

BRITISH DRAGON ASSOCIATION

Autumn Newsletter 1979.

October, 1979

European Championships - Ostend

I crewed on a Belgian Boat during the Championships and thoroughly enjoyed a hard, competitive and very well run week of racing. Only one thing spoilt the experience - every time I went ashore I was cornered and asked why there were no British boats competing. By the end of the week the excuse of the nearness of the meeting to the Edinburgh Cup and Gold Cup was beginning to sound rather thin - even to me!

The organisers were particularly upset as despite an official invitation and repeated written enquiries, they did not receive a single reply until exactly one week before the first gun and that was in the negative.

Four of the countries represented had to hold eliminating races as they were so well supported.

Final positions were:-

- 1st E.R. FRENCH of Holland in GRIFFIOEN
- 2nd ERKKI KOPONEN of Finland in WHITE LADY
- 3rd MARCUS W. GLAS of Germany in CHICHLI

John Mack.

"THE MARKET" by a well known Dragon Enthusiast

A personal comment I should like to make is that one sees Dragons advertised in Yachts & Yachting and elsewhere at asking prices which are, quite frankly, outrageous. Elderly boats in doubtful condition, with little in the way of gear, sails, or prospects are having price tags of well in excess of £1,000., sometimes as much as £2,000. Just because the price of a new G.R.P. Borresen is something over £10,000 it does not mean that a 1947 softwood McGruer with a twice broken mast and a rag bag of sails is worth £1,800 or even £1,000.

A boat of that description would need £1,000 or more carefully spent on good secondhand gear in order to be competitive at club level.

For the Class to flourish I feel that it is most important that these ludicrous prices should be resisted. A surprising number of younger people would be and are interested in buying boats, which can be made competitive at club level for much the same cost as a new Fireball or Wayfarer, but can easily be frightened off when silly money is asked for old boats.

I hope that B.D.A. members selling old boats will resist the temptation to try and jump on the band wagon, they will probably effect a quicker sale anyway.

NOTE: This contribution has been included as it is felt that it could well make a useful subject for discussion during the winter at the various Dragon functions!

B.D.A. Annual Dinner - 1980

Philip Tolhurst has advised that this function will be held at the Royal Thames Yacht Club on 11th January, 1980 - Ticket prices will be between £8 and £9 per head. Philip has asked us to mention that the Menu will be considerably improved on last year's effort and is at present in serious negotiation on the subject with the R.T.Y.C.

PINT POT AT THE BAR (Royal Forth Yacht Club, July, 1979.)

Overheard to Howard Piggot of Tasmania with the new British built boat -

'We'd love to meet your measurer old chap, just because you come from down under does that allow you to have your rudder on upside down?'

FORTH FLEET

The Forth has had a busy and successful season hosting both Edinburgh and Gold Cups under Race Officers Roger Miller and Kenneth Gumley. Could neither of them stand the pace of two weeks sailing we asked ourselves?

Not only were the British Fleets well represented at these occasions, but there were also a good number of European boats - two sailed by Australian crews and one Dragon from the U.S.

The number of entries, which showed that the Dragon is far from a dying breed has renewed local enthusiasm, and two new boats joined the fleet at the end of the fortnight. Robin and Lindsay Burley bought Tormoreren from Denmark, now renamed SNARK. Alan Marshall bought WARLORD I and is still looking for a new name for her. There is also an addition on the way in the shape of Blue Haze which has been bought by Sean MacLean, a newcomer to the class. This is very encouraging, especially for the Crews Union, regular crews now being at a premium the demands of the Union will know no bounds.

Kenny Dougall extensively damaged CRUSADER early on in the season by getting lost in the fog, he replaced her however by BLUE FLAME.

The other tragedy of the year occurred to one of our overseas visitors when Peter Stulken dropped a gallon bottle of whisky, part of his considerable loot from the Edinburgh Cup. This was not only a disaster for him but also for the Irish who were left with nasty splinters of glass in their tongues. K.L.G. managed to get through the whole season without breaking a mast and J.G. Manuel (who?) even put in an appearance - briefly, proving just what a cowboy he is by sailing in a stetson.

presumably Hamish McKenzie

MEDWAY FLEET

The Medway were invited this year to take part in the Benelux Championship at Ostend, over two weekends in August. We sent two different crews each week end, and the Belgians supplied the boats.

I am still not sure if it was supposed to be a form of three cornered team racing, or a three for all, but the social life was superb and I suspect we all crawled into work very much the worse for wear on the Monday mornings. I know that I did.

Fleet News

Ted Vidler has ordered a new complete hull and deck from Borresen, which he will rig himself in time for next season. Ted said it is quite reasonably priced. Perhaps Borresen is mellowing in his old age.

Peter Sarant has just rejoined us in Mustang from his old base at Cowes. Welcome back Peter.

John Martin has now completed two races with us in the new English built St. George Dragon STORM. Good luck!

Ken Watson has put TARA up for sale. I hope he changes his mind.

We hope that by next season our numbers will be swelled by the following:

John Haig in VARNA

Roger Lancaster in BLYTH

Owen Cracknel - the boat is a mystery.

John Mack

ALDEBURGH DRAGONS

Another quiet season. Neither FREYA nor JAVELIN fitted out, however LOGIE, POLLY and GANYMEDE II made it to Edinburgh. POLLY showed well in the Edinburgh Cup once or twice, LOGIE had her moments but GANYMEDE II, after her disaster on the way up, entirely due to making her start on Friday 13th, spent most of her time getting screwed together.

Back at Aldeburgh for the Regatta we mustered 9 boats including 3 from Waldringfield. When not being stupid, POLLY, driven by Michael Bunbury and back seat driven by Pat Gifford and GANYMEDE II Peter Wilson were clearly quicker than the rest of the fleet. POLLY finished up with 2 firsts and a 2nd to GANYMEDE's 2 firsts and a 3rd. Only one mast was lost! This was entirely due to poor design and workmanship by the spar maker who shall remain nameless; suffice it to say that the manufacturer in question has definitely built more Dragon masts than anyone else.

For next year we have the Webster brothers back, this time in ULA, recovered from lying on the mud at Maldon, and we have another prospective owner looking for a reasonable boat at a sensible price.

ALDEBURGH DRAGONS (continued)

As it is hoped to run a meeting out of Harwich next season in early May, we are trying to get as many of our boats as possible to agree to turn out. It should be an easy trip for Medway, Burnham, Lowestoft, Aldeburgh and Waldringfield boats if they only get out of bed in time.

Peter Wilson

ROYAL NORTH OF IRELAND YACHT CLUB, CULTRA.

Although 1979 was a very poor year for weather, the Dragon Class had a good season of keen racing.

JOSEPHINE sailed by James Nixon did very well in the Irish National Dragon Class Championships at Kinsale and then finished third in the Edinburgh Cup, being first British Dragon in that event.

JOSEPHINE finished 12th in the International Gold Cup which was a good performance. At home Bobbie Graham in BEDOUIN carried off the main points prizes and next year will be racing his new purchase SOWESTER.

PUFF's new owners settled in quickly and were always in contention.

We finished the season with a two day event at Bangor run by R.U.Y.C. This was won by JOSEPHINE after some keen racing which was greatly enjoyed by all who took part.

We are looking forward to a bumper year in 1980 with the Irish National Championships and the Edinburgh Cup at Cultra organised by the Royal North of Ireland Yacht Club.

We are hoping for support for these events from as many areas as possible.

J. E. E. Robb.

SOLENT FLEET

Even making allowance for the rather poor weather which we had again this year, the number of boats which turned out to race regularly has once more been most disappointing. Out of a fleet of twenty-one boats an average of only just over seven came to the start line. This was better than last year - but only just. It is with great sorrow that we have to report that VULCAN sank whilst racing in the HDYC Regatta on 28th June and was a total loss.

A total of 42 races were started during the season, even though no racing took place for two weekends after Cowes Week.

The Royal Singapore Yacht Club Challenge Trophy for Dragons taking part in the ISC Round the Island Race was won by FANFARE, by under a minute after 12 hours sailing. All the five Dragons taking part in the race finished within five minutes. The sum of the ages of FANFARE's crew for this race was 198!

The S.C.R.A. Medal was won convincingly by JERBOA II after a very successful Cowes Week. Nevertheless, the Ganymede Bowl for the Cowes Week points series was won by SANDPIPER. KALI, last year's winner, was third. It was of great interest to have STORM racing with us. She did not have an outstandingly good week - during which she broke adrift in a gale and went ashore - but most people concluded that, with a few adjustments here and there, she will in time be fast enough to compete with the top of the fleet. We look forward to seeing her again when the teething troubles have been ironed out.

The Class Championship was won by FANFARE with an average of 3.33 points from JERBOA II with 5.28 points.

ASTERISK was conspicuous by her absence for the latter part of the season. It was rumoured that Peter was too busy baby-sitting.

Peter Henson.

Pint Pot at the Bar

The Irish threatening reprisals on the Scots because their Fleet entry for the Citron Trophy was thrown out, they had one boat from Kinsail, one from the Royal St. George and one from the Royal North of Ireland, first time there's been a united Ireland for years.

Phillip Tollhurst
Sailed 0702-352511

SLRP 855-6803

Provo 17-23
at possibly 21/29.

last two weeks August

1980 EDINBURGH CUP - Cultra, Co. Down.

Provisional details are now available from the organisers, Royal North of Ireland, Yacht Club.

The event will be sailed on Belfast Lough, which is free from fast flowing or complex tides and is considered one of the best and fairest racing areas in the British Isles.

The event will be held 23rd - 28th June, preceeded by the Irish National Championships - 19th-21st June, the latter being with two races per day over shortened Olympic Courses and is open to all visitors.

Transport is available between Liverpool and Belfast at £3.26 per foot each way, Cairnryan and Larne at £2.34 per foot (boat) and £2.09 per foot (vehicle) and a special British Rail Ferries Edinburgh Cup rate of £105 return plus £7.00 per passenger return. All prices subject to VAT.

Special note should be made that none of the routes suggested involve travelling through Belfast.

1980 Gold Cup - Holland.

Fatty Shamers

Roger Dawe and David Dann of the Medway Fleet have both offered to organise group crossings for this event. Any member planning to compete in the Gold Cup is requested to contact either of the member mentioned at the earliest opportunity in order that the most advantageous terms can be obtained.

Roger Dawe,
Rats Castle,
Pinden,
Longfield,
Dartford, Kent.

Davis Dann,
Cuppes House,
Bells Lane,
Hoo St Werburgh,
Rochester, Kent.

ENKHOUSEN

WANTED: A good timber Dragon with a reasonable record by:

Jean-Noel CAPART
323 Av. Brugmann,
1180 Brussels,
Belgium

Phone: 02/344 4072

FOR SALE

- TARA D/K393 1963 Borresen, Musto spinnaker 1979, North(UK) 1977 set, North(UK) 1975 set, plus two other suits, runner winches, chute, Rachmann spars. £3,000 Phone: East Grinstead 22340
- TAMSIN D/K 221 1949 McGruer, splined, new transom, kell bolts X-rayed, new chainplates, wood mast, metal boom, anchor, warps, paddle, two mains, two genoas and one spinnaker. £1,200.
Contact: Ted VIDLER, Medway 250760 or write to 16 Hoo Common, Chattenden, Rochester, Kent.
- MESTENGO D/K 404 Brites 1963. Proctor spars, 79 Musto Main and Genoa, 78 Musto spinnaker, plus many other sails. Runner winches, chute - varnished hull. 4 wheel close couple trailer- complete outfit easily towed by 2½ litre car. \$4,500. Contact: John Reeves on Maidstone 54677 (day) or Maidstone 64344 (evenings).
- D/K 91 and D/K 95, both 1947 McGruer s for further details contact Peter Wilson on Aldeburgh 2019