAL REGATTA | AUGUST 23-24

A 'grand' traditional regatta on the Midwest circuit, the Grand Traverse event carries the Midwest Melges 24s in to late summer with a fantastic and monumental racing extravaganza. Held in beautiful Traverse City, Michigan and at one of the countries best racing locations in the country and marks the high point of the Midwest circuit.





GOLD

Bruce Ayres' USA-637 Monsoon blasts downwind winning races 8 and 9 at the 2008 Worlds in the highly competitive Corinthian division

Competing at a Melges 24 World Championship whether in Europe or North America, one thing is certain — you'll never forget it. Most teams here in the U.S. have experienced the extravagance of a Nationals, Key West, SORC, a North Americans, or a major, regional regatta — but a Worlds is the pinnacle. Where else can you compete against the likes of legendary sailing icons, America's Cup defenders, Olympic athletes and Volvo Ocean Race veterans? It's a bona fide fact, the Melges 24 builds better sailors and regardless of their mandate — to train, sharpen skills, etc. — they too love this all-American sportboat just the same as the weekend warrior.

This past June, the U.S. Melges 24 Class Association was proud to offer five of our countries best teams at the 2008 Volvo Melges 24 World Championship in Sardinia, Italy hosted by the Yacht Club Costa Smeralda. Simon Strauss on *Team Sevenstar SLAM*, Stephen 'Alex' Shaffer on *Sweaty Betty*, Geoffery Pierini on *Gazoo*, Bruce Ayres on *Monsoon* and Brian Porter on *Full Throttle*, each with its own set of guns were all awarded gold fleet status.

The event stirred 117 boats from a record-breaking 16 countries, meaning that in order for the race committee to effectively manage the fleet, three days of 'round robin' qualifying had to take place in advance of the final split fleet racing. From the round robin results gold and silver courses were set. All five U.S. Melges 24 teams including two Corinthians were deemed to compete in the top half of the fleet.

Final results of the competing U.S. teams:

8th - Brian Porter, *Full Throttle*

15th - Simon Strauss, *Team Sevenstar SLAM*

22nd - Bruce Ayres, *Monsoon* (Corinthian)

26th - Geoffery Pierini, *Gazoo*

42nd - Stephen 'Alex' Shaffer, *Sweaty Betty* (Corinthian)

In the very tough Corinthian (all-amateur) division, Bruce Ayres and his legendary *Monsoon* team of John Pinkney, Don Smith and James Malm had a very successful regatta. During the final days of the regatta these great Corinthians lead the fleet around the course on more than one occasion, leaving spectators shouting in excitement. The result was being honored in second overall in the World Championship Corinthian standings!

The next opportunity to experience an event like you've never experienced before will be in Annapolis, Md. at the 2008 North American Championship on October 26 - November 2, then in 2009 at the Worlds on October 27 - November 7 — same boat, same venue, same awesome, world-class Melges 24 style racing! Visit the official event website and register online to compete at annapolismelges24.com.



USA-677 *Sweaty Betty*



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GBR-592 *Team Sevenstar SLAM*



USA-649 *Full Throttle*



USA-511 *Gazoo*

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2007 World Champions Team Pegasus 505

ULLMAN SAILS VICTORY LIST

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2007 Pacific Coast Champs: 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 6th
2006 Key West Race Week: 1st
2005 World Champs: 1st



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USMCA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

CHANGING OF THE GUARD

Effective immediately, Travis Weisleder will assume the role of U.S. Melges 24 Class Association (USMCA) president. This position was formerly occupied by USMCA immediate past president Scott Gregory, from Atlanta, Ga. "For many years Scott has served the class in a variety of capacities. He initially started as Southeast District Governor, then transitioned in as Vice President of the class, then President. Scott's contributions to the Melges 24 class both personally and professionally have been invaluable. For several years he has guided the USMCA down a path of growth and success," commented Weisleder about his

colleague, fellow competitor and friend. "I encourage everyone, the next time that you see Scott be sure to thank him for his hard work and generosity extended to the class."

Weisleder also assumes the position of Vice Chairman (North America) with the International Melges 24 Class Association (IMCA).

Transitioning in as USMCA Vice President is former Northeast District Governor Bill Carleton based in Annapolis, Md. Carleton first served as Annapolis Fleet Captain, then became District Governor in 2006. He is also the

Class Coordinator for the '08 NAC and '09 Worlds. Bill will also serve as a Member (North America) on the IMCA Executive Committee.

USMCA Communications Director, Joy Dunigan will take on the additional responsibility of Executive Secretary in which her specific tasks will include facilitating day-to-day USMCA administrative duties.

The U.S. Melges 24 Class Association would like to extend, in the greatest of appreciation and acknowledgment all the hard work and dedication given by Scott Gregory over the last few years. We wish him all the best with future endeavors.

2008

U.S. **M24** NATIONALS

SEPTEMBER 18-21

WWW.M24CHARLESTON.COM



OMG... WTF?

An Interview with Alan Field

Alan Field and his infamous *WTF* Melges 24 first came into the U.S. Class a little more than a year and a half ago. With him, along came one of the most charismatic teams the National fleet has seen in a very long time. His crew included, and still retains recently crowned 2008 Etchell's World Champion crew members Steve Hunt and Eric Shampain; core team regulars, Jeff Reynolds, Sarah Curran and Jon Ziskind. High caliber from bow to stern, this fast, fun Melges 24 team is definitely one to watch.

Alan, it is no secret that you have sailed many different kinds of boats with great success. What specifically is it about the Melges 24 that made you decide to get into the Class, and how does it compare to others?

The easy answer would be the boat. Arguably, it is one of the most fun boats I have sailed. But, what really attracted me to the Class was the level and depth of competition. Because of its international status, I knew this class would afford me



USA-587 *WTF* (from left to right): Steve Hunt, Alan Field, Sarah Curran, Jon Ziskind, Eric Shampain

the opportunity to go head-to-head with the best around the globe. I also like to race in big fleets. There is always a big turnout in Key West every year. At the time, knowing that the '07 Worlds were going to be held in the US, pretty much assured me that the number of boats attending the 'ranked' regattas would be strong. Yes, there were other large classes with good talent that caught my attention. However, that's where the fun of the boat makes all the difference. Porsche cars has a great advertising line that if you'll permit me to mangle, sums up my feelings pretty well. 'Melges 24... there is no substitute!'

Whether it be 8:00 a.m. getting ready to weigh-in (you guys always seem to be first in line), or later in the day right after a practice sail or tuning, you and your team are full of smiles. You guys always seem as though you are having a great deal of fun sailing together. It's obvious you have a winning combination. How did you and your team come together? What is your secret to success?

We are having a good time! The boats, people, venues and competition are always great! It is easy to field a team when all those pieces are in place. However, I like to stick with my core team whenever possible. Most of us have been sailing together for a long time. We are all connected because of my Farr 40 days. A mutual friend, Bill Hardesty, insisted that if I wanted to do well in the 40s I needed to have Erik and Steve on-board. Boy was he right. ... I now won't leave the dock without them! Fellow Melges sailor, Dave Ullman, lined up Jon Ziskind to be a kite trimmer for me about 10 years ago while at an event in San Francisco, and I have known Jeff Reynolds for just about as long. But, our first time sailing together wasn't till Key West in '07. Due to schedule conflicts, he and Jon rotate in and out often. Sarah Curran and I met last summer while racing on a friends Farr 40 in Marina del Rey. She was doing great job in the pit that day, so I decided to steal her away for my team. It wasn't a hard decision on her part — stay at home and race Wednesday Nights, or join the team

and see the world racing a Melges 24? I think she made the right choice.

We have all become great friends, work together well, respect each others input and love to have fun. I think these are the key reasons why, as a team, we have been able to quickly assimilate into the Class and put a few early points on the scoreboard. This is a very tough fleet. We still have a lot to learn and a long way to go before anyone can claim we are a success. The talent in this Class forces one to continually raise his or her bar... so, even if you think you're there, you're not.

Obviously things went very well for you and your much deserving team in Detroit. Tell us a little bit about the competition there and what was that like. Detroit is a really tough crowd!

That 'tough crowd' welcomed us, not only with open arms, but great weather to boot! The wind ranged from 8 to 30 knots. We got to try just about all our rig settings and sailing styles. We now know the importance of double cleating the tack line. Our wipeout wasn't pretty and my ego is still a bit bruised.

The race committee managed to send us on 8 races over 3 days. Tough thing to do as there were multiple classes, and they had to postpone for quite a long time while they waited for the worst of a big breeze storm cell to pass. I'm told they clocked winds around 36 knots for over 5 minutes.

Twenty-six boats, good lines and strong competition made for a great event. We will definitely place the Detroit NOOD high on our list of regattas to attend in the future.

Looking ahead to upcoming, big USMCA events such as Nationals in Charleston, Lake Geneva in October, and then the North American Championship in Annapolis, we hope to see you there. If so, what specific preparations are you and your team making to ensure you do well?

All the above are on our planned schedule and our prep has already started. We are big believers that time in the boat is critical to success. That said, we try to compete in at least one regatta a month and to show up a day or two early to each event to practice. Additionally, we like to make sure the little things that can cause distractions are dealt with early. Finding housing, arranging for transportation, doing boat prep, shopping for food and scheduling for that dreaded weigh-in are planned for well in advance. That way we can focus on the more important things when we hit town such as practice, tuning and having fun.

We know you can't give away all your speed secrets, but could you share just one with us? Tell us how to go fast... please?

The cat is already out of the bag on that one... Time in the boat. Practice, Practice, Practice!



2008-2009 U.S. MELGES 24 CLASS ASSOCIATION SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

2008 NORTH AMERICAN RANKING EVENTS

9/18 - 9/21	U.S. National Championship	Charleston, SC	Reggie Fairchild · reggiefairchild@gmail.com
10/4 - 10/5	Lake Geneva Fall Championship	Lake Geneva, WI	Andy Burdick · andy@melges.com
10/26 - 11/2	2008 Melges 24 North American Championship	Annapolis, MD	Bill Carleton · m24tiburong@gmail.com
11/22 - 11/23	King's Day Regatta I Atlantic Coast Championship	Jacksonville, FL	Steve Kopf · skopf@advan-tek.com

2008 REGATTAS

8/23 - 8/24	Grand Traverse Invitational Regatta	Traverse City, MI	Mike Dow · mdow@chartermi.net
8/30 - 8/31	Pitch	Bellingham, WA	Gary Stuntz · gary@clearheadsailmakers.com
8/30 - 8/31	Red Fox Regatta	Charlevoix, MI	Marty Jensen · searaymarty@yahoo.com
8/30 - 9/1	CBYRA Annapolis Race Week	Annapolis, MD	Bill Carleton · m24tiburong@gmail.com
9/6 - 9/7	Velocitek Melges Regatta	TBD	Tom Klenke · tklenke@gmail.com
9/19 - 9/21	Sperry Top-Sider Houston NOOD	Seabrook, TX	Matt Mayo · mamayo@flash.net
10/4 - 10/5	Austin Leukemia Cup	Austin, TX	Matt Mayo · mamayo@flash.net
10/4 - 10/5	Fall One Design Regatta	San Francisco, CA	Tom Klenke · tklenke@gmail.com
10/11 - 10/12	PSSC	Seattle, WA	Gary Stuntz · gary@clearheadsailmakers.com
10/11 - 10/12	WFORC	Pensacola, FL	Steve Kopf · skopf@advan-tek.com
12/5 - 12/7	2008 Key Largo Regatta	Key Largo, FL	Jerry Creasman · jcreasman@aol.com

2009 NORTH AMERICAN RANKING EVENTS

10/27 - 11/7	2009 Melges 24 World Championship	Annapolis, MD	Bill Carleton · m24tiburong@gmail.com
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2009 REGATTAS

1/19 - 1/23	2009 ACURA Key West	Key West, FL	www.premiere-racing.com
3/21 - 3/23	2009 Southeast Inland Championship	Lake Lanier, GA	Frank Vandall · fvandall@emory.edu
4/23 - 4/26	Charleston Race Week	Charleston, SC	Steve Kopf · skopf@advan-tek.com
5/2 - 5/3	Gateway Melges 24 Spring Regatta	Carlyle, IL	Tom Wyman · twyman01@charter.net
6/26 - 6/28	2009 Long Beach Race Week	Long Beach, CA	info@lbrw.org

2008 HALL OF FAME

ACURA Key West Race Week* Dave Ullman (USA)
St. Petersburg NOOD* Terry Hutchinson (USA)
Texoma Lakefest* Shawn Grisham (USA)
Charleston Race Week Travis Weisleder (USA)
Annapolis NOOD Brian Porter (USA)

Sperry Top-Sider Detroit NOOD* Alan Field (USA)
Melges 24 Gold Cup* Christopher Farkas (USA)
Whidbey Island Race Week* Dave Brede (USA)

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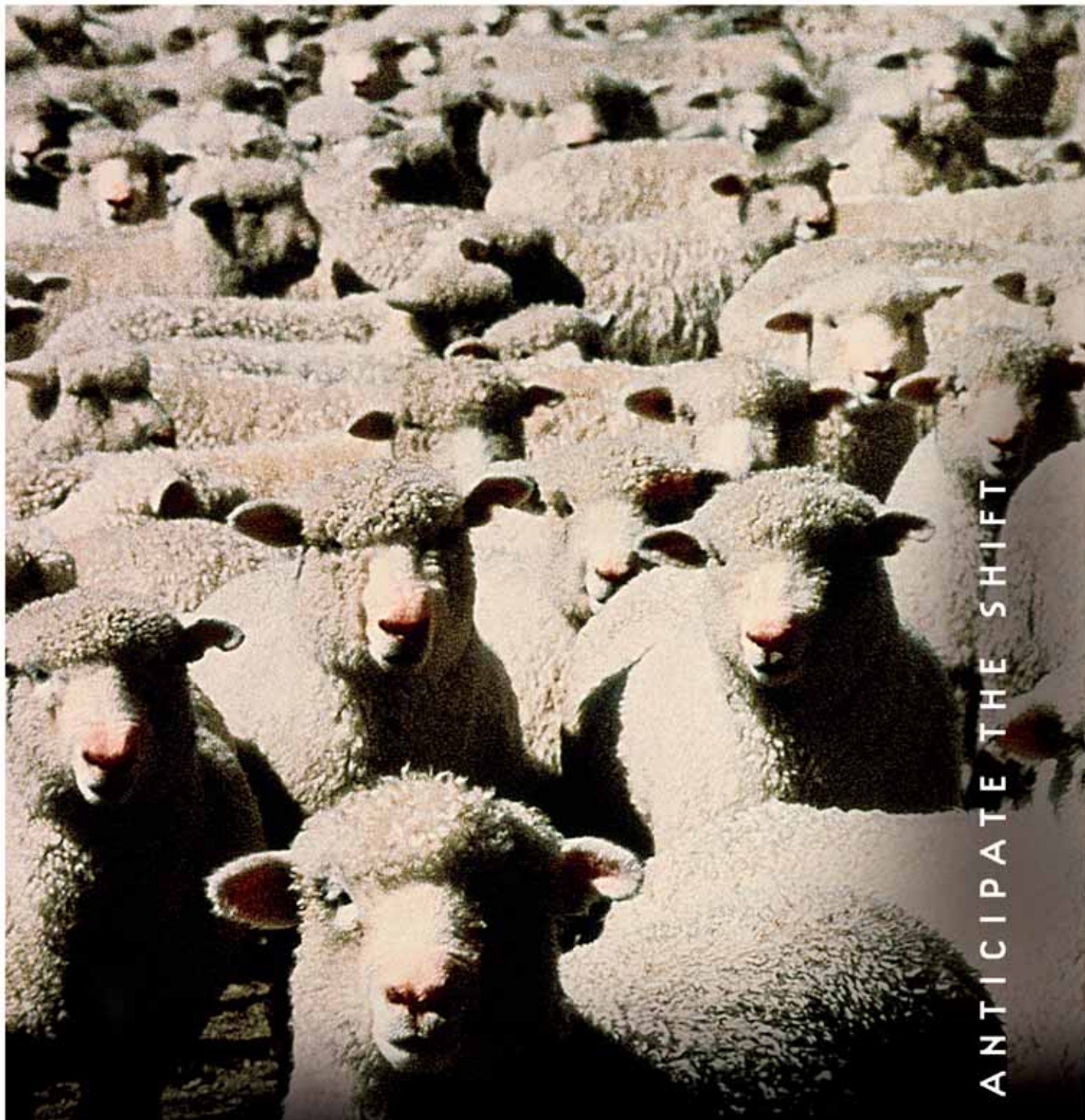
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