



THE BRITISH DRAGON ASSOCIATION



NEWSLETTER AUTUMN 1982

THE BRITISH DRAGON ASSOCIATION

Autumn 1982

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Our thanks to Peter Cook of
"Yachts and Yachting" for his
kind permission to reproduce reports.

EDITORIAL

This is the third edition of the B.D.A. Newsletter, and it falls to the Torbay Fleet to be responsible for its output. Although we have not had news from every fleet in the country, I think it is fair to say that the Dragon Class in Britain and Ireland is in a very healthy state, and most fleets are growing in numbers. This issue gives quite a complete picture of racing in these islands this season and, as a result of this keenness, we expect a good turn-out of entries for the Edinburgh Cup in Torquay next June. Championships from abroad have been less well reported this year, but we know that the German Dragons go from strength to strength: and from conversations with our French visitors from Deauville, there is no doubt that the class thrives in France. In passing may I point out to those thinking about next year's Edinburgh Cup that there will be a four race, two day, regatta over similar courses the week-end before that event, for those wishing to avoid the rush of getting in the water.

NOTICES

B.D.A. DINNER and A.G.M. - Royal Thames Yacht Club 7th January, 1983.

A.G.M. at 7 p.m.

Tickets are available either from local fleet representatives or direct from the Secretary :

R. Gilday - 21 Fitzjohns Avenue - London - N.W. 3 - Tel: 01-794-2772.

1983 FIXTURE LIST

3rd to 10th April	Vasco de Gama	Areachon	
30th April or 28th May	Eastern Area Championships	Leamington	
5th to 10th June	Irish Championship	Belfast	
11th and 12th June	"Warm Up"	Torbay	
18th to 24th June	Edinburgh Cup	Torbay	
10th to 16th July	French Championship	Douarnenez	
22nd to 30th July	World Championship	Vancouver	
28th July to 6th August	Gold Cup	Manstrand	
22nd to 26th August	Western Area Championship	Torbay	
4th to 10th September	Regatta Royale	Cannes	
12th to 17th September	German Championship		
1984	July	Gold Cup	Copenhagen
	August	European Championship	Kinsale
1985	July	Edinburgh and Gold Cups	Scotland

Making Waves

Selwyn Parker

THE DRAGON MALADY: ROPE NUMBNESS

Like everybody else, I paid lip service to the Dragon class. You know the sort of thing. "Classic lines, greyhound of the sea etc. etc." But also, like others, I thought them a bit ponderous. In an age of planning hulls and fin keels, the displacement, slack-bilged, long-keeled Dragon seemed an anachronism. A beautiful one, maybe, but still an anachronism. After all, she's over half a century old.

If you think about it, that's an awfully long time. In 50 years we've had a world war, a revolution in computers, the Model T Ford and a dozen American presidents. And the Dragon has survived them all. Like an elegant dinosaur.

But now, after two months of crewing one with Michael Cotter of the Royal St. George, I've undergone a sort of nautical conversion. Ponderous she still is, but in a dramatic way. Upwind she is very rapid but downwind, when planing hulls hurtle past, the Dragon fairly thunders along, giving a somewhat frightening impression of terrific speed. When inertia gathers momentum, the result is like a runaway locomotive.

Continued on pages 4 and 5

I was quite unprepared for the hot contemporary the Dragon is. In the era of tweakiness, the Dragon is among the tweakiest. In a 25-knot sou'wester blasting down Dalkey Sound we roared downwind on a dead run in the faithful "Tarasque", rolling like stink with Mick issuing timely warnings while I pumped like hell.

"Look out. Here we go", he bellowed as a particularly nasty-looking short one loomed up astern.

Suddenly, the spinnaker guy came adrift. "The guy, the guy", yelled Mick, as he grabbed for it with one hand. "Which guy?" I enquired. "The only one", I think he said. (One's recall of phrasing isn't too precise at times like that. He might have added an adjective too.)

OK. I should have known. But look at it this way. A Dragon has between 35-40 strings to pull. When you've only been on a Dragon a couple of times, you suffer from what might be called rope-numbness, malady that affects Dragon neophytes. The floorboards are simply awash with strings of every hue. So, when somebody says "pull the yoke", you have a fair old choice, and the brain freezes.

How do I know that "Tarasque" has 35-40 ropes? In fact, it's exactly 40 and I counted them. This rather pointless statistic emerged when Des McWilliam, who was sail-trimming on Cork's "Triton" in the East Coast Dragon championships (see "Racing" inside), mentioned that he'd counted 37 ropes. Impressed, Colm Barrington, a former Laser hotshot crewing on the Northern boat "Ragnar", and I, went painstakingly through all the ropes on our respective boats. He got 39 and I got 40. (Now, on "Ragnar", they are looking for an excuse to fit another tweak.) All of the ropes are of varying degrees of importance, but important none the less.

Another thing that's important to remember is that the Dragon probably has as many tweaks as do the Admirals Cuppers, but there are seven or eight guys to do the work on them, and a lot more space. The cockpit of a Dragon at spinnaker-drop time resembles the floor of a sheep-shearing shed on a Canterbury high station just before "smoko". For example, the only way I can furl the genoa is to crawl through the legs of Big Bob, the for'ard hand, and hope he doesn't close them at the wrong moment and break my neck.

Here's my drill for a drop. Get off the rail and adjust the outhaul and Cunningham eye, pull on the runner, de-tweak the mast, re-tighten the tunner, check the backstay (if I remember - I usually don't), open the spinnaker hatch, unwind the genoa, adjust the traveller and start hauling on the mainsheet as we round. And that's no different from any other crew. It IS busy. I suppose there is about half a minute to get it all done. Unlike Ken Rohan, Mick Cotter doesn't use a stopwatch.

The point is that Dragons are, perversely, very modern. Above that slack-bilged hull stands an ultra-rig. A tiny adjustment produces a dramatic effect in boat-speed. After the racing Des McWilliam described how he decided, after a bit of a struggle, that it was worthwhile getting off the rail to ease the genoa sheet half an inch although he didn't expect it to work. It did. Suddenly, the old boat came alive.

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Dragons Edinburgh Cup

BAD WEATHER and Irishmen dominated the Edinburgh Cup — the British open championship for International Dragons — held at Abersoch in North Wales under the burgee of the South Caernarvonshire YC from June 19th-25th. The bad weather accounted for the loss of two days of racing midweek and the loss of two Dragons on Abersoch's exposed moorings, the Irishmen — or at least Irish boats — accounted for five out of the six points races which, with no little difficulty, were held on the days when racing was possible.

The week began badly and grew worse. After a straightforward practice race on Saturday which was won by Richard Riggs in 'Javelin' and which gave no hint of the trouble in store, Sunday's opening points race brought back uncomfortable memories of the first inshore race of last year's Admiral's Cup. There was so little wind the race should never have been started, the line was so badly laid it could not be sailed along, let alone crossed, on port tack, in the conditions the starboard end of the line was seven minutes sailing time away from the port end; there was so little wind that it took some two-and-a-half hours to reach the first mark, and then, when it looked as if the dismal affair could honourably be forgotten by allowing it to run out with the time limit, the course was shortened at the third mark of what is supposed to be a six-leg race. Gordon Mellor won this affair, largely by going further into the shore than anyone else to avoid the tidal stream which is said by many locals not to exist while those who went out to sea looking for a new breeze were lifted in a great circle round the mark while at the same time being swept away towards Harlech by this same stream and were never seen again.

On Monday a race could not be held until five o'clock in the evening, so long did it take the wind to settle but the race officer, having perceived on the grapevine that not everyone was happy with Sunday's affair, took a firm and commendable hold on the situation and simply refused to start the racing until he had a reasonably steady breeze in which to hold it. It meant a long day but most competitors accepted that the long wait was worth it. The race was won in fine style by Tony O'Gorman — already a two-times holder of the Cup — in 'Galax', with Philip Tolhurst, last year's runner-up, second in 'Warlord II' and Chris Dicker of Lowestoft third in 'Skal III'.

The wind, having declined to blow for two days, then blew with a vengeance and on Tuesday and Wednesday it was impossible to ferry competitors out to their Dragons, moored off the club. In Tuesday's onshore gale there was little question of racing but on the second day racing would have been both feasible and enjoyable in the afternoon had more sheltered shore facilities made it possible to board the boats. As it was, heroic efforts were required of the South Caernarvonshire's launch drivers to ferry an assault party of Dragon crews out through heavy surf off Abersoch's tiny, tidal harbour to put them on board the wildly plunging Dragons to make with the bilge pumps. Even so, their efforts were too late to save Chris Dicker's 'Skal' and class secretary Rufus Gilday's 'Stroller', both of which had sunk during the night. Both were recovered next day, damaged but not wrecked.

Dragons Edinburgh Cup

... continued from page 7

On Thursday and Friday race team and competitors were left with the daunting prospect of cramming four days racing into two, and so keen were competitors to get on with it that there were no less than four general recalls before the third race was under way. An incident on the start line marred this race when, on the good start, a single recall gun was fired, indicating some, but not all, the fleet over the line. The race officer hailed two boats, which returned and restarted, but subsequently disqualified seven boats which were not hailed: moral — race officers should either hail all premature starters, or none. Some of the unhailed but disqualified boats were close astern of the hailed boats, and were not best pleased at the race officer giving outside assistance to some boats and not to them and, not being hailed, had sailed on, believing themselves clear. They had, however, been over the line and requests for redress fell on stony ground. The third race, rendered processionary by yet more windshifts of a dramatic nature, was won by J. J. Finnigan in 'Jane' but Cardigan Bay had yet more tricks in store for the fourth race, late on Thursday evening.

This was only the second full length race of the week and was full of huge windshifts from the word go. A delighted Ken Bushell arrived at the windward mark first, set the kite and he and his crew gave themselves three cheers — cheers promptly returned by a goodly number of those behind, for Ken Bushell is a popular if not spectacularly successful competitor in the class. He lost his lead to 'Tarka' (John Histon) while the fancied yachts, which yet again had gone the wrong way, did their best to catch up. Come the final beat, however, and there was more dismay. With the wind dying the leaders all headed for the shore, which was where Mellor had shown everyone was the place to go at Abersoch in no wind. Down came the mist, on came the rain, even lighter fell the breeze and poor, not to say non-existent, visibility blotted out all but the yachts close by. 'It's probably quite nice here, in the summer' remarked one crew

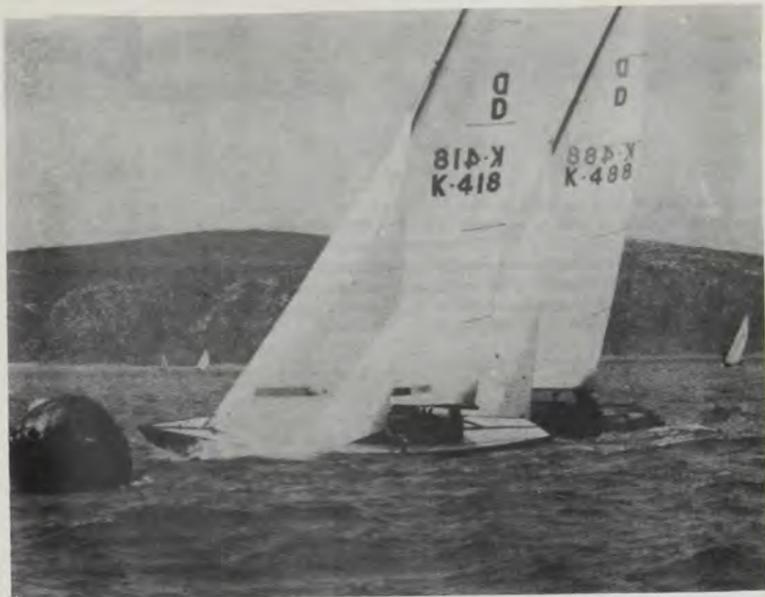
With twenty minutes left to the time limit, a single gun boomed out through the murk — someone had finished. As the mist cleared it could be seen that all those who had not followed the leaders but who instead had gone off out to sea had found a breeze and come reaching in. 'Tarka', leading comfortably at the leeward mark, struggled in 16th, others in the leading group finished in the twenties and the boat which won, 'Hikari', yet another Irish boat, had been about 25th at the leeward mark. Abersoch was living up to its reputation in the Dragon class of being a difficult place to read.

The final two races, held on the Friday, provided the best and truest racing of the week. The morning's race was won by American Star sailor and sailmaker Jack Lynch who now lives and works in Northern Ireland and, there being no Stars in Ireland, has taken to the Dragon class to find demanding, intellectual racing. His 'Ragnar' is based at Royal Ulster YC, so it was yet another feather in the emerald caubeen, especially with Kinsale's Alan Crosbie in 'Isolde' coming second.

By now, all the fancied stars had some very unfancied results. O'Gorman had a first and a second — but he also had a 10th, a 15th and a 28th. Mellor, Monday's winner, had a 1st and a 5th — and a 14th, a 20th and a 28th. Philip Tolhurst had a second but had blown his

chances by losing his fourth in Thursday's first race by having been over the line at the start (precisely the error which had cost him the Edinburgh Cup the year before) and was thus adding a 050 to his down-the-pan results, Mike Patten and Nick Streeter were both carrying scores in the twenties to weigh down their single figure results while Richard Riggs, practice race winner, had a 27th and 32nd and 'Hikari', Thursday evening's winner, was sporting a 13th, a 24th and a GAVE UP.

One boat, however, had good consistency — J. J. Finnigan's 'Jane'. Finnigan seemed to have the knack of being near enough the front for enough of the time to go the other way when it was obvious that those out in the lead were going the wrong way and were about to bomb-out, and he thus had a 1st, 3rd, 5th, 7th and 8th and only had to keep it together for the final race to be home and dry.



Hamish McKenzie in 'Kis' leads Philip Tolhurst in 'Warford II' into the mark during the practice race — one of the rare pleasant sailing days at this year's Edinburgh Cup at Abersoch.

Tony O'Gorman, the only threat to 'Jane's' position, won that final race, however, in blistering style and Finnigan obliged his compatriot by returning his worst result of the series, 12th, and thus the one Irish boat snatched the Edinburgh Cup from the other's grasp. Alan Crosbie turned in another second and thus leapt up in the rankings from a nondescript twenty-fourth to fourth overall behind the Royal Ulster-based 'Ragnar' whose 9th in the final race allowed her to drop a 23rd — the sort of place too many others were having to count. Fifth overall, dropping a 25th but still counting a 21st, was Mike Patten from Burnham and the first English boat to get a look-in, and sixth was local fleet captain John Thornton in 'Flapjack', who had redeemed earlier pan-outs with a 3rd and a 5th on the final day.

The host club put in a great deal of effort to make the regatta a success only to be thwarted by the weather, and a measure of their efforts — and success — was on display at the prizegiving where many local and not-so-local companies had produced a glittering display of prizes. Perhaps one consolation was that, with the vagaries of the weather and the erratic performance of so many competitors, those handsome prizes were scattered fairly liberally throughout the fleet.

Malcolm McKeag

Overall results: 1st 'Galax' (T.O'Gorman, Kinsale YC) 40pts, 2nd 'Jane' (J.J.Finnigan, RStGYC) 42.7, 3rd 'Ragnar' (J.Lynch, R Ulster YC) 59, 4th 'Isolde' (A.Crosbie, KYC), 5th 'Coquille St Jack' (M.Patten, R. Corinthian YC) 73, 6th 'Flapjack' (J.Thornton, South Caernarvon YC) 74.7.

THE SEASON ON THE FORTH



Nineteen Eighty Two has been another busy season for Dragons on the Forth with over fifty separate races in four series plus Forth Week all requiring winners. In general the weather was kind to us with the early part of the season being almost sub-tropical, but just when summer was supposed to be at its height, oil-skins and warmwear were at their most necessary. Fog caused the best argument of the year when questions were asked under Rule 9/2 (Mark Unseen), satisfactorily resolved a couple of days later when normal viz returned, to the relief of the three finishers who battled it out to the end.

Hamish Mackenzie sailing 'Kis' (K418) has again been the man to beat, taking the class championship and three of the series with Alan Marshall in 'Idris' (K464) winning the Early points and 'Blue Haze' (K375: Shaun and Liz Maclean) taking the Olympic series. Idris might well have been better placed but for crewman Andrew Hall doing his best to break everything in sight on the boat, usually in the absence of the owner too! Most would have been suggesting less in the way of spinach or bananas, or whatever passes for crew fodder nowadays, but not Alan: what does he do but offer a partnership in the boat. That must merit a large fine at the next crews' union dinner. (Friday 25th March, by the way!)

After Abersoch Hamish returned with numerous "if onlys" and an "I should have been third" and, would you believe, we all believed him! Anyway, he did do well in upholding Scottish honour and holding Scottish drink.

On our own waters, out of a fleet of a dozen boats we have maintained a consistently good turn-out with all events well contested, whilst we continue to show our keel-boat rivals at Granton, the Soling, Etechells and International One Designs, what "class" racing really means.

For next year we hope to welcome back two other Dragons to our ranks, these being 'Snark', after a years sabbatical by her owners, Lindsay and Robin Burley: whilst the long term re-fit on 'Karen II' is expected to be completed. Incidentally, a word of comfort to those of us who worry about our keel bolts: even after all had been removed from 'Karen' and she had been hoisted in the air and shaken about a bit the keel still wouldn't fall off! It required a sledge hammer and a determined man.

And so to 1983: we hope to support the Clyde fleet which has dwindled badly, with a number of boats hopeful of being through West for Clyde Week, now a new, successful format as a four day weekend. That's the kind of weekend that most of us like!

Shaun Maclean
17th October, 1982

ROYAL TORBAY YACHT CLUB



The Torbay Fleet enjoyed an excellent season despite the fact that two or three good boats were not put in the water. No doubt with Edinburgh Cup fever spreading for 1983, we should be at full strength next year. The Club racing has been very close with no boat winning all the races. I think everyone got a few wins. Mike Ellis with 'Heuschrecke' won the Wednesday series; 'Mistral' (John Lewthwaite) the Sundays; and 'Menace' (David Bowen) the Saturdays.

Highlights of the season were the first Western Area Championship, and the revival of the Team Racing against the Deauville Yacht Club.

Four boats went to Abersoch. They all had their moments of glory but did not fair spectacularly overall. 'Mistral' and 'Heuschrecke' also went to Kinsale for the Irish Championship. On both occasions they came back full of praise for the large number of Irish boats who tactically sail impeccably. The Torbay boats will gain tremendously from the experiences. Our congratulations to Tony O'Gorman and Philip Tolhurst.

WESTERN AREA CHAMPIONSHIP

Only nine boats enjoyed some of the best racing Torbay has seen for some time, as part of Torquay Regatta, in the third week of August. Most welcome was Nick China's 'Chinatown', sailed by Bill Hancock. There were five races with one discard. Superb trophies were awarded by members, the Club, and Peter Stuyvesant for each day's racing. Adrian Hinkins, the Race Officer, set first class lines and courses throughout the week. One day produced a bad windshift but otherwise the wind blew south-westerly all week at force 3 to 7 with nice little shifts to keep it interesting. Amazingly, in such excellent conditions, there was a different winner each day! Nevertheless, the Championship became a close fight between 'Menace', sailed by Hugh Duder, 'Tara' (John Hart), and 'Mistral'. These three were well clear of the rest on points, being consistently near the front. Hugh Duder eventually emerged the winner by one point from 'Tara', although he nearly blew it in a very close finish in the last race.

The winners:

Race 1 - 'Mistral'. Race 2 - 'Chinatown'. Race 3 - 'Menace'.

Race 4 - 'Rapier' (N. VansColina). Race 5 - 'Tara'.

Overall Winner - 'Menace' (Hugh Duder).

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TRUSTHOUSE FORTE HOTELS

..... continued from page 11

TORBAY and DEAUVILLE TEAM RACING

After a two year gap, the annual Deauville/Torbay Team Racing for the Phantom Trophy was finally revived by John Lewthwaite after many, many letters and telephone calls. In the end, on the first week-end of October, the French sent over a very strong team including two of Baron Bich's Twelve Metre experts Michel Frottier and Guy Dumas.

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The Hotel has a reputation for first-class cuisine with an interesting and varied choice of menu each day, using fresh ingredients whenever possible. The dining-room is well fitted and the wine rack carries a good stock of selected wines. All meals are personally supervised by the proprietors.

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All in all,

a holiday at the Beacon Cove Hotel, is one to be enjoyed and remembered by the whole family. Proprietors Bob and Sue Knott will make sure of that.....why not be their guests?

With no racing on the Saturday, because of the lack of wind, the first disastrous race took place on the Sunday morning in Force 2/3. At the start the main halyard broke on a boat lent to Deauville. On the run there was a port/starboard incident and at the finish the French failed to sail the complete course. After a chaotic lunch, the second race got away well in similar conditions, but with Torquay having only three boats instead of four. The final result was a narrow win to Deauville of 49% points to 51%. Recriminations were smoothed over at the Prize Giving enough to ensure the continuation of this excellent annual diversion.

Graham Jenkins

BURNHAM FLEET

The Burnham Fleet have enjoyed a most successful year with turnouts of up to twelve boats on some week-ends.

Racing started in late March and continues on both Saturday and Sunday until mid-November.

At the Edinburgh Cup, Burnham boats finished 5th and 7th which was disappointing. They did, however, retain the Citron Trophy.

'Coquille St. Jack' (M. Patten) won the East Coast Championships at Levington, with 'Storm' (R. Melville) finishing third in a fleet of twenty-seven boats. Later in the year, 'Warlord' (P. Tolhurst) beat all the Irish on their own water to take the

Irish Championships.

Prospects look good for next season, when it is hoped several more boats will be joining the fleet.

Michael Patten.

ABERSOCH FLEET

The Abersoch Dragon fleet are looking forward to next season when John Bradshaw will be sporting his newly aquired 'Javelin'. It is a boat with numerous old boat prizes and is in truly wonderful condition. John is looking forward to the challenge of living up to the standards set by the previous owner Richard Riggs. There is rumour of other boats appearing in the fleet, but as yet nothing concrete enough to report.

John Thornton ('Flapjack') and Gordon Mellor ('Phoenix') are hoping they may go to the World Championships in Vancouver in 1983. Simon Holt, and established bachelor member of the fleet, is to be married soon.

Apart from that, the S.C.Y.C. dragon fleet are still feeling the disappointment of the weather supplied for the 1982 Edinburgh Cup - sorry chaps better luck next time ! At least the social side was acclaimed as a great success. It is anticipated that four, or even five, of our boats may make the journey to Torbay in 1983.

Gordon Mellor.



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ALDEBURGH YACHT CLUB



The Aldeburgh Dragon Fleet have enjoyed a good season having been re-inforced by three boats from Waldringfield: joined by the old 'Troika' from Lowestoft; and with three boats changing hands within the fleet. We had eleven boats sailing in the regatta, 'Polly' being the overall winner with 'Ula' going very fast on occasion.

Seasons points were won by 'Ganymede II' who adopted a revolutionary new crewing technique to win the necessary last two races. This secret will be revealed in exchange for a bottle of port !

ROYAL NORTH OF IRELAND YACHT CLUB CULTRA



After a period of racing with a small number of Dragons at Royal North of Ireland Yacht Club, 1982 showed a welcomed increase with two additional yachts racing regularly.

We are hoping that 1983 will further add to our numbers and strengthen our fleet.

We have had a very successful season's racing in exceptionally good weather, the various Trophies and Points Cups being very keenly contested.

Next season we hope that at least two of our Dragons will be competing in the Edinburgh Cup at Torquay, and we are confident that they will do well.

Our next social event is the annual Dragon Class Dinner which has always been a most popular event, and helps to keep us in touch during the over long period when our Yachts are on the land.

Yours

J. E. E. Robb
Class Secretary.

SOLENT FLEET REPORT

The season at Cowes began in May with reasonably fine weather which, as the season progressed, deteriorated into a series of flat calms or gales; Cowes Week being the nadir: two days were cancelled due to lack of wind and to fog, whilst the rest of that week was only a slight improvement, weatherwise, on the two aforementioned days.

On the social scene: two cocktail parties were held; one at the Royal London, and the other at the Royal Yacht Squadron. The latter was a tremendous success with 63 members attending; so it is intended to repeat this event next year. A Dinner was also held at the Royal Corinthian in July; a very pleasant evening was had by all who participated.

Lastly, four new boats joined the Solent Fleet last season, and it is hoped that they will continue much in evidence in future years.

Joanna Styles.



THE ROYAL NORFOLK AND SUFFOLK YACHT CLUB, LOWESTOFT

The season for us at Lowestoft was a rather up and down affair. It started in earnest at Levington where we assembled for the East Coast Dragon Championships. An enjoyable week-end both on and off the water and an event most certainly not to be missed. The race organisation, and marvellous parties, clearly establish this as a must for everybody's calendar.

A few weeks sailing at Lowestoft and then the Edinburgh Cup. This was also up and down! One of our boats 'Troika' was up, well up lying third overall until running out of steam on the final day. Another, 'Skal III' was down, well down: lying on the bottom for much of the week. This achieved two things: firstly the Dicker crew could imbibe more leisurely than the rest of us, and secondly it gave a much needed boost to the boat yard of the old established Nick Truman at Oulton Broad! I understand that the packed lunch survived intact adding still further weight to the comments overheard in the bar concerning the recipe used by the Abersoch cooks. Alas the rest of the Dicker boat being constructed of mere wood did not fair so well but we understand that she is even at this moment being restored to her former glory, indeed some might say even surpassing it, and we all look with eager anticipation to the relaunching next spring.

One brand new boat 'Tara' has joined the fleet this year: there is still an air of mystery surrounding her but we now have it on good authority that she is owned by our new class captain John Crockett who also, somehow, found himself elected as Club Commodore.

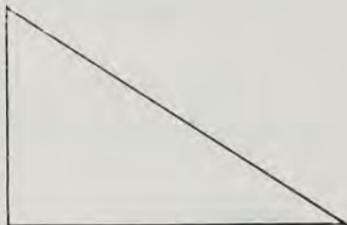
There has been some experimentation by another newcomer to the Lowestoft fleet: Daryl Bowles sailing John's old boat 'Sandoola'. He has been trying loose footed main sails with, one must say at this stage, rather mixed results. I understand, however, he intends to pursue this next season with some purpose built sails, unless of course thwarted by any changes in class rules.

Overall, then, we have an incredibly enthusiastic bunch looking forward to wintering well, and emerging with the same enthusiasm next season to avenge our teams racing losses of this year.

Dragon Irish Championship

AS EVERYONE conceded after the Dunhill Dragon Irish championship at Kinsale from September 5th to 10th it was, after all, only fair. After years of the Irish Dragon fleet taking command of the Edinburgh Cup, culminating in a first, second, third and fourth for Irish boats this year, it was sweet revenge when England's Philip Tolhurst in 'Warlord II', a handsome wood-decked Borresen glassfibre hull in British racing green, 'did an Irish' and swept the board at Kinsale, County Cork. So comprehensively did Tolhurst dominate this hot fleet, which included Tony O'Gorman and Connor Doyle who between them have collected six Edinburgh Cups, that he had already tied up the championship with one race remaining in the six race series.

Near-faultless tactical sailing in difficult south-westerlies gave 'Warlord' a score line of 3,1,1,1,5,7. That hat-trick in the middle races was not as comfortable as it looks on paper. In one of those races 'Warlord' rounded the final leeward mark in sixth place but consummately worked a series of small shifts on the right-hand side of the course while the others chased more wind out to sea. Tolhurst tacked for the line on top of several boats, held his weather and scraped across first by two seconds. It is a measure of



the tightness of the fleet that the first three boats finished within four seconds of each other.

For Tolhurst the Irish championship was consolation for a string of what he called 'bridesmaid' placings last year including a second in the Edinburgh Cup and another runner-up berth in the Gold Cup. Tolhurst and crew, Charles Melville and John McWilliam, all received a standing ovation at the prize-giving banquet in Kinsale's New Orleans-style Perryville Hotel.

The Irish did extract some satisfaction from the presence of McWilliam in the crew. The Crosshaven-based sailmaker also supplied the winning spinnaker on 'Warlord II' (and indeed for virtually all the Dragon fleet).

Runner up was late-charging Michael Cotter in 'Tarasque' who reeled off a first and a second in the last two races to pip O'Gorman by four points.

Selwyn Parker



Overall Results: 1st 'Warlord II' (Philip Tolhurst) 3,1,1,1,5,7, 15.7pts, 2nd 'Tarasque' (Michael Cotter) 6,4,10,6,2,1, 34.4pts, 3rd 'Galax' (Tony O'Gorman) 7,2,4,5,3,6, 38.4pts, 4th 'Hikari' (John Kidney) 2,3,3,13,8,10, 44.4pts, 5th 'Alphida' (Connor Doyle) 5,8,2,2,10,dsq, 46pts, 6th 'Isolde' (Alan Crosby) 4,6,7,4,dsq, 3, 46.4pts



Philip Tolhurst in 'Warlord II' swept the board at Kinsale to win the Dragon Irish championship from a very hot fleet of world class Dragon sailors. Near faultless tactics gave Tolhurst the title with a race to spare.

IRISH DRAGON ASSOCIATION



The Dragon Season started on the first Saturday of May, 1982 with seven boats on the starting line; it has been a number of seasons since we have had this many active boats in the fleet, and I think it gave us all great encouragement for this season and, indeed, for seasons to come.

The first championship was the East Coast Championship in Dun Laoghaire. After some great racing the four boats representing Kinsale finished: 1st ('Galax'); 2nd ('Alphida'); 5th ('Isolda'); and 10th ('Triton'); which was very creditable indeed.

All four boats stayed up in Dublin for the Royal Alfred Anniversary race which was won by 'Isolde' (I could write Pages on that race but modesty forbids even if Miles doesn't!).

'Alphida' and 'Triton' then went back to Kinsale and by all accounts had some wonderful Saturday and Thursday League racing although they did not get it all their own way, or so Johnny, Carl and Dave O'Connell inform me. Meanwhile 'Galax' and 'Isolde' were in Abersoch for the Edinburgh Cup; and after some very mixed weather Tony, Ted, Gary and 'Galax' made us all proud by taking the 1st Spot. Miles, John and myself in 'Isolde' came in 4th with two other Irish Dragons filling the 2nd and 3rd positions. A successful week for the Irish.

A Championship gap then followed in July and August which was filled by some fantastic Saturday and Thursday League racing even if the weather did some times let us down on Thursday evenings.

The highlight of the season for the Kinsale Dragon Fleet was the hosting of the Irish Dragon Championships in Kinsale. Due to all the help we got from Club members, the event was a great success even if the English did get their own back for the Edinburgh Cup by winning the event through Philip Tollhurst in 'Warlord II'. A more popular winner I don't think we could have had. Mick Cotter was 2nd; Tony 3rd; John Kidney 4th; Conor 5th; and Miles and I were 6th.

The following week-end we held the South Coast Championship, this was a bit of a strain on the club. Conor won even though Greg was with him (well done lads!); Tony was 2nd; Mick Cotter was 3rd; and 'Jane' sailed by Michael O' Reilly was 4th.

Our season ended the following week-end with the Fafner Trophy which is a Team racing event in Dublin. There were four teams: Kinsale, Belfast, Killeagh, and Dublin Bay. The Kinsale Team of Myself, Miles, John and Julie, Brian Twomey and Neill Kenefick, I'm glad to say won the event and thus ended a super season on a high note.

Alan Crosbie.

Sunray's Contribution to Dragon Sail Development

Following my visit to Posenhofen Regatta last October, where I demonstrated our new Dragon Spinnaker, we have had a highly successful season with our Stingrays - aptly christened by an enthusiastic Dragon owner who was kind enough to telephone us to say how delighted he was with his new Spinnaker.

As a result of their race-proven performance, we have sold a large number of our Stingrays, and have received very favourable reports all round. Whilst we cannot list all the racing results, we understand that Dragons using them in the Edinburgh Cup did very well, and many comments were made on their markedly superior speed off the wind. One owner tells us that a Stingray Spinnaker is "never passed".

We can, however, give details of our Cowes Week results, when Dragons using Stingrays gained 4 firsts, 2 seconds, and 3 thirds out of five races sailed. Mike Patten in 'Coquille St. Jaques' with a Stingray gained First Overall at Burnham.

A number of owners have asked us to design a Spinnaker specifically for running, and this we have now done: initial tests of our new Mark II Stingray have proved most encouraging. This sail has a wider head angle combined with broad shoulders, which has resulted in an increase in effective area in the upper half of the sail. This Spinnaker will undoubtedly be faster on a dead run than our Mark I version, which gives of its best when the wind is anywhere forward of the beam. For owners who do not use chutes, there is an obvious advantage in being able to set spinnakers which are specifically designed for running or reaching.

Development of our Mainsails and Genos also continues apace, with very satisfactory results. Owners who have bought full suits from us have reported a marked improvement in the performance of their boats.

Dragon owners will be pleased to learn that Vectis have recently brought out an excellent new spinnaker cloth with very low stretch characteristics and high tear strength. It has a silicone finish which makes it not only water repellent, but also ideal for spinnakers which are going to be used with chutes.



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B.D.A. MINUTES

The JUNE meeting (attended by representatives of all the fleets except N.I.) was marred somewhat by the loss of Chris Dicker's and Rufus Gilday's boats; sunk at their moorings that morning.

A great deal of time was spent discussing the question of rule enforcement (only 25% of the boats scrutinizied were 'fully legal'). As a result a number of proposals were agreed (sic)

- (a) Mast weights will be checked at Torquay in 1983.
- (b) Boats will be inspected to see that all weight correctors shown on their certificate are still in place.
- (c) Cloth weights of sails are to be carefully checked.

To help everyone racing in the class, Sir Gordon Smith has agreed to write an article explaining and commenting on the rules - to be published next spring.

There was also discussion as to the dates of the Gold Cup (of which see more later).

The Handbook will go to press on 1.2.83 - those who have not made sure that their Fleet Secretary has submitted an up-to-date list by then have only themselves to blame if they do not receive the Handbook or magazines.

There will also be some changes in the rules of the Edinburgh Cup next year - no more three hour 1st. legs !

The NOVEMBER meeting was also attended by nearly all fleet representatives and, after endorsing the minutes of the June meeting, reviewed the Association's financial position - subscriptions will remain at £5 for boat owners and £3 for others - and the next two years fixtures. If enough people are interested, a regatta at Poole could be organised both for next year and for 1984.

INTERNATIONAL DRAGON ASSOCIATION

Sir Gordon and Lady Smith kindly hosted the November meeting, once again.

The Canadian representative outlined the arrangements for the WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP next year. There will be one charter boat only available per country, but there will be a 'warm-up' regatta the week-end before.

Financially, the Association is well endowed even though German and Swiss Builders have not paid their building fees to the I.Y.R.U. (a proportion goes to the I.D.A.) none of these boats have valid measurement certificates - Buyers Beware !

Phillippe Manset has been elected to succeed Pat Dyas as Chairman and, while Jack De Jong is ill, Philip Tolhurst is deputising as the Secretary.

RULES : there are no changes this year but Tony Watts is considering clarifying a number of grey areas; in particular the need for re-measurement after a major re-build.

GOLD CUP : the most contentious item considered was scheduling and dates for future Gold Cups. At the July meeting the Swedes indicated they could not change the dates : this despite the fact that last year they were informed that the dates must NOT clash with those of the World Championship.

Every national representative expressed disapproval of the clash of dates, particularly in the light of the failure of the European Championships in 1981. However, since the application has been accepted by the Clyde Yacht Club Association, there is little that could be done.

Some changes, however, are now likely. Denmark will be arranging the Gold Cup in 1984 and the dates will not clash with either National or European Championships.

After that the Gold Cup returns to Scotland (The Forth) where it will return every 6 years. In between times the 'circuit' of countries will be changed both as to the countries themselves and also the order. Detailed proposals will be put to the Association by the new Chairman next year.

Finally: Norbert Geissler, the new German representative and a competitive sailor, raised a number of small queries relating to the rules. These ranged from weights of masts and sail cloths, to flow 'flanges' attached to trailing edge of the keel to improve flow over the leading edge of the rudder (this is illegal).

TECHNICAL NOTES

BORGE BØRRESØN tells us that he built over 30 new dragons last year and expects to be building the same number next year - how about some U.K. buyers?

Genoa Sheeting: for many years crews have been pondering the problem of adjusting the Genoa sheet from the weather side. Some ideas have involved a shock-cord pumping system attached to the winch handle; others a solid rod (also attached to the handle!). In 1982, John Boyce launched his new boat and simply cross sheeted to the weather winch mounted on the cabin top. No one - least of all John's crew - will tell you how it is working!

Now news has it that Gordon Mellor - who has just purchased 'Rogue' - is contemplating a 'Warlord II' system (tracks, travellers and power boxes under the deck); whilst 'Warlord's' owner and crew are considering some changes as well - will it all work? The advantages are obvious, but something has to be sacrificed.

SAILS Interestingly, sail prices are almost static - the two notable exceptions are the spinnakers of McWILLIAMS and SUNRAY which names, so to speak, swept all before them in 1982 - both up now to £255 + VAT.

Rumour also has it that 'Warlord II' had time, in the Irish Championships, to try out a few new McWilliams 'white' sails - even more amazing that Connor Doyle and McWilliams were both observers at Burnham with self-same sails in November - methinks this is Irish!

NORTHS, not to be outdone, have taken on Peter Baines to help out with the new designs (apart from driving up to Abersoch and Burnham Week to race). Hamble tells us that with Peter Keye he has now designed a new spinnaker and also a number of refinements to the headsails for 1983.

[Ed. note - it is hoped both Peter Baines and John McWilliams will be at the Royal Thames on 7th January, 1983 for the Dinner and A.G.M.]

Ultimate Technical Note It is difficult to think of a boat which is a better candidate for the ultimate in 'tweakiness' than Mick Cotter's 'Tarasque'. To quote IRISH BOATS & YACHTING: " 'Triton' has 37 ropes, 'Ragnar' 39 and I (Selwyn Parker) have 40. The cockpit of a Dragon at spinnaker-drop time resembles the floor of a sheep-shearing shed on a Canterbury high station just before 'smoko'." BAH! But does anyone know what they (the ropes) all do?

