

DRAGON NEWS



BRITISH DRAGON ASSOCIATION



SELECTED FIXTURES 2023

REGATTA	DATE	VENUE	CONTACT
Burnham Easter Regatta	7 - 9 April	RCYC, Burnham	burnhamdragons@gmail.com
Turkish Grand Prix GP#1	26 - 29 April	Bodrum, Turkey	http://www.turkishdragons.net/
GP de Douarnenez, French Open	2 - 6 May	Douarnenez, France	http://www.srdouarnenez.com/
Derby Dragon	17 - 21 May	La Baule, France	info@yclb.net
Northern Championships	27 - 29 May	SCYC, Abersoch	info@scyc.co.uk
World Championships	29 May - 3 June	Bodrum, Turkey	https://dragonworlds2023.com/
East Coast Championships	3 - 4 June	RCYC, Burnham	burnhamdragons@gmail.com
Linkers Open Dragon de Deauville	17 - 20 June	Deauville, France	http://deauvilleyachtclub.fr/
Italian Grand Prix GP#2	21 - 24 June	Malcesine, Lake Garda, Italy	
Dragon Open Meeting	24 - 25 June	Aldeburgh YC	Patrick@kinnordy.com
Dutch Grand Prix GP#3	12 - 15 July	Medemblik, IJsselmeer	https://dragonclass.nl/
Cowes Week	29 July - 4 August	Cowes, Solent	solentfleet@yahoo.co.uk
75th Edinburgh Cup	15 - 18 August	Cowes, Solent	solentfleet@yahoo.co.uk
South Coast Championships	26 - 28 August	Cowes, Solent	solentfleet@yahoo.co.uk
Gold Cup	9 - 15 September	Royal Torbay YC, Torquay	https://dragongoldcup2023.com/
Regates Royale	25 - 29 September	Cannes	www.yachtclubdecannes.org
Classic/Vintage & Scottish Champs	8 - 9 October	Royal Forth YC, Edinburgh	admin@royalforth.org
GP Sud Dragon En Camargue	18 - 21 October	Port Camargues, France	https://www.sngRPC.com/dragons/
Portugese Grand Prix GP#4	20 - 23 November	Vilamoura, Portugal	http://www.vilamourasailing.com/
Grand Prix Finals	24 - 25 November	Vilamoura, Portugal	http://www.vilamourasailing.com/

BDA OFFICERS & FLEET CONTACTS

British Dragon Association – www.britishdragons.org

Chairman	Simon Barter	simon.barter@btinternet.com
Vice Chairman		
Hon Treasurer	Bruce Boyd	britishdragontreasurer@gmail.com
Hon Secretary	Chris Brittain	britishdragonsec@gmail.com
Classic Dragon Representative	Patrick Gifford	patrick@kinnordy.com
PR Consultant	Emma York	emma@freshapproachpr.co.uk
Abersoch Fleet Captain	Tim Saunders	drtimsaunders@aol.com
Aldeburgh Fleet	Tim Hannon	tim.hannon@btinternet.com
Burnham Fleet	Ian & Gerry Gray	burnhamdragons@gmail.com
Medway Fleet	Edwin Hannant	medwaydragoncaptain@gmail.com
Scottish Fleet	Cathy Ogden	cathy.ogden75@gmail.com
Solent Fleet	Glynn Williams	solentfleet@yahoo.co.uk
South West Fleet	Alan Dale	aadale@clara.co.uk

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The Chairman's Letter

2022 promised much – the prospect of an uninterrupted season – and so it was great that the weather held out and we were able to get some good early races completed albeit with limited numbers. Feedback suggests that many people were adjusting to the first true post-covid summer and had many conflicting priorities, I remain very hopeful that 2023 will see more boats coming out of storage.

We made the drive west to Falmouth for the Edinburgh Cup and what an event that was. The team at the Royal Cornwall led by Robin Taylor laid on a very special week with great racing in a beautiful setting and an army of willing, friendly, and enthusiastic volunteers to look after us both ashore and afloat. The club made us most welcome and all those that attended are keen to return.

A key part of the *Bertie* season is Cowes Week with its mix of challenging navigational courses and lots of social fun. So, when we started the week with two bullets, just maybe it was going to be our year.... sadly, that was not the case, but a great week was had none the less, completing all seven races. I also treasured the opportunity to sail with the family, something the *Dragon* is well suited to and we must encourage this.

Next on the schedule was a quick trip to the Gold Cup, this year in Oostende. Team GBR were very well represented by Graham Bailey, 6th overall in *Bluebottle*, Poul Richard, 8th in *Danish Blue* and David Tabb 9th in *True Story* who with their teams convincingly won the Nations Cup.

On behalf of the BDA, I attended the AGM of the IDA, a face-to-face meeting for the first time in two years hosted by Gerard Blanc at the Yacht Club de Paris. It was a pleasure to meet fellow *Dragon* sailors from around the Globe. Key topics were the feedback from the sailor's survey which showed an aging membership and prompted a very good discussion on how to attract younger owners. The importance of

supporting the local fleets was acknowledged as this is where the new teams are likely to be formed. The vote to allow the use of GPS devices did not receive the necessary two thirds majority of the meeting and was rejected for another two years at least. The meeting was also an opportunity for me to promote the Gold Cup being held in Torquay in 2023.

Bertie is now packed away for the winter, but as I write this, I am looking forward to joining the Burnham Fleet for their end of season dinner and a chance to catch up with old friends.

Now is the time to start fixing dates in your diary for next season starting with the BDA AGM and Dinner on Friday 20th January at the Royal Thames YC in London, I hope lots of you will be there. Additionally next year, I hope we will see more boats travelling between fleets for the regional championships, check out the dates and venues here in the magazine and on the website.

2023 has two very special events starting with the 75th Edinburgh Cup to be held in Cowes and run by the Royal Yacht Squadron, where visiting yachts will be berthed in the Squadron Haven which will make the journey to the racecourse even easier. We already have significant overseas interest, so my advice is to start booking now.

Last but not least of the major events is the Dragon Gold Cup to be run by the Royal Torbay Yacht Club from the 7th – 15th of September. The club has recently held the J70 World Championships so is well practiced at putting on big regattas. We already have entries from UK, Ireland, USA, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Austria, so please join them and register your interest on the event website, www.dragongoldcup2023.com

And I could not sign off without giving a big thank you to the fleet captains, the volunteers that deliver our racing and my fellow committee members for their support in 2022 without whom there would be no BDA or organised racing.

I look forward to seeing you all next year both ashore and on the water.

SIMON BARTER

Nations Cup Winners 2022

Congratulations to *Bluebottle*, *True Story* and *Danish Blue*!



Aldeburgh Fleet Report



The Aldeburgh Dragon fleet

continued to build on its success in 2021 again in 2022. There was more participation even though the number of boats hasn't changed and there are clear signs that the fleet will grow again next year. In particular, we expect *Orion*, with Henry Brewis, and possibly *Apache* with Will Gibbon from among our existing fleet to reappear on the water. Possible new participants are *Mestengo*, a Brites boat built in Portugal in 1963 for Ray Sarant on the Medway, and re-imported from Belgium by James Jackson and *Mystere*, an early Petticrow boat, bought by Michael Goff from Abersoch. It does look as though the growth in the fleet is in boats that are relatively cheap and whose owners want to race them at Aldeburgh rather than away from home. It is a change from the days when Aldeburgh boats regularly won the Edinburgh Cup but we struggled to maintain interest lower down the fleet.

Aldeburgh ran a Dragon Open Meeting for the first time this year. It

was also the BDA's Classic and Vintage Championships. Ten boats took part and we enjoyed the presence of three visitors, *Rân* (Crispin Blyth) from Yorkshire, *Polly* (Street family) from the Solent via Yorkshire and *Cavalier* (Carl Whitewood) from the Solent. A full report is on the BDA website. Suffice it to say that it was a most enjoyable event both on and off the water. *Basilisk* (Patrick Gifford) won the overall event and the Vintage Championship and *Harkaway* (Tim Hannon) won the Classic Championship.

Our other major event was the Aldeburgh Regatta, which remains one of the best attended sailing weeks on the East Coast. Six boats participated and the racing was at least as close among the back three of *Panther*, *Inditine* and *Nooka* as at the front of the fleet. *Basilisk* won five of the six class races, and *Naiad* (Mike Hayles) won the other one. *Basilisk* generally seemed to have rather more speed, especially at two-sail reaching(!) and wasn't really troubled after the first race once her crew had sorted out their

starting technique. *Harkaway* won the Personal Handicap Trophy easily and clearly needs to be re-weighted. The racing provided many close encounters throughout the fleet with a number of positions only determined very close to the finishing line after a ten mile race.

Harkaway was the most regular participant in the AYC club racing and was rewarded with a win in the Wednesday High series, an event which provides entertaining racing before a convivial meal. At different times all the Dragon fleet turned out in the club racing but only *Harkaway* put a series together. *Basilisk*, however, won the Margaret Roney Trophy for a Dragon race round Havergate Island.

Next year we will again run an Open Meeting, scheduled for 24th



to 25th June. We hope to build on this year's success and to welcome visitors. There will be an overall prize and ones for the best Classic and Vintage boats. Visitors are, of course, equally welcome at the AYC Regatta, which offers the now relatively unusual combination of fixed line starts at the scheduled time, a relaxed lunch on shore, followed by an afternoon handicap race either in a Dragon or some other conveyance. Do come and try it. It is refreshingly different from open-water windward-leewards.

**PATRICK GIFFORD /
TIM HANNON**



Abersoch Fleet Report

Another great season

of racing, with the usual mix of weather conditions, was enjoyed by all in the Abersoch fleet again this year!

Racing got underway in May with a breezy weekend for the Dragon Cup, which was won this year by Rob Eldridge and his crew sailing *Caramba*.

The four-day Bank Holiday at the beginning of June was an opportunity to innovate, and the club marked Her Majesty's long reign by staging the Queen's Platinum Jubilee Regatta and BDA Dragon Northern Championships.

All Club classes were involved, starting sequentially from an offshore committee boat, with all classes sailing Windward/Leeward courses.

Strong winds prevailed and despite losing one day due to the heavy weather good racing was had by all.

Colin Brereton's *Tsunami* were the victors in a competitive fleet and were justly crowned Dragon Northern champions!

A formal dinner was held on the Saturday to mark the occasion and to celebrate not only good racing, but Her Majesty's remarkable reign.

The weekend was such a success that the club intend to hold a similar event annually over the three-day Whit Bank Holiday weekend at the end of May.

The weather changed... and we entered the 'glorious summer' of 2022

where we were treated to sunshine, heat, and... very light winds!!

Racing continued throughout June and July but due to a congested fixture list of postponed weddings only Mike Cope and Graham Price's *Raissa* were able to make the long journey south to the Edinburgh Cup in Falmouth. Congratulations to them on winning the Jordan Bell. Their creditable mid fleet performance was enjoyed vicariously by the rest of the homebound fleet, who were regretful for not being able to join in with such a splendid event.

The club's main Dragon event, The Captain's Cup, saw a departure from the previous format by combining with the Squib fleet for part of the week. Each class enjoyed their own offshore committee boat starts, and excellent Windward Leeward courses set by Mike Crompton and his team.

These were really light wind conditions and were a challenge to the Race Officer and sailors alike. Short single races were



the order of the week, but with patience we managed to complete a series.

Vixen, sailed by Tim and Carole Saunders and George Davies were the winners, with Patrick Lomax's *Good Grief* second, and Colin Brereton's *Tsunami* third.

Again, this change of format was a success and in 2023 the whole week will be shared with the Squibs to make full use of the committee boat starts and the PRO and his team.

The light winds persisted on race days during August and our season came to its usual end on August Bank Holiday weekend.

The fleet is in a positive mood, looking to the future, and is already planning further developments to enhance the season in 2023!

**DR TIM SAUNDERS
SCYC DRAGON CLASS
CAPTAIN**

Burnham Fleet Report

2022 was the first time

in the last three years that we can say we are back to a somewhat normal sailing season.

As this is our first report, we must firstly thank Noddy and Harriet for looking after our fleet for the previous four years— a brilliant job done which has been really appreciated and a great help in setting us up.

Although slightly shorter on total numbers of boats participating, we have completed all the club trophy events so far this year with a good variety of winners.

The Easter regatta was won by team *Quicksilver* (Rob, Jonathan, Matt, and Penny) followed by Spring Saturdays and Spring Sundays won by team *Still Crazy* (Ian, Ian, and Rene) The Karl Marx trophy over the Early May Bank Holiday was dominated by a visiting Dragon – congratulations to *Floatation* (Richard Davies, Stavros and Donald Milne).

Our first Mini-series in May was won by team *Quicksilver* (Rob, Heath and Penny) followed by Summer series Saturdays and Summer series Sundays both of which were won by team *Beauty and the Beast* (Peter, Katie, Noddy and Harriet).

Next, in September, came the Carlton Patter which was won again by team *Quicksilver* and in October the Petticrow Open Series was won by *Still Crazy*.

As this is being written the remainder of our club Trophies – Candlesticks, Newts & Peter Matthews Memorial Trophy have yet to be decided.

There was a good turnout for Burnham Week which saw all the Burnham Fleet boats competing with team *Avalanche* (Mark, Mandy and Nigel) taking the Bank Holiday trophy with team *Still Crazy* taking the mid-week trophy and the overall Weeks points. The final Saturday trophy race went to team *Beauty and the Beast*.

A second Mini-Series was sailed in October and was easily won by team *Avalanche* (Mark, first time in a dragon Stuart Mears and Harriet).

Out and about, a variety of our boats and class members have also been travelling this year with a few good results.

Team *Hands Off* (Andy Moss, Tim and Teresa Wilkes) won the Medway Regatta for the second year running and had an excellent result at the Edinburgh Cup.

Team *Still Crazy* and *Hands Off* took part at Medway YC for the East Coast Championships which was won by team *Still Crazy*.

Katie Cole crewed with Graham and Julia Bailey and Killian Boag in *Bluebottle* and won the South Coast Championship.

Others travelling were Katie sailing with Poul

Richard in Douarnenez, La Baule, Gold Cup in Ostend with Noddy, Eric Williams at Cowes Week and Richard Davies at the Edinburgh Cup in Falmouth.

Others at the Edinburgh Cup / Southwest Champs were *Page Boy*, *Dublin Bay*, *Still Crazy*, *Hands Off* and Noddy with *Fit Chick*. Noddy also sailed on *Fit Chick* at Port Camargue.

Still Crazy also went to La Baule and Ostend for the Belgian Nationals.

Quicksilver went to Ostend for the Brugges Zot, Belgian Nationals, and the Gold Cup.

Hands Off also went to Ostend for the Belgian Nationals.

Finally, Jono Brown with Chris and Gilly sailing *True Story* finished top Corinthian and 4th Overall at Regates Royales in Cannes.

We now go forward and hope that for 2023 we can attract new boats and crews to join our fleet.

We are hosting the East Coast Championships on the 3rd - 4th June 2023 and look forward to welcoming you all.

IAN & GERRY GRAY



Dragon Gold Cup 2023

7th - 15th September

Race in some of the **finest sailing waters** in the World.

Torbay is an internationally renowned sailing venue thanks to a long and distinguished history of the Royal Torbay Yacht Club.



Register your interest in attending the Dragon Gold Cup 2023

dragongoldcup2023.com



Bluebottle's European Summer

a personal account of the Worlds and Gold Cup



Having had a relatively gentle reintroduction to racing in 2021 after a 60-year sabbatical, would it be madness to put this iconic 1948 Camper and Nicholson onto the World stage? There was only one way to find out. The Royal Yacht Britannia Trust were up for it and Land Rover generously supported the project with a brand-new Defender in *Bluebottle* livery.

Our thinking was that this would be an opportunity to learn more about her performance plus there was great interest in her on the Continent, so once she was back from the Royal Windsor Horse Show where she was displayed on the Land Rover stand with her Defender, we took her for a quick sail locally before hooking up and heading for Kuhlungsborn, Germany.

Ruairidh Scott joined the team together with Will Bedford and Julia. We

particularly wanted to tap into Ruairidh's technical expertise and once we saw photos of the *Bluebottle* cupcakes his children had proudly made for a Platinum Jubilee school assignment – we knew he was the right person for the job.

23rd in the opening race felt OK – almost a top 20 so at least we weren't going to disgrace ourselves, but we weren't super confident of our speed.

The next day we sailed out in black skies and ran into a vicious squall. We were the first to return to the harbour in full survival mode but when things eventually calmed down, we had a couple of races in the 18 to 21 knot range. It was pleasing how *Bluebottle* powered through the long seas. We had a couple of good races but lacked height at times. Ruairidh commented that our mast was soft, so we worked on the set up for the next day including shortening the forestay by 15mm.

Races 4 and 5 were full hiking conditions but shifty. We found a high mode for the first time, so we were more confident of holding our lanes. 4th in both races and we were top boat of the day. Who would have thought that possible!

It was far from plain sailing though as the rudder stock was binding against the back of the keel which had swollen a little resulting in zero feel through the tiller. At least I wasn't going to over-steer. Maybe a locked tiller is fast as we scored inside the top 10 in each of the remaining races.

The final race for us was sailed in around 7 knots. Further trim changes and slightly easier seas put us into second place. There was one more race, but we black-flagged ourselves. 5th overall was totally out of the blue and we had learned a lot.



Will Heritage joined us and Will Bedford for the Gold Cup. We have done a lot with these 2 over the years. Not only are they amazing sailors but they are also completely hilarious together, so it was always going to be fun.

Building on everything we had learned so far, we shot off like a greyhound and won the first race. An absolute dream start but could we hold it together? A second and fourth in the next two races felt great but the Gold Cup punishes like no other and a poor start in race 4 compounded by being on the wrong side of a 20-degree right-hander dropped us to virtually last at the top mark.

We recovered to 16th.

Strong breezes and mountainous seas for race 5. Another poor start dropped us into the pack where life is very hard. 10th by the finish, which was OK, but *Bluebottle* had been shipping water over the foredeck as she pitched in the steep seas, and we weren't quite fast enough.

Following a conversation with Andy Beadsworth, we tried sailing with more heel in the steepest seas in the final race. This didn't feel right in terms of balance, but the technique better enabled us to claw our way upwind in very difficult seas. 7th in the race, 6th overall and

first in the Nations Cup exceeded all expectations.

We provide detailed reports to the Trust after each day's racing and occasionally these seem to find their way to the Palace. A matter of only 10 days before HM Queen Elizabeth II passed away, we received a message via the Chairman of the RYB Trust, Admiral Rankin that HM was delighted with *Bluebottle's* progress. There is no greater reward for us and our teams who have had the honour and privilege of sailing *Bluebottle*.

GRAHAM BAILEY





2022 has proved to be a very good year for Classic Dragons at all levels of the class. At the top, Lars Hendriksen won the Gold Cup in *Eva*, a 1957 Pedersen and Thuesen boat, and Peter Heerema won, or was placed in several major events, including the European Championship, in *Troika*, a 1961 Pedersen and Thuesen boat. From a British perspective the achievements of *Bluebottle*, a 1948 Camper and Nicholson boat, were equally significant. Sailed by Graham and Julia Bailey she came 2nd in the Edinburgh Cup, 5th in the Worlds and 6th in the Gold Cup. She also won Cowes Week. Importantly this proved that it wasn't only the Pedersen and Thuesen boats that could perform successfully at the top level. That this is so is a major achievement for the integrity of the Class Rules and the longevity, properly cared for and restored, of the boats themselves.

Classics Roundup

Within the British fleet there has also been greater activity than had been seen in previous years. The Classic Championship was held in the Alde, under the auspices of Aldeburgh Yacht Club and attracted five boats, within an Open Meeting fleet of ten. There were two Classic visitors, *Polly*, sailed by the Street family, and *Ràn*, sailed by Crispin Blyth. *Harkaway*, a 1947 Nunn Bros boat sailed by Tim Hannon, won the Classics convincingly and finished second in the Open Meeting. A full report is on the BDA website. Elsewhere *Ràn*, and *Meteor*, sailed by Peter Cooke, both Pedersen and Thuesen boats, finished very close second and third in the Scottish Championship behind Richard Leask. *Bluebottle* and *Polly* both took part in Cowes Week, which *Bluebottle* won. At club level both Aldeburgh and Royal Forth saw regular participation by Classic Dragons.

The number of active Classics in Britain is continuing to grow. This year saw *Ràn*, a 1966 Pedersen and Thuesen boat, and, a 1966 Borresen boat both re-join the fleet. For next year the Aldeburgh fleet expects to be joined by *Mestengo*, a 1963 Brites (Portugal) boat. It looks as though the fleet is growing, both at the top end with boats like *Bluebottle* and at a lower level in club racing with *Inditine* and *Mestengo*. Somewhere in between are *Ràn*, *Meteor* and *Polly*. Overall, by my count, there are fifteen Classics, from eight different builders, in the UK which have all raced recently. There is plenty of opportunity to buy into this growing activity with available boats ranging from the beautifully restored *Carronade* all the way down to some which are in need of significant TLC.

At the competition level, Classics are of course welcome in any Dragon event. In 2023, more specifically, the BDA Classic Championship will be held at Royal Forth in Edinburgh and Aldeburgh will again run an Open Meeting as well as its regatta week with Classic participation likely from the local fleet and, we hope, some returning visitors. For those wishing to travel further the Yacht Club San Remo is holding a Classic Championship in August, so there is plenty of opportunity to sail these boats at all levels of competition and in many places. It is a great chance to sail boats which still turn heads wherever they sail.

PATRICK GIFFORD

Medway Fleet Report

My last year as Class Captain and although we were still in the last throws of the pandemic, we started this season with optimism and hope for a normal year, having great racing and enjoying each other's company once again. We welcomed one new boat to the fleet *Tempest* owned by David Fry, a former Dragon sailor from ten years ago

The weather has been very kind to us in the Southeast this year having not lost a single race to the wind - last year we lost four days during the season. We have regularly had four or five boats racing each week and on occasions seven or eight. Competition hasn't been dominated by one boat and we have seen seven boats winning races some for the first time. The trophies have also been spread out with multiple short series winners and individual race trophies. *Whistle* again showed its class and won the Silver Irish Bowl coming in first overall. It took the last race of the season to determine 2nd and 3rd, and after twenty-five races Suti pipped *OCD* by 1.2 points. We have the prospect of more boats joining us next year, so the future of the Medway Dragon Fleet looks bright as we look forward to more great racing.

Training wasn't a main focus this year but we had a very good session prior to one of our organized windward/leeward days in which Quinton Strauss gave a very good presentation assisted by Philip Catmur. I thought I knew most things about sailing a Dragon, turns out my knowledge was lacking and have benefited hugely as have others. Our club full time RYA instructor is currently putting in a program to assist the training of all our fleets which I am sure will benefit us all in the future.

What I have focused on this year is setting special courses each week taking into account the wind and tide conditions (haven't used a single race from the course card). I believe boats will want to go racing on well thought out courses rather than simply going around the cans.

Our club events included the Medway Regatta which was held in June. It coincided with the Queens Platinum Jubilee, so the Regatta was cut from three to two days (Thursday and Friday). The Regatta itself was a success with windward/leewards on both days for the Dragons and for the second year in a row *Hands Off* from Burnham took the honours.

Three Medway boats took part in the Edinburgh Cup in Falmouth, *Fit Chick* coming out on top with both *Gandalf* and *Suti* sailing for the first time at this event. (Unbeknown to us *Suti* had broken the retaining pin at the base of the mast allowing the mast to move around at will. Great for downwind but rubbish

upwind). Anyway, we certainly gained an appetite for more top-level racing and thought Falmouth was a fantastic venue and we all thoroughly enjoyed the week. (Medway might even get a mention at the prize giving next time!)

Edwin Hannant took the opportunity to keep his Dragon *Gandalf* at Falmouth to compete in Falmouth week. The winds were very light at times but had great success and duly won his class.

This year's East Coast Dragon Championships were hosted by the Medway Dragon Fleet. The event was overshadowed by the sad death of Queen Elizabeth II two days prior to the event. The decision was made to go ahead but with more of a respectful tone and a black ribbon was flown from the backstay on each boat. Eight Medway and two Burnham boats took part which turned out to be a very good and competitive competition with multiple race winners. Congratulations go to *Still Crazy* (Ian Gray) for their overall win and to *Suti* (Toby Atack) for runners up and overall Corinthian.

Edwin Hannant on *Gandalf* will be taking the reins for the next two years and may I say what a huge help and support he has been to me. The future of the Medway Dragon Fleet will be in very good hands as we near our 75th anniversary in 2024.

TREVOR COX
MEDWAY DRAGON
CAPTAIN



Staying Competitive

Mike Hayles and I bought the Dragon *Basilisk* (GBR515) from Mike Patten in October 1987, just in time for her to sink on her mooring at Burnham in the October hurricane. She had had one full season's racing and was only for sale because Mike Patten had decided to become a Dragon builder as Petticrows. He could then hardly campaign a virtually new Borresen boat. We owned her until 1997 and used her mostly in top flight competition. Our best result was a third in the Gold Cup in 1990 and we never felt short of boat speed.

We bought her back in 2007 with the intention that she would be raced in the Alde while we would use *Nereid* (GBR717) at events away from home. Things didn't work out like that and she found her way back onto the regatta circuit. She has remained competitive with many wins in Aldeburgh Week and various Vintage and Corinthian trophies elsewhere. She even won the Corinthian Trophy and the last race at last year's Edinburgh Cup.

So, this boat now in its thirty-sixth season has remained competitive and it is worth considering what has been needed to achieve this. I don't think it is down to the owners' sailing abilities. I think they have declined with age to roughly the same extent as the boat's competitive level has also in fact declined from high placing at the Gold Cup to the same at the Edinburgh Cup. Much has changed on the boat but there have been two fundamentals. The first is that we have been willing to expend the effort and money required, including maintaining a good sail wardrobe, and

the second is that Borresen built an extremely good platform for everything that we have done. The hull is very fair and shows few signs of age. Panel stiffness seems to be good. It would be very interesting to measure fore and aft deflection under heavy runner tension compared to the newest boats. My guess is that there would be some difference but probably below 5mm given the results found by Borresen when longitudinal bulkheads first were fitted. The hull is, however, heavier than when she was new. Paint, some absorption of water and retro-fitting have all added some middle-aged spread.

So, what has changed from the state of the art boat we first bought? In our first period of ownership, we fitted a ram, windward sheeting control for the genoa and tacking jumpers. The ram was essential, however misguided I think the associated rule changes were. The tacking jumper system we used was difficult to get right and not as effective as later ones. We also fitted bulkheads, which is unusual in an old boat and did nothing for our speed.

By the time we bought her again, the tacking jumpers had gone, and the spinnaker pole system had changed to a simple on-boom stowage. The main changes thereafter have been the replacement of the mainsheet horse with a standard GRP one from Borresen and a hybrid genoa halyard system which has kept the original drum system below deck but leads the fall down the mast rather than the forestay. She also has a relatively new Borresen mast and a new Petticrow boom. I don't think these

changes did much for speed other than making her easier to sail, particularly the changes in the runner arrangements consequent on the new, much wider mainsheet horse. We have also replaced wire with Dyneema in a variety of uses, saving weight and running more freely.

Could we improve her further? A really determined effort at weight reduction would help. This might well include removing the genoa sheet winches. Otherwise we could improve the swing test characteristics a bit by removing the fittings on the bow which make it easy to moor her at Aldeburgh. If we had really regular crews and were only doing regatta windward/leeward courses we should probably also remove the spinnaker chute. Perhaps we should again fit the tacking jumpers rather than having the very simple, fool proof fixed ones. A mainsheet fine tune system might help the older helmsman. Five to one purchase does mean a lot of rope at the leeward mark. We do need to upgrade a number of blocks which are elderly and don't run as smoothly as new ones would. The change that would be useful and isn't really possible is to raise the cockpit floor. By comparison with the new boats it is a long way up and down from deck level. If Mike and I were twenty years younger I think most of these things would happen. Our current pattern of usage makes it less likely since we are conflicted between sailing at Aldeburgh, often with scratch crews and regatta sailing.

My conclusion is that, provided the platform provided by the hull is really solid the older GRP boats can remain

competitive, similarly to the experience with carvel-planked boats. However, it is better to work at this on a continuous basis since the expense of recovering a boat that has been allowed to deteriorate will be much greater than the drip effect from one's bank account that we have experienced. *Basilisk* has been a boat that has always delivered what was expected of her and, as one of my crew remarked, "she definitely knows her way round the racecourse".

PATRICK GIFFORD







The 2022 Edinburgh Cup



Falmouth, perennial Falmouth, ever popular, ever there. So early July saw the Dragons assemble at Falmouth for a week of good racing, good sailing, and good socialising.

The Saturday was spent saying hello to friends, registering and picking up our goody bag, courtesy of regatta supporters Falmouth Harbour, Classic Cottages, Ancaster, Penrose Sails, Allspars and St Austell Brewery, who had brewed a limited run of 'Dragon beer'. Very good it was too! The other great thing about that first day, was getting to know the delightful and large

team of volunteers, always cheerful, ever helpful, who really went a long way to make the entire regatta both pleasant and memorable.

Robin Taylor of the organising club, The Royal Cornwall Yacht Club, was our Race Officer for the two regattas, with racing for the Southwest Championships on Sunday and Monday.

Nineteen Dragons came to the start on Sunday, ready to have three races each day of the opening regatta. Twelve of them were Corinthian entries, it was also wonderful to have two notable classics in the fleet, the stunningly restored

Bluebottle GBR 192 and the beautiful Pedersen & Thuesen *Rån* GBR 430. Not to be forgotten were several Dragons from the Vintage class, Cathy Ogden having travelled with *Kismet* GBR 508 from her Royal Forth Yacht Club base.

The racing got under way and Graham Bailey won this first round, from start to finish. It was great to see the Royal Forth Yacht Club's Richard Leask in *Kestra* GBR 731 in third place, in his first race for a couple of years.

The following two races that day proved what a master Graham Bailey is, winning them both in convincing style. Hot on his heels on good form was Martin Byrne aboard *Jaguar Racing* IRL 201. Third place was hotly contested amongst the fleet, with Cowes well represented by Chairman Barter in *Bertie* GBR 763 and Owen Pay in *Furious* GBR 777.



The second day the remaining three races were sailed, allowing the discard to come into play. Race four produced a worthy Burnham winner in Ian Gray in *Still Crazy* GBR 827. And excitingly, Crispin Blyth won race five in *Rån* GBR430. However, racing consistently well, it was Martin Byrne and *Jaguar Racing* who finished ahead of the rest of us, taking the championship. *Bluebottle*, having started so well, did not have it all her own way on the second day and had to be content with the runner-up slot, whilst Simon Barter was able to take third place.

On Monday evening we enjoyed a trip to Tregothnan House. We arrived by ferry, having steamed up the River Fal, for the championship prize giving. Drinks and canapes on the lawns in front of the house were well received.

Tuesday, with four more Dragons joining, brought 24 boats to the start of the main event. Graham Bailey had another good day, with a first and a seventh, though not as good as Andy Beadsworth in *Provezza Dragon* TUR 1212, who had a second and a first.

Meanwhile others were having a good day too. Abersoch's *Raissa* GBR 809 with skipper Michael Cope had an 8th in the first race, with Dragon stalwart Patrick Gifford in *Basilisk* GBR 515 snapping at his heels in 9th. Cathy Ogden raced into 14th slot and ever improving David Warner finished in 16th. Sure, there were the battles at the front of the fleet, as ever. But there were neck and neck, cut

and thrust battles being equally hard fought in the middle and at the back of the fleet.

Day two arrived bright and breezy. *Bluebottle* sailed another majestic race in race three. There was an especially loud cheer for 3rd place, as *Floatation* GBR 790 sailed across the finish line to give Richard Davies a fillip. Things changed in race four, however, as evergreen Ron James had a race win in *Fei-Lin's Flirtation* GBR 633

Ashore, things were looking bright as we all gathered at the Chain Locker quayside pub for an evening of beer, lots of beer, gin, lots of gin and shanty singing.

And so, the final two races on Thursday and Friday. Thursday gave us a taste of things to come with an exciting race, tricky to call and a dying wind not helping matters. Beadsworth, Bailey and Byrne took the top three slots. It seemed you had to have a surname starting with B to be in with a chance. Davies and Gray had good finishes too, whilst Trevor Cox aboard *Suti* GBR 747 in 9th place was closely followed by our local Bahamian Dave Ross in *Sanka* GBR 748 in 10th.

On Friday, going into the final race, at the top of the leader board only one or two points separated four possible winners. This was going to be close and interesting. The wind gods were having a lazy day, so careful tiller work and wind reading were called for. There was a general recall first off and not surprisingly, given how critical it now



seemed to get the race in, the black flag was bought out for the next start.

The line was clear and now all was to play for. Much swapping of places led to a tense and exciting final beat to the finish line. At the front Beadsworth and Bailey were crossing tacks whilst Gavia Wilkinson-Cox in *Jerboa* GBR 761 edged into the lead. James and Moss were also crossing tacks as they approached the finish.

Goodness, it was close at the end. *Jerboa* had their first race win. *Provezza Dragon* TUR 1212 got in front of *Bluebottle* GBR 192 to take second place forcing *Bluebottle* to settle for third and *Fei-Lin's Flirtation* pipped *Hands Off*.

But all our skills were nothing compared to the skills displayed by the 2022 Edinburgh Cup winners on board *Provezza Dragon* TUR 1212, Andy Beadsworth, Simon Fry and Edward Salter, nor that of the teams on board second overall *Bluebottle* and third was *Jaguar Racing*.

TIM WILKES



Below top to bottom:
Ràn, Meteor, Rainbow

The Forth Dragons have had a long, busy and mainly windy season from our Opening Regatta in April with our last races of the season on the last Saturday of October. Most of the club racing has involved *Wizz Too* GBR 343 with Helen Horsfall and Henry Boyd racing against *Kismet* GBR 508 Sheena Kerr and Cathy Ogden. *Meteor* GBR 402 belonging to Pete Cooke has been dry sailed this season but the Dragons enjoyed a great West Cup race, which is a long distance passage race around the Forth, with *Meteor* leading the way.

Richard Leask, Willie Adams and Donald Milne took *Kestra* GBR 731 on a long distance tow to Falmouth this season and were joined by *Kismet* with Moira Kinnear and Joe O'Leary joining Sheena and Cathy for that adventure. A great time was had by us all and we were made very welcome by the club and all the fantastic helpers. Having never visited Cornwall before we had a great time sailing in Falmouth Bay and the highlight on the water between races were the pasties!

The Scottish Fleet

Pete Cooke has had a busy year further afield chartering *True Story* and sailing with Martin Payne and Donald Milne in the Belgian Open in Oostende in August, followed by a trip to Imperia for the Italian Championships in September and most recently Lake Garda. A great learning experience which comes highly recommended, in some fantastic sailing locations, with top level competition in well run events.

The highlight for us on home waters was the Scottish Dragon Championship being run as part of a One Design event. The planned weekend event was shortened to a One Day event on Saturday 17th September and renamed the Queen Elizabeth Regatta. We had a visiting Dragon normally based in Findhorn, *Rainbow* GBR 686, with David Stevenson, Steve Cox and Mark Harris having sailed her from Findhorn to Lossiemouth, in challenging seas, so that she could be lifted out onto her trailer for her trip to Edinburgh. Our other visiting Dragon came from Royal Yorkshire Yacht Club and was the very beautiful restored classic *Ràn*, GBR 430, with Crispin Blyth, Jimmy Cliff and Hugh Blyth on board. We had the pleasure of their company alongside us in Falmouth which was the first outing for the restored *Ràn*.

The truncated Scottish Championships was a series of 4 races held in blustery Westerly conditions. The results could not have been closer between *Kestra*, *Meteor* and *Ràn* completing the series with only 1 point difference between them all. *Kestra*, with Lewis Smith joining Richard and Willie, finished with the same points as *Meteor* but was ahead in the last race so took the Scottish Championship trophy. *Meteor*, Kevan Gibb and Eddie Bachelor crewing with Pete, took second place and the First Classic trophy. *Ràn* having had a very consistent four 2nd places was 3rd overall with her 6 point total.

The 2023 season is looking busy already and we are looking forward to hosting the Scottish Dragon Championship along with the Classic and Vintage Dragon Championships. This will be held over the weekend of 8th - 9th October and we look forward to seeing you up here on the Forth to round off your season.

CATHY OGDEN



Solent Fleet Report



Every 5 years the Etchells 22 fleet hold their World Championships in Cowes. The Etchells fleet numbers ebb and flow synchronised with the proximity of the next Championship. This year they had a very active schedule with an event pretty much every other weekend, the UK Nationals, the Europeans, and finally the Worlds in late September. There are a limited number of dry sailing slots in Cowes and the Etchells took the lion's share, followed by J70s, and then a rapidly growing Sonata Fleet. Prevarication from one fleet member (*Furious*) caused the loss of one Dry Sailing slot and meant one regular participant was missing from the racing turnout. Also, as the season progressed, it was almost impossible to accommodate the tardier boats and visitors for Cowes Week. Fortunately, the Etchells fleet is slowly dispersing to the corners of the World, and we can revert back to business as usual for next year.

2023 is now the year of the Dragon with the Edinburgh Cup in Cowes, hosted by the Royal Yacht Squadron. Also, with the Gold Cup in Torquay, we hope for a good turnout for the cup. The schedule for August in the Solent is as follows:

Cowes Week: 29th July - 4th August
Edinburgh Cup: 15th - 18th August
South Coast Championships: 26th - 28th August

Which leads nicely into the Gold Cup in Torquay on the 9th - 15th September. Another date to consider is the ever-popular Cowes Classics Week from 8th to 14th July 2023 which is a real festival of Dragon racing on the Solent. We are in negotiations with the marinas in Cowes and hope to have some attractive propositions so please do contact us for more information.

Back to this season's racing and it was hot weather with light winds, as you all know. The early season belonged to *Jerboa* who won the WD Citron Plate. The Summer Series was closely fought but *Fanfare* won on countback. The Late Trophy was won by *Polly*, again on countback. The Class Championship, for overall winner of all races, was again won by *Jerboa*. Congratulations to Gavia Wilkinson-Cox, Mike Issaias, and Charles Street for their winnings.

The Solent Fleet had a successful Edinburgh Cup in Falmouth with four boats in the top ten, but unfortunately the cup did not return to its rightful home.

Next year the cup is in our home waters so hopes are high.

Cowes Week was a vintage regatta, and it was nice to see a recovery in numbers with nine entrants. It was nice to have a visitor as Stewart Reed joined us with his 'French' boat prior to returning to France for Regates Royales. We had all conditions including one day of wild planning conditions where the Dragon could once again demonstrate its most exciting characteristics. The usual suspects were fighting for the main prize, the Ganymede Bowl, but *Bertie* had an early showing and looked as if they could actually do it this year. The Baileys in *Bluebottle* eventually prevailed but it was all decided on the last race, with *Bluebottle* on 13 points and both *Jerboa* and *Ecstatic* on 14 points.

The South Coasts were a low-key affair but admirably managed by the CCYC. The weather was fantastic, but the wind was a notoriously unstable northerly and meant a real 'snakes & ladders' event - that is my excuse. Strangely *Bluebottle* still managed to win all four races; the best sailors always make their own luck!

OWEN PAY

The South-West Fleet

We were very glad to see the success and popularity of Falmouth as the 2022 Edinburgh Cup venue, and we hope that this might encourage more visitors to join us in 2023.

It was another 'dry year' for *Snap* and her crew as she is still in the farmer's shed being completely re-varnished, with progress hampered by my less than satisfactory right hand still not fully functional following the operation in February.

The plan is to get *Snap* finished in April 2023 in time for trials of some rig alterations ready for a more active season next year.

We are hoping to include a new crew member as well with a degree of Edinburgh Cup experience.

As we know, Classic Dragons do need constant attention, and the two images, one at Cockwells in 2016 following the rebuild, and one with the topsides stripped



taken in August 2022 indicate the amount of work required just after a few years. The varnish was damaged just as a result of the boat being incorrectly left in the rain for two weeks without a cover.



Buccaneer has been sailing in 2022, so we hope to have at least 2 Classics sailing in Falmouth next year. *Echidna*, a beautiful wooden spar classic, is always afloat at Falmouth, but is not involved in competition.

Once again, we will extend a warm welcome to all Dragons who would like to join us for Falmouth Week which is always held during the second week in August.

ALAN DALE

From Your Treasurer

2022 has been a different year from a Treasury viewpoint. Unfortunately I couldn't attend the January AGM and Dinner due to a holiday commitment. Simon very kindly presented the accounts. The AGM is a great opportunity to catch up with others. However Pepita and I did not miss our previous AGM experience. On that occasion we missed the last train back to Kent.

The March direct debiting of members' subs revealed thirteen rejections. Seven

members left us, the remainder were boat subs. During the season these losses were replaced with a mixture of new members and boats.

All was going well until Lloyds Bank unexpectedly advised the withdrawal of their direct debit (DD) facility. As 95% of your subs are collected via 300+ mandates, this was not good news. My subsequent descriptions of our bankers could not possibly be repeated here. Anyway subsequent investigation

revealed that we can move to another DD bureau without obtaining new mandates. That was very good news.

Autumn has seen the big hike in interest rates. It is fascinating to see our monthly deposit interest increase by 125% since May.

Merry Christmas and Happy New year to you all!

BRUCE

The BDA 2022 AGM and Dinner

The 2022 British Dragon Association AGM and Dinner will take place on **Friday 20th January 2023** at the Royal Thames Yacht Club, Knightsbridge, London. After a very mixed up couple of years we are back to 'normal' this year so please do come and support your Officers and the Association by arranging your dinner table and booking your tickets now. The evening will get underway as usual with pre-meeting drinks at 18.00. The AGM will start at 18.30 prompt and dinner will be called at 20.00. There will be a cash bar for all drinks before, during and after dinner.

After dinner we shall present the Citron Trophy and have some short speeches. There will then be time for relaxed drinks before departure at 23.00. Dress is reefer jacket or lounge suit.

Tickets are £60.00 per person for dinner which is payable in advance and preferably by bank transfer to: *British Dragon Association, Lloyds Bank plc.*
Sort Code: 30-00-08, Account No.: 03090827

Please reference your payment with your name followed by 'AGM'. Cheques, made payable to the British Dragon Association, will also be accepted. Cheques should be posted to the Honorary Treasurer, Bruce Boyd, together with with your name followed by 'AGM'.

To reserve your tickets and for further information please e-mail the Honorary Secretary, Chris Brittain, at Britishdragonsec@gmail.com with confirmation of the number of tickets you require, the names of your guests, any special dietary requirements and confirmation of the date your bank transfer was made or your cheque was posted.

We look forward to seeing you all there.



Paul Gibbins
PHOTOGRAPHY



If you're seriously invested in winning, consider starting with a visit to Cascais.

Known for its prime racing playground, Cascais is also known as a historic and cosmopolitan seaside resort in the Atlantic Ocean located 30km west of the Capital - a 20-minute drive from Lisbon Airport. It's year-round mild weather and consistent wind make this village a sailor's paradise.

Being at one of the world's best regatta locations ensures Peticrows is very well placed to develop high-performance boats efficiently. So if you're looking for a winning package, come test your next Dragon with us, Pedro Rebelo de Andrade and the rest of our team are waiting to welcome you.

For spares and repairs in the UK you may contact our local agent Katie Cole
[@katie@katiecole.eu](mailto:katie@katiecole.eu)

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WE TAKE DRAGONS SERIOUSLY

