

Dragon News

**British Dragon
Association
2005**





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2004 RESULTS

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European Championships	1	2	3	4	5	6	8	10		
Gold Cup	1	2	3	4	5	7	8	10		
British Championships	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Grand Prix	1	2	3	5	6	7	8	10		
Princess Sofia Trophée	1	2	3	4	5	6	8	9		
Danish Championships	1	2	3							
German Championships	1	2	3	4	6	7				
Irish Championships	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Kiel Week	1	2	3	4	5	7	9			
Regatta Royale	1	2	3	6	7	10				
St. Tropez Anniversary Race	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	20	21	22
	24	25	26	27	28	29	30			

Peticrows

We take you winning seriously...

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Peticrow
 Dragon
 2004

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EUROPEAN AND WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP SELECTION PROCEDURES

Detailed information can be found on page 28



Cover picture:
Dragon 75th
Anniversary Regatta
by Jacques Vapillon

UK Dragon Fixtures

2005

March 25th-28th	Easter Regatta	Burnham
March 25th-28th	Easter Regatta	Plymouth
May 28th-29th	East Coast Championship	Lowestoft
May 30th - June 4th	Edinburgh Cup	Lowestoft
June 19th-26th	European Championship	La Trinité, France
August 5th-12th	Gold Cup	Sandhamn, Sweden
Sept 17th-18th	South Coast Championship	Cowes

2006

May 27th-29th	South Coast Championship	Cowes
June 3rd-10th	European Championship	Cowes

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BRITISH DRAGON ASSOCIATION

AGM 6pm and Annual Dinner 8pm
Friday January 7th 2005

Royal Thames Yacht Club, Knightsbridge

Dragon News

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photo by James Walker

BDA CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

from James Mehew



The Dragon is 75 years old. The anniversary year started with the Jubilee Ball in London, and the season ended with the Celebration Regatta in St Tropez.

During 2004 and around the world, 360 boats sailed in special races to mark the anniversary with almost 1,200 people taking part.

For the British fleet, the season started with a win for Martin Payne in the Iberian Championship – an event combining results from regattas in Cascais and Mallorca. He sailed one of the four British boats in the series. Back home, the Burnham Easter regatta was its normal well-supported success. The Grand Prix at Douarnenez in May was up to its usual capacity of 100 with the British well represented. The East Coast Championship was hosted by Medway for the first time, and it was considered by all to be an outstandingly successful event. We had a successful Edinburgh Cup in Torquay with a dedicated anniversary race, and we hosted the Gold Cup in Falmouth with over 80 entries from across Europe, one from Hong Kong and one from Australia. Two British boats attended the Europeans in Estonia. But when we all look back on 2004, it will be the event at St Tropez that will be remembered by those who were there.

The statistics of the St Tropez regatta were impressive. At 267 boats, it was reputed to be the largest one-design keelboat regatta ever held, with entries from 31 countries. A great many more would have come if numbers had allowed, but, after multiple extensions, the entries were finally limited with 250 passed and still counting. The race in which all of them started on a single line must also have broken records – 69 boats black flagged might be one.

It was not just quantity but quality. The list of names was impressive, with the great and the good from the international sailing world – to stand out in this crowd you needed more than one gold medal, or to have won the America's Cup rather than just contested it. A good number of Royals were there – most of them black flagged in the big race! And there were us lesser mortals.

All of us had fun, both on and off the water. Belonging to the Dragon class is like belonging to a worldwide club, especially to those who have travelled to overseas regattas, and that includes a good proportion of the competitors in St Tropez. There were familiar and friendly faces at every turn, and they were all there to enjoy themselves on land as well as on the water, where they demonstrated equally

characteristic enthusiasm and competitive spirit.

That level of competitiveness was apparent in the quality and preparation of the boats, and it is interesting to note how modern the Dragon fleet now is. Of the 46 British boats that attended, 28 were built in the last 10 years (over 60 per cent), but you do not have to have a new boat in order to be competitive. The Dragon class has maintained a strict policy over the years, of keeping the hull shape and weight constant. The virtue of the policy was demonstrated by a number of older wooden boats, mostly beautifully refurbished and

**AT 267 BOATS,
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TO BE THE LARGEST
ONE-DESIGN KEELBOAT
REGATTA EVER HELD...**

certainly with modern rigs, that chose to sail against the new boats with impressive results, rather than in the 'Classic' fleet. In the big race one such boat, 43 years old, finished in the top ten only to be black flagged, but the point was made and she certainly won on looks with her varnished topsides. There were some fantastic examples of boat builders' art on display.

I often suspect that the beauty of these boats is what attracts many people to them, and I guess it has done over the 75 years that we can now look back on. It is certainly something that we all enjoy, but there are far more practical issues that make us all so enthusiastic.

The quality of racing, not just in the UK but throughout the world and especially Europe, is extraordinarily high, with boats that are remarkably evenly matched. The same gear is available to all of us, so you cannot buy your way to the front. Towing is easy and for those who wish to travel there is a huge choice of regattas in wonderful locations, from the Baltic to the Mediterranean, and the Atlantic to the Swiss Lakes – and that is just in Europe. The season never stops, with winter series in Cannes and Mallorca, and a regatta circuit that starts in Europe in Portugal in February. You need just a helmsperson and two crew, and every person on board needs to be completely involved for the boat to go fast.

Most important of all is the people who sail Dragons. Lots of variety of course, but they typically bring with them a wealth of sailing experience, often at a very high level in other branches of our sport, and in this class they seem to be able to mix healthy competition on the water with enjoyment of other fine things in life. Possibly an appreciation of the beauty of our boats is part of that, but I note an appreciation of good food as another, not to mention a beer or two as we come ashore!

It was all there in St Tropez, almost a statement of why we sail Dragons. We are all very lucky.



LEE WHITEHEAD
Gold Cup photographs on
www.photolounge.co.uk
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The front cover picture and all St Tropez Dragon 75th Anniversary Regatta photos on the following pages are reproduced by kind permission of marine photographer Jacques Vapillon



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A CLASS ACT

267 Dragons celebrate their 75th Anniversary in style at St Tropez



A CLASS ACT

An account of the action in St Tropez, extracted from an article originally written for *Yachts & Yachting* by **John Roberson** – all photos by **Jaques Vapillon**

Russell Coutts is a man who seems to be able to jump into just about any boat and make it go fast. After sailing in the Dragon 75th Anniversary Regatta in St Tropez, he commented, "what a fantastic turn out, they must be doing something right."

The regatta at St Tropez in October 2004 was quite simply unique, it was a benchmark in the history of small boat sailing, and all those that were there will remember it in the same way that those who took part in the America's Cup Jubilee in 2001 remember that. The venue was very suitable, the assembly of boats spectacular, all 267 of them, from the 1936 vintage *Falmer*, through to David Palmer's *Princess Jalina*, launched for the first time, the day before the regatta.

This was not a world championship, it was not the Gold Cup, it was just a celebration of the longevity, resilience, magnificent, and superb qualities of a boat that probably stands alone having been at the fore front of international competition for 75 years. The personalities that turned up were a tribute to this, the Olympic medallists, world champions from this and other classes, and those club racers who just 'had to be there'.

Often when you sit at a harbourside cafe in St Tropez, you can't actually see the water, your view is blocked by the sterns of a row of pretentious, multi-million pound gin palaces. So for this regatta it was a treat to see the waterfront lined with these classic sailing boats, all moored neatly stern-to, in an ark around the inner harbour.

The fleet was divided into five groups, with the 31 Classics (built before 1972) sailing on their own, and the other four groups of Moderns, consisting of nearly 60 boats each. The plan was for each of the groups of moderns to sail with each other, before dividing them into gold, silver and bronze fleets in the usual way.

On the Monday and Tuesday this worked well, with Ireland's Ward Woods sailing *Jessica*, heading the leaderboard after two days, having chalked up first and second places. Second was Swede Gutta Johannson, with David Palmer, Andy Beadsworth and Graham Wilkinson sailing *Princess Jalina* into third place.

Tuesday was Britain's big day, with *Princess Jalina* winning her heat, the 24-year-old Mark Dicker finishing second in the other heat, and Laurence Jacobsen from the Clyde taking first place in the Classics. Palmer was quite emotional about his success in his brand-new boat, while Dicker was surprised, having thought he'd finished fourth, but two boats ahead of him were OCS. Jacobsen was a little bemused to find himself doing so well, as his is the only active boat on the Clyde these days, a bit of a sad situation for the place that got the class started in the British Isles.

Day three of the regatta saw winds up around 30 knots, and, with a big swell rolling into the Bay of St Tropez, race officer Tony O'Gorman wisely postponed racing. While under normal circumstances Dragons can handle winds of this strength, the combination of such a large fleet and the large waves made it just too dangerous.

Thursday, the fourth day of the event, was the big one. Bravely O'Gorman agreed to try and start all 267 boats on



one line – 2.51 kilometres long, with one end just off the harbour entrance in St Tropez, and the other end close to the shore in St Maxime. The course configuration was interesting and innovative, with the committee boat in the centre of the starting line, and a mark boat at either end.

There were two windward marks, each directly to windward of the centre of each half of the starting line, and boats could go around whichever windward mark they wanted. Similarly there were two leeward gates, downwind of the start/finish line, and just one round, with both mark boat being moved in to shorten the line for the finish. Not surprisingly controlling the over eager fleet proved difficult, and there were four abandoned starts, before they got away.

Again it was the Irish who set the pace, with John Ross-Murphy of DunLaoghaire winning this very special race, it'll take a long time for the smile to fade from his face. "Words can't describe how I feel, and how my guys feel, it's just



fabulous," was how he summed up the day. "Ailbe is my co-owner, and he was up front, and Ed only started sailing with me last year, and the very first event we did, Dournanenez, we won, that was the first time I ever sailed with Ed, and that was my biggest win in sailing, and then to do this on top of that, it's awesome really."

Friday was 'special' race day, with a Champion of Champions race for any skipper who was a current or past champion in any class, and other races for crews, over 65-year-old skippers, helmswomen, and juniors. This was a difficult day on the water, with thunder storms and squalls rolling through producing blustery conditions interspersed with almost oily calms.

However, the cream will rise to the top, and Russell Coutts, crewed by Yann Neergard and Sam Evans, grabbed victory in the Champion of Champions event, by about a quarter of a boat's length, from Sweden's Tom Lofstedt. Also

in the top six of this 'rock star' fleet were two of England's former Olympic and America's Cup skippers, Phil Crebbin and Andy Beadsworth, and the president of the IOC, Jacques Rogge, sailing with legendary German sailor Ulli Libor.

On the Saturday there was just one race to decide the overall winner of the regatta, with the fleet being divided into gold, silver and bronze on the results of just two races. On the day it was Tom Lofstedt and his crew of Martin Alsen and Martin Larsson sailing *Maria*, who won, with St Tropez turning on the sort of weather that one expects of this resort, bright sunshine and 18 to 20 knots of breeze.

Second place went to Denmark's Jorgen Schoenherr sailing *African Queen*, the current holder of the Gold Cup, who put on his best performance of the week. John Ross-Murphy of Ireland continued to show good form, finishing third, to cap a successful week for the Dun Laoghaire fleet.

THE DRAGON EXPERIENCE

David Palmer – West Wight Scow, Firefly, BUSA, offshore trimaran OSTAR and Round Britain, Swallow and Sigma sailor – joins the Dragon class and goes dream chasing...

It's the second race of the International Dragon Class's 75th Anniversary Regatta at St Tropez. There are 268 Dragons gathered for what amounts to a celebratory rally. The fleet has been divided up, and there are 120 boats lining up for a start. After two hours of racing the finishing order is: 1st Brit, 2nd Irishman, 3rd Norwegian, 4th German, 5th Dane, 6th German, 7th Dutchman, 8th Greek, 9th Kiwi – feller by the name of Coufts, 10th Russian.

Welcome to the International Dragon Class – and welcome to an environment which offers everything from keen club racing to the best organised and the most competitive international one-design racing in the world

Did I say most competitive? Try this for another result. It's the Douarnenez Regatta in May of this year. Number of starters – 94. Finishing order: 1st Dane – Soling double Gold medallist; 2nd Swiss – Star, Tempest and H-boat World Champion; 3rd German – Dragon Gold Cup winner; 4th Dane – Dragon Gold Cup winner, European champion and Danish Olympic team member; 5th Swede – European FJ champion; 6th Brit – more about him later; 7th Dane – 505 and Flying Dutchman World Champion.

Dragon sailors love to recall how Russell Coufts came to Douarnenez with a hot shot America's Cup Crew a few years back and came 22nd. "What do you have to do to win in this class, Russell?" asked a fellow competitor. "Spend more time in the boat", replied the best helmsman in the world.

My own Dragon odyssey started three years ago over a drink with Peter Nicholson. I was 60 years old, and trying to persuade my Irish employer to let me retire and come home. I had sold my Sigma 33 in Ireland, and was wondering what to do next in sailing terms.

"You should buy a Dragon and do the European Circuit, David", said Peter "You've never experienced anything like it – huge international fleets, top level competition, and the best sailing venues in Europe."

A Dragon? I had never sailed one, and had always thought of the Dragon as a beautiful throwback to a different era. Over the next two seasons, the seed that Peter had planted slowly took root. Dragon sailors talked of places like Cascais, Palma, Cannes, St. Tropez, Douarnenez, Sandhamn. I had never sailed in any of them. They talked of 100-boat fleets, of stunning international competition.

There was just one blip on the smooth path from original idea to Dragon purchase. A seasoned observer of the class warned me: "It takes even the best helmsmen two years to get up to speed in a Dragon". I wondered if my Dragon dream was doomed to end in disappointment and frustration. Was I too old? Was I about to step right outside my sailing league?

At Cowes Week 2003 I took the plunge. I went to a Dragon Class cocktail party and announced that I wanted to buy a two or three-year-old glass Dragon with a trailer, and that I wanted to do the European Circuit. I immediately felt the warm embrace of the Dragon Class. In all my years of sailing, I have never known a fleet so friendly, so welcoming to new entrants, and so willing to offer advice and help. It is a

spirit that seems to cross national borders and yacht club cultures.

By the Wednesday of Cowes Week I found myself on the telephone to Poul-Richard Hoj-Jensen, who had just the boat I wanted. He and his wife Sophia own and run Peticicrows at Burnham-on-Crouch, and are able to offer Dragons in good racing condition for between £20,000 and £38,000, including sails, trailer and VAT. After a couple of phone calls, I bought a two-year-old Peticicrow Dragon, sight unseen, with a two-year-old Harbeck trailer, all fully serviced by Peticicrows. She had been campaigned by Tommy Mueller of Germany, and had won the Gold Cup in 2002. I felt that she was young enough to be competitive and old enough to take the sting out of the price of a new Dragon and a new trailer (which today would come in at around £45,000 plus VAT,

including trailing cover, mast cover and sails).

A month later, the Palmer household became a three-car family – one for me, one for my wife and one for the Dragon. It's a five-year old Mitsubishi Shogun, and it lives with the boat, wherever she is and wherever she goes. The total cost of Dragon plus Mitsubishi, ready to tow and ready to race, was £40,000.

Poul-Richard is key to the continuing success of the Dragon Class. He is a large man, with a gentle Scandinavian accent and a dry sense of humour. He is the double Olympic gold medallist who won Douarnenez this year. On the water, he never shouts, never protests, and likes to get away from the fleet and sail fast. "Now, we go", he tells his crew when he finds some sea-space of his own. His role as ambassador for the class, both on the water and as principal class builder, has been central to attracting a raft of Olympians and world champions into Dragons. Peticicrows has built 38 – yes 38 – new Dragons in the last 12 months.

For my first weekend's Dragon sailing, I ask Martin Payne to sail with me. Martin is a former schoolteacher who has transformed himself into a full time Dragon sailor. He is both a fine helmsman in his own right, a brilliant crew and a skilled teacher.

Martin introduces me to the mysteries of Dragon rig tuning. A Dragon is a very tweaky boat, with over 40 control lines coming into the cockpit. A major part of the learning curve for new Dragon sailors is breaking through the "tweak barrier", so that you are psychologically at one with your boat and can concentrate on the basics of boat speed and tactical positioning.

Martin sails the first race and wins it. Over the next three weekends, I bring home some seconds, thirds and fourths – Julia Bailey, Queen of the Solent Dragon Fleet, is consistently too good for me. But we are pleased to be settling into the front half of the Solent fleet.

Fast forward to the first weekend of December. We have been racing over a three-day weekend in the Trofeo de Palma. There have been 15 starters, half a dozen starts, and we have finished 14th or 15th in every race.

The competition has been the usual high Dragon standard – the top six places have all been filled by former Gold

**Big fleets,
top competition,
great atmosphere,
best European venues**



The *Princess Jalina* crew in action at the Gold Cup
— photo by Lee Whitehead

medallists or world champions. But *Princess Jalina* is far off the pace – and here I am, sitting on the tarmac in an Easyjet, trying to make sense of it all. I decide I have three options. I can admit the whole Dragon dream has been a big mistake, sell the boat, and forget it; option two: take the boat back to the Solent, and enjoy the marvellous camaraderie and the excellent competition of the Solent fleet; option three: raise my game big time.

I go for the third option. I line up Mark Spruce, an experienced Dragon sailor and former North Sailmaker, and Jamie Lea, head of North's one-design department, for the two Cascais regattas in February; and during the Boat Show, I make contact with Andy Beadsworth, our Atlanta and Sydney Soling skipper and starting helmsman for the GBR America's Cup challenge, to do a series of regattas through the season.

At the two Cascais regattas, against 30-strong fleets, we finish seventh and fifth overall. In one race, we reach the first mark two lengths behind Russell Coutts, and 100 metres ahead of the rest of the fleet, and the race becomes a match race. On the second beat, we get on the right end of a windshift, and round the windward mark two lengths ahead of Coutts. All down the subsequent run, we hold our lead, and then, just before the final leeward mark, the wind dies, the world's best sailor smells the next zephyr and ghosts past us, and rounds the leeward mark a length ahead. Result: Coutts 1, Palmer 2.

I've been racing since I was ten. But after 53 years, I'm no more than a good club sailor, who usually ends up in the front third of a club fleet, and who has won one National Championship and the odd open meeting. In this Dragon fleet, I am under no illusions – I'm out of my league. But there it is on the results sheet – Coutts 1, Palmer 2. And it was so close to being the other way round!!

We head back to Palma for the *Princess Sophia*, and my first regatta with Andy Beadsworth. We don't do very well, finishing 22nd out of 43. But there are some causes for optimism. In ten races, we have three top 10 finishes; we have occasional bursts of boatspeed.

So to Douarnenez, and a fleet of 94 Dragons. Our bowman for the regatta is Kasper Harsberg, a 6ft 9in Dane with a decade of championship Dragon sailing behind him. The starting line is nearly a mile long. The fleet is black flagged in three out of six starts.

And we make our breakthrough. Andy does not miss a windshift all week. We begin to get off the starting line in the front group. I find, with a lot of coaching from Andy, that I can at last hold my lane going to windward. I am the Brit who finished 6th on the week in the third paragraph of this article, with three top ten and five top 15 finishes in six races; in one race, we round the final mark first, but I do not have the experience to hold off Jorgen Schoenherr, winner of the Gold Cup for the last two seasons, and he surfs past us on the back of a wave.

But it is slowly coming together. Vincent Hoesch, multi-World Champion, comes up to me in the hotel lobby and commends our boat speed. Poul-Richard seeks me out to say how pleased he is at the way we've come on. I still feel like a goodish club sailor with ambitions way above my station. But something is happening. A campaign is slowly taking shape. The crew is beginning to gel. Above all, this 63-year old is having the time of his sailing life. He's also lost 10 kilos, and is off to the gym twice a week!

The summer is a bit of an anti-climax. On four separate occasions, we turn up for regattas where the wind fails to blow. We have one blinding weekend at Cowes – four races, four wins, with Martin Payne outstanding in the middle of the boat and Ninx Bulmer lightning fast in the bow. But at the Gold Cup in Falmouth, we finish 15th overall out of 83, with just one top ten finish all week.

At Cowes Week, with Andy busy elsewhere, we have a consistent week, full of seconds, thirds and fourths, but with no winning guns. We are third on the week.

By now, I am discussing a new Dragon with Poul-Richard. Andy and I spend many hours debating it. The boat we have is fast and well set up. But by 2006, she will be five years old, and in the meantime, I will be towing her for 7,000 miles a year, and racing her hard 70 or 80 days a season. At the end of August, almost exactly a year after taking delivery of my first Dragon, I take the plunge – it's a new boat for the winter, to be ready just in time for the 75th anniversary regatta in St. Tropez.

And so to St. Tropez. There are 268 entries, and 50 more on the waiting list. Andy is in the bow, Graham Wilkinson, who was with me at the beginning of the campaign, at the *Princess Sophia* and for Cowes Week, is in the middle. We throw our new boat together and head for the starting line.

First race – 120 starters, *Princess Jalina* eighth.

Second race – I was the Brit in the race that opened this article. It's the first time I've ever won a race at this level. It feels just about as good as it gets.

Next year, Andy will be sailing with me in a total of eight regattas, in between organising an Olympic Star campaign. Andy's Star crew, Freddie Carr, will be bowman. Martin Payne will be with me for four other events.

It's Bordeaux in November, Cannes in December and January, Cascais twice in February, Palma twice in March, Douarnenez in April/May, Lowestoft in June, Stockholm for the Gold Cup in July/August, Lubeck for the worlds in August, and Cannes again in September.

So, dear reader, will you understand if this aging club sailor, just for a season or two, indulges himself with dreams way above his station?

The dreams are, of course, impossible. But what fun it's going to be chasing them.

Falmouth 2004

Royal Cornwall
Yacht
Club



DRAGON GOLD CUP

 **JPMorgan Fleming**
Asset Management

Danish sailor Jorgen Schoenherr exploded the myth that you need years of experience to win major events in the Dragon class, by winning the Gold Cup for a second successive year, having won in 2003, just three months after stepping into the class. Crewed by Axel Waldersdorph and Anders Kaempe, Schoenherr won four out of the six races in the no-discard series, to finish with an 18.7 point advantage over fellow Dane Frank Berg, who seemed to spend the whole series sailing in Schoenherr's dirty wind.

Schoenherr is no stranger to winning major regattas, having won world championships in two of the world's most competitive dinghy classes, the 505 and Flying Dutchman. Somewhat surprisingly he said that many of the lessons

learnt in those classes held good for the Dragon:

"It's a good boat because you can work so much with the set-up, and you can adjust almost everything. It suited me very well, because many of the trim settings are similar to the FD and 505s, even though it's a keelboat and doesn't plane. You can use a lot of the knowledge that you get from dinghies in the Dragon."

In a class where it is notoriously difficult to find a fraction of a knot of boatspeed advantage, this Danish skipper had an ability to wriggle his way out of the pack of over 70 boats on the starting line, and be in the top ten at the first mark. From there he invariably showed good downwind speed and tactics to move up the ladder, and in four races, hit the front to cross the line in first place.





John Roberson reports
 – photos by **Lee Whitehead**

Second-placed Frank Berg is at the opposite end of the Dragon class psyche, having sailed the class for 15 years, and all those years in the same boat, like Schoenherr's, a Petticrow hull. In three of the races that his countryman won, Berg finished second, and was never more than three places behind the eventual winner, with his worst result 24th in the last race, when Schoenherr finished in 21st place.

"My boat is 15 years old, it is the oldest boat in the fleet," he said proudly. "It is a very good boat, I am very happy with this boat, I have tried a lot of new boats but we like this better." He was also second in the Gold Cup in 2003, and has never won it, though he has taken the Danish championship five times.

Neither of these skippers sails in a large fleet at their home club, with Schoenherr having the only Dragon at his home club in Koege, about 30 kilometres south of Copenhagen. Berg comes from Hellerup, home of the legendary Paul Elvstrom, and he says they only have a small fleet of Dragons there, but that the Danish fleet regularly turns out over 50 boats for their championships.

With no home fleet to sail against Schoenherr explains, "we only sail at regattas. We bought the boat last year, and started last year, but we have been attending quite a few regattas." This year alone he seems to have been pretty busy – "We just finished Kiel Week two weeks ago, we won that. We have also sailed another two regattas in Denmark which we won, and we sailed one in France and one in Spain."

The Danish have a long and glorious history in the Dragon class, and also in the Gold Cup, which they have won 28 times in the 60 times it has been held. This is twice as many times as the next most frequent winners, Germany, whose sailors have only put their names on the trophy 14 times.

Britain's performance is less than impressive, with only three winners – well four if you count a Northern Ireland entry in 1947 – the last of which was Nic Truman 30 years ago in 1974.



In the results of the 2004 regatta you have to go all the way down to eighth before you find a GBR sail number, that of Rory Bowman, and his crew Chris Pank and Duncan Grindley sailing *Yeah Baby*, the current British national champions.

Filling the places between the two Danes and Bowman were two Germans, one Turkish boat, one from the Netherlands, and another Dane.

The British fleet, which provided 45 of the 75 entries, had its moment of glory, when Patrick Gifford won the third race in *Kraken*, but he could manage no better than 21st overall, one place behind the celebrity of the week, HRH the Prince Consort of Denmark. Bowman's best result was a fifth, and that was the only time he cracked the top half dozen. In fact British appearances in these rarified heights of the scoreboard were few and far between.

Bowman commented about the series, "I hadn't done a Gold Cup for quite a while, but remembering that it's a no discard series, and how to sail a no discard series, took a few races, which was a few races too many. But what was clear to me was that there were a couple of boats that were just clear of the rest of the field.

"Schoenherr in *African Queen* obviously was clear of the field, but actually Frank Berg was as. I don't think they were necessarily faster, though they were never slow in any

DRAGON GOLD CUP

continued

conditions, particularly Schoenherr who was just sailing majestically."

He also drew some positives from his performance explaining, "my big lesson would be not to be massively disappointed that there are several gears to go up. I think we just met somebody who was just very committed, doing a lot of regattas, and who had an absolute purple patch."

Talking about the different psychology of sailing a no-



discard series he said, "I think you've got to fundamentally have confidence, that you can come back from a bad first rounding, because if you don't, you take on too much risk. I think the two Danes had the feeling that they could work their way through the field right from day one.

"You need to have that belief, and then manage your risk very tightly, because what became clear was a 15th was fine. What you've got to do is work your way through, so if you're round in 30th, it's not impossible to get to 15th, if you've got some confidence in your boatspeed and your tactics."

Even the legendary Poul-Richard Hoj-Jensen, who has won the Gold Cup four times representing Denmark, but now sails with a GBR sail number, could only manage one top six result. This is some indication of the standard and depth of talent in this fleet, which although down a little on numbers from the 100+ entries of some Gold Cups, was loaded with former winners, world champions and Olympic medalists.

Technical Tips

5 - The Leeward Gate

LEEWARD GATES are becoming ever more popular as Dragon fleets increase in numbers. Making it work for you is not as easy as it looks.

Choosing the correct buoy at the Leeward Gate – this may not necessarily be the nearest buoy to you as you make your final approach.

THINGS TO CONSIDER:

- 1) Which side do I want to go up the next beat?
- 2) Has the wind shifted on the run? So which buoy is to windward?
- 3) Am I the inside boat? Or shall I take the other buoy in less traffic?
- 4) Who am I following? Can I round up better?

Point number 1 is very important if one side of the course paid big time on the first beat. It is better to round the buoy that will take you towards the paying side, than to take the other buoy and tack, which will sail you through the fleet of spinnakers slowly, in bad air.

Point 2 will make you watch the wind carefully towards the end of the run. Remember, for every extra boat length you sail downwind towards the buoy, you also have to sail upwind away from it!

Point 3 – don't be rafted up on the outside of a three or four boat rounding. Why not reach over to the other buoy, for clear air and a tighter manoeuvre? Giving you a better lane instead of bad air.

Point 4 – if you have to give someone water, take down the spinnaker early, go wide, stake your claim to any other clear astern boat and make a better/tighter rounding. This will give you a clear lane to continue, towards your previously-thought-out preferred side of beat.

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The Dragons are grateful for his permission to reproduce articles from *Speed&Smarts* on a regular basis. We continue in this issue with

Tactics – Start the Second Beat Strong – on pages 12 and 13 overleaf,
and *Strategy on Runs* – on pages 18 and 19

Check out Dave Dellenbaugh's sample issue of *Speed&Smarts* on:
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TACTICS

Start the second beat strong

What you do during the first part of the second beat is very important because it sets a tone for the rest of this critical leg. If you tack to clear your air right after the leeward mark, for example, there's a good chance you will end up playing the left side of the beat. And if you decide to go right but the left turns out to be favored, you may lose a lot of boats.

Your approach to the second beat should reflect your answers to two critical questions. First, how satisfied are you with your current position in the race? And second, how confident are you about your strategic plan for this leg? Let's look at both of these in more detail.

How satisfied are you?

From a psychological point of view, you should seldom allow yourself to feel satisfied, or complacent, in a competitive sport like sailing. But in practical terms, you have to decide when you're going to protect

what you've got and when you must attack to improve your position.

Before you reach the leeward mark, think about how happy you are with your position in the race. For example, if you are sailing down the reach in second place out of 65 boats, you will most likely be very content with where you are. But if you are currently 45th, you probably won't be.

Of course, your satisfaction level depends on your position in the overall series, not just in one race. You may be 45th at the final mark of the last race, but if you're leading the series and the only boat that can catch you is in 53rd place, you will probably be quite satisfied.

Your level of satisfaction is very important because it will influence almost everything you do on the second beat. For example, if you are very happy with your position, you will probably be conservative

in your tactics and strategy. You will spend most of your efforts covering the fleet, minimizing separation, and defending your position so you don't lose what you have.

On the other hand, if you are not at all happy with your position in the fleet, you will approach the beat in a completely different way. You will be willing to take more chances in order to catch boats. You'll spend more time near the corners of the course, splitting from the fleet and looking for leverage.

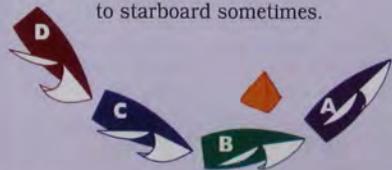
By the time you finish the second beat, you will likely be two-thirds of the way through the race. There probably won't be too many more chances to make big gains (or losses). Therefore, you have to go

A good practice idea

When you have three or four (or more) boats together at a practice session, here's a good way to work on your tactics during the first part of the second beat. Set two marks as a short windward-leeward course. Then have the boats position themselves so they round the leeward mark bow-to-stern in a certain order (e.g. A, B, C, D).

The goal for each boat is to race up to the windward mark and improve or protect their position. After getting there, they start again at the leeward mark. This time send the first boat to the back so you have a different order (e.g. B, C, D, A). Keep doing this so each boat gets to round the mark in every position. Then talk about what everyone learned.

If your class uses gate marks, don't always round the leeward mark to port. Try doing this drill with a gate, or have everyone round the mark to starboard sometimes.



When you start the second beat, your two main priorities are getting clear air and following your strategic plan (that you devised before rounding the leeward mark). You can't always do both of these at the same time, so you may have to decide which is more important. If you can get clear air without going too far in the wrong direction, that is usually a good idea.

David Dellenbaugh's
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for it as soon as you start the beat. If you're in good shape, try to hold on until the windward mark. If you aren't, look for ways to start making gains immediately.

How confident are you?

As I've said many times before, it's important to make a strategic plan for the second beat well before you round the leeward mark. This serves as your blueprint, or guide, for how you will use the wind and current to get to the next windward mark as quickly as possible.

Of course, you don't always have the same degree of confidence in the plan you make. If the current and wind both favor the right side,

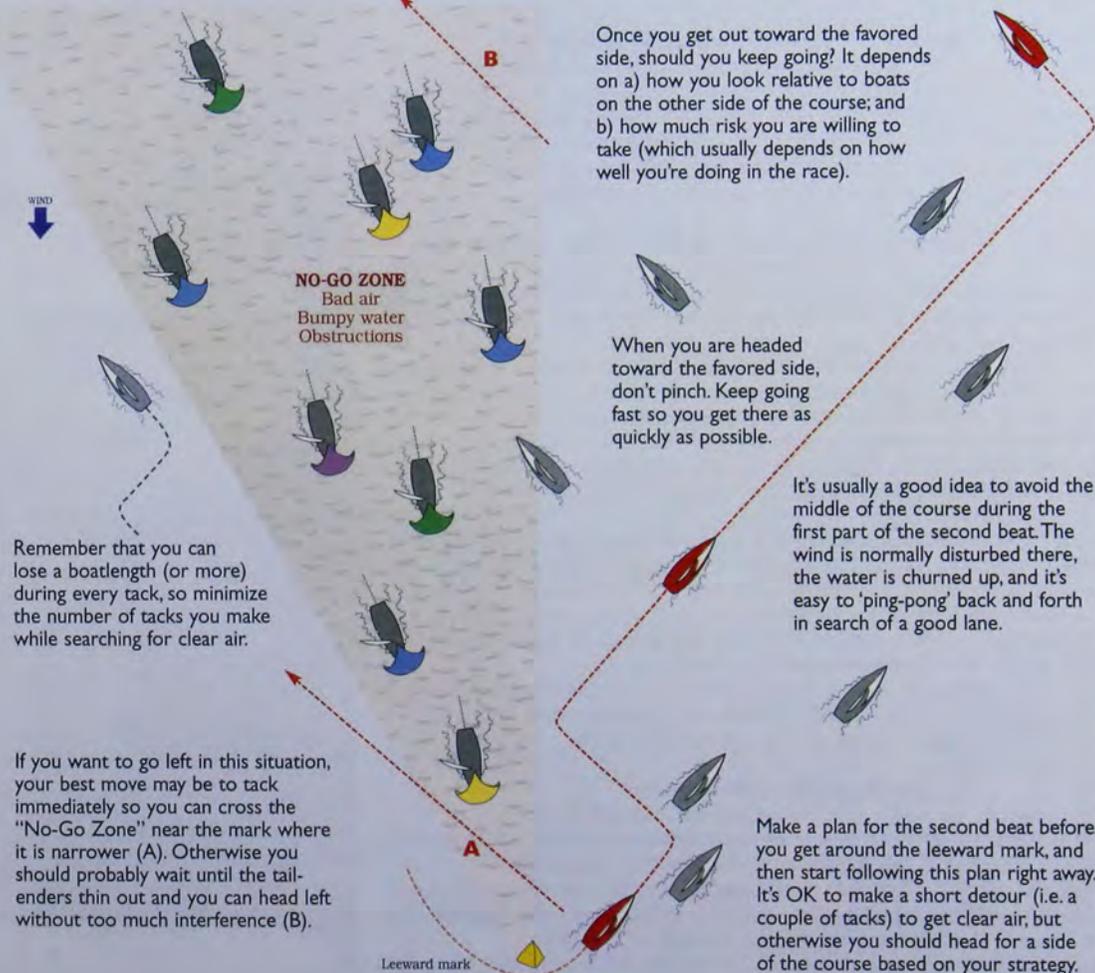
for example, you may be 95% sure that right is the way to go. But if the windshifts during the last half hour have been completely random, your best guess at picking the better side may involve a coin toss.

The difference in these two levels of confidence has a huge impact on how you sail the second beat. When you are very confident about your strategy, don't waste any time after the leeward mark. Make a quick detour to get clear air, if necessary, but once you find a good lane head for the favored side as quickly as possible. It may even be worth staying in bad air to go that direction.

When you aren't so sure about

your strategy, be more conservative, at least initially. Your priorities at the start of the beat should be to get clear air first, watch where the other boats are going (so they don't get too far away from you), and keep an eye on the wind.

Of course, in order to sail the second beat effectively, you have to compromise between satisfaction and confidence. If you are leading the race, for example, you shouldn't sail all the way into the right corner by yourself, even if you are 99% sure about what the wind will do next. It would be much smarter (and safer) to position yourself on the right side of the fleet and then apply a loose cover. •



STIFFENING A CLASSIC DRAGON

Richard Rycroft describes the now legal process of adding floors to elderly Dragons

Almost all the various proposals for stiffening elderly Dragons, such as bulkheads, partial bulkheads, tubular chain plates and aluminium compression tubes from the chain plate area forward to the bottom of the furling gear, can be applied to Dragons of any form of construction.

None of these, however, addressed a structural weakness in the garboard area of classic wooden Dragons. In his article *Rebuilding a Wooden Dragon*, available as a download from the Classics page on the BDA website, Don Street suggested a simple solution which he had used very successfully on his 1937 Johanssen-built *Gypsy*.

The very flat forward sections of the Dragon cause the boat to slam when driving to windward in a chop. Where the boat takes the worst of the pounding, the ribs of a wooden Dragon stop short of the keelson and only one rib in three is attached to the keelson by a floor. This puts an enormous strain on the garboard plank and the seam between it and the keelson.

Don's solution was to laminate additional floors extending for about five plank widths up each side of the boat alongside the unsupported ribs, which he describes as "hanging out in the breeze", and then to bolt the additional floors to the keelson. The method was inspired by the great American designer and boat builder Nathaniel Herreshoff, who always insisted that there be a floor at every frame and that the floor and frame be tied together and tied into the fore keel, stem, deadwood and horn timber.

STIFFEN A GOOD WOODEN DRAGON AND STUFF THE GLASS BOATS...

says Don Street

THAT A GOOD 'turbo-charged' wooden Dragon, given a good three-man crew, is competitive was proved at the Jubilee Regatta where two wooden boats made it into the Gold Division.

White Lady FIN 48 came 19th, *Troika* GBR 348 was 32nd beating hundreds of glassfibre Dragons. Both these Pedersen and Thuesen boats have been professionally re-done to the highest standards and have had buckets of money thrown at them.

In contrast the oldest boat in the competition was the historic *Falner*, a 1936 Johanssen-built winner of the first Gold Cup in 1937. She was purchased in a very run-down state in April 1997 for £500, and was re-done by Donald M Street III in time to sail in the 60th anniversary of

the first Gold Cup.

The job was done on the cheap, by himself (sometimes he would draft in his younger brothers) in a abandoned warehouse.

Jane contributed a spare mast, and Mick Cotter lent him sails. At the end of the regatta, Mick said "Hell he did such a magnificent job on reviving *Falner*, the sails are a gift".

In local racing she has been very competitive. In light and moderate conditions she is just as fast as modern Petticrows (if everything is trimmed right). In heavy weather one large Irishman weighs the same as two skinny Streets.

Let's get some youth in the class - find old wooden Dragons, help out by giving or selling cheaply spars, sails and gear to the young person who is restoring.

The additional floors stiffened up the forward end of *Gypsy* so much that when the Irish helmsman Tony O'Gorman was sailing with Don, and they were slamming into a head sea, he said, "my God Don, you've stiffened her up so much forward she sounds like a glassfibre boat rather than a wooden one, when pounding on these waves."

Shortly after Don's article appeared on the BDA website, the IDA declared the additional floors to be illegal as the official constructional drawing of the wooden Dragon show a floor at every third frame. The decision was reversed at the IDA Annual General Meeting on October 30 2004 as the class rules only stipulate a minimum number of floors and no maximum.

The extra stiffening will probably not make your classic Dragon any faster and may even make her a smidgen slower in a chop, on account of the extra weight in the ends of the boat. It will, however, reduce maintenance in a crucial area of the boat and keep the old girl looking beautiful, as her fore ends should remain as fair as befits a class which has earned the accolade of the 'sailing man's Bugatti'.

Technical Tips

6 - Fleet Racing

WHEN YOU ARE sailing on Starboard tack, you do so simply because you wish to go in that direction of the course. My advice, when a boat is coming on Port and cannot cross, is to wave him through and if necessary ease the sheet and dip.

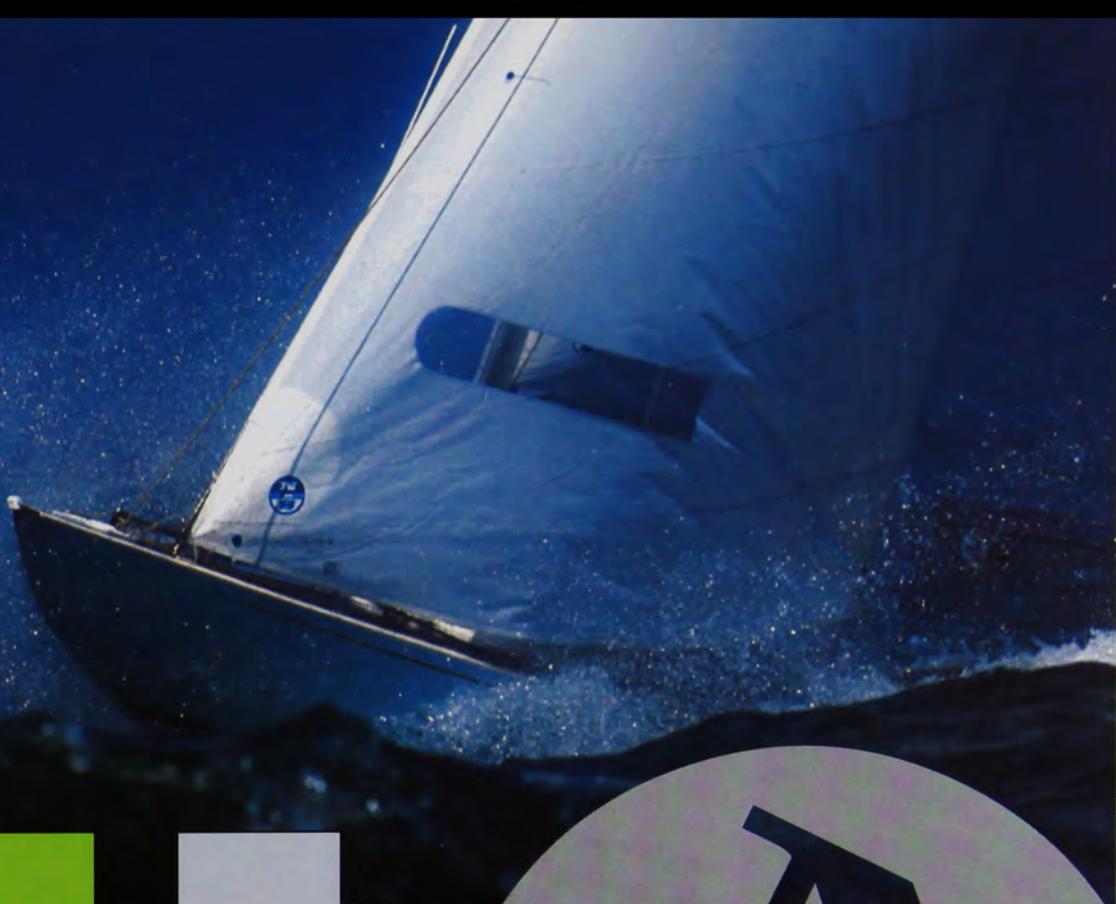
If he tacks, he will go into the same "favoured" direction, and will slow you down; possibly forcing you to tack, in a direction you did not want to go.

You will be surprised how many sailors get carried away with their rights and make this mistake on the racecourse.

Poul-Richard Hoj-Jensen



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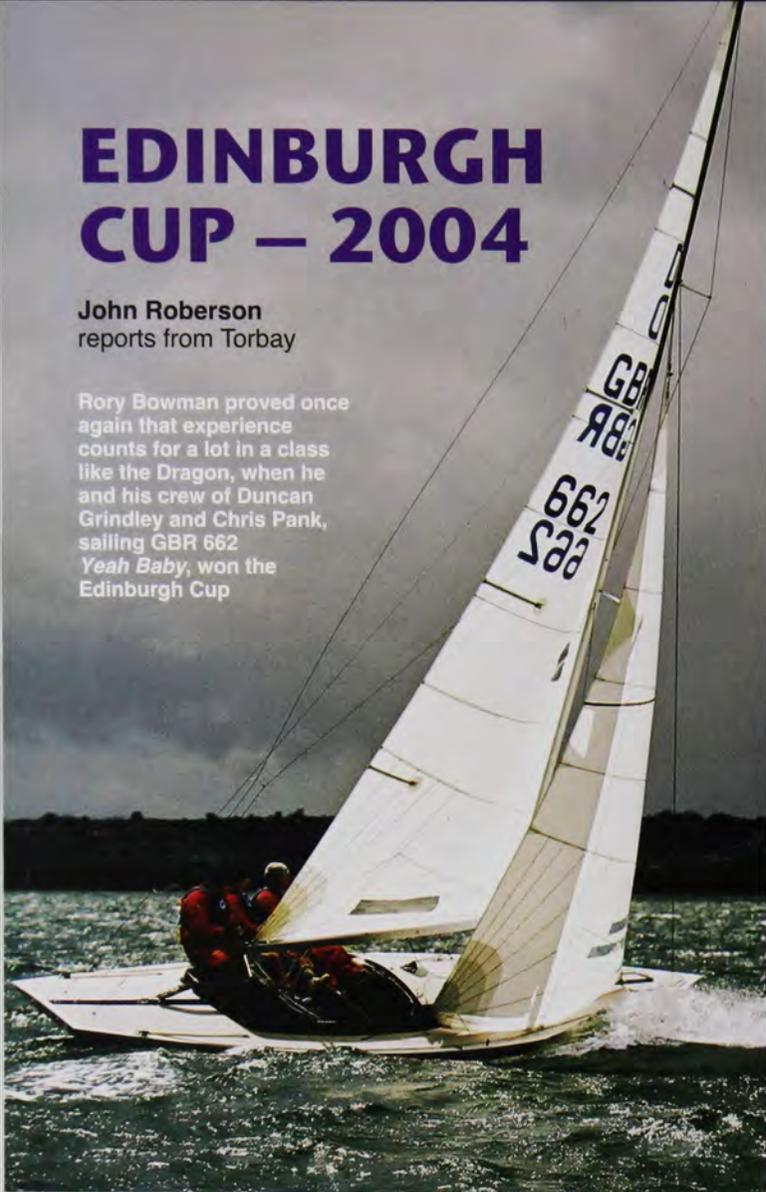
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EDINBURGH CUP – 2004

John Roberson
reports from Torbay

Rory Bowman proved once again that experience counts for a lot in a class like the Dragon, when he and his crew of Duncan Grindley and Chris Pank, sailing GBR 662 *Yeah Baby*, won the Edinburgh Cup



photographs by James Walker

Nigel Cole and crew working hard in
GBR 644 *Tsunami*



Competing against a fleet of 34 boats, Bowman chalked up two firsts, two seconds and a third place, discarding an eleventh, to take the Cup by a comfortable margin from Martin Payne sailing *Elusive*, with Richard Jordan sailing *Chaotic* taking third place after a strong last day.

This is the seventh time that Rory Bowman has engraved his name of the Edinburgh Cup since 1985, though he claims to have only won it six and a half times, having shared the trophy and the British title once. The *Yeah Baby* team normally sail out of Aldeburgh and their boat is a 2001 vintage total Peticrow package.

The defending champion, Bowman and his crew had failed to win any of

the major regattas earlier in the season, with Martin Payne, Julia Bailey, Paul Patenall and Rob Campbell all picking up trophies in various parts of the country. However, over the course of the six-race Edinburgh Cup series, hosted by the Royal Torbay Yacht Club, they proved to have good speed in a variety of conditions.

The first day of the series produced a 12 to 17 knot south easterly breeze, and moderate seas, which was a good test of boat speed. A whole day of racing was lost when south easterly gales swept across Torbay, and the breeze was still a challenging 20 to 25 knots on the third day, when two more races were sailed. On the fourth day the series was completed in light and

shifty winds of 8 to 10 knots.

In the two days preceding the Edinburgh Cup, the four-race South West Area Championship had been scheduled, but light and shifty winds only allowed one race to be completed, so the event was declared void.



Richard Jordan sailed *Chaotic* into third place overall



STRATEGY

Four rules of thumb for strategy on runs

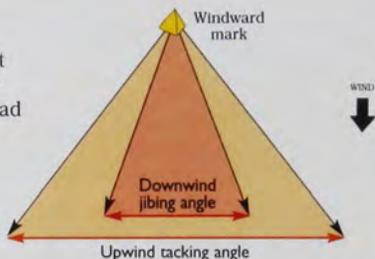


Not even the best sailors know which way to go on every downwind leg. When you're in the "same boat" and you aren't sure which side of the run is favored, it's helpful to have a few basic strategic principles that you can fall back on to keep yourself in the race. Here are four good rules of thumb that will work in almost any situation. Some of these are very similar to the strategies we have discussed for upwind legs. Others, however, are mirror images of what you would do on a beat!



1. Sail the longer jibe first.

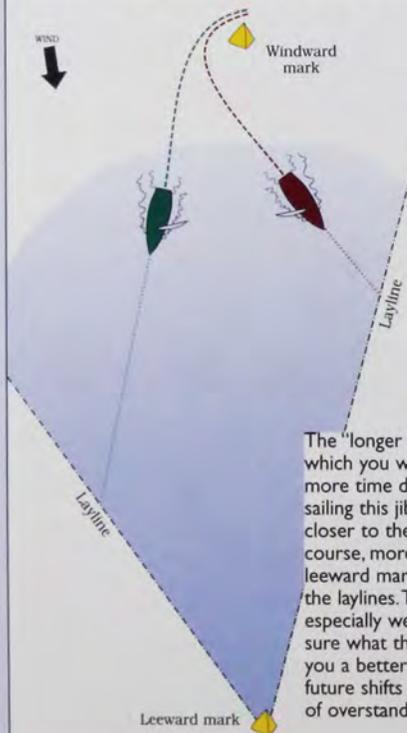
This rule of thumb is a great percentage move on beats, and it works well on runs, too, because it keeps you away from the laylines (below). Once you get to a layline you're at a strategic dead end; by staying closer to the middle of the course you have a better chance to take advantage of whatever windshift may come your way.



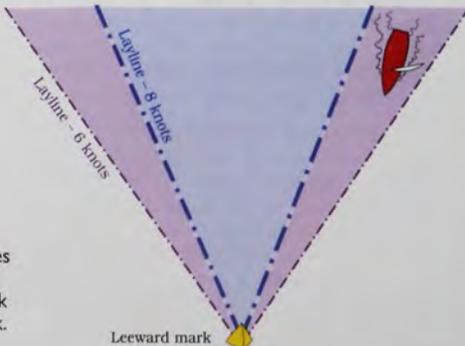
Why it's easy to overstand the leeward mark

There are two reasons why getting too far to the sides of the course is even more risky on a run than a beat. First, your jibing angle is usually much narrower than your tacking angle (above). When you have as few as 20° or 30° between jibes, it's easy to sail past the layline to the leeward mark.

Second, changes in wind velocity have a much greater effect on your jibing angle than on your tacking angle. In the example shown below, the red boat was sailing within the laylines in six knots of wind. When the wind increased to eight knots, however, she was able to sail much lower and thus found herself overstanding the leeward mark.

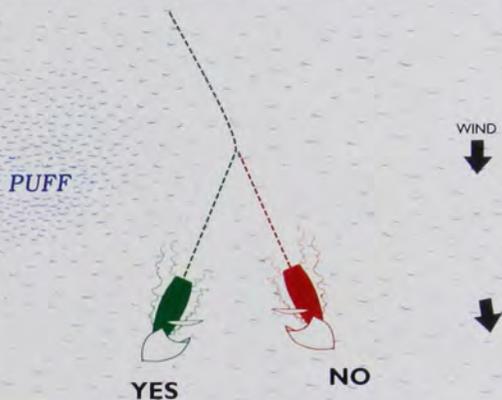


The "longer jibe" is the one on which you will have to spend more time during the run. By sailing this jibe first, you stay closer to the middle of the course, more upwind of the leeward mark and farther from the laylines. This strategy works especially well when you're not sure what the wind will do. It gives you a better chance of playing future shifts and reduces your risk of overstanding the leeward mark.



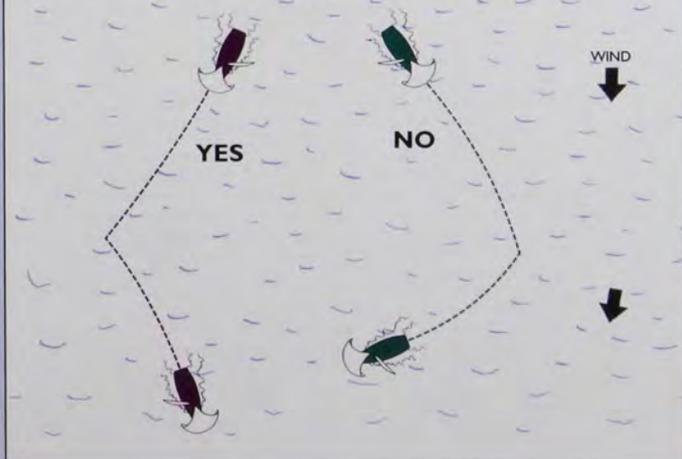
2. Sail for velocity before shifts.

It's almost always better to have more wind velocity when you're racing, and this is especially true downwind. On runs, a puff will give you better speed through the water, and it may also let you sail quite a bit lower. Increased wind velocity usually affects your angle much more on a run than on a beat. For this reason, puffs on runs are a lot like headers because they allow you to sail lower and closer to the leeward mark. That's why you should usually go for pressure first downwind, especially in lighter air.



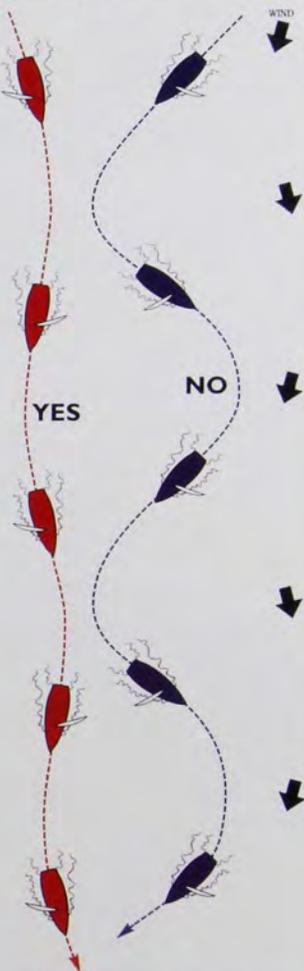
3. Sail away from the next shift.

On a beat you will almost always gain if you sail *toward* the next windshift because when the shift comes you will be on a higher "ladder rung." On a run, the opposite is true. You should sail away from the next shift (below) so you get to a *lower* ladder rung. Two times when you probably wouldn't want to sail away from a shift are when a) that shift brings more wind pressure; or b) that shift allows you to fetch the leeward mark.



4. Jibe on the lifts.

When you're sailing upwind, you should tack on the headers so you sail on the lifts. On runs, however, you want to jibe on the lifts so you sail on the headers. By staying on the headed jibe, you can sail lower and closer to the leeward mark. Also, jibing on lifts is consistent with rule of thumb #3 because you are sailing away from the next shift.



In the sequence shown here, the red boat jibes on the lifts while the blue boat jibes on the headers. You can see that the red boat sails much more directly toward the leeward mark.

ALDEBURGH

THIS YEAR HAS been one of additions to the fleet. Dusty Hughes has bought *Pongo* from Patrick Gifford and Mike Hayles. Simon Whittle has bought and re-furbished *Sirenia*, one of the original Anker and Jensen-built Dragons. *Pongo*, in particular has been seen regularly racing on the river and confidence is building. Unfortunately *Loki*, our star boat of many previous years, has been sold to go to France. She hadn't been seen out for several years, but there had been hope that she might be bought by someone local.

The highlight of the year was that we hosted a championship in the river for the first time. Admittedly it was the Classic Championship rather than the Edinburgh Cup, but it was a new experience. Dick Rycroft came from Burnham with *Logie*, aided and abetted by Bill Daniels who sadly didn't have time to bring *Mistress* from the late-running Cowes Week. What wasn't so new was the discovery that *Harkaway*, fastened together again for the occasion, remains a very fast classic boat. She easily won the event in Peter Wilson's hands. It must be that longer waterline length!

The regatta itself, which contained the Classics was won easily by Rory Bowman. In strong, sometimes very strong winds, remaining in one piece became critical. Both *Kraken* and *Hawkeye* failed this test, reducing the number of unsleeved masts at Aldeburgh by two. And Patrick and Mike thought they were being so seamanlike in taking down the spinnaker ahead of the nasty black cloud! An early challenge by *Navaho*, aided by guest star Andy Gilmour, faded later in the week under the impact of disputes about the rules and a near knockdown.

Otherwise the season at Aldeburgh has been quiet. However, there is hope for the future as more of the younger generation turn up in the boats either as crew or guest helmsmen. We have made plans to be more organised about both catching and then keeping them.

Away from home *Kraken* definitely wins the prize for most miles on motorways and ferries. Deauville was very civilised but not very competitive so *Kraken* won, whereas Tallinn was ultra-competitive and she didn't (least said...). In between she won the non-existent South West Championship (only one race sailed) and was the only British winner of a race at the Gold Cup in Falmouth. Rory, however, did much better by winning the Edinburgh Cup and being the best-placed British boat in the Gold Cup. He still remains the boat to beat. If you can do that at Aldeburgh, you have a good chance in any other competition.

Patrick Gifford

BURNHAM

MY BUMPER STICKER says "Dragons start early and keep going longer"... this year the season started on March 20th, followed by the Pete Matthews Memorial race, held over by bad weather at the end of last season, which was won by Woody in his new boat *Leah*. A four-race mini-series the next



Kraken, the only British winner of a race at the Gold Cup – photo Lee Whitehead

weekend with big winds and lots of damage, including a broken mast for *Avalanche*, meant we were all fully prepared (if a little battered) for our main annual event, the Easter Regatta.

A fleet of 23 boats, including visitors from Belgium, Medway and Cowes, had generally light winds over the regatta. This gave Race Officer Kim Allen a difficult task to get the races completed.

Rob Campbell in *Quicksilver*, crewed by Jonathan Hill and Matt Walker, proved that consistency in the testing light airs was the winning formula – with two firsts and three seconds he won the series and the Easter Bowl. Mark Wade's *Avalanche*, crewed by John Davies and Richard Elphinstone was second and Len Jones from Medway, with Philip Catmuir, and Jeremy Jordan in *Rumours* were third.

Again this year the Regatta has benefited from generous sponsorship – thanks to Bolle, Peticrows, Mailspeed, Musto, Cadburys, Allen Brothers, Forrester Hyde, and Rice & Cole.

In early May, the stalwarts of the Burnham fleet started their 'away' season and had good sailing again in Douarnenez. With 94 boats entered, Poul-Richard HJ (a Burnham Dragon sailor) took first, with next best Burnham boat being Mike Holmes in *Hand-of-Fortune* in 14th place.

At the well-organised East Coast Championship on the Medway, Rob Campbell took fifth and Mike Holmes sixth place. In June at the Edinburgh Cup the large Burnham contingent of nine boats only managed a best of 13th by *Avalanche* (Mark

Wade), and 14th *Tsunami* (Nigel Cole). The caravan moved on in July... to Falmouth for the Gold Cup where nine Burnham boats in a total fleet of 80 enjoyed excellent sailing.

Back on the river, the Clifford Cup match between Cowes and Burnham was sailed in Dragons this year with a convincing Burnham win. Rob Campbell, the Burnham Team Captain, accepted the impressive piece of silverware and Peter Morton, the Cowes Vice-Commodore, promised vengeance in The Solent next year.

Nigel Cole arranged the return of our good friends from Hamburg for the annual weekend of match racing and socialising, including a succulent hog-roast on the terrace. This event is a fantastic example of real sailing comradeship. In August, Sir Richard Rycroft in *Logie*, represented Burnham at the Classic Championship in Aldeburgh.

Burnham Week was well supported both on and off the water. One notable result was the Telegraph Cup, won by Roger Clarke in *Mithrandir* who sailed his own race and showed that the knowledge and tactics of the Burnham mafia are not always right. We had an excellent Pimms Party on the lawns of Creeksea Hall, followed by the Dragon Dinner at the club. Someone please give Daniel Wastnage the recipe for a bowl of Pimms – Daniel used vodka as the 'clear colourless liquid', rather than lemonade.

Ganador went to the Regatta Royale in Cannes and then joined the 15-boat Burnham Fleet at the 75th Anniversary Regatta in St Tropez. I am reliably informed that the RYC fleet was the biggest club and that the British the largest national contingent out of 267 boats.

Best Burnham boat was *Avalanche*, although the results didn't seem to figure much. Everyone seems to have thoroughly enjoyed the once in a lifetime experience and returned tired but happy and glad to be back to the balmy blue waters of Burnham.

While they were all away, three boats back in Burnham (*Hatrick*, *Logie* and the new *Amok*) enjoyed two weekends of gales and calm and some surprisingly low series points.

This year the fleet has travelled far and frequently which is absolutely fantastic. We have also had excellent local club racing which has just about been sustained while the travellers were eating their croissants. I do feel that we need to find ways of sustaining and hopefully developing the local club racing – we are always on the lookout for potential new owners and perhaps even more important, new crew. Next year we are going to do some promotion and have trial sailing for those who want to try the Dragon experience, but not in a race.

There are a number of people I would like to thank – in no particular order – our race officers Bruce Burnett, Edwin Buckley, Kim Allen and Paul Noonan supported by Roger (the Rib) Mant. Everyone in the fleet helps out but there are a few stalwarts who we should note including Woody and his team with the Easter Regatta, Matt Walker and his Crewsearch cohorts have done a great job for both owners and crew, Nigel Cole for the German visit, Yvonne Hall for entertaining the German spouses, Sue Shapiro for some

Dragons at Burnham Week
– photo by Hugh Bourn



excellent photography, Kate Cole for constant advice and lifting boats in and out, Toby and Roger for reports, calendars and websites, all of the house staff including Tony and Margaret and Barbara and Peter the launch-man, who has rescued me often.

And finally a bit of history – a local Burnham jeweller has just discovered a forgotten solid silver cup, the 'Peter Gimpel Trophy' for the Dragon Handicap Season's Points, last presented to *Flapjack* in 1976. I wonder if the Clanger has ever been inadvertently mislaid?

Clive Morgan

DUBLIN BAY

ALMOST THE ENTIRE Dublin Bay fleet turned out for a special Jubilee celebration race on Sunday September 5th to compete for what is now the most beautiful trophy in the Irish fleet's possession. Elder statesman John Finnegan, who owns the beautifully restored wooden Dragon *Jane*, presented an absolutely stunning solid silver wine cooler as a perpetual trophy to the Irish Fleet.

John found it in a Dublin antique shop and it is extraordinarily appropriate – made the same year as the Dragon was born, it has three handles to represent the three crew members, and all around the rim is the most intricate filigree of fire-breathing dragons. Who would win this magnificent trophy?

On what turned out to be the last glorious day of summer the crews were summoned by the admirable Fleet Admiral Clare Hogan (Cloud) to assemble at 12 noon for buck's fizz and brunch on the balcony of the Royal St George Yacht Club in Dun Laoghaire. Most of the crews dressed in 1930s period dress, a few of the older sailors simply having to pick something suitable from the back of the wardrobe.

At around 1430 the fleet assembled. Most boats were crewed by a minimum of five, and fuelled by champagne. The handicap

race was started off the bandstand inside the harbour by veteran Dragoner Harry Maguire, who was a competitor in the Dragon class at the 1960 Olympics. The Harbour Master had refused permission for a cannon to be fired as "it might cause someone walking the pier to have a heart attack" so Harry had to make do with a hooter!

It was a spinnaker run to the corner of the East Pier and Mick Cotter's crew of six – who included Simon 'asylum seeker' Brien (third spinnaker hand) and Davy Gomes (second spinnaker hand and friend of the Princess Royal – dressed in plus fours and tweed shooting jacket) lost no time in cheating by raising TWO spinnakers at once! First around the harbour wall into the foul flood tide was John Finnegan, but he must have realised how embarrassing it would be to win his own cup because he allowed Fintan Cairns and 'Burdie' to direct him towards the shore where there was no wind, and soon fell back into a respectable 14th position.

Diva had the distinction of having the youngest crew member on board – Master Max Goodbody age one year two months and five days will no doubt be the only living survivor of this race when the Dragon sesquicentenary is held in 75 years time.

As the fleet came abeam the naturist swimmers in 'the snotgreen scrotumtightening sea' off James Joyce's Tower, IDA officer Andrew Craig took over at the front, and the last of the flood shunted him around Island mark into an unassailable lead. The rest of the fleet trailed back into the ebbing tide, all standing out to sea where the breeze held on. *Summer Wine* (the Kidney clan, Dave Nolan et al) and *Sir Ossis of the River* (Denis Bergin, Tim Pearson) however, seemed to have some special local knowledge and headed for the shore to cheat the tide... and were much later towed in by a RIB, about an hour after everyone else had finished.

Admiral Clare Hogan's crew of guest celebrities mutinied just before the finish line and jumped overboard – apparently Clare had promised them prizes which it did not seem likely they would collect, having finished in 10th place. The tension was high – nobody knew the handicaps except Andrew Craig who had placed them in sealed envelopes before the race. Andrew presented IDA coasters to each skipper and finally announced that it was Sean Billings in *Rebel* (the only woodener in the fleet) who walked away a worthy and popular winner.

John Finnegan and the Fleet were very keen that the Cup should have a built-in longevity, and so, rather than have an annual 'fun' race which might not be held every year it was decided that after this inaugural year, the Cup will be awarded at the Irish Nationals to the Irish boat with the lowest score from the last two races in the series.

There are Irish Dragon fleets in Dublin Bay, Kinsale, Glandore and Lough Ree.

Tim Pearson

More information is available at www.dublinbaydragons.org or contact National Secretary Tim Pearson at timpearson@eircom.net

FALMOUTH

AS USUAL THE sailing season started slowly and again Mylor YC hosted class racing on Friday evenings. *Quartet* – a glassfibre Borresen – joined the fleet and with an experienced crew soon showed pace. *Quicksilver* went to Torbay helmed by Eddy Shelton and had mixed fortunes at the Edinburgh Cup. Their experience helped with some of the fine tuning of Gold Cup organization.

The J P Morgan Fleming Gold Cup went well and when the last visiting Dragon left we felt 'job well done'. Tim Dewhurst's *Quartet*, helmed by Gary Watson, proved the fastest

local boat with some scary performances against the top class competition. In fact they were included in the Nations Cup. *Rainbow* and *Quicksilver* were the next Falmouth boats.

Falmouth Week had to be an anticlimax, understandably without visitors. However, it was well contested in demanding conditions. *Rainbow* got revenge on *Quartet*!

I am now handing over to Tim Dewhurst and Mike Caudry – the fastest and the newest. I hope, with their enthusiasm, the next ten years of Dragon racing in Falmouth will exceed the last.

Peter Flutter

LOWESTOFT

THE SEASON GOT off to a good start with two new Dragons. Peter and Helen Stokes and family went to Switzerland and came back with *Gitanes*. Then Annie Smith and Peter Johnson acquired *Scaramonger*, so that we have had seven or eight Dragons racing at Lowestoft.

The weather has not been as kind this year on the lighter crews and so Peter Colby (xy stone) won most of the cup events and even when he lent the yacht to other heavy helmsmen, his Dragon *T'ai lun* still won the cup races.

In the lighter weather, racing has been very competitive with the new owners doing very well.

The June Regatta was again won by Rob Campbell. Well done Rob, but how does he manage to show us the way round our own waters for at least the third year running?

We are hoping to have another Dragon at the club next year. Jimmy Tubby (former Squib and 707 National Champion) and Nick Faulkner (Commodore RNSYC) have teamed up to buy *Merlin*, so racing will be even more competitive.

Most of the fleet have or are fitting 12v bilge pumps this winter in readiness for the next season's big events. This will make the crews job much much easier – what with a winch-free, pump-free life, Taktic compasses and boom braces – they have never had it so good. The drinks are on us, Skipper!

In 2005 the Lowestoft Fleet is looking forward to staging the East Coast Championship on Saturday May 28th and Sunday May 29th, followed immediately by the Edinburgh Cup from Monday May 30th to Saturday June 4th. More details elsewhere.

Our June Regatta follows the next weekend June 11th and 12th, and you are welcome to leave your Dragon at the Royal Norfolk & Suffolk YC for this event.

The Annual Fleet Prize Giving Dinner will be held at the club on Saturday January 8th 2005 – contact PVP

Peter Park

MEDWAY

THE 2004 SEASON could also be titled "Who was in charge of the switch?" It seemed like whoever it was, the wind was

either on or off. However, we had another good sailing season on our big river, only one race early in the season was abandoned due to lack of wind. This year, we had up to 16 boats on the start line for Saturday afternoon racing, which is a very good turnout considering that we had 18 Dragons on our moorings.

Early in the year, we hosted the East Coast Championship for the first time, more about the event in a separate report.

The Medway fleet has a number of young sailors coming into Dragon sailing and they are learning quickly. We thought we would not have to battle with GBR 677 *Chouette* when Len Jones went big-boat-sailing. But then co-owner Nick Jenkins started winning races as well and to add to the tally they asked Jono Ratnage to sail the boat – he proceeded to add another first to the list.

The other young helmsman we saw a number of times was Ian McMillan in GBR 580 *Esoteric* – he won the Commodore's Cup and the Myrtle Cortell Trophy. Ian also travelled a bit this year, he crewed in Falmouth and St. Tropez. Whereas Jono supported Irish Dragon *Fascal Rat* in Torquay, the *Chaotic* team during Cowes Week and USA 310 in St. Tropez.

In June, we saw the long awaited re-launch of Richard Green's Classic GBR 39 *Aurora*, in time to practise a bit on the river before he went to the Gold Cup and the Anniversary regatta. Richard and Anne have now moved to the Isle of Wight. Good luck on the South Island, Richard!

In 2004, more Medway sailors went out on their events: Owen Pay travelled on the circuit to all events mentioned hereafter with Barbara Dann's GBR 653 *Njord*. Simon Winn and Pat Fysh with GBR 654 *Beowulf* went to the South West for the Championship and the Edinburgh Cup in Torquay. Also in Torquay were some of us to spectate and crew: Mike Gagg, Jono Ratnage and the Gallos. From there, Simon and Pat as well as Owen, Josy and Ben went on to Falmouth for the Gold Cup, where they were joined by Richard Green and the Gallos with their boats. Len Jones went to and won Cowes Week, the other Medway Dragon there was GBR 643 *Tucano* with the Coltart family. GBR683 *BBC* (Philip Clarabut, Bruce Boyd and Peter Booth) went to the Belgian Open and the Swiss championships. The long journey to St. Tropez was braved by four Medway boats: *Aurora*, *Esoteric*, *Luna* and *Njord*. Not forgetting *Blue Movie*: Bruce and Pepita brought their RIB down to watch us race.

New people on the Medway include Richard Jones who supported GBR 591 *Tia*, the Ridsdill-Smiths and other Dragons. Richard is very keen to build up experience in Dragons before he buys his own soon.

On the trophy side, Len Jones and Nick Jenkins in *Chouette* won the season overall, Hilary and Ina Gallo in GBR 646 *Luna* came second, Robin Ridsdill-Smith in *Tia* came third. The Medway Regatta was successfully defended by the Sowrys in GBR 650 *Scimitar* – they had a very knowledgeable Medway crew in Sam Gray. Team *BBC* won the Kittiwake Cup for the best results over the weekend races.

And finally: mud, mud, glorious mud.

During the year we had a few interesting groundings. First to sample the mud this year was James Mehew during the first day of the East Coast Championship – even though he brought his echo sounder. Other interesting mudbaths include the Sowrys and Len Jones during the last day of the Medway Regatta – jumping in quickly and pushing off swiftly paid off for Julian. Finally our Class Captain, Rob Sheppard went aground within sight of the club finish line, jumped in, pushed the boat off and Claire, his wife, sailed away, leaving Robert behind.

We are looking forward to the 2005 season and anyone who fancies a visit to our big river would be very welcome at any time. Crews, helmspersons and boats are all welcome. One of our members refers to the Medway Yacht Club as one of "Kent's best kept secrets" but we really are easy to get to from London and the South East – 15 minutes down the A2 from the M25. For next year, we'd recommend the Medway Regatta between July 13th and 17th.

Ina Gallo

THE SOLENT DIVISION

(supported by Wightlink)

THE SOLENT SEASON got off to a light airs start with the first weekend, April 24th-25th, run by the Island SC. Saturday was cancelled due to a lack of wind but on Sunday a marker was put down by Miss Gavia Wilkinson-Cox the fox, who won the first race of the season in *Jerboa*. Gavia sailed a superb race and even Martine in the middle calling shots couldn't put a dampener on her day.

The following, May Bank Holiday, weekend we raced for the New Jubilee Cup presented by the extremely generous yet slightly ugly looking owners of *Stamperde*. This was a five-race series run in excellent fashion by the Cowes Corinthian YC, who also ran a superb party on Saturday evening. Eleven boats came to the line and honours went to team *Aimee* (Julia and Graham Bailey with H in the engine room). Second place went to *Caramba* (Chris Brittain) and third to *Apalala* (Chris Caws and team). Thanks to *Meteor* and the Jacobsen family for travelling down from Scotland to take part. I hope we see a few more visitors next year from a bit closer to home.

The first half of the season was highly frustrating with much racing lost to no wind. However, team ugly in *Stamperde* came through to take the Spring Series, closely followed by *Caramba* and *Aimee*. Positions were reversed for the Mid-Season Series with *Caramba* taking the honours followed by *Stamperde* and *Apalala*.

At this stage of the season some members of the Solent division went off on their travels. First it was the East Coast Championship on the Medway, which was won by *Aimee*, Jules on the stick, Graham looking at the stick and H taking a lot of stick. A text message received by Graham on the evening before the final day was good news and showed their intentions – 'one race to go, four bottles of red down, we have this in the bag' – class in a glass!



reckon. Then off to the Edinburgh Cup, Richard Jordan and team good looking placed third overall and won the last race; Jules was again up there in fourth overall and won race 5 – great stuff from the Solent Division.

For the Summer Series leading up to Cowes Week we had a few people back from their travels and numbers were better – there were frequent weekends where 27 Dragons hit the line and Chris Dicker was nowhere in sight! This was again won by *Caramba* (Chris, Gillian and various crew), followed by *Apalala*, Chris Caws benefiting from regular crew, and in third place the slightly ageing members of the fleet on board *Stampede*.

Cowes Week took place this year a week later than normal so that the week could be sailed over neap tides. The jury is still out on this one as it meant sailing most days around the Solent at low tide, with short tacking up the Green particularly interesting, and rocks found that no one knew existed. Twenty-eight Dragons came to the line including an impressive number of visitors – probably one of the most competitive fleets assembled in recent years. Varied weather included some days spent struggling against the tide in very light airs and another day finishing in over 30 knots.

The week was won by visitor Len Jones with Philip in the middle and Martine Stavros Porn Star helping in all departments. They were followed just one point behind by the ever-reliable Solent expert Eric Williams, with newcomer David Palmer finishing in third place – an excellent result for someone so new to Dragons – with the hot crew David has now organised we expect great things in the future. *Virago* (Peter Nicholson), and the permanently drunk chaps in *Stampede* took fourth and fifth respectively.

The Solent fleet had their usual excellent party on the Thursday with a slight change to the catering arrangements this year as they had roast piglet, after Littlelegs, our secretary, had managed to catch it. Over 250 people came through the door to party

into the small hours with the band Sky Bus.

Cowes Week is a superb regatta, one of the best round-the-cans events in the world and certainly one of the most challenging. Make no mistake, to win it is an achievement – Len Jones and team did so in style – well done guys.

A fantastic time was had by all who made it to Dublin at the Royal St George, competing for the Cannon Ball Team Racing trophy against two teams from Dublin Bay, one team from Cowes and one team from the Royal Muiden YC. There was too much wind on Sunday to finish off the series but the Royal St George A team were uncatchable so won the event. The Cowes team did take on the Irish boys in Foxes pub, allegedly the highest pub in Ireland for a liquid lunch on Sunday afternoon where we won the drinking series 157 pints to 7. Thanks to Peter Bowring for an excellent organising job.

The South Coasts was unfortunately lost due to lack of wind but *Aimee* won the only race that we managed to complete. This was followed by the Autumn Series which was won by *Excalibur* (Paul Patenall helped out by Lisa and Roger Guy), in second place was the ever enthusiastic and improving Gavia Wilkinson-Cox the fox, her lay lines improving with every race, followed in third by *Caramba*.

The SCRA medal for the Season was taken by *Caramba*, sailed by Chris Brittain and Gillian and helped on by Noddy and various others. The Class Championship was won by those elderly lads in *Stampede* – Neil Payne, Dave Ross, Steve Richardson and Doctor Jon. Congratulations, a very good performance from them, clearly a team at the pinnacle of their sport.

A thought to leave you all with is that there have been many good events on in the UK this year, including a well-organised Gold Cup in Falmouth and of course the Jubilee event in St Tropez which we have all enjoyed. With so much to focus on elsewhere, our local racing has been affected and numbers are down, particularly

with people leaving the Island for the East Coasts and deciding not to come back until after the Gold Cup.

We need to look at how we can structure our domestic events so as to not affect the local fleets – as they are the backbone of Dragon sailing. I don't profess to know the answer but we do need to be thinking about structuring events to encourage our local fleets and should start the debate.

Neil Payne, Solent Fleet Captain
Matt Armstrong, Hon Sec, 'Sex up' Editor
for the above and spell checker

TORBAY

THE TORBAY FLEET welcomed two new recruits in 2004. Roger Jobson and his boat *Snapdragon* and Martin Parry with *Humoresque* (GBR 588). We are pleased to welcome both new boats – Martin's claim to fame in Dragons of course is winning the Edinburgh Cup, the Europeans and the Olympic trials to come fourth in the Olympics when the Dragon was an Olympic Class.

The Torbay fleet opened the season in Plymouth over the Easter weekend for a seven-race series organised by David Jephcott and the Royal Western YC. This was an excellent pre-season warm-up regatta joined by boats from Lowestoft and the Solent. Knight Frank generously sponsored the Easter Regatta and were so impressed with the success that they have agreed to sponsor the regatta again in 2005 with an increased budget.

Excalibur, helmed by Paul Patenall with Martin Payne and Will Nesbitt took overall honours, followed closely by *Temeraire*, helmed by Alan Bulmer, with Ninx Bulmer and Mark Heseltine, and then *Jerboa*, with Gavia Wilkinson-Cox and Jo Richardson third.

This means that there is a regatta at Easter in both the East at Burnham and the South West at Plymouth. So I would encourage those Dragons in The Solent to

FLEET REPORTS



Sandy Ellis sailing GBR 422 *Heuschrecke* at the Edinburgh Cup in Torbay – photo by James Walker

take to Plymouth for a great start to the season. Following the same successful format there will be a training weekend to follow.

Not only was this an initiative to introduce Dragons to Plymouth but also for Plymouth to show itself off as having excellent sailing waters for keelboats. There is however, a wider objective which is to promote more interaction between the fleets in the South West. There is no reason why the fleets in Torbay and Falmouth cannot, with the Dragons based at Dartmouth and Plymouth, encourage this initiative to swell the numbers and size of the class in this part of the world.

On the domestic front during the remainder of the season, racing was dominated by Sandy Ellis' *Heuschrecke*, with *Humoresque*, *Snadragon* and the refurbished *Pendragon*, sailed by Colin Peters, keeping him on his mettle. *Heuschrecke* won most of the trophies although *Humoresque* won the Herald Express championship week-end.

The Torbay Fleet and the Royal Torbay YC were honoured to host so many boats at the Edinburgh Cup which was well attended bearing in mind the number of Dragon regattas taking place in this 75th Anniversary year. Unfortunately the weather was not in the mood to celebrate being too

light to run the South West Championship and too strong to make the Edinburgh Cup an easy event. But congratulations to Rory Bowman and his team of Duncan Grindley and Chris Panks in *Yeah Baby* for winning the Edinburgh Cup, and to Martin Payne and Ivan Bradbury in *Elusive* for coming second and Richard Jordan, Matthew Armstrong and Jeremy Field for coming third in their last big regatta in *Chaotic*.

For Torbay Royal Regatta, two Torbay members with Cowes-based Dragons, Richard Cullen, crewed by Lisa Guy and alternately by John Tilbrook and Simon Howard in *Supremacy* and Gavia Wilkinson-Cox crewed by Mark Hart and Roger Guy, in *Jerboa* joined the fleet. Again the weather was less than kind for the event, blowing 25 knots on the first day. Fortunately the wind came predominantly from the north-north-west and the sea state did not reflect the wind strength so the race officer enabled all the races to be completed successfully.

Jerboa, won five out of six races to take the bulk of the awesome array of fine trophies, with *Heuschrecke*, the Pedersen & Theusen rocketship, sailed by Sandy Ellis and his son Pete and Jim White, second and *Supremacy* third.

Can I finish by reflecting on the fact that after such a busy anniversary year, many Dragon sailors may hanker after less travelling abroad and if you do, you will be welcomed by the Royal Western Yacht Club on March 25th-28th 2005 for the Easter Regatta and on August 27th-29th 2005 for the Torbay Royal Regatta.

Paul Patenall

Technical Tips

1. PREPARE YOUR BOAT

Check:

- shackles, runners and blocks
- bilges are clear of debris
- you have a good towline in addition to anchor warp
- lifejackets

2. SETTINGS

Set to be easy and fast

Heavy weather helm shows the boat is overpowered and slow

- depower the rig by flattening the mainsail with the mast ram
- raise genoa barber
- use the backstay to open mainsail leach

7 - Heavy Weather

3. TECHNIQUES Upwind:

- ease the main before tacking
- use the waves to help pull the bow round in the tack
- allow extra at the lay lines to avoid tacks and to ease off for greater speed

Downwind:

- running slightly by the lee is fast and allows you to use the waves... but take care and practise first!
- gybe when speed is maxed
- ease the kicker before the gybe, in flat water
- flatten spinnaker by sheeting in and pulling in barber to stop rolling

Eric Williams



See more East Coast Dragon photographs on my website at:

www.photosail.co.uk

photography by
Hugh Bourn

For Medway photographs contact Mike Spurgin on 01474 814352 email: tamikes@hotmail.com

EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP – Estonia

Michael Gifford, Ian Armstrong and I travelled to Estonia for the 2004 European Championship, together with Ron and Julia James, Jay Bourke and Martin Payne. For anyone contemplating trailing across Europe in this direction, there are some lessons. It is an easy two-day drive to Stockholm (site of next year's Gold Cup), spending the night in the Malmo/Copenhagen area. You can indeed return in 19 hours to the Hook if you drive overnight through Germany as we did. Don't attempt to travel any distance on the south side of the Eastern Baltic. The roads are bad and it is a long way round to avoid the Russian enclave at Kaliningrad. Ferries are plentiful in this area even if some of them are more like luxurious booze cruises than a means of getting anywhere quickly.

In Tallinn we were at the 1980 Olympic site at Pirit. This has been extensively re-furnished, though it still boasts the Olympic rings and a holder for the flame. The Kalev YC were excellent hosts and Tallinn itself is a splendid compact city whose centre has now been completely renovated. Ian had last been there at the 1991 dissolution of the Soviet Union and found it almost unrecognisable.

There were 36 entries for the championship, drawn from 11 countries. The mixture was different from that we normally see. There was strong local representation from Russia, Estonia, Finland, Sweden and Latvia; including several beautifully restored wooden boats, which had been worked on by the local yard in Estonia who have built an international reputation here. A few years ago one could assume that Eastern European boats were unlikely to be competitive. It is now clear that they can afford state-of-the-art equipment and that the Dragon has attracted a number of fast sailors.

The conditions for the racing were influenced by the fact that the ferry lane into Tallinn bisects the bay. As a result the courses had to be laid closer to the shore than was ideal, exacerbated by the fact

that the wind was offshore all week. We raced mostly in light to medium winds with the occasional stronger puff in the first race. It was rather like sailing on a lake with considerable shiftiness both in wind direction and speed. Boat speed became critical (may be it always is) since everybody was dumped at some point either by a shift or a lull and the speed to recover was essential.

The results broadly followed the form book, in so far as we knew it. Harm Muller-Spreer, crewed by Vincent Hoesch, ultimately won from Frank Berg after a match racing contest in the last race. Both had to count this since they were already carrying earlier disqualifications for premature starts. Harm was always in control of Frank and must have felt very relaxed in second place at the start of the last beat only to see Werner Fritz pick up a 50 degree lift which dumped the two leaders

and put Werner close to the overall lead. Fortunately for Harm, insufficient other boats got ahead of him so that his final 10th place was enough to win overall.

Each race had a different winner, Fred Imhoff, Alexei Krylov, Muller-Spreer, Vadim Statcenko, Guus de Groot and Werner Fritz. Fred appreciated the IJsselmeer-like conditions of the first race, but they never re-appeared. The two Russian race winners scored convincing wins under pressure from others better known on the Western-oriented circuit. Of the Anglo-Irish visitors Jay did best in 11th place having looked as though he could be improving in the middle of the event into serious contention. We seemed to be lacking in boat speed so that we never managed to capitalise on good potential positions. Ron and Julia never really seemed to get going.

It was a very friendly regatta, confirming that the smaller, but very competitive, fleets can often provide the closest racing. It also showed how much progress the Dragon has made in establishing itself in Eastern Europe.

Patrick Gifford

...strong local representation
from Russia, Estonia, Finland,
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EAST COAST CHAMPIONSHIP on the Medway



GBR 684 *Hand of Fortune* ahead of GBR 660 *Aimee*
– photo by Mike Spurgin

For the East Coast Championship, at the end of May, we had 31 entries – one withdrew – so we had 30 boats on the start line. This included 16 visitors, most of them first-time visitors to our big river.

The regatta started with a party on Friday night at the Medway YC. MDL Chatham Maritime Marina, the main sponsor of the event, craned the visiting boats in and then invited everyone to welcome drinks on the other side of the river in the club house, where they also enjoyed a curry buffet.

On Saturday a south-easterly was blowing so Race Officer Lesley Brooman set the course for the first race in Kethole Reach. Rory Bowman in GBR 662 *Yeah Baby* from Aldeburgh YC finished first, followed by GBR 681 *Kraken* with Mike Hayles, also Aldeburgh, and Mike Holmes from the Royal Corinthian YC in Burnham in GBR 684 *Hand of Fortune*. The second race, with the course was moved into Long Reach, was won by Mike Holmes, second came the Baileys in GBR 660 *Aimee*, third was Medway boat GBR 677 *Chouette* with Len Jones and Nick Jenkins.

A hog-roast in Jasper's timber framed barn provided a great evening in historic surroundings. Outside was Richard Green's *Aurora*, her restoration was not quite finished in time for the event. We ate the whole pig and drank lots of beer and wine (again). Local chandlery Pirate's Cave gave a pair

of gloves for the foredeck crew of a boat finishing outside the podium places for each of the five races. Three pairs of Dragon sunglasses were also donated – these were raffled each day.

On the second day, in a light westerly, experienced river-sailor Ricky Gillingham from Aldeburgh won the first race in GBR 664 *Navaho*. Second was Woody in his new boat GBR 696 *Leah*, leaving GBR 617 *Flame Again* with David Hall in third place. Rory, Duncan and Chris won the second race of the day in *Yeah Baby*. Julia Bailey came second and Nigel Cole from the Royal Corinthian YC Burnham in GBR 644 *Tsunami* sailed over the line as third.

The Championship Dinner was one of the biggest ever held at the Medway YC and required a marquee attached to the club house. The highlight of the evening were the speakers: the Pirate and the Admiral. Martin Payne and David Dale were on form but we'll let you guess which was which character.

On Monday morning Lesley Brooman wanted to get a "short and sharp fifth race" in before the wind went completely. It meant that the support RIBs had to tow the Dragons to Long Reach, where we had a bit of breeze. Just at that point, the crew of GBR 576 *Excalibur* were letting themselves in to the Library to pick up their sails after a leisurely breakfast. They finally thumbed a tow off a cruiser and made it to the race area just in time for the start.

The wind held and Rory Bowman won the final race, Julia, Graham and "H" came second and after the late start, Martin Payne in Paul Patenall's *Excalibur* got a third.

The prize giving took place on Monday afternoon in glorious sunshine. The results were close – Julia Bailey won by one point. Rory Bowman, winner of three races, was second. Third was GBR 679 *Avalanche* with Mark Wade and crew, who proved that consistency really pays: they had a series of fourth and fifth places to count.

The event was very fair and we only had two protests. According to jury chairman Rob Owens this was partly due to the presence of two judges on the water who observed the mark roundings very closely.

It was fantastic to have the support of the whole of the Medway YC, in fact one participant felt "that the whole club has entered into the spirit of this event." Most of the visitors said they'd definitely be back in 2007. This is the greatest compliment we could receive and we look forward to welcoming you all again.

Hilary and Ina Gallo

Technical Tips

8 – The Run and Bearaway Set

THE RUN IS NOT a time to switch off, relax and get your energy ready for the next beat. It is another leg of the course where there is opportunity to overtake the boats that are in front of you.

You need to be thinking about the run on the approach to the windward mark. Look at which gybe will take you closer to the leeward marks and make a clear call to the crew as to what the plan is as you round the spreader mark.

The bear away set is the most common call, mainly because if you gybe at the spreader mark, you will be

sailing in the lee of all the boats sailing across the spreader leg – in light winds this is not a good move.

If the bear away call is made, you need a pair of eyes looking back asap after rounding, to call to the helmsperson if you are in clear air, and what to do about it if you are being covered.

In the moment after rounding the spreader mark there will be much jostling for position. It is here that you can suddenly be engulfed by boats taking your wind – before you know it you could have lost four or five places.

Therefore you need to be most alert at keeping a clear lane. The person looking back, normally the front man/woman, sitting or standing at the mast, needs to evaluate whether to go high with the fleet in order to keep clear air, or to sail low and sacrifice a few places to keep clear air.

Jamie Lea

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Technical Tips

9 – Trim Tactics

SETTING UP OF MAST:

The runners on a Dragon these days are more or less working as a backstay. The reason for this is, the jumper wire is shorter, the jumper angle is further back and the mast ram has made an effective impact on bending the mast.

This is what I do, when I set the mast up:

1. Put the forestay up in 121
2. Put 20 on the uppers and 5 on the lowers with the Loos tension gauge
3. Put the tension gauge on the forestay
4. Pull on the starboard runners, until the tension on forestay shows 30
5. Mark the through deck position of runners with tape
6. Do the same exercise on the port side

Now, I am sure I have the same runner tension on port and starboard. As a check, when pulling the runners just tight, you should have a measurement of 15cm from the tape mark to the deck.

When sailing in light conditions, I have 15cm from the tape to deck; in medium conditions 8cm; and when it blows hard, the tape is at deck level. Try it, it works

Poul-Richard Hoj-Jensen

EUROPEAN AND WORLD SELECTION PROCEDURES

1. Based on 2004 fleet numbers, the UK is entitled to select 12 boats although certain extra places can be granted at the discretion of the IDA to the home fleet if there is space (Note -this may help for the Cowes Europeans in 2006).
2. Selection will be based on the helmsman's performance.
3. All applying helmsmen must be members of the BDA.
4. Selection will be based on the three best results achieved by the helmsman in the following regattas:
 - a) Edinburgh Cup in the year preceding the application;
 - b) Edinburgh Cup in the year in which the application is made; and
 - c) South Coast and East Coast Championship each of the year in which application is made and . up to one other championship in such year designated by the BDA officers by the AGM in such year.
5. Of the available places, three will be awarded at the sole discretion of the BDA officers. The remainder will be awarded to the first nine applicants, as calculated from the helmsman's qualifying regatta results added on the low points scoring System per the ISAF Rulebook. The ranking will be calculated from results ignoring any non BDA members and helmsmen who have qualified through another route. Those not attending a regatta will be ranked in that regatta as one more than the number of other BDA member helmsmen not otherwise qualified or if

more 21.

6. Any helmsman wishing to be considered for selection must notify the the BDA Officers of his or her wish in writing, . not later than 30th September in the year preceding that of the relevant European or World championship, subject to paragraph 8 below.
7. The BDA will notify, in writing, all applicants for places not later than 31st October in the year preceding the relevant championship, subject to paragraph 8 below.
8. Where a Championship for which selection is required to commence between 1st January and 31st March, the deadline for notification of intention to attend must be submitted, in writing, by 31st May in the preceding year (as per paragraph 3 above) and the BDA's allocation of places will be notified, in writing, not later than 30 June in the preceding year. The qualifying regattas from which results can be submitted will be such regional Championships as have been held by 30 June, together with the Edinburgh Cup of the year of application, and all qualifying regattas of the previous year.
9. If at the deadline for applications for selection the number of applicants fall short of the allocation available for the BDA, the BDA officers may, at their discretion, make further selections.
10. Note: it is possible to qualify on the international circuit too - details on the IDA website - and such places are additional to the national allocation.

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