

DRAGON NEWS



BRITISH DRAGON ASSOCIATION

Winter 2002



**YOUR NEXT DRAGON
COULD BE FREE...
SEE PAGE 5**

**'The problem with one-design racing is that usually
the best sailor wins...'**

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- 1st.** Régates-Royales
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- 1st.** Campeonato de Portugal
- 1st.** Gold Cup
- 1st.** Swedish Championship
- 1st.** Bayerischer Löwe
- 1st.** Soerensen Preis
- 1st.** Finnish Championship

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Front Cover Picture by **Hugh Bourn**



photos – Hugh Bourn



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UK DRAGON EVENTS 2003

March 18th - 21st Burnham Easter Regatta
May 3rd - 5th South Coast Championship, Cowes*
May 24th - 26th East Coast Championship, Lowestoft*
June 7th - 9th Scottish Championship, Rhu, Helensburgh
June 11th - 14th Edinburgh Cup, Rhu, Helensburgh*
June 20th - 22nd Northern Championship, Edinburgh*
August 9th - 16th Classic Nationals, Falmouth

2004

April 9th - 12th Burnham Easter Regatta
May 1st - 3rd South Coast Championship, Cowes
May 29th - 31st East Coast Championship, Medway*
June 20th - 22nd South West Championship, Torbay*
June 24th - 28th Edinburgh Cup, Torbay*
July 11th - 17th GOLD CUP, Falmouth
Date and Venue TBA Northern Championship*
Date and Venue TBA Classic Nationals

* These are counting events for the Citron Trophy and for qualification for IDA events. The South West Championship in Torbay replacing the South Coast Champs for 2004 only.

BDA ANNUAL DINNER Friday 10th January 2003

The annual dinner will follow the AGM at the
Royal Thames Yacht Club at 8.00pm
Dress: reefers or lounge suits

Tickets £36 per person (includes wine on table)
must be booked in advance
preferably by December 14th,
or by January 6th 2003 at the latest

BRITISH DRAGON ASSOCIATION



NOTICE OF AGM

The Annual General Meeting of
the British Dragon Association will
be held at the Royal Thames
Yacht Club, Knightsbridge at 1830
on Friday January 10th 2003

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of last meeting and matters arising
3. Chairman's Report
4. To receive and adopt the accounts for the year ending 31st October 2002
5. Subscriptions
6. Class Promotion
7. Edinburgh Cup. Proposal to amend Rule 6 to delete the provision for a reserve day
8. Election of Officers
9. IDA Report
10. Gold Cup, Falmouth 2004 and Europeans Cowes 2006
11. Any Other Business

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The BDA Committee propose the following officers for election at the AGM:

Chairman - James Mehew
Vice Chairman - Rory Bowman
Hon Secretary - Julia Bailey
Hon Treasurer - Gill Smith

Please cut off and return the completed form
(below) to: **Julia Bailey, 92 Eaton Terrace,**
London SW1W 8UG

TICKETS FOR BRITISH DRAGON ASSOCIATION ANNUAL DINNER Friday January 10th 2003

Please return this slip with your cheque (made payable to the BDA) to Julia Bailey (address above)

Name..... Telephone Number

Number of Persons..... Tick if Vegetarian Meal required

I enclose a cheque for £.....

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2002-2003

Our championship events this year were generally successful. The East Coasts were hosted by the Royal Corinthian, at Burnham on Crouch. Unusually, therefore, it was held in a river rather than at sea. It attracted a record entry of 33 boats. Unfortunately, the South Coasts at Cowes were hit by bad weather and abandoned. The Edinburgh Cup was also at Cowes and attracted a large entry of 45 boats. The Royal Northern and Clyde Yacht Club at Rhu hosted the final event, the Northerns. The entry was disappointing with only 12 boats. I found the lack of entries surprising, as the venue is wonderful, great scenery, great racing and great hospitality. Next year, the Edinburgh Cup is also at Rhu and I strongly recommend the great location.

The class is moving towards its 75th Jubilee year in 2004 and class promotion is really hotting up, with Project Jubilee in full swing. James Mehew has written a separate article in this magazine (see pages 4 to 5). Note it details how many raffle tickets we have all earned to date! Remember, it is the taking part that qualifies for raffle tickets, not the winning – so make sure you turn out as often as possible for your club racing and local events. The actual Dragon Jubilee will be arriving in the UK this December and she will be on show throughout next year at our major events. The actual raffle for Jubilee will take place at our 75th Jubilee dinner in London in January 2004.

We are enjoying an excellent relationship with our sponsors, Aberdeen Asset Management, and have already given them two very successful corporate hospitality days in Dragons. Four more are planned in 2003. Gavia Wilkinson-Cox is generously organizing these events for us. We are also very grateful for the generous support of both Borresen and Holt Allen.

In 2002 the European Championship was held on Lake Thun, in Switzerland. Southern European lake sailors dominated the event. However, we had five British entries and Patrick Gifford and his crew performed superbly to achieve sixth overall. The Gold Cup was in Mariehamn, Finland and Ron James and crew made that epic journey. Patrick Gifford, Andrew Craig and Peter Bowring have decided to attend the Worlds in Hobart, Tasmania in January 2003, another epic journey, and we wish them success. In 2003 the Europeans are at Kinsale and we have the maximum permitted British entry of nine boats.

It is now time to start planning in earnest for the 2004 Gold Cup, which the British are hosting in Falmouth. I am pleased to report that JPMorganFleming have agreed to act as our major sponsor. This puts us in a strong position, being able to plan with confidence and without major financial concerns. The Gold Cup is a major event, requiring complex organization and I know many people will be asked to participate – in advance, thanks for your help!

An important debate is starting within the class about hiking. Following several complaints about the current rule, both the IDA Technical Committee and the IDA AGM have

given this matter considerable thought. The IDA has asked all national associations to consult members over the next several months. The complaints have centred on perceived abuse of Rule 13.20, commonly known as the mid thigh rule. This states "when hiking, no part of the crew's body between the middle of the thigh and feet shall be outboard of the sheerline." Furthermore, this rule states that "The use of any apparatus or contrivance (other than fixed handholds on the inside of the coaming) the purpose of which is to support or

assist in supporting a member of the crew outboard or partially outboard is prohibited." Essentially, I believe the debate should concentrate on two key points. Firstly, how far out do we wish to be allowed to hike?

Secondly, what supports should be allowed to enable us to hike comfortably and safely in the allowed position?

I think it is essential that the BDA expresses a clear view on this very important matter and I ask everyone to consider and feed back conclusions via your Fleet Captains. We are fortunate in having Graham Bailey as the new Chairman of the Technical Committee and Mike Hayles is also a member of that Committee. I am sure they will both be keen to field any questions members may have on this subject. I believe the importance of obtaining a clear and popular hiking rule cannot be overstated. It can affect the very nature and hence attractiveness of the Dragon Class in the future.

Other significant rule changes agreed at the IDA AGM were the

approval of digital compasses (but not linked to anything else) and of electric bilge pumps (although you must still have at least one manual bilge pump). Traditional planked Dragons (pre 1988) may now install stiffening the same as for plastic boats. It was also agreed that annual boat subscriptions to the IDA are increased from £10 to £11 per boat.

The British applied to hold the World Championship in 2009 – the last time we held this was in 1989. Our application was agreed in principle, although the IDA wishes to consult with North America and Australasia before our application is confirmed.

This year we will have a major change of officers, with Richard Jordan, Richard Green and me all retiring. I would like to thank both Richards, who have both been very supportive. Richard Green retires as Treasurer and Membership Secretary leaving both our membership and finances in rude health! Gill Smith has agreed to take on this position. Richard Jordan handed over the reins as Honorary Secretary last September to Julia Bailey.

James Mehew is succeeding me as Chairman and Rory Bowman becomes Vice Chairman. I would like to thank James for his outstanding support over the last two years and, in particular, his emphasis on promoting the class. James will be elected at our AGM in absentia as he will be on his way to Hobart, crewing for Patrick Gifford in the Worlds, a valid reason for absence!

I have really enjoyed my time as Chairman and I wish the new team well.

Rob Campbell

Patrick Gifford, Andrew Craig and Peter Bowring have decided to attend the Worlds in Hobart, Tasmania...

Firstly, how far out do we wish to be allowed to hike?

JUBILEE RAFFLE TICKETS 2002

Boat		Total	Boat		Total
Adams Steve	Chase	2	Lutener Mike	Dax	2
Allen Tony	Hat Trick/Hand of Fortune	6	Maclean Shaun	Secret	5
Bailey Julia	Aimee	9	Makey Martin	Ganador	4
Bendon Adrian	Mystery	3	Mathews James	TBB	6
Bergin Dennis	Lucky Lucky	5	Mehew James	Comanche	8
Biddle Donald	Sapphire III	3	Mellows John	Ariadne	4
Billings Sean	Rebel	2	Morgan Clive	Amok	4
Bishop Paddy	Elsa	5	Murphy Pat	Setanta	7
Bourke Jay	Puca Two	11	Nicholson Peter	Virago	6
Bowles Michelle	Tana	1	O'Donoghue Don	Seabird	7
Bowman Rory	Yeah Baby	9	O'Reilly Peter	Chaos	7
Bowring Peter	Phantom	9	Owens Gerry	The Snapper	7
Boyd Henry	Sieglinde	1	Pank Peter	Blue Flame	2
Brien Simon	Kin/Aphrodite	7	Patenall Paul	Excalbur	9
Butler Les	Solan	1	Payne Neil	Rampage	11
Campbell Rob	Quicksilver 2	8	Rankin Mottram	Delilah	6
Caws Chris	Apalala	5	Ratnage Ian	Water Rat	6
Colby Peter	Merlin Scaramanga	3	Rees Alan	Spoof	4
Cole Nigel	Tsunami/Smaug	5	Risdill-Smith Robin	Tia	2
Collart Stewart	Tucano	2	Ross-Murphy John	Topaz	7
Cotter Mick	Whisper Three	8	Rountree Mark	Black Mark	3
Crabb David	Seafire	7	Rumbelow Peter	Dragonet	2
Craig Andrew	Chimera	10	Rycroft Richard	Logie	5
Cullen Richard	Supremacy	5	Shapiro Sue	Tarakona	7
Daniels Bill	Mistress	4	Sheppard Bob	Esoteric	3
Dann Barbara	Njord	8	Shilling John	Ulysses	2
Dare John	Quartet	1	Sinclair Danny	Eclipse	6
Davies Richard	Flotation	4	Skelsey Keith	Reprise	4
Dawe Roger	Royalist	1	Slatter Chris	Chica	3
Dee Peter	Rainbow	6	Smith Brian	Gem	7
Denton Aubrey	Nimrod	6	Solly Fred	Luder	5
Dicker Chris	Scorpio	4	Sorensen Olaf	Christianna	11
Dudley John	Phase 2	4	Sowry Julian	Scimitar	3
Ellis Sandy	Heuschrecke	2	Storton Colin	Djinn	1
Field John	Vol de Nuit	2	Streeter Nick	Sandpiper	3
Finnegan John	Jane	1	Sullivan Sarah	Ygraine	9
Freivokh Ken	Spitfire	5	Tait John	Thalasso two/OTT	3
Gallo Hilary	Wisp	0	Tracey Peter	Perspicacity	3
Gilday Rufus	Orion	2	Treacy Garry	King Rat	7
Gillingham Richard	Navaho	6	Trist William	Eva	5
Good Cameron	Tatsu	7	Twomey John	Mar-J	6
Goodbody Richard	China Blue/TBA	7	van der Poul Jan	?	3
Gray Brian	Phantom	2	Ward Chris	Snark	3
Gray Rob	Rackham	4	Webster Mark	Buccaneer	3
Green Richard	Sagitta	5	Williams Eric	Frantic	3
Hall David	Flame Again	3	Wilson Peter	Harkaway	2
Hall John	Fistral	4	Winn Simon	Beowulf	2
Halpenny Michael	Susele	3	Woodcock Colin	Rapid/Transit Hectic	8
Hancock Ben	Asa	5	Woods Ward	Cojo/Jessica	10
Hannant Edwin	Gandalf	2	Wright Jasper	Moonshine	1
Hayes Declan	Sabbatical	3	Brittain Chris	Caramba	2
Hayles Michael	Pongo	7	Threfall Richard	Mushu	2
Hennessy Robin	Rat Three	4	Andrassy David	Magic	2
Hogan Clare	Cloud	8	Mellish Nick	Tamerlane	1
Horgan Dave	Tog Go Bog E	7	Anthony Fred	Wish	2
Howland Wendy	Whistle	1	Bevan Mark	Thunder	1
Hunt Jonathan	Panther	2	Hellstern Matthias	Eve	4
Issaias Michael	Fanfare	6	Lady William	Chaing	2
James Ron	Feilin's Flirtation	6	Moriarty Paul	Zinza	2
Jenkins Graham	Basilisk	4	Kingston Tony	Stormvogel	4
Jenkins Nick	Chouette	2	Jacobsen Laurence	Meteor	2
Jephcott David	Moonbeam	5	Bergin Rob	Kim	2
Johnson Michael	Mustang IV	4	O'Donoghue Kieran	Sonata	4
Jones Len	Rumours Chouette	7	Lynch Frances	Phoenix	2
Jordan Richard	Chaotic	3	Sieweck Peter	Flirt	2
Kidney John	Merette/Summer Wine	8	Corboy John	Infinity	2

The Jubilee Raffle

photo – Hugh Bourn



James Mehew with exciting news of the magnificent raffle prize – a brand-new Dragon

The project is well under way. Virtually all active Dragons have now earned tickets for the draw in January 2004 at a Ball to be held in London to celebrate 75 years of Dragon sailing. The prize is a brand-new Borresen Dragon. Tickets can only be earned by owner members of the British and Irish Dragon Associations who actively sail their Dragons. The Ball will be the first event in a year promising a series of international gatherings to celebrate this remarkable milestone in the class, and to celebrate not only its history but also the success of the class today, still enjoying intense competition at an international level in a fleet of very modern boats.

The new boat will be named *Jubilee*, and is being built as this newsletter goes to press. She is a standard Borresen GRP boat incorporating the extra stiffening now allowed under the rules, and will be on show at major regattas in 2003. She is equipped with Holt Allen spars and fittings and sits on a new Harbek trailer. Both Borresen and Holt Allen have been very generous in their sponsorship of the raffle project and we are extremely grateful to them.

This is the first time in this country that a new Dragon has been raffled, but the concept is not new in the Dragon class, nor is every Englishman a stranger to winning such a magnificent prize. The French run an annual regatta in Douarnenez in Brittany and have so far raffled three Dragons at the event, two of which have been won by visiting English sailors!

The Jubilee Raffle seemed an appropriate way to draw attention to the class and the activity within it, and has been made possible by the involvement of our principal sponsors, Aberdeen Asset Management. Aberdeen were keen to associate themselves with the Dragon class, and part of the deal was for the class to offer Aberdeen clients the chance of a day's sailing on board a Dragon.

We have already hosted two such days, one at Cowes and the other at Burnham, and both appear to have been an outstanding success in more ways than we anticipated. The surprise was to find that a fair proportion of the clients ended the day seriously contemplating further personal involvement with the class, both as crew and in one case as an owner. Well over half of the clients were already experienced sailors and several had clearly responded to the invitation from a

remarkably informed position, seeing it as a way to get on board a boat that they had previously admired from a distance, but not found an opportunity to make closer acquaintance with. There has clearly been a real synergy between the aims of Aberdeen and the exposure of the Dragon class within the financial community that they target.

For the Dragon sailors who took part, the days were also rated a success and enjoyable as well. The format was a series of races with one client on board each of six boats with an experienced helmsman and one crew, and there seemed to be a consensus on the mood which was very relaxed but not without a certain competitive awareness! The clients were without exception good humoured and delighted to be with us, and generally very good company.

The list shows the tickets earned and notified as we went to press. Full details of how the figures are made up are listed on the website and we encourage everyone to check it and make sure that we have got it right – and let us know immediately if not. We will not re-consider alterations to the 2002 allocations once we are into next year.

With a prize as big as this, we clearly need to have a clear set of rules and stick to them, and those who participate must agree to be bound by them. Again, the rules are on the website along with an entry form which you can print off and we would ask you all to read them and make sure that we do have a signed entry form confirming acceptance. If you have already submitted one for an event then that is fine.

One really important aspect concerns multiple owners who need to decide who is the beneficiary for each ticket earned, and if you wish different owners to have specific tickets for different events then we need entry forms for each with those details. We expect most boats to specify a single beneficiary for all the tickets earned and have an arrangement as to what you will do with the boat if you win it!

Jubilee is a spectacular prize, and a quick count of the tickets earned shows that the odds are not that long. For someone, 2004 certainly will be the year of the Dragon!

Jubilee raffle rules and full details of tickets earned can be found on the BDA Website
www.britishdragons.org

CORINTHIAN DRAGONS HOST HAMBURG SAILORS

Toby Marshall reports on a good natured international Dragon team racing challenge, sailed on the River Crouch in October 2002

Early in 2002, the Royal Corinthian YC in Burnham on Crouch received a challenge from the Norddeutscher Regatta Verein, a German yacht club situated on a small lake in the city of Hamburg.

The challenge, in the best traditions of the America's and Admiral's Cups, was to pitch a broad spectrum of Dragon sailors from each club against one another in team racing held on the River Crouch. While good-natured competition for the newly-resurrected Scheldt Trophy and, of course, to uphold the honour of one's country, was to be expected, the emphasis was to be very much on having fun and extending the international hand of friendship.

So, it was to a very warm welcome that nine sailors and their entourage from Hamburg arrived on the evening of Friday October 18th, and fed on that most British of dishes – fish and chips. Saturday dawned to almost perfect weather, if a little chilly, with the westerly breeze allowing race officer Edwin Buckley and his team to set windward-leeward courses for the day's four races.

The Hamburg team, having brought their own spinnakers, borrowed six of the Burnham fleet's Dragons, and ably assisted by some local volunteers, providing some knowledge of the Crouch, the lake-sailing German team set about proving that they were more than capable of handling the quirks of tidal sailing. Despite the valiant efforts of Robert Campbell in *Quicksilver*, who scored a first, and Chris Brittain in *Caramba* in fifth, the might of the German team was evident in the first race, sealing victory for the visiting team by a 16 point margin.

Race Two was a repeat of the first race, with the Germanic challenge proving too strong. Only Campbell, with a third, and the second-placed Tony Allen and Mike Holmes' *Hat Trick*, provided some much-needed resistance, and, despite a subsequently-discounted protest from Chris Brittain against the German-helmed *Flame Again*, the Burnham team found themselves six points adrift at the break for lunch.

After lunch, the changed tidal direction causing some confusion amongst the German team-members, Race Three saw the Hamburg team extending their lead yet again. The overdue local fight-back was led once again by Robert Campbell assisted by sterling performances by Hugh Howard in *Tarakona* and Chris Brittain in *Caramba*. However, the effort was marred by the retirement of Nick Mellish in *Tamerlane* following his second grounding of the race requiring outside assistance to re-float his stranded Dragon.

Race Four, set against the watercolour hues of a setting sun, saw the German margin of victory cut somewhat, with notable performances, again, from *Quicksilver*, *Caramba*, and *Hat Trick*. However, at the end of the first day's racing, the Teutonic lead, in part secured by gold medal-winning Danish 'local' Poul Hoj-Jensen, an 'honorary German' for the Saturday's sailing, had been stretched to 41 points.

After an extremely amicable dinner held in honour of the Hamburg team, in which all the visiting team were presented with engraved whisky tumblers, Sunday morning dawned to unexpectedly light conditions. Local rising star Katie Cole, standing in for Hoj-Jensen in the German team, stamped her authority on the fifth and final race, gaining line honours for the visitors. Meanwhile, there were notable performances from Martin Makey in *Ganador*, the Burnham fleet's class captain Colin Woodcock, sailing *Rapid Transit*, and Alan Rees' *Spoof*.

It was the Burnham team who were able to make better use of the zephyrs to end up with a four point victory over the

visitors. However, the local comeback came all too late, with the team from Hamburg returning home with an overall 37 point victory. The return match, which is to be held in Germany next year, will be keenly contested as well as eagerly anticipated.

Toby Marshall



photo – Hamo Thornycroft

SCOTTISH CHAMPIONSHIP

A win for Eclipse in clear blue skies and light airs on the Firth of Forth...

THE REGATTA was held over the weekend of 31st August to 1st September this year and, contrary to mythical perceptions of Scottish weather on the Firth of Forth, was graced with clear blue skies, winds of 5-10 knots, and flat seas.

A formidable array of ex-Dragon sailors, including Marshall Napier and Mike Pollett, arranged the windward/leeward courses in a manner which befitted a grand international regatta.

Paul Patenall, ably assisted by his international star-studded crew, was the only visitor. Paul's spectacularly timed start in the last race, fully ten seconds ahead of the rest of the fleet, unfortunately didn't altogether agree with the timing of the Scottish race committee, with whom it is always dangerous to disagree.

The racing was extremely close, and boat speed differences in the conditions experienced were remarkably small. Everyone involved considered the actual race courses and organisation on the water to have been as good as you could probably get anywhere, and those who also went to the Northern Championship on the Clyde found it hard to believe we could have had two weekends so very different with respect to the weather, with the light weather on the Forth complementing the heavy weather on the Clyde.

David Young

Results: 1st *Eclipse*, Danny Sinclair, 2nd *Secret*, Shaun MacLean, 3rd *Excalibur*, Paul Patenall, 4th *Feillin's Flirtation*, Ron and Julie James, 5th *Comanche*, David Young, 6th *Solan*, Robin Brownlie, 7th *Eva*, William Trist, 8th *Seiglinde*, Henry Boyd;

Old Boat Prize: *Solan*.

AN OLD GIRL GOES TO FALMOUTH WEEK 2002

Buccaneer – fifty years on

Built by Camper & Nicholson in 1952 as the sister ship to the royal yacht *Bluebottle*, *Buccaneer* was a victim of Michael Fish's hurricane in 1987. We believe her grieving owner sold her for £750, while she was still on the bottom of the Helford River.

After salvage, her Stuart Turner inboard engine was removed to a more suitable craft and *Buccaneer* spent some years in decline. She was brought back to life for the 1995



Edinburgh Cup in Falmouth, finishing a very credible 6th overall. Sadly this was followed by a few more years of inactivity until 2001 when she acquired a new owner. Yes! For the forthcoming Edinburgh Cup in Falmouth.

We were on a very steep learning curve, our first sail being on day one of the Cup. The best result the old girl could coax out of us was an 11th and this result cast the die. *Buccaneer* now sailed every week in the local handicap class at St. Mawes with considerable success. Followed by a winter of frantic activity beneath her water line, she returned to the water and the handicap class, before being lifted for her trip to Cowes.

Yes! You guessed, the Edinburgh Cup. We all know what happened, the wind was just too strong; we suffered some gear failure and dared not abuse the hull by winding the rigging up to competitive tension. After a disappointing result *Buccaneer* returned to her home territory to lead the Handicap class around the course and await Falmouth Week.

The week begins with the Falmouth Classics. This had to be the old girl's day. Six Dragons set sail in blustery conditions, but only three of us started the race. *Buccaneer* went well being first around the windward mark. Richard Green in *Sagitta* stole the lead downwind. However, as *Buccaneer's* newest spinnaker is 11 years old, we weren't

too upset. Richard then mis-identified a buoy and to our delight sailed a shortened course to cross the line first. *Buccaneer* followed, with our fleet captain Peter Flutter sailing *Quicksilver* third, sadly this was to be Peter's last day as shortly after the finish in a strong gust of wind, *Quicksilver's* boom was broken. When Richard's mistake was pointed out in the bar later, the honourable course of action was taken and *Sagitta* retired. Yes! On her own patch the old girl had her day.

The week now started in earnest. On day one, in strong winds, *Buccaneer* and *Sagitta* set sail across the bay for Helford, only to be told on arrival that the wind was too strong and the Dragon class had been cancelled. Feeling slightly cheated we settled for a lively spinnaker run back across the bay and to the club bar.

In the following days the wind moderated and a familiar pattern emerged. *Buccaneer* was usually first to windward mark to be overtaken downwind. On day three the old girl pulled a neat trick. There was a dredger working in the Carrick Roads and by sailing under the transom of the dredger she was slung shot forward by the prop wash for about three hundred metres to regain a place.

Sagitta, representing the Medway fleet, won the Week with *Moonbeam* from Plymouth second, *Buccaneer* third, *Tana* fourth, *Encore* fifth, *Mustang V* fifth, and *Whizz Too* sixth, all local boats completing the results table. All had some excellent sailing during the week.

Buccaneer has now been sold and passed to her new owners, one of whom owns a local boatyard, so she will receive the attention she deserves. It was a delight to sail a real classic for two years and I am sure she will continue to race under the new management team.

In order to increase the active Falmouth fleet, her late crew are in the market for a faster model, so if anyone knows of a good Borresen or a very, very cheap Petticrow, let us know!

Having spent two Edinburgh Cups following, we now intend to show at least some of you, our transom!
Ian Winzar, Mark Webster, and Mike Cowdrey

GBR 632 *Rapid Transit* (Colin Woodcock) and GBR 575 *Flotation II* (Richard Davies) – photo Hugh Bourn



YOUNG PERSON'S REPRESENTATIVE

Kate Cole attempts to define 'Youth' in the Dragon class

After staring at a blank piece of paper, patiently waiting for inspiration to strike for this year's report into what the youth of the class had been up to, I started wondering just what defines 'youth' in the Dragon class.

Certainly, from observation of the many walks of life that find themselves inexorably drawn to a 75-year-old design, a good many Dragon helmspersons appear to have recruited a younger element to operate the boat forward of the traveller beam.

Indeed, looking around the marina on regatta days, I find it heartening that through crewing, so many youngsters are finding their way into the class, many through sailing in the forward 'playpen' for relatives or older friends. And it is this section of the fleet that is effectively the 'nursery', for want of a better phrase, for tomorrow's future owners, and should be encouraged.

Yet to be an owner able to afford to buy, and, more importantly, afford a season's running costs for a Dragon, one needs to have a certain disposable income seldom enjoyed by college-aged students. It is possible to buy a good second-hand

Dragon as part of a consortium of former dinghy hooligans who have decided that the effort of righting the Laser 4000 after the 15th capsizes in the same race just isn't worth it.

A glance at the BDA website tells me that it's possible to purchase a decent second-hand Dragon, a set of rags, sail in the local fleet, and still have change from ten grand. Split between two or three crew members, the costs aren't insurmountable. Yet if you want to take one of Peticrow's magnificent new creations (sorry, have to say it or the boss will kill me!) around the international circuit, your disposable income needs to be somewhat enlarged with age and experience, or perhaps, like some, with sheer entrepreneurial skill. Unless, of course, one happens to have rich relatives who are for some reason insistent on donating all their reserves to one's sailing fund.

To court controversy for a second, the issue of age in crewing is inexorably linked to fitness, strength, and athleticism in manoeuvring the boat around the race course. While I won't use this forum to inflict my opinion on

the current hotly-debated issue of hiking, one cannot help but acknowledge that if the class is to attract younger sailors, then care needs to be taken when addressing whether the younger, fitter crews are allowed to take advantage of their more toned conditioning.

Do we want to move away from the 'old man's boat' image of yesteryear? One would certainly hope so, and the fact that I'm sitting here writing this as youth representative must surely be testament to the fact that we are!

Anyway, to return to my train of thought, just what is defined as 'youth' in the Dragon class? Do I phone the membership secretary and get a survey of ages organised, to get an average? I think that it's a sensitive area, so I won't go there!

So let's take a guess - I'd like to unilaterally nominate anyone under the age of 35 as 'youth', and I suspect those 'elderly statesmen' who insist on embarrassingly taking to the dance floor during the Edinburgh Cup will take issue with me! Perhaps we should up the 'youth' limit to 40... Or 50, or maybe 55...

Kate Cole

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Falmouth for Orders

The Royal Cornwall Yacht Club look forward to hosting the 2004 Dragon Gold Cup. Founded in 1871, the club has a history of running prestigious events. Based in Falmouth, Cornwall, in the south west corner of England, it is only 40 minutes by car to the Lizard Point, the most southern part of the Britain and 60 minutes to Lands End, the most western part of Britain.

Falmouth boasts the third largest natural harbour in the world and has the added bonus of an excellent race course area in Falmouth Bay which is protected by the 20 mile long Lizard peninsula from the prevailing south west winds.

Influenced by the remains of the Gulf Stream the port is in the middle of a popular holiday area offering many

different types of accommodation including hotels, bed and breakfast and a lot of self catering apartments and houses.

A working ship repair port, the town has a long maritime history some of which can be seen in the local one-

design racing of oyster dredging boats that are a fine sight on a summer's day. Some of these grand old ladies are over 100 years old and have a tradition of inviting

visiting racing sailors aboard for a race followed by a drink afterwards in one of the many local pubs.

The surrounding area offers family beaches, palm trees, semi tropical gardens, wonderful scenery, delightful restaurants and two new large national attractions. The Eden Project has a

...the club has
a history of running
prestigious events



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Colin Drummond, Commodore of the Royal Cornwall Yacht Club, extolls the virtues of Falmouth – the venue for the 2004 Dragon Gold Cup

tropical rain forest under cover, and, opening in 2003, the National Maritime Museum in Falmouth will contain the Greenwich Maritime Museum's small boat collection and the Falmouth Maritime Museum including the Dragon, *Bluebottle*, donated to the museum by the Duke of Edinburgh.

"Falmouth for Orders" used to be the message sent to the packet ships that started the first sea mail surface. It is a call that modern day ships still respond to.

We warmly make the same call to Dragon sailors of the world to visit us in July 2004.



Pendennis from the air

photo by Simon J. Burke

NORTHERN AREA CHAMPIONSHIP

Matt Walker reports on the regatta and revelries at Rhu

Quicksilver II is a Burnham-on-Crouch-based boat, and it will come as no surprise to many of you who know them that the crew rendezvoused for the Northern Championship at around 10pm on Wednesday 4th September at Leicester train station. We then ended up as impromptu guests at an 80th birthday party. Anyone confused at this point should bear in mind that Quicksilver's regatta arrangements can be a little eccentric.

The next day brought the most uneventful delivery of the boat to regatta that we have done all season – no last minute panics involving passports or ferry tickets, no desperate searches for fuel and no encounters with the local constabulary. On arrival in Rhu we discovered the organisation to be superb, with plenty of space to rig the boats, crane facilities available as soon as you were ready and no rain, a situation welcomed by the assembled travelling fleet.

However, that evening, when the official BDA scales were delivered to the Royal Northern, we discovered that there had been a misunderstanding. One or two people thought there was no weigh-in for this regatta, and following a couple of weeks strict dieting (including the slim fast plan!) the chance to relax and have a huge slap up lunch had been too tempting for one crew – and they had indulged all afternoon. They compounded the error by sending text messages while lurching to the late-arriving helmsman, saying how easy it was to weigh in. Said helmsman doubtless enlightened them in no uncertain terms and there were some very worried looks until he arrived an hour later. The identities of the offenders are being kept secret in case Ricky hasn't forgiven them yet.

The hilarity continued the next morning, when the laggards arrived, with the fleet discovering that Rory will remove his trousers for anyone who asks – if he thinks it will save him a kilo or two. In the prevailing moderate and shifty conditions the first day's racing quickly proved that although only 12 boats had managed to attend, the standard of competitors was extremely high, and making any mistake was going to be terminal for your chances. *Aimee*, *Excalibur*, and *Yeah Baby* made the early running, with the rest of the pursuing pack hard on their transoms.

Sunday morning dawned, and the fleet was alarmed to find that a nuclear submarine was lying in wait for them near the racing area, before departing up the Clyde with its police escorts, which were presumably there to ensure that the more militant Dragon sailors would not daub anti-nuclear slogans all over the threatening-looking monster. Unfortunately, *Quicksilver* was, at this point, winning the 'alarm clock award' after leaving the sailing instructions on board and thinking the start was somewhat later. Conditions were now extremely testing both for competitors and race officer, with huge wind shifts requiring marks to be moved on almost every leg. Waiting between races was greatly improved by the sun coming through (although the rain didn't really stop) allowing everyone to appreciate the glorious scenery.

Aimee, *Excalibur*, and *Yeah Baby* continued to lead the fleet, all

three getting two good results, and one down-the-pan performance in the three races. Julia's wins in the first two races put her as overnight leader, but counting up points on the way back in revealed that the final result was wide open with at least three boats still in contention. After an impromptu party for the fleet, generously hosted aboard the committee boat by its charismatic owners, Will and Margaret Rudd, Dragon sailors were treated to a superb meal and whisky-tasting at the Royal Northern and Clyde Yacht Club.

With the fleet nursing slight headaches from the previous night's revelries, they were greeted the following morning with monsoon-like rain and a lot more wind. The landscape scenes of the previous day had gone, to be replaced by a vertical wall of water. What proved to be the last race was probably the hardest fought of all with some superb downwind legs and very busy mark-roundings.

Excalibur took themselves out of the running when the kite tumbled on the last mark, leaving the trailing fleet concentrating on the battle between *Aimee* and *Yeah Baby* as they headed for the finish. Having led all the way up the last beat, *Aimee* was drawn into a tacking duel by *Yeah Baby*, and the final result was so close that none of the competitors could see who crossed the finish first. Speculation continued until the fleet arrived back in the marina to discover that *Yeah Baby* had done it, crossing a lick of paint ahead of *Aimee*.

The Royal Northern Yacht Club were superb hosts for a wonderfully-organised event and deserve our congratulations for the way things ran both on and of the water. For those of you who have never been to the Clyde, and are thinking of going to the Edinburgh Cup next year, I would recommend it as a fantastic venue, although there are some things that you will need to remember to take:

- Your best waterproofs – you're going to need them.
- Money (in cash) – if you're staying in Rhu, the nearest cash point appears to be in Helensburgh.
- Your second best waterproofs – for going to and from the Yacht club and the boat.
- Submarine detector – power does not give way to sail in this case
- Your drysuit – for the really bad days
- Whisky tasting handbook – obvious really!
- Waterproof sun cream – otherwise it washes off, and makes a mess of your oilskins.

Northern Championship Results

1st *Yeah Baby* GBR 662 (8pts inc dis), 2nd *Aimee* GBR 660 (10), 3rd *Excalibur* GBR 576 (14), 4th *Eclipse* GBR 670 (19), 5th *Quicksilver II* GBR572 (26), 6th *Navaho* GBR663 (31), 7th *Ygraine* GBR 626 (32), 8th *Comanche* GBR 649 (32), 9th *Rapid Transit* GBR 632 (33), 10th *Secret* GBR 599 (42), 11th *Fei Lin Flirtation* GBR 633 (50), 12th *Eva* GBR 295 (56).



photo – Hugh Bourn



GOLD CUP 2002 ALAND

How we got two firsts and nearly won a race – a Personal View by Ron James

To sailors all islands are alluring and Aland (pronounced Ooland) is no exception. It's actually a group of islands, some joined by bridges, on the western edge of an archipelago of 130,000 islands and islets lying between Sweden and Finland. Aland's only small town, Mariehamn, with wide streets and mostly wooden houses reminiscent of colonial USA, is home to Henrik Dahlman and his two FIN 50 Dragons and was the inspired choice for the venue of the 2002 Gold Cup.

It's a long way from the UK which probably explains why we were the only GBR Dragon competing, although Martin Payne and William Willet were also there crewing in Ted Sawyer's USA 310. The 60-strong fleet mainly comprised Finnish, Swedish, German, Danish, and Dutch Dragons, with two from USA and Hong Kong and one from each of Portugal, Estonia, Russia and UK.

Getting out to the race area clear of shallows and obstructions (but see below) involved a long sail or tow, but in the warm sunshine that persisted throughout the regatta, this was never a chore. Aland is large enough to create a local sea breeze, which is fortunate because the prolonged high pressure produced little gradient wind. The continuous hot weather and absence of tide had reduced the temperature differential between land and sea, consequently the sea breeze rarely reached Force 4, and then only between the islands sailing home.

The Baltic Cup warm-up event was won by Dragon master, Vincent Hoesch (2,2,2,2,5) sailing with a couple of local teenage sailors in place of owner Muller-Spreer who arrived to take over the helm in the Gold Cup. Jose Bello from Portugal in a borrowed FIN 50 was a popular runner-up with the consistent Tommy Muller third. A day of sight seeing, or measurement for the new arrivals, preceded the start of the main event.

Race 1 was sailed in a force 2 SSW breeze. The longer line and 2.5 mile legs made the 'go left/go right' decision even more crucial than it had been in the Baltic Cup. We started reasonably, headed towards the generally preferred left side, and arrived at the first mark in mid fleet, moving agonizingly slowly in a temporary lull just ahead of GER 950 with Vince Hoesch on board. We spent the rest of the race gaining or losing a place or three, never far from GER 950, finishing one in front in 28th position. Michael Schatten in GER 968 won.

In Race 2, halfway up the first beat we were seduced by a lift on port all the way to the starboard lay line, but the shift was permanent. The long adverse tack back was made more painful watching the fleet pile in from the left in less choppy seas sheltered by nearby islands. As others were also to find, there was little 'cannon fodder' in the fleet, and barring big shifts, there was no way back.

After the previous day's experience, we were so determined to 'go left' in Race 3 that we seriously overstood, but not as far as some others. We watched with incredulity as SWE 283 sailed full tilt into a small islet. Talking to them later over the daily free beers, the crew

told me they were debating whether to tack or bear away when it happened. Over standing proved costly and a second result in the 50s left us depressed. We were not alone. A 40th place sent USA 310's hopes spiralling down having started the day equal fourth (14,7), and Schatten could only manage 20th. On the other hand Fred Imhoff got a first, Muller was second and Muller-Spreer, GER 950, third so the main contenders were emerging.

We spent Race 4 sparring with Crown Prince Frederik and Guus de Groot, finishing between them in a more satisfying 25th place. Bello, whom I remember ducking our stern early on, to go far left, won the race. Repaired SWE 283 avoided islets to take second. Muller (5,2,2,3) now led the series from Imhoff and Schatten both 22.3 points adrift. USA 310 had another difficult day finishing 41st.

With four races completed the next day was a lay-day. We decided to find an old Russian fortress with a lookout tower on a rocky peninsula overlooking the race course. It was a hazy windless day so we learned nothing about wind patterns, but being keen bird watchers were delighted to find Crossbills feeding on pine cones, a striking lemon yellow Icterine Warbler and a magnificent male Black Woodpecker. The last two are not native UK species and were 'firsts' for us.

Race 5 was to determine the fate of the Gold Cup. Having to sail across the race area between recalls should have prepared us for what was to come. The fleet got away on the third attempt. We made a reasonable start and found the speed groove to lie 13th at the windward mark. Downwind, we were forced high by the following Dragon, which cost us both a couple of places. Bello led a group going left from the gate, while Muller and Imhoff were in the group going right. Schatten was out of it. In fading wind we joined the left group, but seeing boats rounding behind us progressively lifted, we judged we should tack right before this became even more adverse. There also seemed to be more wind in the unoccupied centre. It was scary being on our own but, when we tacked back in our own private zephyr, we were heading straight for the mark with a shorten course signalled and no boat between us and the line. The left group was slowly returning on the adverse shift and the zephyr had not reached the right. Imhoff had also headed for the centre but was in less wind.

Three hundred metres from the line, the zephyr expired. After minutes wallowing with sails banging and Germans whistling loudly for an abandonment, spinnakers at the back of the fleet began to fill. We waited. Eventually our spinnaker filled, still with nobody too close behind. Two seconds later, three guns! We might not have won. Imhoff may have had a better angle. Bello might have caught us. Muller would probably have made the top 10.

When Race 5 was re-sailed next day, the shifts were large and taking them paid dividends over boats still doggedly hitting the corners. We made the first mark in 12th place, then gained places downwind, closing rapidly on the leaders as the wind swung turning the run into a beat 100m from the gate. Once through, boats ghosted

under spinnaker left or right, unable to sail very close towards the erstwhile windward mark. Minutes later I recall calling "starboard" on FIN 46, a wooden Dragon still beating to the gate. The wind gradually filled from behind. By halfway down this presumed final leg, the fleet was in a line "Like a start, but downwind" the PRO later observed.

The breeze then veered causing those of us on the right to wait our turn to gybe onto port, then 100 metres later, beat to the mark, while those on the left reached in under spinnakers calling for water – potential mayhem! However, this was not the finish. There was still a short windward leg to the spreader mark so we rounded deliberately wide to keep the boat moving, finishing 23rd, but it was a bit of a lottery. Claus Hoj Jensen, having joined the line next to us from well back, finished seventh, while SWE 159, a beautifully kept 50 year old classic which sailed to and from the regatta, gybed three places ahead of us but finished 37th between Tommy Muller and Schatten. Imhoff also came from the behind, kept it moving and ended up 17th.

So, after 20 years of trying, Tommy Muller won his first Gold Cup (5.2,2.3 .36) just 3.7 points clear of Fred Imhoff (4,14,1,10,17). Frank Markein FIN 75 (3,26,12,18,2) was third, a point ahead of Muller-Spreer. It might all have been different if the abandoned race had

run its course, but that's racing.

During the prize giving, which took place on a Clyde built square rigger that sailed commercially out of Mariehamn until the 1950s, the PRO told me, "I abandoned because I could see no wind". He allowed the re-sail to continue, despite knowing that FIN 46, the classic Dragon that won it (52,54,50,53,1), had been last through the gate 11 minutes behind the leader, "because there was wind from the right direction at the spreader mark".

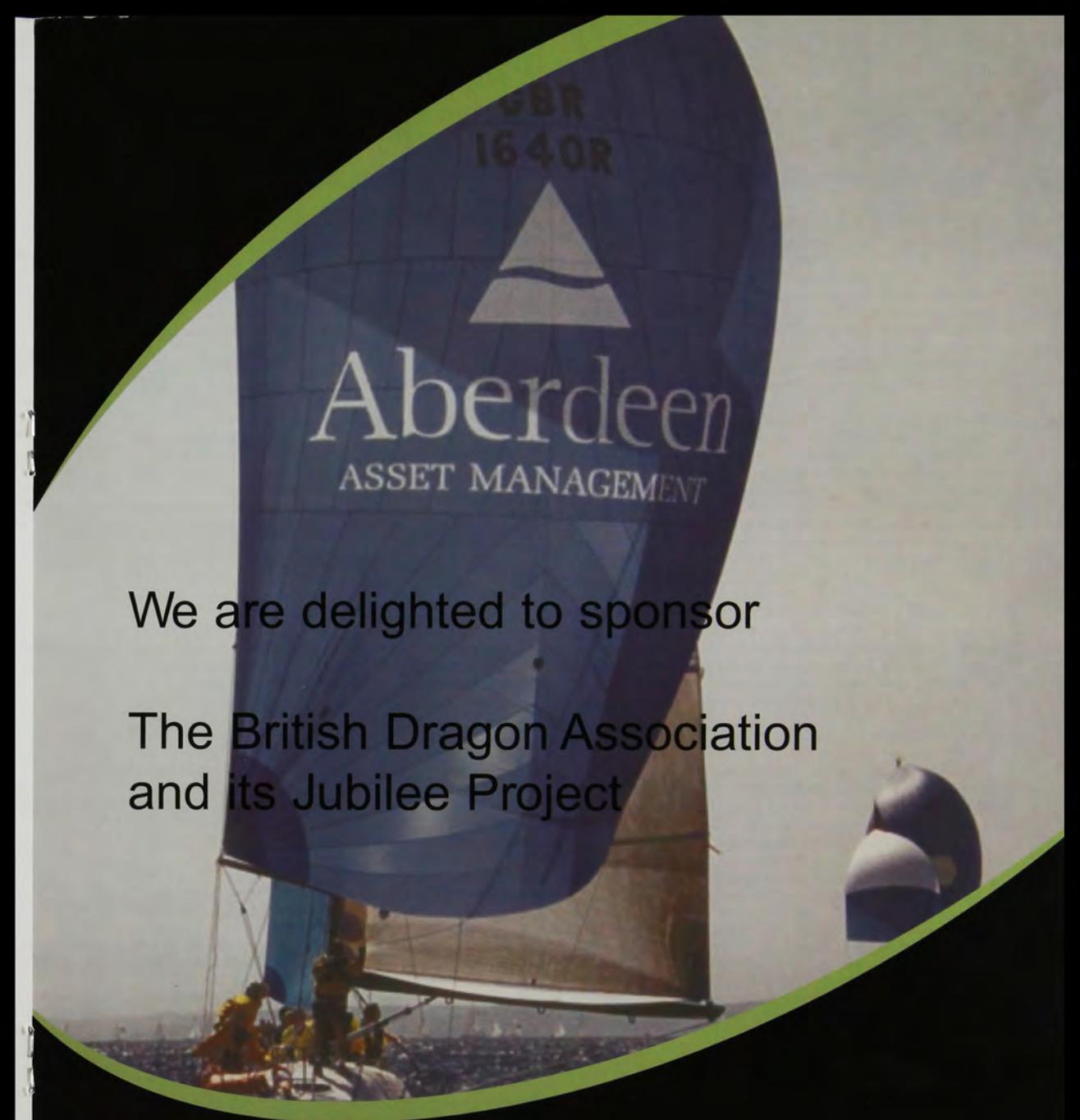
Justice seemed smoother when, over dinner the next night, Mini Jaatinen, secretary of the Finnish Dragon Assn. who, with Henrik Dahlman, had worked hard to get the fleet to Aland, told us that FIN 46 was her father's Dragon and she and her brother learned to sail in it. Her father, now too old to race, had come to Aland for the day and was on the committee boat to see Mini's brother sail the family boat into first place.

The following morning we began the two-day, three-ferry, journey home. Was it worth it? Absolutely, we improved our geography, our history, and our sailing. There is much of the world we have not seen, so new regatta venues, inevitably more distant, are alluring. We would like to go to Tallin for the Europeans in 2004, and why not hold a Gold Cup some day in St Petersburg? We've never been to Russia nor seen a Siberian Rubythroat.



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FIVE GO MAD IN BELGIUM

Toby Marshall's account of the Belgian Open Championship, Oostende August 2002

Hang on a minute lads, it looks like we might be able to get a third," says the Skipper. Oh, how good would that be? We'd sailed our socks off, choosing the left-hand side in some very light and testing conditions, and it was starting to pay off. Three boats ahead of us, approaching the committee boat end of the finish line on starboard, two of which had gone right and weren't looking so special now, so maybe it could be...

"Keep it going, lads, it just might be a second," hisses the Skip. I'm sure he can read my mind. Now the problem is going to be the Belgian boat that chose the middle of the course. We're on port, aiming for the pin end, and with him on starboard, going for the same patch of gently-undulating sea as we are, to squeeze us out, it looks like we're going to have to duck him. The other two over on the right hand end are distinctly struggling - we've got 'em. OK, here he comes - start to head down and ease sheets a fraction. The boatspeed increases a fraction. Start thinking about how good second place will feel - it's our best result of the regatta.

Stone the crows - he's tacking, leaving a Dragon-sized hole between him and the pin! There just might be a chance... The helmsman's already well ahead of me, swinging the boat back up onto the wind, and beyond, shooting the line with the momentum we've gained. The Belgian guy's going very slowly after his tack, both of us frantically urging, perhaps even praying, that the boat will cross the line ahead of the other guy... It's going to be close... BANG-BANG...

Did we get it? If we did, it must've been only by the thickness of the bow fitting. Were they gloomy looks from the Belgian boat? Sail clear of the line, keeping clear of the finishing, third-placed Belgian, and what turns out to be Rob in fourth. Crack sheets, and head for home, past the committee boat. As we pass, raise arms with shrugged shoulders in a question to the tanned guy with the clipboard - did we get it? He raises a single index finger skywards.

YEEESSs! Nigel Cole's first win; our first win; at an international event! Try to look cool to the rest of the bewildered-looking crew, who don't seem to be able to believe it, but the wry smile cracks into a fully fledged idiot grin. Winning feels good! It's my over-riding memory of the Belgian Open National Championship. The fantastic hospitality; the blazing sunshine; the win. We did it again the next day.

It had all started a couple of days before, with a misty ferry crossing to the hot, bright sunshine of Calais, followed by a 50-mile drive north, across the Belgian border to Oostende and the Royal North Sea YC. Spurred largely by positive reports from the BDA Chairman that the Belgian regatta was 'a good one to go and do', five UK boats, almost entirely from the Burnham fleet, had made the relatively short journey. There was Rob Campbell himself, crewed by Matt Walker, with 'special guest star' Ian Gray of Linton & Gray sailmakers, on *Quicksilver II*. Burnham Dragon Class Captain Colin 'Woody' Woodcock, with dream-team crew Kate Cole and Alex Burnett, had made the trip with *Rapid Transit* on the tow-hitch. Hugh Howard had brought *Tarakona*, as well as his helmswoman, Sue Shapiro, to team up with Josie Roberts when they arrived. Chris Brittain's *Caramba* was by the crane when we arrived, being rigged by Chris, Jilly Hamilton, and Owen Pay. And then there was us - *Tsunami* - Nigel Cole, David Crabb, and myself.

We weren't the only travellers. It turned out the next day at the briefing for the first day's racing, that five Dutch boats had crossed the border to join the 12 Belgian entries to swell numbers to 23. Our charismatic host, Patrick Delahaye, reminded all the competitors, each in their respective languages, that, in view of the soaring temperatures, it would be wise to slap on the sunblock, wear hats, and take plenty of water afloat with us - sound advice indeed. We were left for an hour of heat and glorious sunshine before the wind piped up enough for Race One to get started.

When it did, *Quicksilver* made the best of the running amongst the UK boats, opening their account with a third, followed by *Tsunami* in sixth, and *Rapid Transit* in eleventh. In the afternoon race Woody in *Rapid Transit* had a terrific time, scoring a second, with *Quicksilver* not far behind in fifth and *Caramba* in seventh.

The second day's racing, with similarly light-air conditions, saw Rob Campbell steer *Quicksilver* to the top of both the fleet and overall rankings in Race Three, chased by Chris

Brittain in *Caramba*, not far away in fourth, and Sue Shapiro taking fifth in *Tarakona*.

As previously described, Nigel Cole narrowly squeaked a win in *Tsunami* in the afternoon's Race Four, trailed by *Quicksilver* in fourth and *Caramba* in eighth. At the end of the day's racing, Oostende's harbour master kept the fleet from entering port for quite some time due to big-ship traffic entering and leaving the narrow-entranced harbour.

It was at this point that a certain member of the BDA rather unwisely decided that it would be the perfect moment to go skinny-dipping whilst surrounded by the entire fleet, and more importantly, the UK visitors. Photographic evidence exists. (Rob, if the money doesn't go into my account soon, the images go public!)

On Saturday after a re-run Race Five, Nigel Cole repeated his previous day's win, catapulting him up the overall order. *Quicksilver* languished in tenth, a discarded position, while *Caramba* trailed in eleventh, but the rest of the UK entries found themselves victims to the dying breeze, and were unable to get to the finish before the expiry of the time limit.

However, *Tsunami's* win over the second-placed Belgian boat, *Ruuder*, in the final race allowed *Quicksilver* to sneak past in the overall standings to win the regatta overall. The double win allowed *Tsunami* to leapfrog to third overall, while *Caramba* and *Rapid Transit* finished in 10th and 11th respectively, and *Tarakona* brought up the rear of the UK fleet in 17th.

There was much celebration at the prize-giving supper, with Patrick Delahaye giving a polished multi-lingual presentation of the results, addressing each boat in their respective French, Flemish, or English tongue. Rob Campbell, giving a token, "Messieur dames - vielen dank" (to much amusement from the natives) paid tribute to the fabulous hospitality, facilities, and organisation that had made the event run so smoothly despite some testing, and sometimes desperately trying, conditions. They weren't by any means empty compliments - quite the opposite - as all of us who made the trudge back to 'Blighty' agreed.

It's an excellent venue, and I'm hoping that many more of us from the UK fleet will take the short hop on the ferry to swell the numbers at next year's event - it's worth it.

Toby Marshall

YEEESSs! Nigel Cole's first win, our first win, at an international event

DRAGON EUROPEANS

In July 2002 Patrick Gifford took Pongo to Lake Thun in Switzerland

I took *Pongo* to the European Championship with my son Michael, and Bim Daser, preceded by the Swiss Championship in July. The experience had its ups and downs and I've set them out below. However, for those who want the summary version, it was depressing to turn up to race at 6am to watch the rain pouring down for most of the day. On the plus side, the racing was always close and interesting and we got a good result for us in sixth place in the Europeans.

I've given a bit of detail on the other aspects of going to this kind of event for those who haven't done it and feel uncertain about it.

Travel and Accommodation:

Don't use a car whose cooling system isn't working properly. If you do, there are strong smells of burning and you may have to drive most of the way across France with the heater on, on a very hot day. Otherwise, it's about a 12 hour drive from Calais to Thun on good roads, mostly motorway, and not particularly Alpine.

We found plenty of accommodation and actually stayed in a hotel in Spiez, which has the added benefit of being on the direct line from Zurich airport. Very useful for crew movements.

Thun is neither a cultural nor a culinary desert and was enjoyed on this front. Much better than some British venues I won't name.

The Venue

Thunersee Yacht Club is splendidly equipped with a small marina, lots of lawns and excellent facilities. Fresh water really does make it easier to keep everything in good condition.

It is probably the premier racing club in Switzerland with a fleet of about 40 local Dragons and many more around the lake. In addition the club has strong fleets of Stars and H-Boats as well as representation in the other Olympic classes. In this it isn't very different from the other major clubs on the European lakes, but unlike anywhere I can think of in Britain.

The Sailing Water:

Lake Thun is shaped like a banana, with Thun at one end and Interlaken at the other. The topography has the peaks of Bernese Oberland showing on a clear day to the south, quite a steep immediate slope up from the lake on the east side and hills set further back on the west. In the winds we had it never seemed to pay to go far to the west of the rhumbline, particularly upwind, when sailing in the typical thermal blowing from the Thun end of the lake.

In these circumstances there was a wind bend and greater pressure normally associated with the nearby slope to the east. When the wind blew from the south the position was much less clear cut. While we were there it never blew more than Force 4 and that only briefly. I do suspect that more settled weather than we had would also produce rather more wind.

The Racing:

We used the Swiss championship to warm up. One of our crew, Bim Daser, while a successful boat designer, had never sailed a Dragon before and I hadn't sailed on a lake since Attersee in 1991. Rob Campbell seemed less in need of practice than we were with a fifth and ninth in the first two races. The event was dominated by Lars Hendriksen, sailing

the Danish Prince Consort's boat. He had the advantage of an extremely committed 11-year-old Oppie sailor in the crew. He had four results in the top four and only erred when going with us to the west side of the lake in the third race. Behind him Fred Imhoff showed lots of speed to win the last two races but had been less consistent earlier. Tommy Muller in third was more consistent.

We went better as the event continued and were pleased to finish 11th overall. Rob, in contrast, had a poor last day to finish 29th overall.

The Europeans had a very similar fleet though the German contingent was significantly stronger. The racing was bedevilled by a large low which settled over the Alps and rained for much of the first three days. However, the organisers managed to run a four-race, all to count, event on the last two days, having abandoned a race that could have been finished reasonably fairly on the third day.

For the first actual day of racing we sailed in the less usual southerly. The wind was full of holes and the trick through the races was to stay in the wind. The first race was dominated by greater pressure on the last beat on the right, while the second saw wind and a big shift on the left on the first beat. The last day ran the risk that the series would not be completed since the wind did not settle until mid-afternoon. However, two races were sailed in a northerly with a persistent advantage to the right hand side of the beat early on. The wind was again variable in strength, threatening to die at one point.

The series was dominated by German lake sailors, and was won by Michael Erhard, a former European champion from Ortwin Semmerow and Michael Schattan. Others who might have been expected to do well fell into one or more of the holes that were lying as bunkers over the course. We came sixth and could even have improved but failed to capitalise fully on a strong position in the first race and blew the start in the third. The other British boats had mixed experiences with some good results but too many less good.

Lessons:

Our equipment was fine. There was no clear evidence that either particular sails or hulls gave an advantage. We still need to learn how to point amazingly high and not stop. Some of the lake sailors are much better at this than we are. We also need to be more pragmatic and less stubborn when the need to bale out tactically appears. It was good fun.



photo - Hanno Thornycroft

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2002 Results

Irish Championships
1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14,15

Danish Championships
1,2,3

British Championships
1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8

Dragon Derby La Baule
1,2,3

French Championships
1,2,3,4

Gold Cup
1,4,5,8,9,10

Swedish Championships
1,2,3,4,5,6,7

Cowes Week
1,2,4,5,6,7,8,9,10

Kiel Week
1,2,3,5,8,9,10

Pfingstbush Kiel
1,2,4,5,6

German Championships
1,2,3,4

Grand Prix Douarnenez
1,3,5,6,8,9,10,11,12,13,14,15,16,17

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FLEET REPORTS

ALDEBURGH

THE ALDEBURGH fleet has had a year characterised by a lot of travelling by three of the boats, an increasingly successful effort to vary the racing and training locally and a very competitive and tense Aldeburgh regatta.

The travellers' tales are covered quite fully elsewhere in this Newsletter. The main impact locally was frenzied activity with our very smart new crane to ensure that boats were also able to participate in our own weekend events. Several of us have now been licensed/trained to use the crane, but this has so far been limited fortunately to those who understand engineering. We do hope that this will also mean that we entertain more visitors. We had hoped that Tom Mehew's appearance last year would start a trend, but, if it has, recent non-observations must represent a mere blip.

Tim Hannon has discovered e-mail and used it to great effect to promote the once-a-month weekends when we all make an effort to turn up, swap boats and generally try to vary the occasion from being just another club race. We have discovered that *Harkaway* is a very fast Dragon, which seems to perform well whoever steers her. She does have a fault of not liking short tacking, since she is stronger on momentum than acceleration. However, equipped with some of *Pongo's* cast off sails, she has been a revelation. There is now no excuse for anyone owning a boat less than 55 years old, especially if, like her, it has a nice long waterline, possibly due partly to weight. Rory discovered one weekend that it really was easier to sail with a tiller extension. He is too young to remember the days when they weren't permitted.

The Regatta provided cut-throat racing between *Pongo*, *Yeah Baby* (helmed for the occasion by the Olympic representative in the family) and *Navaho*. *Pongo* ultimately won the event. However, it didn't feel at all easy but rather lucky. In the third race, after 12 miles sailing, the three boats were in line abreast, but *Pongo* coming from behind benefited from minor tactical errors by the others to lead for the first time in the last 400 yards. In what turned out to be the decisive race, sailed largely in the waters round Orford, *Pongo* came out best from one of those tricky moments when the sea breeze arrives from a direction almost 180 degrees different from the gradient wind and was then helped by an ambitious hand brake turn by Aisling in *Yeah Baby* on the last bend going round Havergate Island. We all know it's deep there but you can't actually touch the dry land and stay aloft.

The season's points were a more sedate affair. *Orion* was probably the most regular participant but *Pongo's* use of two helmsmen proved to be decisive. Several of the races were more cut-throat than one might expect in small fleets, depending on the matching of the participants.

For the future we observe quite a lot of interest from among the more irregular participants in our racing. Above all in a club



On the wind at the East Coast Championship, River Crouch – photo Hugh Bourn

where there are probably too many keelboat classes we have to demonstrate the commitment to be a survivor.

Patrick Gifford

BURNHAM

I ALWAYS ENJOY sitting down and writing a report about success, and that is what our year has been. The racing has been fun, and at times our very full programme has also been hectic. There is a buzz and enthusiasm about the club on race days, which is highly infectious. It shows out on the river, (evidenced by the increased attendance before protest committees), and is carried over into the bar afterwards. There is no doubt about it; Dragon sailors in Burnham enjoy themselves.

I have yet to come across a fleet that races between March and November every Saturday and Sunday, and if that is not enough, the "diehards", Hugh, Poul-Richard and Woody stay in the water and sail up until the new year, or when the ice on the deck is too thick to chip off!

The fleet now numbers 26 active Dragons, and for me the year really begins, when all of these beautiful boats are put out on moorings adjacent to the club. It's a sight for sore eyes, and heralds the end of hibernation, and the urge to be out there racing.

We reported last year, our members were developing a healthy taste for regatta sailing. This trend continues and has meant that numbers sailing on the river each week has been slightly lower than last year. This has, however, been made up by more Regatta attendance, so overall, there has been more racing activity during the year. Regatta starts are always by committee boat, and I believe this adds greatly to the 'Character' of the

event. The line is crowded with crews planning their start, the adrenalin is pumping and everyone admits to at least a few small butterflies. When the start gun blasts away, the whole fleet experiences either joy or frustration (in my case, usually the latter) and we all settle down to the race.

During this year, thanks to Edwin, Bruce, and their team, we have enjoyed committee boats starts for some of our races on the river. Our club line starts are important and good fun, and they bring the towns folk into our sailing calendar, but we do appreciate the efforts of those dedicated few, who fire a missile across our bow to start us, and then settle down to watch us make mistakes. Long may you live!

I believe the Burnham Dragon fleet, to be the strongest travelling fleet in the country, and it is proving to be worthwhile, with Poul-Richard bringing home numerous firsts, Aisling Bowman, Katie Cole and Noddy notching up an impressive win at the Medway Regatta, Rob Campbell a first in the Belgian Championship, and Nigel Cole a very well earned third. At the same event.

Dragons travelling from Burnham this year included, *Tsunami*, *Seafire*, *Logie*, *Danish Blue*, *Caramba*, *Quicksilver*, *Rapid Transit*, *Grethe*, *Tarakona*, *Flotation*, *Hat Trick*, *Ygraine*, *Ganador*, *Water Rat*, and *Delilah*. In 2002, we travelled to regattas in Douarnenez, Cowes, Medway, Switzerland, Clyde, Kinsale, Deauville, La Baule, Cannes, and Ostend. All of these venues hosted championships, and not only has the race organisation and racing been of a very high standard, but the social side, which Dragon sailors must be famous for, has always been a talking point. Whenever I hear from returning helmsmen and crews, they always report having a good time, and without a doubt competing internationally, has raised our own standards.

FLEET REPORTS

Our fleet number was boosted this year with the Douarnenez prize draw win by Mike Holmes of a brand-new Peticrow Dragon. Now back in Burnham and racing, Mike and Tony have named her *Hand of Fortune*, but to the rest of us she will probably be known as 'Hands Off'. Our 'old friend' *Hat Trick* is for sale, and we hope she is sold locally and stays on the river.

Our year started on March 23rd with a practice race, and a week later, at Easter we hosted the East Coast Championship. With 11 visitors, and the balance made up by Burnham Dragons, we boasted 33 boats racing. The weather was good, and with the wind in the right direction, we were able to set windward/leeward courses.

The competition was just excellent, with very close racing. Rory Bowman was hailed as the Champion, with Tony Allen and Mike Holmes second, and Rob Campbell third. We were pleased to welcome so many visitors, travelling from Cowes, Medway, Lowestoft, and Aldeburgh, and the long distance travellers including Shaun Maclean from the Forth and Olaf Sorrensen from Ireland. Olaf was in town, having just taken delivery of a new Peticrow Dragon, and he did not take any persuading to join in.

We followed Easter with a training weekend by Martin Payne. Unfortunately, the weather was horrendous, and so sailing was restricted, but nevertheless we enjoyed the lectures. The classroom was a hoot, awash with good humour, and with Poul-Richard watching over the proceedings. Stavros had to be on his best behaviour.

Our Saturday and Sunday race programme will see the honours more evenly distributed this year, as the travellers are away, those competing at home have more of a chance to take some of the silver. Clive Morgan and John Holt (*Amok*), Nigel Cole (*Tsunami*), Dick Rycroft (*Logie*), Alan Rees and Martin Blackwell (*Spoof*), Dick Threlfall and Duncan Ayres (*Mushu*), Nick Mellish (*Tamerlaine*), Fred Anthony (*Wish*), Nick Hyde and David Andrassy (*Magic*) and

Martin Makey (*Ganador*) have all shared moments of glory on the river, and the cost to the class in Champagne is sure to rise!

Dry sailing, remains firmly on the agenda, and during this year I have received several good ideas from members. It is a big project, and work goes on. The aim is to provide economic lifting at any stage of the tide. This will be an agenda item at our AGM, and hopefully we can move this project forward.

I am writing this with two months of our season to sail. This is the time of the year I love, the winds are fair, and the weather is seldom too cold. Almost all of our fleet will be in the water and the weekend racing will be even more fun. Our programme will include three more series, The Newts (Saturdays), Candlesticks (Sundays) and the Peticrows open series (Sats and Suns).

In October, our last major event of the year will be a friendly challenge between our fleet and a team of Dragon sailors from Hamburg. The idea is to lend the visitors six boats to make up a team and to compete on the river, for a five-race series. The trophy will be the 'Scheldt Trophy', which in the past has been the prize for a three-way team race event between Burnham, and fleets from Belgium and France. We hope that our event with the German team will be an annual competition.

Our programme for the year will conclude on the weekend of November 23rd/24th with the Peter Mathews Memorial Trophy, and then the last crew's race on Sunday. We will have much to celebrate during this weekend and, after our AGM, we will all be dressing up for our last Class Dinner of the year.

But then there is more.....it's likely that *Rapid transit*, *Tarakona*, and one of Peticrows fleet will stay in the water till early in the New Year to race tune. Why not join us. It may be chilly, but the sun often shines, and the sailing is wonderful. We round the morning off with a hot brandy in the bar, and go home feeling in good form.

Colin Woodcock,
Dragon Class Captain

FALMOUTH

THIS YEAR HAS been one of consolidation but with the hope of improvement next year. We suffered a poor first half of the summer weather-wise.

The enthusiasm has shifted to St Mawes with *Tana*, *Encore* and *Whizz Too* racing there. Friday evening racing at Mylor has been supported. *Buccaneer* travelled to the Edinburgh Cup and learned old boats struggle in strong conditions. Ian Winzer reports elsewhere.

Falmouth week with an entry of nine locals and three visitors was the best for years. Richard Green's clean sweep only prevented by Dave Jephcott driving *Mustang*. We did not take great advantage of the good August and September, racing being rather fragmented.

Peter Flutter

FORTH

THE SCOTTISH DRAGONS had some extremely good racing this year, although the pattern has very definitely been for more concentrated, but fewer, good weekends of racing, rather than regular Saturday and evening racing.

The Northern Championship on the Clyde is reported on page 10, but in general terms it was a great success. Similarly the Scottish Championship, see page 6, on the Forth was an excellent weekend of racing based on three short windward/leeward races each day.

Whereas a weekend of this sort, at intervals throughout the sailing season, is what the majority of Dragon sailors would like, it does reflect the high standard the class has come to expect (demand? hope for?). This type of weekend racing is only possible given a support team willing and able to organise such racing, with the necessary committee boats, mark laying

Hat Trick and *Scorpio* mark rounding on the Crouch – photo Hugh Bourn





Edinburgh Cup 2002 – photo Hamo Thornycroft

boats, and people, but it is somewhat at odds with much of the club racing organised by the average club. This inevitably leads to 'wandering Dragons' going around the world in search of this type of racing.

In Scotland, Laurence Jacobsen wandered off to Ireland in search of the perfect race course – history doesn't relate whether or not he found it, but he was right royally entertained at Kinsale.

Julie and Ron James, after rain in Switzerland, found superb weather in the Northern Baltic, and a general air of contentment was detected in their camp, as their beautiful wooden boat seemed, like good wine improving with age, to be going consistently faster.

Danny Sinclair, Clive and Donald left their usual impression wherever they went in their wanderings.

However, the real backbone of the class, as everywhere, are the local boats: on the whole, they don't travel often (if at all), but they sail a lot, and in our case at Granton, 'local' Dragonners like William Trist and Henry Boyd, spend a lot of time on the water, taking many different people out sailing, in many cases for the first time.

If anyone has any suggestions how this local club sailing can be encouraged, we should start a dialogue to support one-design sailing and racing, which nationally has been declining.

Plans are well advanced for the Edinburgh Cup on the Clyde in June next year, and we hope a good number of visitors will stay on in Scotland for the following weekend when the Scottish Championship will be held on the Forth.

David Young

LOWESTOFT

THE SEASON started slowly, we really did miss the East Coast Championship, it is rather like dropping out of the Premier League.

We do look forward to welcoming our visitors back at the next East Coast Championship

on the second bank holiday weekend 24th to 26th May 2003.

The following weekend we will be holding our June Regatta and all those who enjoy Sea Racing are most welcome to stay for another weekend for a small fee.

We hope to have an entry form for the East Coasts available on the Royal Norfolk and Suffolk Yacht Club website in February 2003 – www.rnsyc.co.uk

Peter Pank

MEDWAY

RACING ON THE Medway has again been very successful with a fleet total of 23 boats and up to 20 boats on the start each Saturday.

Although Len Jones with GBR 646 *Chouette* is leading, the points racing has been close with John Field GBR 639 *Vol de Nuit* and Robin Ridsdill-Smith GBR 591 *Tia* not far behind. With Champagne bought for the fleet by boats winning for the first time in the season there are several winners thereby keeping the fleet members well lubricated.

During the year we welcomed Wendy Howland and Quintin Strauss with GBR 560 *Whistle* to the fleet. Chris Ward purchased GBR 582 *Warrior* and renamed her *Shark*, Len Jones purchased *Rumours* and Richard Green is still working on GBR 39 *Aurora* which he hopes to race in 2003.

Medway Regatta was again enjoyable and we welcomed five visiting boats. This year it included the National Classic Dragon Championship which was won by Katie Cole GBR 384 *Crackerjack*, followed by Roger Dawe GBR 455 *Royalist* and Sir Dick Rycroft GBR339 *Logie*. The overall winner was Len Jones *Rumours* and the Visitor's Cup was won Katie Cole *Crackerjack*.

In keeping with the Medway tradition there were long races out into the Thames Estuary which was both interesting and enjoyable. We look forward to seeing more visitors in 2003 as the club is working hard to improve all aspects of the regatta. One project which

is hoped to be completed by next year is a hoist, which will mean that members will be able to launch their own Dragons at the club. We shall be able to assist visitors to launch their boats at the club rather than having to use the marinas.

The social programme during the year has included a trip to France for lunch and shopping, three informal suppers, the formal presentation dinner in March, and a Martin Payne training weekend.

Another sailing season is coming to an end together with my term as Class Captain but as I hand over to my Vice Captain Robert Sheppard (GBR580 *Esoteric*), I am very confident that the fleet will continue to expand and grow stronger.

I should like to thank all fleet members who have helped Mary and myself during the last two years making our task a lot easier. A very Happy Christmas to all our Dragon friends and all the best for 2003.

John Elphick

SOLENT

YEARS FROM NOW, Dragon sailors in the UK will ask themselves, 'why was I not on the Solent for the 2002 sailing season?' The answer may prove hard to find.

The Solent division has experienced a Champagne year, some great racing, fantastic weather, laughter, tears and romance. Yours truly has the difficult task of covering this season for you, but as I look out of my office window over the roof tops of the houses I regularly sell for many satisfied clients in Belgravia, Chelsea and Knightsbridge, a smile creeps across my face as the memories come flooding back.

The Spring season started at the end of April, when the class enjoyed some superb early season racing in near tropical conditions, a good omen for things to come. Richard Cullen in *Supremacy* sailed the most consistent series to take the title. The South Coast Championship was held over the last weekend in May. However, the wind

FLEET REPORTS

gods had obviously been eating curry prior to the event, the end result being 30 knot winds for the whole weekend. In the one race that was sailed, Peter Nicholson in *Virago* secured the win. As only one race was sailed the trophy was not awarded.

Immediately after the South Coasts, the Royal Corinthian YC hosted the Edinburgh Cup. With PRO Ian Lallow in charge on the water and 47 boats entered it promised to be a corker of a week. Racing was extremely tight for the duration, with a different boat winning every day. In the end it was a battle between Poul Richard Hoj Jensen and Martin Payne for the title, with 'The Man' coming out on top on the final day's racing to take overall honours. Top classic boat was Ken Freivoch sailing the ultra competitive and beautiful *Spitfire* – not very often you get to see a classic Dragon racing round the bay displaying GBR 678 on the mainsail. Special mention should also go to *Moonbeam* in the Classics who had a tremendous week with some impressive individual results.

Puca, sailed by Jonathon Bourke took the Jordan Bell back to Ireland. This trophy, presented for the first time this year, is awarded to the top boat without a top five result in an individual race and no doubt will prove to be a hotly contested pot in regattas to come.

All in all an impressive and hugely enjoyable week, many competitors were seen leaving the Isle of Wight in tears. Class Captain Rob Campbell summed up the feelings of many and said, with a lump in his throat, 'why does this week have to end, this has been the best week's sailing I have ever had and now I have nothing to look forward to for the rest of the year, only Christmas'. Never mind Class Captain Sir, we have the Europeans in 2006, so no doubt we will see you then.

The Cowes fleet after the excitement of the Edinburgh Cup, then got back to the serious business of the Mid season series. By now the season was in full swing and on regular occasions 20 Dragons were to be found on the start line ready to commence battle. Julia Bailey driving *Aimee* had a most comfortable victory in this series, the loveable lawyer sentencing the entire fleet to kiss her transom for the whole of the series. Richard Jordan, probably the best looking man to grace the lines of the international Dragon, managed to sneak the runners-up spot, with Chris Caws coming in third.

During this series, the Island SC hosted the Round the Island race, which was well supported by the Dragon fleet. Richard Jordan in *Chaotic* covered the 55 miles displaying the courage, seamanship and determination needed to succeed in a race of this type and took the win and with it the Royal Singapore YC trophy. Mike Issais on *Fanfare* came in second, Justin Biddle on board with him calling shots was rumoured to be his downfall.

On then to the Summer Series and again it was team *Aimee* with Mrs B at the helm that took the series in impressive fashion. Chris Caws and the *Apalala* team coming in runners-up and a welcome return to the podium for Neil Payne on *Rampage*. I say a welcome return, that is actually a misdescription because he has never been on the podium before. That's as maybe some may say, but good for him to be up there in any event, the first of many third places overall for Neil, this reporter thinks.

On to Cowes Week, sailed during the first week of August, what a week it proved to be. Frank Von Hoogenjurgengurgen was back to defend his trophy, Ian Ratnage and Len Jones both knew where the serious racing was going to be and made a welcome

appearance, also Graham Bailey borrowed a boat for the week from a second-hand boat dealer in Essex and did really rather well. The funny thing being that he named his boat *Etchell*, but of course it wasn't an Etchell at all, but a Dragon – how we all laughed.

Richard Cullen on *Supremacy* opened his account with a win, with Graham Bailey in *Etchell* (it's a Dragon) taking the bullet on the Sunday. A lack of wind gave the fleet a day off on the Monday and on Tuesday Frank in *Hestia* secured the win. By Wednesday the fleet was joined by Richard Jordan and *Chaotic*, a freak accident while shark fishing off the coast of Africa meant that he had to race the regatta one-handed with his right hand in a pot, surely he would not be competitive for the rest of week. Wednesday's race was taken by the Solent legend Chris Caws on *Apalala*. Thursday and the cripple, Richard Jordan, took the win singlehanded – his fellow competitors commenting that his boat handling had improved now that he only had the use of one hand.

Thursday evening saw the annual social event of the year in the form of the class party – again a superb evening and thanks must go to Famida Daniels, Colin and Christine Field, Coral Davies, Rosaleen Cullen, Val Caws and Jean Jordan for all their help.

With sore heads the fleet returned to the water on Friday and Graham Bailey sailing his *Etchell* (it's really a Dragon) took the win – the result he needed to put the pressure on his closest rivals in the form of *Hestia*.

Saturday and the final day's racing was again taken by the one-handed wonder George Jordan. However, Graham Bailey, with his crew of David Heritage and my future wife Miss Freya Bailey, had done enough so the overall trophy went to *Etchell*, but remember, it's a Dragon.

All in all a superb week, great to see so many Dragons on the water racing hard and also enjoying the social side of what continues to be a great event, hopefully a few more visitors will recognise this event next year and join us for what is always a great party week.

The fleet took the rest of August off but were back in early September for the late season series. *Apalala* took the title but, perhaps more impressive, was Ben Hancock sailing *Asa* taking the runners-up spot. Ben has got his classic well up to speed after some hard work and will no doubt be on the pace at the start of the season next year. Richard Cullen in *Supremacy* took third place.

On a number of weekends during the year, the fleet enjoys a series of windward leeward courses, with two races on Saturdays and Sundays, sponsored by Red Funnel ferries. Always well attended, this year the overall winner was not decided until the final weekend which saw Julia Bailey in *Aimee* take the title with Chris Caws in *Apalala* runner-up. Ben Hancock in *Asa* took the trophy for the first classic boat.

The SCRA medal went to Julia Bailey in

GBR 576 *Excalibur*, second overall Edinburgh Cup 2002 – photo Hamo Thornycroft





Three photos from Paul Patenall...

Aimee. I have never been clear on what it is presented for. However, it sounds very impressive, so well done. More importantly Julia also took the overall prize for basically being best boat on the South Coast and probably the world, a great result. Julia has, it has to be said, been a bit of a pain this year simply because she has been going extremely well and has been very difficult to pass. At the bar of the Island Sailing club over the last weekend Neil Payne commented 'it is not the first time I have had my backside whipped by a girl'. His fellow competitors will now give him a wide berth, but we sympathise with what he means. Well done Julia and Team *Aimee*.

So now the end is upon us, boats are tucked away in their sheds and owners are deciding upon what to do next year. I look out of my office window and see our office assistant place a sold sticker on a lovely little property in SW1, and a client walks past offering a friendly wave. I think of the highs and lows of the season past; I think of the parties, of Fred Solly's new found love of Pimms, of the time that our Class Captain actually bought a round at the bar of the RCYC and of Justin Biddle saying, 'I'm only going to have one then I must go home'. I think of the racing, close tacking up The Green cheating the tide, dodging the shallows off Stone Point and Lepe Spit surrounded by 60 or so other boats trying to do the same.

And I think of the friends that we all race against and also the love birds who have found each other this year (you know who you are). It's a shame to be in the office, but then, there's always next year.

Matthew Armstrong

TORBAY FLEET

TORBAY HAS, indisputably, the best waters for keelboat sailing in the UK. Since the Dragons were in Torbay for the 1948 Olympic Games, there has always been a keen and often high profile fleet here.

The tidal conditions and protected natural waters make Torbay a popular venue for international and national events for all classes. Do not forget that the Edinburgh Cup is here in 2004. With the superb sailing water that Torbay has to offer and the undisputed calibre and CVs of the local race officers, and the experience of the Royal Torbay YC, combined with the hotel accommodation and social facilities, you are

guaranteed an excellent event.

To complement the Edinburgh Cup the BDA have suggested that we raise the profile of a well established event, the South West Area Championship. This has traditionally been contested for during the Torbay Royal Regatta in August but in 2004 the BDA has suggested that it is run as a



...overtaking the cream of Ireland

separate event before the Edinburgh Cup. This will therefore count as an event for the Project Jubilee raffle.

However, on a more domestic level, it has been a difficult season for the Torbay fleet, mainly because of the problems caused by the construction work on the harbour side in Torquay for the new development. This will be done and dusted by 2004.

Unlike so many other venues most of us have competed at – Lowestoft, Burnham, Dublin, Falmouth, to name a few – the Harbour Authority fails to recognise the importance of its most valuable asset. It is sure to change. Well done the Royal Torbay YC for taking such a strong stance in promoting the value of sailing and the facilities required to run such excellent events. For those of you who have visited the yacht club, you will know that you are assured a warm welcome.

However, from a fleet of nearly 15 boats at the time of the last Edinburgh Cup in 1998 (do you remember local boy, Dominic Stanislaus repeating Adrian, his older brother's win in *Tyr*) the fleet has dwindled. By the way, Martin Payne, local at the time, now international Etchell star, came second and somebody called Roxy Bowline came third.

Rapier was sold before the season started. *Rapier* sailed against *Bluebottle* before any self respecting young Dragon sailor was born. Prince Charles was a mere twinkle in Philip's eye. On many occasions we were staggered how quick *Rapier* (GBR 289) was (is)!

Norman Vans Colina, whose father sailed Dragons, will not mind me telling a story of how he and Mrs V.C (with head scarf-Hermes, not Musto), habitually late for the start, regularly with awesome modesty worked their way up into the chocolates.

Martin Parry was our new recruit this year. Martin won the Edinburgh Cup in 1963 at Torbay – *Andromeda* (GBR 381) was the boat. Yes, a Borresen. You can have one if you win the Project Jubilee Raffle! Martin's new boat is *Humoresque* (GBR 588) which I believe to be a Petticrow.

Only four Dragons contested the early and late summer series both of which were won by *Basilisk* (GBR 515). *Skall 111* (GBR 425) brought the numbers up to five in July but her season was abruptly cut short after only two races when she had a very destructive collision with *Nimrod* in an exceptionally high winds.

We were very pleased to welcome David Jephcott with *Moonbeam* (GBR 434) for the Torbay Royal Regatta, bringing the numbers back to five. Three Dragons, *Basilisk* (GBR 515), *Heuschrecke* (GBR 422) the Pedersen and Thuesen rocket ship, and *Nimrod* (GBR 621) went down to Dartmouth Regatta to join



...who said anything about hiking?

Vivi, *Humming Bird* (GBR 432) and the eventual winner Jock Douglas' *Cruchan* (GBR 490).

The highlight of the season was the success enjoyed by two erstwhile and very supportive Torbay fleet members in the Edinburgh Cup at Cowes. Our heartiest congratulations go to Martin Payne and Paul Patenall, our Fleet BDA Rep, on their second overall with *Excalibur* (GBR 576).

One cannot also forget their new strategy for catching nuclear submarines in the Clyde when *Excalibur* travelled North. Poul Richard, the CR1 is ideal for this purpose. Most people north of the border heard the language... Still, a third was not bad in the circumstances. And the look of suppressed joy on Rorys face, I know *Excalibur* is quicker down wind than *Yeah Baby*, but Rory, you deserved to win.

At this point, and a tip for all fleets, thank you the Clyde and the Forth for being so hospitable, not only in the yacht club, but in offering to transport boats from the Clyde to the Forth. It enabled those who travelled to participate in both events.

To conclude there is no doubt that this fleet, with a long history behind it is at a low ebb. Every fleet has its troughs but the class is strong and getting stronger.

The club is very supportive of the fleet and the BDA Committee has also turned its attention to those fleets to whom it can add impetus. The Edinburgh Cup at Torbay in June 2004 will inevitably add profile; and do not forget that the Gold Cup is at Falmouth in July 2004. This will be a South West bonanza – be there.

If you need any help with respect to these events (when the wind blows from the west, head for the Imperial! Otherwise head for the Guinness bar), please contact the Yacht Club, Paul or myself. We would be happy to help.

Graham Jenkins

BIG FLEET STARTING

advice for the big occasion, from Stavros

Perfect starts in large fleets are not easy. Good starts however, are not always luck. Here are some tips that you may find useful to try out next time you are away from your weekend club racing and mixing it with the 'Bigger Boys' (and Girls) in Europe.

PRE-START

SOMETIMES quick changing conditions in the few minutes prior to the actual starting sequence can make it difficult to know which genoa to go with, what rig tensions to set, which side of the course is favoured and where to start on the starting line?

All I can advise is to not question the settings and the genoa you have at the last minute, but to concentrate on the start itself.

In big fleets it normally pays to be one end or the other. Reasons are as follows:

1. Race Officers are more and more setting square lines.
2. Unless it's blowing hard, on the starting gun the wind will try and blow over the fleet. Just as if it was going over a cliff or some large obstacle, so it starts to rise before it gets to the front boats. So you can imagine how little wind there is left if you are in the third rank (with Poul-Richard & Woody)!
3. Because of this effect of the wind rising, it also pushes out sideways (like a fan), this will lift boats at each end of the line, even on opposite tacks.
4. There is also usually a one minute rule, so if you are early it's easy/quick to round the end.
5. Lastly, if your start is slightly late or boxed, it's easier to clear the line for clear air. Tack quickly if at the committee boat end, or foot low and fast if at the pin.

STARTS Pin End

I NORMALLY adopt the 'Prowl' approach in a big fleet, using the port approach technique. Coming in on port at about two to three minutes to go enables you to maintain your freedom,

avoiding deadly (controlling) overlaps of nearby boats. With the genoa still rolled, keep below the oncoming starboard boats and look for a nice gap. It is much easier to find space to execute a clear starboard tack start if you are on the 'Prowl'.

Think back yourself, to when a perfect looking space at 30 seconds to go was suddenly closed off by a port tack boat coming in late and fast and tacking below you.

When choosing your space, tack high to maintain space below. At the appropriate time unfurl genoa, put the bow down to accelerate and start strong.

Committee Boat End

To set yourself up for this start, practise coming to the line three or four times close hauled on starboard with just the main. See what angle it takes for your approach to get you right next to the starting vessel.

It is vital not to be too far to windward, someone (probably me!) will close the door right on the gun. To be safe, aim to be four or five boat lengths down the line and go for speed. If you get squeezed out, tack ASAP for clear air and that lift that comes to the edges of the fleet.

On all these starts, try and maintain a space to leeward for acceleration.

THE FINAL ACCELERATION

ACCELERATION is a direct function of your 'beginning boatspeed' and the amount of wind. The slower you approach the line, the harder it is to get moving. The faster you approach the easier it is to manage final acceleration and maintain options.

In light air you must have the genoa pulling at the latest within two minutes to go. As the wind increases, so the genoa can be left furled longer. Practise accelerating your boat in that oh so often wasted time before each start.

If you can gain in confidence from trying any or all of the above over the next season, I am sure the consistency of your starting will improve.

Higher, Faster, Longer...

Martin Payne





photo – Hamo Thornycroft

TREASURER'S STATEMENT

I HAVE COME to the end of my stint as your Treasurer and am happy to report that the accounts on the next page have been approved by the Class's Honorary Auditor and will be presented for approval at the AGM.

I would comment that, in general, a comparison on a like for like basis between account headings shows no great changes, except for advertising; though it is gratifying to see subscription income returning to a higher level. Advertising is down because we have not run the previous wider spreads in Yachts & Yachting for some time, and have only resumed much smaller teaser adverts for the Jubilee project in the middle of the year.

So this brings us to the big change. The Jubilee project. Here the immense efforts by our Chairman, Vice Chairman and others are reflected in real cash in the balance sheet. In fact there is the possibility of more to come. However, the Officers have considered it prudent to count that cash as and when it is safe in the bank. So if and when arrives, it will show on next year's balance sheet.

So on this higher note I bid you all farewell and a welcome to my successor, Gill Smith. Someone with whom I have worked with closely, for it is entirely through her good work that the Solent subscriptions, nearly a quarter of our income, look so good.

I bid you a farewell, you are in good hands.

Richard Green

Treasurer and Membership Secretary

BOATS FOR SALE

PONGO GBR 623 Borresen 1997. Two fully rigged masts, North mainsails, medium genoas and heavy genoas 2001 and 2002, Elvstrom spinnakers 2001 and 2002, other older sails, Harbeck trailer. Very successful boat, lying Aldeburgh, available spring after World Championship. £21,000 Apply Patrick Gifford 020-7328-0408 Michael Hayles 01799-53046

SCORCHER GBR 483. (1975) Boressen fibreglass, stiffened hull. Petticrow mast, Boyce boom, lying Medway, Kent. £5,250. Contact Chris Ward 01634 407056 chrisw@skilltrck.u-net.com

1973 Borresen New Nordic mast/rig hardly used, new spinnaker pole (never used), two sets of sails including

new spinnaker (used twice), steel trailer (serviced by RHP Marine, considered roadworthy), currently stored under cover Isle of Wight. Accept £4,000. Rupert Boyle (Rboyle@CIBL.NET)

GER 942 Petticrow 2000 GRP Hull White, GRP-Deck, in racing condition Extras 1 set of sails, 1 cover EUR 39.000 Markus Glas +49 (0)8157 939520 Fax.: +49 (0)8157 939555 (M_Glas@t-online.de) For other Dragons for sale see www.bootswerft-glas.de

MAST WANTED
MAST FOR A BORESSEN Dragon needed. Ours has snapped in this really bad weather that we have been getting.
Mrs Alix Hawkrige
(alix.hawkrige@prismic.ie)

STOP PRESS

YNGLING GIRLS CAMPAIGN

THREE BURNHAM Dragon sailors – Caroline Edwards, Kate Cole and Lizzie Edwards – have come together as a team in the Olympic womens keelboat class – the Yngling. Their aim being to qualify for Athens 2004.

The girls have been delighted with the support from their local Dragon fleet.

For more information e-mail: info@olympicteamrcy.co.uk.

photo– Hamo Thornycroft



HOLT

SETTING NEW STANDARDS IN PERFORMANCE



FLYING 1. CLASS.....



On board a Dragon from Børresen you are flying 1. Class.
Enjoy the new Viking Dragon and the multiple advantages that comes with it.

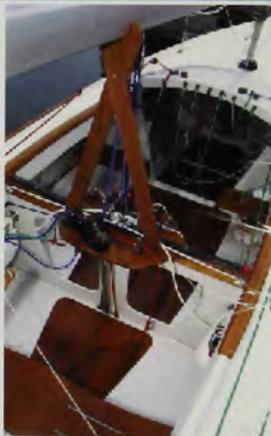
WORLD-CLASS QUALITY

A Børresen Dragon is your guarantee of a world-class quality boat developed by experts. Improving on perfection is our motto – we are continuously on the look out for new ways to optimize to ensure improved speed and function, and with the latest improvements the Viking Dragon outdistances all competition.

To ensure the best possible stiffness within the dragon class rules we have worked together with leading structural design experts from the wind power industry. More expert advice has been collected from colleagues building IMS racers.

Consequently the new Børresen Dragon tops the class with the most optimized stiffness, the fastest hull shape and perfectly working trim functions with minimal friction – a born winner.

- Narrower cockpit allowing closer genoa sheeting
- More deck space
- Comfortable coaming design
- Helmsman seat with new curved design
- New slim sheeting bridge allowing helmsman to move forward
- Improved cleating under roof minimizing malfunction
- Fast and precise winch less Genoa system standard
- Spinnaker sheets under deck proving clean and tidy working place
- New stiff chain plate with easy adjustable shroud position
- Improved pump system under floorboard
- Longitudinal bulkhead forward
- Additional bulkhead athwart ship forward
- Longitudinal bulkhead aft
- Extra bulkhead under roof
- Bulkhead under sheeting bridge
- Reinforced mast support
- Electric pump
- Electronic "tacktick" compass



NEW DECK MouldING AND HULL CONSTRUCTION

The new Viking Dragon features optimized cuddy design for improved strength, comfort and efficiency, with a range of new improvements that make the boat even faster.



BØRRESENS BÅDEBYGGERI A/S

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