

Newsletter No; 5

The 1978 season has now come to a close, having been an interesting year for the Dragon Class. The Edinburgh Cup held at Cowes proved as exciting and hectic as ever. Plans have been made for Dragons to be built in the U.K. The B.D.A. held a draw for the first time to raise funds to help crews attend International events, culminating in a strong team being selected to go to the World Championships in 1979.

The Annual General Meeting of the Class Association, normally held in January, has been postponed until mid-March, 1979 when it is hoped to follow the meeting with a 'supper evening', which will be a new format that could attract a larger attendance for the A.G.M.

The Annual Dinner will be held at the Royal Thames Yacht Club, Knightsbridge on Friday, 12th January, 1979 and all applications for tickets should be with Philip Tolhurst by not later than 18th December, 1978 - on the attached application slip, in order that the arrangements may be concluded before his departure for Australia to participate in the World Championships.

1979 is the 50th Anniversary of the Dragon Class and this will be marked with a large spread in the first issue of Yachts & Yachting in January.

B.D.A. Draw - 1978.

Results - 1st prize was won by the Abersoch Fleet, other prizes went to:- S. Tilbrook, K. Clabburn, John Lewthwaite, Tim Street, N.R. Vans Colina, D. Allison, H. Baker, C. Lucy and C. Mortimore.

Special thanks must go to Bill Citron, Pat Dyas, FISONS and Petticrow for their generous support in providing the prizes.

This effort has made the princely sum of over £200 available for distribution to crews attending international events and must surely be a great benefit to our Class.

World Championships - 1979.

This event is being held 13th - 21st January, 1979 at the Royal Geelong Y.C., Australia and our committee have selected the following helmsmen together with their crews to represent us:-

Simon Day	Torbay
Pat Dyas	R.C.Y.C.
Sir Gordon Smith	B.D.A.
Guy Newton	R.C.Y.C.
Ian Mackenzie	Torbay
Philip Tolhurst	R.C.Y.C.
Gilmour Manuel	Forth

We have been extremely fortunate in receiving £1600 as a grant towards crew travelling costs from the R.Y.A. - all helmsmen are financing their own travel - this assistance from the R.Y.A. IS OF GREAT HELP to the Class and must be viewed as a fantastic boost for us all, who enjoy the fine qualities of the Dragon.

British Dragon Association - Annual Dinner
Friday, 12th January, 1979.

To: P.J. Tolhurst, Esq.,
Gay Bowers House,
Danbury, ESSEX.

Please send me .. . tickets for the B.D.A. Annual Dinner at Royal Thames Yacht Club, Knightsbridge, for which I enclose the remittance of £..... @ £7.50 each, made payable to the B.D.A.

Name..... Address.....

APPLICATIONS BY LATEST 18th December, 1978.

EDINBURGH CUP - 1978.

Hosted this year by the Island Sailing Club, Cowes - who made history with the Dragon Class in 1947, when they presented the Dragon 'BLUEBOTTLE' to H.M. the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh as a wedding present.

Those entrants arriving at Gosport had quite an eventful sail across the Solent, taking some four hours with a force 6 on the nose, bilge pumps being thoroughly tested. Unhappily, MISTRAL (John Lewthwaite) and ROGUE (Raymond Dodds) spent the Friday evening and early hours of Saturday hard aground on Ryde Sand.

Events of the week are quite numerous, as there were many that were not in the official programme - the first race produced six broken masts, most boats were racing again within 48 hours, the only boat to sail again with the original mast being STORM, the crew simply stuck it together again!. Later in the week a considerable number of competitors were aground off Lee-on-Solent, Pat Dyas could be heard inducing his 'Gorillas to get overboard' and Clare Lallow indulging in a spot of 'careening' with his crew up the mast to produce sufficient heel to lift the keel clear!

The Q.F.2. sailed through the fleet during the one sunny day of the week, making a fine spectacle for us all.

Activities ashore were numerous and made a fine relief from the hectic hours afloat. Special mention should be made of the Crews Union Dinner, which was graced with the attendance of, as the Chairman for the evening announced, the 'Three Ugly Sisters' of the Dragon Class! All competitors enjoyed an evening afloat on the Solent by courtesy of CCL, who sponsored the week, having a fine evening cruise with supper and an opportunity to attend a Disco on board. Philip Colville, Peter Lloyd and L.D. de Rothschild hosted an evening at the Royal Yacht Squadron - which was a marvellous opportunity for us all to enjoy and relish the historical surroundings.

The many Cowes Clubs made us extremely welcome and their excellent facilities were available to us all. The balcony of the Royal London Yacht Club provided the opportunity for those present to watch Peter Hunter (HUNTER of ASTERISK) cross to the water front and gaze blissfully over the Solent at around 11.00p.m. until his wife arrived with transport!

This was truly an excellent week in which "those Irishmen" Conor Doyle and Tony o'Gorman excelled again, to take first and second places with Peter Lloyd and Nick Streeter 3rd & 4th.

Regretfully, mention must be made regarding the behaviour of some competitors ashore - firstly, as is now quite well known amongst Dragon Members, a rather 'Special Ashtray' which had been presented to the Royal London Yacht Club and kept in the main bar went missing during the week. If anybody knows of the whereabouts of this "SPECIAL ASHTRAY" would they kindly make the appropriate arrangements for it's return to the Royal London Yacht Club. Secondly, one evening saw two Dragon Crewmen removing flags from the Esplanade, which whilst done in high spirits does leave an unpleasant mark upon the Dragon Class as a whole.

FLEET REPORTS

Royal North of Ireland Yacht Club, CULTRA.

The 1978 season at Cultra has seen a most dramatic change for the better in the fortunes of the Dragon Class.

With additions to our own numbers and the presence of Royal Ulster Dragons at all regattas it proved to be a most interesting season's racing, ending with a most enjoyable Northern Ireland Championship run at Bangor by Royal Ulster Yacht Club. The Championship was won by one of our new members James Nixon, sailing JOSEPHINE.

The upsurge of the Dragon Class in Belfast Lough has led to the definite fixing of the Edinburgh Cup in 1980 to take place at Royal North of Ireland Yacht Club, CULTRA. Every effort will be made to make this a memorable event and a large entry is expected from the various Dragon Class areas. Royal North of Ireland Yacht Club have at their disposal one of the finest and fairest sailing areas to be found anywhere.

At CULTRA, the main season's points prizes were won by James Nixon in JOSEPHINE and Bobbie Graham in BEDOUIN.

Eric Robb.

South Caernarvonshire Fleet.

Although the SCYC Fleet is down to five Dragons which race seriously throughout the season, we have had some really close racing this year with positions changing regularly throughout races, but we feel that we do not have the edge on the Irish because they seem to have the boat speed, and when we go away they ---- all over us. So next year in May we are spending our Saturday mornings tuning up our boats and do some pacing with each other.

We hope to see more of Gordon Mellor next year, but he has had a lot of success

holding a golf club this year rather than the tiller, but we will have to see what happens next year and see if he really can see the windward mark!

ZARA II, FLAPJACK and MIRAGE all went to Ireland this year in June for the Irish Championships, it blew very hard for some of the races but as usual they all gave us a tremendous holiday with the usual Irish hospitality, again it took us two weeks to get over it, which was just when the Edinburgh Cup started in Cowes. Again, ZARA, FLAPJACK and MIRAGE were launched.

At the end of September we were asked over to Ireland again by the Dublin Bay Fleet for a team race. What a weekend, we did not do much sailing, just eating and drinking, without doubt it was one of the most enjoyable weekends we have ever spent. We are asking them over to Abersoch next year, but there is no way that we can re-pay their hospitality.

We are having our A.G.M. on the 25th November and the Class Captain for 1979 will be John Bradshaw, so we hope to see more of him in 1979 especially with the Gold Cup and Edinburgh Cup being in the Forth next year.

An extra boat joined us in August this year at Abersoch, owned by the famous Dragoner Peter Lloyd but unfortunately without his right hand Peter Hunter who have raced together for so many years. We hope Peter will join us again next year.

Mark Pritchard.

Solent Fleet.

It has certainly not been a vintage year for the Solent Fleet. Perhaps the weather had something to do with it. No less than eleven races had to be cancelled and the average number of starters fell to only 6.7 - from a Fleet of 20 Dragons - for the 37 races which were held. We look forward to better things in 1979.

Because of the small number racing regularly in the Solent, only four Dragons took part in sufficient races to qualify for the S.C.R.A. Medal. This was won by CHIME (Tim Street) with an average of 3.89 points from VULCAN (Leo Rothschild and Bill Pease) with 3.59 points. It is doubtful if this medal has ever been won with an average below 5 points.

The points for the Solent Class Championship were also distorted by the small number of starters in many races. The final result was extremely close with GERYON (Philip Colville) Peter Methuen and Christopher Lucy) winning with 44.1 points from VULCAN who scored 46.5 points. Third was CHIME with 135.8 points.

The outstanding feat of the season quite clearly belongs to KALI (Gordon Smith) who won five races in Cowes Week and finished the season with seven flags from eight starts

Peter Henson.

Medway Fleet.

Medway Dragons have completed a fairly satisfactory season, with the weather being of little assistance. We either had too much wind or insufficient to combat the local tides. A rather hectic Saturday race produced three broken masts, which meant some busy operations to get the boats racing again before the season finished.

CARRONADE changed hands at the beginning of the season - Ian Ratnage changed her name to WATER RAT and then went on to pursue a positive 'up front' campaign being challenged by ROYALIST and LIZ - ~~ET~~, finally emerging as the season's Points winner.

WIZARD, MESTENGO and ISIS travelled to Cowes and participated in the Edinburgh Cup, enjoying themselves as usual.

WATER RAT, GALATFA and TAMSIN visited Burnham for the 'week' - Ian Ratnage managed to almost re-equip WATER RAT with new spars and fittings whilst in the vicinity of Petticrows, but did keep the mast in one piece until returning to the Medway. GALATEA sported new Norths just prior to Burnham Week and has enjoyed success since the acquisition. TAMSIN became known during Burnham Week as "rent-a-crew" due to the number of bodies on board and available to make up crew shortages if required.

Our normal annual match with Dragonists from the North Sea Yacht Club (Stend was held at the Medway in July - a good weekend, regretfully only two races were sailed due to very strong winds on the Sunday morning.

As the season was about halfway through, we were joined by ZEPHYR with Paul walshaw and family in command.

Regretfully, we have lost ISIS to Royal Forth, WHY to Burnham and TARASQUE to Ireland. We understand that an old Medway boat will be returning for next season - GRENDEL, which it is understood is undergoing a major refit before arriving.

Medway Owners, please note - LINTIE has now got a TIN POLE, we shall really have to keep an eye on the yellow peril!

Most of the fleet have gone to their winter quarters, VOODOO has returned to the apple orchards of Kent, sporting a very nice new black metal mast and Wilson type runner winches, which it is understood have proved very satisfactory - however,

special security arrangements have been made around VOODOO, to ensure that the Staplehurst Hop Farmers do not requisition these new fittings for use in their hop gardens!

Ken Richardson.

Aldeburgh Fleet.

We had another quietish year with JOSEPHINE departing to Ireland and JAVELIN staying ashore with Richard Riggs involved in half tonning. The early season Cup Race was won by GANYMEDE (Peter Wilson) and for the regatta we had five visitors from Waldringfield and a total of 12 boats out. POLLY (Patrick Gifford) won quite easily from GANYMEDE and LOGIE (Peter Bowman) who were equal second.

We had an 'at home' to against Lowestoft and again managed to win, lunchtime being sailed with 2 or 3 inches of water over the Yacht Club floor. Most unusual to see Dragon Sailors taking water with their liquor - at least it wasn't in it.

Five boats raced to Snape Bridge to lay up. VANA won the match to be known as the Snape Ploughing and Sailing Match, by dint of putting her crew ashore with a tow rope for the last fifty yards. The I.Y.R.U. rules went overboard - as did most of the crews and several helmsmen. Short tacking in a channel $1\frac{1}{2}$ boats lengths wide is amusing - to watch anyway.

GANYMEDE has gone to the Dunn family who have provided crews for her regularly for some time.

Peter Wilson was elected Class Gruppenfuhrer for 1979.

Peter Wilson.

Waldringfield Fleet.

The Fleet had a successful racing season, although only six in number. Jack Heath won the spring series, Ted Sudell the summer and Don Farthing the winter and the offshore competition.

Deben Week was well supported with a Dragon race each day. The wind strength varied from 1 to 6 causing some gear failure. Four boats went to Aldeburgh Week when a fleet of eleven raced each day. Our performance improved all week as the wind decreased, with SNAP coming fourth overall and VENTURE fifth.

SNAP also went to Cowes, breaking the mast the first day on the practice race. Having acquired an old mast she managed to race the rest of the week - her best position was 12th.

Ted Sudell.

Royal Forth Yacht Club Fleet.

The season started rather quietly, with only three boats in the water. During an attempt to launch another three it was discovered that BAWBEE did not float well without a bung. (Shows how much Kenneth Gumley trusts Robin Burley in that he keeps this most essential piece of equipment on his dressing table!)

Kenny Dougall now part owner of CASSADER made the early running at the beginning of the season by winning the early season points. Unfortunately, his early success faded towards the end of the season - was it the thought of going off to the jungles of Kenya with his girlfriend!

June was the usual fight between BAWBEE and KIS for the honours in Forth week, Bawbee being successful, (Bloody Gumley - jammy again!) by 0.3 of a point.

It also happened in June that Three Wise Men and the President of the Scottish Dragon Crews Union took themselves off to Cowes without a Dragon, which seemed to be a very sensible arrangement unless you are prepared to fit them with wheels. However, the Forth Club did make a certain amount of noise about looking forward to seeing all their friends and others at the Edinburgh Cup and Gold Cup which will be held next year in the last fortnight of July.

The rest of the season the honours were divided between KIS and BAWBEE for the next two-point series when KIS, much to K.L.G.'s amazement managed to retain the Class Championship for a further year.

It was pleasing to see the enthusiasm generated by the new owner of GEM and he has got himself stirred to such a pitch that he is planning to instal a fundamental orifice in the old KIS!

For those who wish to enjoy a very good dinner and watch hopefully, a successful rugby match the following afternoon, names are now being taken for the Scottish Dragon Crews Union Dinner to be held at the Royal Forth Yacht Club on Friday, 2nd March, 1979 (5p.m. for 8p.m.)

The Driver elect for next season of KAREN II celebrated his first shot at the helm of his old mans' Dragon with a win. Not only were the rest of the Fleet astonished, but his old man was totally dumbfounded, thus not being able to buy anybody a drink!

Towards the end of the season it was nice to welcome Keith Miller with ISIS to the intrigue of one-design racing as opposed to driving NORLIN

Brian Tunstill is having a third shot at Dragon owning on the Forth. To his horror the new boat sank at her moorings within two hours of Brian negotiating the sale, fortunately she was only slightly damaged

Arrangements are progressing well for the Edinburgh and Gold Cups. But you are advised to make your accommodation arrangements as soon as possible. We have block booked a rather nice University Hotel for the fortnight, further information is available from the Secretary, R.F.Y.C.

"HAMISH"

"CONSTRUCTION NEWS"

Peter Wilson reports that the new cold moulded boat is now well advanced. She is timbered out with all deck beams and carlines fitted and the deck well in hand. A keel has been formed in Ernie Nunn's yard and it is hoped that, subject to satisfactory measurement, the boat will be racing by Easter.

The New G.R.P. Boat

The fibreglass project headed by John Martin, part owner of STORM (DK 91) and Peter Wilson is now progressing. The Moulders will be Lifeline of Hoo, Rochester. Mould will be taken from the new cold moulded boat and it is hoped to have the prototype afloat early in the season.

She will be fitted with a mast from Needlespar, which is already being tried out. Although no firm prices have yet been decided it is hoped that complete boats with runner winches, furling gear etc., and sails will be about £7,500. excluding V.A.T. and bare hulls fitted with keel, rudder and interior mould but excluding deck will be about £2,750. excluding V.A.T.

The Company is called St. George's Dragons and the address is 15 Althorp Road, Wandsworth, London, S.W.17. Also available through the Company are runner winches, furling gear and various 'non-standard' "Dragon only" fittings such as through deck sheave boxes for barber haulers. They can also supply drum castings for Borresen runner winches. 01: 688-7251 office

Dragon Personality; ERNIE NUNN

Ernie NUNN, who with his brother Harry, built their first Dragon HARKAWAY (DK 151) for R. Pershouse in 1947 has retired.

Between 1947 and 1964 he built 14 Dragons. HARKAWAY was followed by OCTAVIA (DK 222) VANA (DK 272) and VIKING (DK 276). OCTAVIA sailed by Tom Riggs was 4th in the Duke of Edinburgh Cup in 1951. VANA sailed by Gordon Smith won in 1954 and was 2nd in 1955. VIKING sailed by Pat Dyas won in 1956, was 4th in 1955 and 1957 and 5th in 1960. None of his later boats were quite so successful, although Patrick Gifford in ULA (DK 338) went very fast from time to time.

All his boats have held together very well, which is a tribute to the high standard of craftsmanship and most are still racing in British Fleets.

I am sure that all who have owned and sailed in Dragons built by Nunn Bros., will wish Ernie a long and happy retirement.

At the Bar with PINT POT !!!!!

Overheard at Cowes during the Edinburgh Cup - A young quiet Dragon Owner was heard to remark to an elderly gentleman with a red face and moustache "How in hell could a senile old idiot like you manage to win a race." Not only to this gentleman's amazement but to the amazement of everyone else, he went on to win a further race in the European Dragon Championships.

An Irish Sheep Farmer attempted to embarrass a quiet polite Scotsman at the European Championships "is this lady really your wife?"

To all those concerned, Gilmour Manuel has been seen again!

1979 FIXTURES

12th January	Royal Thames	Annual Dinner.
13th - 21st January	Geelong, Australia	World Championships.
11th - 17th April	Arcachon, France	Vasco Da Gama Trophy.
Mid June *	Kinsale	Irish Championships.
End June *	Ostend, Belgium	European Champions's.
14th - 20th July	Edinburgh	Edinburgh Cup.
21st - 27th July	Royal Forth	Gold Cup.
August	Deauvill, France	French Championships.
10th - 15th September	Starnbergsee, Germany	German Championships.

* PROVISIONAL.

FOR SALE

DK 91 STORM - McGruer 1947 and looks it! Wood mast and a small collection of useless sails. No reasonable offer refused. Lying London S.W.19
Contact: Alexis Villiers 01-789-2182 (evenings only)

IR 17 POLARIS - Woodnutt (UK) 1950, timber spars, selection of sails, including 1977 suit, plus all usual equipment. Afloat Royal St. George Y.C., Dun Laoghaire . Contact D.W. McCaffrey on Dublin 766431 (office) or Dublin 882968 (home)

IR 77 PANACHE- GRP, BorrESEN, built 1975, all modern gear including sails by Norths and Elvstrom, including custom built trailer with hydraulic brakes and overall cover. Price: £7,500.
Contact: Dr. Oliver C. Waldron, Innisfallen,
Dungriffin Road, Howth, Dublin.
Tel- 322154.

Two wooden masts in good condition, including one main boom.
Contact: Ken Richardson on 01-855-6803.

NOTE: Our Secretary has requested that all outstanding B.D.A. Subscriptions be forwarded to him without delay, as he wishes to close the books before his departure for Australia - would those Defaulters please take the necessary action.

Contributions and reports for the next Newsletter to Ken Richardson,
3 Woodrow,
London, S.E.18.