

BRITISH DRAGON ASSOCIATION

Spring Newsletter 1980

March, 1980

Hon. Secretary's Notes:-

European Championships: Travemunde, 4th to 9th August, 1980, Owners interested in being considered for nomination by the Committee should contact Guy Ormiston at 67 Braemar Avenue, London, S.W.19. at the earliest opportunity.

Borresen Boats: Prices from this well known builder have been received - all in Danish Kroner, however, based upon the rate of exchange at the time of going to press the following selections were correct:-

Basic price complete boat, ex. sails., ex. yard.....£7,700
(This does not include a chute or cleat beam)
Runner winches.....£285
Teak deck (Veneer on plastic base).....£1,100

Components for the D-I-Y enthusiast

Hull moulding.....£2,530
Deck moulding (plastic).....£1,320
Keel.....£600

Clothing: Philip Tolhurst has the following items available from stock:-

B.D.A. Ties.....£4.50 ea.
Car stickers.....£0.50 ea.
Dark blue sweaters (lambswool) with
embroidered B.D.A. crest:

Lightweight.....£14.00ea.
Mediumweight.....£16.00ea.

Please apply to ---- Philip Tolhurst,
Gay Bowers House,
Danbury, ESSEX.

AND INCLUDE CASH WITH ORDER!!!

Insurance (Merchant Shipping Act): Most policies provide a liability of £70.00., however, Philip Tolhurst has negotiated with his Insurers and has had a special clause inserted to increase his liability to £10,000 to cover boat damage only in the event of Dragon versus Dragon. In the event of Dragon versus SUPERTANKER liability reverts to £70.00.

Gold Cup: David Dann had been in contact with the Olau Line and has had an offer for car, boat on trailer plus two passengers at £150 single journey. This offer applies to the 11.00 hours sailing only in both directions. Should anybody wish to take this offer up, please contact:-

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

EAST COAST DRAGON CHAMPIONSHIP.

This event will be held at Levington Marina under the auspices of Haven Ports Yacht Club from May 2nd to May 6th. It will consist of a practice/team race, and a six race series. The sailing will take place in Dovercourt Bay. This will make it possible for the first time to have Dragon racing on an Olympic course in water little affected by tide on the East Coast of England. For all those in this area who suffer either from crawling along mudbanks or sluicing tides on open water this should be a liberating experience not to be missed. The event will also provide invaluable early season tuning-up for those aiming at higher things later in the year.

The Championship is sponsored by Frenbury Properties and there is a full social programme, including a dinner in Snape Maltings.

All those who have not already entered should write to:-

East Coast Dragon Championship, c/o Girdlestone Ltd.,
Melton, Woodbridge, Suffolk.

FLEET REPORTS

Medway - Whilst we are all busily fitting out our boats, there is some concern regarding moorings this year. The Medway Ports Authority have advised our club that as larger ships will shortly be coming up river to Rochester the fairway width has to be increased immediately opposite the Club Hard. This has meant that one trot has had to be eliminated - thereby relieving us of seven Dragon moorings. However, our Mooring Master, Roy Townshend has worked extremely hard in discussion with the Medway Port Authority and then his mooring committee re-allocating moorings to the extent that we understand that every Dragon has a deepwater mooring, albeit anywhere on the river! Those concerned will have to make a special effort each race day to get to their boat in sufficient time to rig and get back to the starting line - perhaps we'll have seven less inebriated helmsmen each Saturday afternoon and as one was heard to mention in the bar, 'Roy will be able to get served himself more speedily on Saturday lunchtime with the Dragons out of the way!'

The Fleet has been very quiet throughout the winter, hibernating in various out of the way places in Kent, but suddenly came to life on 15th March for the Fleet Annual Dinner attended by 83 persons including the Medway Yacht Club Commodore (Peter Steele) and his wife as Guests of Honour.

During this year the Medway Yacht Club celebrates it's centenary and the Dragon Fleet will be endeavouring to mark this event with regular turnouts at all of the Club events.

Ken Richardson.

Cultra - This year all interest at Royal North of Ireland Yacht Club is centred on the coming Edinburgh Cup and Irish National Championships which we are hosting.

Plans for the events are at an advanced stage and visitors are expected to be well looked after in every respect.

A special caterer has been engaged to deal with the requirements of Competitors as separate from the normal Club meals.

A very full programme of evening entertainments has been arranged and no one should have any complaints on this score.

Visitors will have the choice of hotels, bed and breakfasts or caravans at or convenient to the Club.

Special reduced rates have been obtained on two of the main drive-on, drive-off ferries.

The racing area gives a true test of skill and is not affected by complex tides and is amongst the fairest racing areas to be found. The standard of racing is bound to be high as many experienced helmsmen and crews have told us they are coming.

June in Northern Ireland generally has the best of weather and is a most pleasant time for sailing.

We have been most fortunate in obtaining very generous help from our main Sponsor - the "Northern Bank Ltd" (a member of the Midland Bank Group., and have also a number of supporting Sponsors.

We will be holding two separate Prize-Giving Events, the first after the Irish National Championships and the second for the Edinburgh Cup at the Ball to be held on the final day.

Eric Robb.

Abersoch - The Abersoch Dragon Fleet is once more rising from the ashes like the proverbial Phoenix. 1979 saw us down to about four boats. However, TARKA has been bought from Edinburgh and CHINOOK has joined us from Torbay. MYSTERE (D/K 478) is for sale and is being replaced by a new Borresen, building at the moment. With a bit of luck the fleet should muster some eight boats by July and with the Edinburgh Cup coming round again within a year or two this usually stimulates additional interest. Talking of the Phoenix, at least the F.W.A. haven't got around to our boats yet! There is some talk of one of our boats going to Belfast for the Edinburgh Cup, but that is only a 50/50 chance, so, apologies to the Belfast Fleet for our poor turnout.

Gordon Mellor.

Solent - It looks as if the Solent Fleet has lost seven boats over the year and gained three, including a new one - LEVIATHAN (Leopold de Rothschild and Bill Pease), leaving a total of seventeen. It will be the first time that we have had a new boat since 1975 and it is interest to note that during this period of five years the sail numbers have only gone up by ten.

Solent - The racing season will start during the first weekend in May. Cowes Week will be 2 - 10 August when we will hope to see some Dragons from other Fleets. I shall be only too happy to send entry forms to anyone interested. Entries are made through class secretaries.

Resulting from last year's Fastnet Race, new safety regulations are to be introduced for the Island Sailing Club's Round the Island Race which is to be held on 21st June. Those effecting the Dragon Class are so minor that they are unlikely to deter anybody from entering - the entry fee, which I hear is likely to be raised to £10, may be another matter. Any takers from other Fleets for this 60 mile race?

The number of boats racing regularly last season was once again rather disappointing. However, a meeting to discuss this matter, followed by a dinner, was held at the R.T.Y.C. just before Christmas and it is to be hoped that this aspect will improve.

Peter Henson.

Burnham - The season at Burnham this year gets under way with a practice race being held on the afternoon of March 22nd, followed by the Corinthian Yacht Club's Fitting Out Supper in the evening. Racing will then be every weekend through till November 8th: a varied selection of trophies to be raced for.

Our plans this season include the East Coast Championships, to be held in Harwich. The passage there being organised for 26/27th April; the return trip on the 10/11th May (weather permitting of course). Bob Melville will be sailing the new all British glass Dragon 'STORM'. With such an experienced helm as Bob we shall no doubt be seeing the boats full potential.

At least five boats are heading for the French Championships via Plymouth to Roscoff, hoping for warmth and sunshine in contrast to the Scottish climates of last year.

We have all taken advantage of the mild conditions of this winter and have been, one way or another, working hard on re-fits. Hugh Coryn as well as having had 'MONICA' completely stripped and re-varnished beautifully, will be using a new suit of Bruce Banks sails, he tells us they are keen to become involved in Dragon Sail Production. Pat Dyas used a spinnaker of theirs last season. Its good to see another British Sail Loft taking the initiative.

Petticrows are supplying and rigging the first of Holt Allan's new Dragon mast extrusion for Ted Vidler's new Borresen Glass Dragon. Richard Riggs' 'JAVELIN' is at present at Burnham for re-fitting after several seasons laid up. Tuning up will take place with us before going on to Aldeburgh. Also Kelvin Smythe's 'RASCAL' is having the same treatment before returning to Edinburgh.

Motram Rankin will be helming 'CHICKADEE' in the absence of Guy Newton, who having retired to Australia will not be able to join us quite so often.

The Fleet number looks like being on the increase this season which is an encouraging trend whether they be new boats or just looking for a change in competition; we gather Mr. Sarant from the Solent Fleet in MUSTANG may be East Coast bound.

With five visiting Dragons entered for Burnham Week already good racing is assured. However with moorings as always at a premium visitors should book as soon as convenient. Now that the R.C.Y.C. have built squash courts, local crews will be in peak condition; visitors beware!

After Bob Melville won the Points Series last season and Philip Tolhurst cleaned up Burnham Week, Ken Bushell decided 'SMAUG' was not going fast enough and bought a new boat..... An Etchells!

Sharon Cooke.

Lowestoft - The Lowestoft Dragon Fleet looks forward to the 1980 season with much enthusiasm and the prospect of several new boats joining our ranks. We are hoping to see 'THERIO' (with a new mast) back in the water after her sabbatical and some of us are perhaps even cautiously optimistic that 'GOOSE' may reappear. David Cannell has acquired and is renovating 'CRUSADER' which was mysteriously sunk in the Forth last year. Jonathan and Giles Webster have purchased 'ULA' and we hope that they will be yachting regularly at Lowestoft this season. Richard Clarke an enthusiastic newcomer to the class is seeking a good second hand fibreglass boat and we are delighted that he will be joining the Lowestoft fleet this year. 'TYRA', which is still in excellent condition and is one of the most competitive boats at Lowestoft is now for sale and we hope that she will remain in the Fleet (anyone interested should contact David Cannell).

Lowestoft - The more active members of the Fleet have already made plans for travelling further afield during the 1980 season. We hope that at least five boats will attend the Eastern Area Championship in Dovercourt Bay, and 'INDROS' has already booked to go to the French Championships in Douarnenez in July. The Royal Norfolk and Suffolk Yacht Club have kindly consented to lend the East Coast Dragon Championship Trophy for the Dovercourt Bay event and we look forward to hosting this championship at Lowestoft in 1981. Looking further ahead the Edinburgh Cup is due to be held at Lowestoft in 1981 and we hope that the B.D.A. will confirm this venue at their meeting in March.

Chris Dicker

DUBLIN BAY DRAGON FLEET - have sent in their Captain's report for last season as there was insufficient time to prepare a special report for this Newsletter, so the following is an analysis of the interesting items:-

- A. There appears to be a number of events in their calendar involving "swapping boats" - obviously some owners are not too keen on this, as it comes out very strongly in the report that the prime object of such events is "social" and the objective is to return the boats to their moorings unharmed
- B. Results - the question of the "driver" or the "boat" getting the result is of interest. Evidently the Fleet attempted to keep records on a personal basis and got themselves into reams of paperwork. Therefore there is now a move afoot to keep the records for "Boat Results" only and so make life rather more acceptable for the administrators.
- C. A good idea for keeping some spare gear for Fleet use - they now have two masts, complete with rigging and goosenecks, main boom and spinnaker boom in store for use as required by owners - the location being open to all and not kept in an individual's private store which would be inaccessible when the individual is on holiday etc.
- D. It is noted that 'ANDROMEDA' is for sale and that Johnny Walker plans to go cruising!
- E. Racing is held three times a week, Tuesday and Thursday evenings and Saturday afternoon - does this explain something to the "Saturday only" boys?
- F. The list of boats in the Fleet totals 25 at present - during 1979:-
 - 6 boats entered the Irish Championships at Kinsale
 - 5 boats entered the Edinburgh Cup at Edinburgh
 - 6 boats entered the Gold Cup at Edinburgh
 - 4 boats entered the Vega Cup at Cultra

James Nixon ('JOSEPHINE' - R.N.I.Y.C. - Cultra) has written saying that various modifications are being carried out to his boat this winter including sealing the fundamental orifice in the foredeck so that two spinnakers will be in use in 1980 (only one at a time) hoisted from the cockpit. He's also raising the cockpit floor by 9" to assist his foredeck crew in obtaining better speed in sorting out foredeck "snarl-ups" - this has caused consternation to his middle man who is in fear of decapitation - even when kneeling! However, to avoid getting involved in any possible controversy he is building a perspex shelter (sound proofed) for himself with two small holes in the bottom so that the crew will still be able to re-tie the laces on his "Decksiders"! - a recurring feature of their escapades in Edinburgh.

I would like to thank all Fleet Secretary's who have sent in contributions for this Newsletter and especially the new contributors. After a seasons sailing plus a winter lay-off it is quite a difficult task to round up the news - especially if one's Fleet is inactive during the Winter. I hope to prepare the next edition towards the end of the 1980 Season and so, perhaps a few notes jotted down during the season, especially the more amusing incidents, could help to make the various items included of a more general interest. Any offerings be they constructive, destructive or just pure unadulterated criticism to:-

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