

DRAGON NEWS


BRITISH DRAGON ASSOCIATION



Tchuss at the Hamble Classic Series by

Rick Tomlinson
PHOTOGRAPHY

Chairman's Review



Dear Dragon sailors and friends,

The year started on a very positive note with a great turnout at the annual Dragon dinner and AGM. It was such fun to meet up with friends and competitors including those from across the Irish sea.

Plans for the year were discussed and we had much to look forward to with the regional championships and what was to be a very special Edinburgh Cup on the Forth. I met with Cathy Ogden and her team at the end of February and plans were well advanced. We were particularly grateful for the generous support of the Britannia Trust who, not only, had committed to hosting a special evening aboard Britannia but also have funded the restoration of Bluebottle with the intention of her racing again. The kind sponsorship of Ballie-Gifford meant we were poised to hold a great regatta.

Alas less than a month later, we entered lockdown. Your committee continued to meet virtually and adapted plans as the news changed, however, in the end, it became necessary to cancel the 2020 events. We have decided to remain with the Royal Forth Yacht Club as the venue for the 2021 Edinburgh Cup, other events will be published as things become clearer.

This photo from the Algarve Dragon Winter Cup in Vilamoura – round 3 which was held in February 2020. One of the last Dragon events before Europe locked down and sailed by GBR782, Graham & Julia Bailey and GBR375, Ivan Bradbury.

Post lockdown, the crew of Bertie were able to enjoy local sailing in Cowes, relaxed, handicap dayboat racing from the Cowes Corinthian Yacht Club gave us the chance to showcase the Dragon when other fleets stayed ashore.

On your behalf, I attended the IDA AGM on the 23rd October, as a virtual meeting it was mercifully shorter than normal. As with our regattas, there was considerable discussion about what might be possible next season, whilst being optimistic the IDA committee has decided to take a cautious approach to the budget for next year. The proposal to ban bow/hull stickers, which was proposed by the BDA, was approved with a small amendment. Our thanks go to Nigel Cole, of the Burnham fleet, who instigated this change which, although not a giant leap, is a small step towards an eco-friendly class. The only contentious issue was that of allowing the use of GPS devices, which required a two thirds majority which was not achieved. Following feedback from your fleet captains, I voted against allowing GPS.

Sadly, we heard recently of the passing of two great supporters of the Dragon Class. Mike Williamson, a former Secretary and Vice Chairman of the IDA and great supporter of the Solent fleet for many years and Roger Dawe, a former Medway Class Captain and great supporter of the Medway fleet also for many years. On behalf of the BDA we send our condolences to their families and friends.

As the year comes to an end, we look forward to next season with the promise of a full programme of events and whilst we cannot hold the dinner this year, I hope to meet as many of you as possible at the regional regattas.

My thanks, as always, go to my fellow BDA committee members/Fleet Captains who work very hard to support and promote Dragon Sailing in the UK.

S. B. A. T

ALDEBURGH RACE WEEK 2020

It seems strange in 2020 to be writing a regatta report after months of enforced inactivity. However, five Dragons competed in the shrunken Aldeburgh Regatta, renamed Race Week and lacking the traditional trophies. Otherwise it seemed quite familiar. The five were composed of one new(ish) GRP boat, *Naiad*, sailed by Mike Hayles, two vintage boats, *Basilisk* and *Panther*, sailed by Patrick Gifford and James Hunt and two Classics, *Harkaway* and *Inditine*, sailed by Tim Hannon and Hugh Rich. *Inditine* is new to the Alde and probably better known as *Fenrir*. She is a very pretty Borresen boat.

We had four days racing in excellent conditions. A fifth day was lost to Storm Ellen. The fleet turned out to have match racing at the front between Mike and Patrick and close racing between *Inditine* and *Panther*. *Harkaway* was in the middle-close enough to challenge the first two but never capable of staying ahead of either of them. The racing was largely determined by

decisions taken at the start or very shortly after it. Patrick won the first start with a neat start at the port/starter's box end and was never seriously challenged by Mike. For the second race Mike started well and Patrick fluffed it and then went quite hard aground in a desperate attempt to escape Mike's cover. He then had to struggle to get up to second place. Patrick and Mike started on opposite sides of the river for the third race and Mike got it right by about two lengths when they came together. In the last race Patrick got a very early lead and covered relentlessly until Mike dropped back. So Patrick won on countback because of the final race result.

It was great fun to be on the water in a Dragon event again. The racing took place on excellent courses with very few other boats around. If the combination of post-Brexit rules and Covid-19 means that travel to grander regattas becomes much more difficult, do consider Aldeburgh Week. We would really love to see any visitors.

PATRICK GIFFORD

CLASSICS ROUND-UP 2020

The Classic Dragon scene in Britain has seen a surprising amount of activity despite the efforts of Covid-19 which have prevented much sailing. Aldeburgh has seen both *Harkaway* and *Inditine* (formerly *Fenrir*) in action, *Wizz Too* has competed on the Forth, at least until losing her rudder, and *Tschuss* went to the Hamble Classics. New owners were welcomed for both *Inditine* and *Tschuss*. Hugh Rich now owns *Inditine* and she is now a regular in Aldeburgh. Carl Whitewood has bought *Tschuss* from Tim Street and intends to campaign her seriously.

Behind the scenes there has also been a surprising amount of action as boats have changed hands. As mentioned above both *Tschuss* and *Inditine* have new owners. *Inge*, a Johanssen boat with a distinguished past record has been bought by Peter Donker-Curtius and Matt Lingley in Aldeburgh. She needs a little work but should be racing next year. *Royalist*, owned for many years by Roger Dawe on the Medway, has been sold to Germany and will reappear on Starnbergersee. However, a matching transaction in Pedersen and Thuesen Dragons has been the purchase by Crispin Blyth of *Ran*, GBR430 and originally one of Bill Citron's Nortics. Crispin intends to keep her and race her after minor refurbishment. Overall, my impression is that there is increased but largely latent activity in racing Classic boats.

There are several boats in the process of restoration and the market is probably still better offered than bid. The best known of these is *Bluebottle*, which has been restored by the Heritage family in Cowes and is destined to join the Royal yacht fleet in Leith. She will be there for next year's Edinburgh Cup and may well compete in it. Notable among the boats for sale are *Carronade II*, built by Borresen and beautifully restored by Crispin Blyth, and likely to be pretty competitive, *Tarka*, a Pedersen and Thuesen built Edinburgh Cup winner, and *Fafner* in *Glandore*, the winner of the first Gold Cup in 1937, now restored by the Street family. Less close to the water Joe Irving has *Polly*, *Karen II* and *Whirlwind* in his yard on the Humber, all making gentle progress. The upshot is that boats are available at widely varying prices and condition. It all depends on the way in which you want to use them. They can win internationally in the top flight, as shown by *Troika*, *Blue Haze* and *Eva* among others, or they can be successful at club level if pointed in the right direction.

Next year the BDA Classic and Vintage Championship will be in Cowes based on the weekend of 12th to 13th June. The International Classic Championship will be in Flensburg from 7th to 12th August. There are, of course, numerous other events where Classic participation has regularly taken place and is very much appreciated.

If anyone would like more information about Classic Dragons, don't hesitate to get in touch with me.

PATRICK GIFFORD



Above: *Inditine* at the Aldeburgh Regatta.
Below: *Tschuss* at the Hamble Classics.



Burnham Fleet Report



In Burnham, plans were well underway for the season opener, the 2020 RCYC Dragon Easter Regatta, when the country was locked down. Usually the first fleet to take to the water, we were grounded.

As lockdown rules evolved, the fleet watched on enviously as first single handed dinghies and then single household crewed boats took to the water. As soon as multiple household crews were allowed to sail David Warner launched *Dublin Bay* and was quickly followed by Ian Gray's new vessel *Still Crazy*. With racing still not possible, these two boats practiced manoeuvres and tuned up on a quiet river.



The first real opportunity for Dragon racing came when the Royal Corinthian Yacht Club held a Members Regatta starting at the end of August when Burnham Week would normally be held. The two early teams were joined by *Beauty and the Beast* (Katie Cole and Peter Marchant), *Avalanche* (Mark and Mandy Wade) and *Flotation* (Richard Davies). Regular Burnham crews were joined by Martin Payne and Donald Milne on *Flotation*. Four races were completed out of the seven scheduled, with team *Avalanche* emerging victorious. The regatta was sailed in good spirits and the RCYC managed to deliver excellent, if socially distanced, après sail.

With Covid-19 sensitive measures in place, the Burnham clubs have been able to run Autumn racing for all classes and we have had up to four boats out. We had a flying visit from Poul Hoj Jensen who took the helm of *Beauty and the Beast* once in September, scoring a win. For all Poul's records, this could be the first year he finishes unbeaten in a Dragon!

Although we are a small racing fleet this year, we should be racing into November as usual and we will make plans for Easter 2021 - after all, if we don't make plans it cannot possibly happen. Thanks go out to all those who have made it possible for us to get back on the water.

NODDY



Bluebottle DK192

Built by Camper and Nicholson in 1948, *Bluebottle* was presented to HM the Queen and HRH Prince Philip as a wedding present from the Island Sailing Club of Cowes, Isle of Wight. She is the only British Dragon to have won an Olympic medal, picking up a bronze at the 1956 Melbourne Olympic Games.

Bluebottle is part of the Royal Collection made up of 13 historic royal residences and over 1 million objects including thousands of images, ceramics, books, jewellery, art, and other vessels. She joins the Royal Yacht *Britannia*, the Flying Fifteen *Cowslip*, and the ocean racing yacht winner *Bloodhound*.

The beloved keelboat spent 40 years as a sail-training vessel at the Britannia Royal Naval College and more recently was residing on the pontoon at the National Maritime Museum Cornwall, in Falmouth. Now at the age of 72 - *Bluebottle* is undergoing a full restoration by David Heritage Racing Yachts on the Isle of Wight. The restoration project had an end goal of being ready to be sailed and raced at the Edinburgh Cup 2020 in Edinburgh, which was sadly cancelled due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

While this year's Nationals were postponed to 2021 the refurbishment project of the most famous Dragon, *Bluebottle* continued. Over on the Isle of Wight David Heritage and his team were well underway with the refurbishment project and got back to it as soon as lockdown restrictions were lifted.

July - by early July, most of the construction work was complete, and the painting process was starting. Next up was for all the deck fittings to be removed.

August - the hull was lifted onto the keel and rudder was fitted.

September - saw *Bluebottle* take a visit to the spray shop where all the painting and varnishing was done followed by the fit-out.

October - there is still a little more to do to finish.

David Heritage's unique experience in boat restoration is unrivalled in the UK. A time served wooden craftsman, David Heritage specialises in both restoration and race preparation for some of Britain's most successful owners.

We are all looking forward to hopefully being able to see and sail alongside *Bluebottle* at its eponymous home on the Firth of Forth at the 2021 Edinburgh Cup in Edinburgh.

EMMA YORK



Medway Dragon Fleet Report 2020



Despite the virus there was limited club racing at MYC and we held a Dragon picnic on the beach next to the clubhouse with bubbles. Not wine bubbles but social bubbles! It was a beautifully hot summer's day and hats, sunglasses and parasol were needed.

Two dragons entered the club racing: *SUTI* and *Taniwha*. They were both sailed two up. These pictures were taken by Quentin Strauss on September 12th from the club rib and show Howard Paterson and Bill Baker in action.



8 The races were started by a single person in the race hut and this proved to be easily manageable because the sound signals and lights are automated following the pressing of one button.

We were pleased to welcome Neave O'Clery as a new Dragon owner and member. Local members instantly recognised her Dragon as the boat previously sailed by Julian and Claire Sowry then called *Scimitar*.

This boat was MYC overall winner in both 2007 and 2008 seasons and we all look forward to racing against her again next year.

CHRIS BREALY



Roger Dawe – a tribute *Royalist* DK/GBR 455, Pedersen & Thuesen The 48-year affair



Roger Dawe and Mike Freeman purchased *Royalist* soon after her sailing at the 1972 Munich Olympics, where she finished twelfth overall, with her highest placing being a third.

Due to some financial impropriety, not on Roger's behalf, she spent her early months hidden in a Kentish barn.

She raced under their joint ownership until 1975 when Roger took over as her sole owner.

Roger was a keen and competitive sailor and class captain, winning the overall Medway Yacht Club Championship seven times up until 1985, as well as many other series cups and several summer regattas.

Royalist competed for the Edinburgh Cup seven times. 1975–Edinburgh, 1977–Torbay, 1979–Edinburgh, 1981–Lowestoft, 1982–Abersoch, 1984–Cowes, and Lowestoft in 1987, this time with his wife Jo who had also joined him in Edinburgh, where they also took part in the (following on) 1979 Gold Cup. *Royalist's* last competitive outing was the 2019 East Coast Dragon Championship where much to Rogers delight, she won the Classic Class and finished fourth overall.

Roger sailed *Royalist* for almost all his 48 years of ownership, except for a few short years of blue water cruising on his Oyster, *Dragonfly*. Once he had the cruising bug rinsed from his system, he returned to *Royalist* afresh.

A thank you must go to all the competitors who endured with such grace, the good-natured sledging that always seemed to emanate from *Royalist* at critical moments.

Roger sailed with many crews and all those that have made contact have very fond recollections of both the boat and her skipper, both on and off the water.

The costs of maintaining *Royalist* overtime would probably have purchased several new or newer boats if totalled up, but Roger never wavered.

Royalist is a boat of great beauty and originality, she is probably unique in her condition and is a testament to having had an owner who so cherished and understood her.

She now resides in Germany with an enthusiastic and knowledgeable new custodian who aspires to keep her as a "classic boat".

Roger was a gentleman racer who raced a gentleman racers boat.

He took her from her zenith through times when many of her type fell by the way to what is probably one of the finest original wooden dragons still afloat today. They were a fortunate match.

R & R will be sorely missed at the Medway Yacht Club and we wish them both only fair winds and blue skies ahead.

MIKE GAG

MIKE WILLIAMSON

1932 - 2020



Mike with Stavros at the RYS prizegiving Cowes Week 2014

Mike died on Tuesday 3 November.

Mike was born in 1932 and it was in the early 60s that he entered into Dragon sailing, crewing for Nicky Streeter in his newly launched Sandpiper for the 1966 Poole Bay Olympic training week – they won all six races! Writing at the time *Yachting World* reported; ‘New Names at the top. The success of the week – and the surprise – was the performance of Nicholas Streeter and his new Pedersen and Theusen *Sandpiper* crewed by Mike Williamson and Graham King’.

This was the start of what was to become a long-standing Dragon partnership over the next 35 years, during which no less than nine Dragons, (nearly all *Sandpiper*'s), earned them more than a fair share of successes which included winning the prestigious Edinburgh Cup twice, as well as a number of International regatta successes including 2nd at the Gold Cup and 6th at the Worlds of 1973, and a well-deserved entry into Dragon history!

Mike was Honorary Secretary of the International Dragon Association from 1997 to 2001 and was the last to serve in this unpaid role. He was an efficient and dedicated administrator and with his legal background he made a significant contribution to many aspects of the IDA including updating the Sailing Instructions for major events, the Regatta Guidelines, and the IDA Constitution. He travelled far and wide to regattas around the World and was always willing and able to give advice and support to the National Associations with whom he maintained regular contact. Mike was Vice Chairman in 2001-2.

As well as always crewing for Nicky, when time permitted, Mike also enthusiastically sailed his Sunbeam in Itchenor (always saying it was the only opportunity he had to helm!).

The partnership ‘retired’ from Dragon ownership in early 2000 but not to be deterred borrowed *Jerboa* to compete in the International Dragon Class 75th Anniversary Regatta in 2004 in St Tropez.

Mike never lost his interest in the Dragon class. He closely followed the fortunes of the class both on and off the water, nationally and internationally. Up until a couple of years ago he regularly attended Cowes Week never missing the Dragon class socials as well as the annual dinner in London.

GAVIA WILKINSON - COX

One of the things that became popular during the spring lockdown was the on-line IDA Quiz. Following a series of ‘Zoom’ interviews with prominent faces from the world of Dragon sailing, IDA Sailing Coordinator, Martin ‘Stavros’ Payne organised a quiz with Werner Fritz very generously putting up a Spinnaker as the prize. Run between mid-May and mid-June with four Heats, two Semi-Finals and a Final, GBR boats made up seven of the initial nineteen teams of two. Other teams represented boats sailing under USA, TUR, SWE, BEL, POR, NED, FIN and IRL codes. Each round consisted of four categories General Knowledge, Dragon Sailing, Food and Drink, and Sport. Each category included eight questions and teams could play a ‘Joker’ at the beginning of a round for double points.

The Heats and semi-finals were mostly unruly affairs with plenty of banter and no lack of alcohol.

However, things were starting to be taken seriously in the Final, and there was much less alcohol on display as the four teams went head to head. GBR 753 (Chris Grosscurth, Emma York) and GBR 515 (Patrick Gifford, Mike Hayles) were up against BEL 82 and the consistently strong TUR 1212 (Andy Beadsworth Simon Fry). Werner Fritz was present and even featured in one of the answers about the winner of one of the Douarnenez Grand-Prix.

Throughout the Quiz, it was notable that not many teams felt confident enough to play their Joker in the Dragon Sailing round. GBR 753 played their Joker in the Sport round and with Chris scoring an impressive eight out of eight this was enough to see him and Emma finish just ahead of Beadsworth and Fry to win the top prize.

All those who took part enjoyed the experience and extended a big thanks to Stavros and his



Chris Grosscurth and the Fritz spinnaker which was the IDA quiz prize.

glamorous assistant Sarah for hosting, Werner Fritz for the top prize and Nicola Wilton for many of the questions. The Quiz and Stav’s lockdown interviews can be watched on the official IDA Facebook page ‘International Dragon Sailing’.

Above is a picture of Chris with the prize so you don’t have to do a Google search of ‘Fit Chick beats competition’ – that gets you some different stuff.

NODDY

The BDA would like to thank photographer Rick Tomlinson for the use of his photos of *Tchuss* which appear on our front cover and on page 5 this year.

Many of you will be aware of Rick’s A2 Portfolio Calendar and his Desk Calendar which features *Tchuss* for the month of June. These are available from www.rick-tomlinson.com/shop



SELECTED FIXTURES 2021

REGATTA	DATE	VENUE	CONTACT
Portugese Grand Prix	25-28 March	Cascais, Portugal	www.cncascais.com
Princess Sophia Trophy	30 March - 2nd April	Palma de Mallorca	www.trofeoprincesasofia.org
Burnham Easter Regatta	2 - 4 April	RCYC, Burnham-on-Crouch	burnhamdragons@gmail.com
European Championships	12-16 April	Puerto Portals, Mallorca	www.crpuertoportals.com
French Grand Prix	28 April - 1 May	Cannes, France	france-dragon.org
Derby Dragon	2-6 June	La Baule, France	info@yclb.net
South Coast Championships	12-13 June	Royal London YC, Cowes	solentfleet@yahoo.co.uk
Classic/Mintage Championships	12-13 June	Royal London YC, Cowes	patrick@kinnordy.com
World Championships	13-18 June	Kuhlungsborn, Germany	www.dragon-kuehlungsborn.de
Le Linkers – Open de Deauville	25-28 June	Deauville, France	www.deauvilleyachtclub.fr
Edinburgh Cup & Scottish Champs	4-9 July	Royal Forth YC, Edinburgh	cathy.ogden75@gmail.com
Danish Grand Prix	29 July - 1 August	Denmark	www.dragonclass.dk
Cowes Week	31 July - 7 August	Cowes	solentfleet@yahoo.co.uk
Gold Cup	15-20 August	Marstrand, Sweden	www.goldcup21.com
East Coast Championships	18-19 September	Royal Temple YC, Ramsgate	burnhamdragons@gmail.com
Regattes Royale	TBA	Cannes, France	www.yachtclubdecannes.org
Italian Grand Prix & Finals	26-31 October	San Remo, Italy	www.yachtclubsanremo.it

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