

Dragon News

British Dragon Association



2004

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1st Cowes Week

1st Northern Area Championship

2002

1st Gold Cup

1st Swedish Championship

1st Finnish Championship

1st Portuguese Championship

1st Open Dutch Championship

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Front cover picture: The master at work

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UK Dragon Fixtures

2004

- April 9th-12th – Burnham Easter Regatta
- May 29th-31st – East Coast Championship Medway*
- June 19th-21st – South West Championship Torbay*
- June 22nd-25th – Edinburgh Cup Torbay*
- July 11th-17th – Gold Cup Falmouth
- August 15th-20th – Classics Championship Aldeburgh
- September 11th-12th – Northern Championship Clyde*

2005

- World Championship – Warnemunde Germany
- Edinburgh Cup – Lowestoft*
- South Coast Championship – Cowes*
- East Coast Championship – Lowestoft*
- Northern Championship – Forth*
- Classics – Burnham Week

2006

- July 1st-7th – European Championship Cowes

* These are counting events for the Citron Trophy and for qualification for IDA events. The South West Championship in Torbay replaces the South Coasts for 2004 only

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CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2003 - 2004

The 74th year of the Dragon has come and gone, and we look forward to the 75th. It will be a time for celebration, starting with the Jubilee Ball in London in January and culminating in the phenomenal regatta in St Tropez in October, with an entry of 250 Dragons already over-subscribed.

Of course, it is the Dragon itself that is the phenomenon. There is no other three-man keelboat in the world of any age which is raced with such enthusiasm by so many superb sailors in so many countries and where new boats are being built in such numbers. There is a whole raft of reasons why, but it surely could not be happening if boats were not being built with modern materials and had they not been developed with the use of modern equipment and fittings. One could easily point to other classes, mostly local and some similar in many ways, which have not made this transition into the modern age.

It is interesting to look forward and wonder whether Dragons will still be an active class in the same way in another 75 years time – whether they will be a real part of the modern sailing scene or an amusing antique. Even 25 years will be a challenge, and if that challenge is to be met, then the development of the boat must continue down the road that has already taken it from the carvel wooden construction with wooden spars and cotton sails that would have been found in 1929 to the craft we know today.

Strategy Paper

I was therefore very pleased to see the IDA Officers producing a strategy paper, adopted at the IDA AGM in October, aimed at taking a longer view of how development in the class should proceed in the future.

It starts by trying to define what it is that makes the Dragon so special, and commits the class to a policy of maintaining its character whilst also aiming for continuous improvement and use of new materials, but in a way that will avoid the immediate obsolescence of existing boats. No more than has happened in the past, but the devil will lie in the detail and I am sure there will be much discussion and difficult decisions ahead. The important thing is that we face up to the issue and try and keep it moving.

We are very lucky in the UK in having two very capable representatives on the technical committee in Mike Hayles and the Chairman Graham Bailey who will need to steer a delicate path through the potential minefield, but anyone who thinks that the class should sit still should themselves stop and consider whether we would all be sailing Dragons today without the progress that has taken place during the history of the class so far.

However, one suggestion that has certainly slipped off the agenda for the time being is that of hiking aids such as footstraps. What has come in is a relaxation of the rules for the top of the coaming so that it can be made more comfortable. We can all be grateful for that!

Back on the home sailing front, it has generally been a good year. There is a rash of new boats on order, which is surely a sign of a healthy class, and we have had a trickle of new and returning owners, generally with new or nearly new boats. Regional and local events have been well supported,



although Edinburgh Cup numbers were down, reflecting a well known reluctance of some of the fleet to travel north. They missed an excellent week on the Clyde, with a well run regatta and superb hospitality. The Classics ran their championship as part of Falmouth week, and it was clearly a great success. Martin Payne won the Citron Trophy, neck and neck with Eric Williams on placings, but with a better result in the higher scoring Edinburgh Cup.

Elsewhere, Patrick Gifford was seventh in the Worlds in Hobart and won a race in the process. The Europeans in Kinsale produced the odd hangover and results which were perhaps also better forgotten from a British point of view. Paul H-J was fifth, proving that he can be beaten (although not, apparently, at Cannes). Eric Williams was 17th, which does not sound too good until one reads the results list and realises just who he had to beat to get even there! He came sixth in the Gold Cup, which was impressive. Martin Payne crewed Ted Sawyer to 20th in the Europeans, but he helmed at Cannes and came second. Not bad for a crew.

Looking Ahead

The Worlds are in Warnemunde in Germany for 2005, and the Europeans in Cowes in 2006. The IDA agreed at the AGM to increase the number of places available to us by three, making 12 for the Worlds and 18 for the Europeans because we are the host nation. However, I am sure that there will be pressure on places for both. This should give our regional events and the Edinburgh Cup extra spice over the next two years which will be critical for selection.

Next year, the Gold Cup comes to Falmouth, and it is open to all. Interest has already been impressive both from home and abroad and we are confident that it will be a great event. The organization is well under way with JP Morgan Fleming as main sponsors, and they are clearly determined to make it a memorable regatta for all. Go to www.dragongoldcup.com and you will be able to enter online. The Edinburgh Cup is at Torquay beforehand with a two-week gap and arrangements for you to leave your boat in the area, and again you can enter online. Both events should be excellent.

Before that comes the Jubilee Ball, and the chance for someone to become the proud owner of the brand-new Dragon Jubilee. We would like to thank Aberdeen Asset Management for their great support for this project, together with Holt Allen and Borresen. We will be doing all we can to maximise the PR opportunities of the event for the benefit of the class and our sponsors, and aim to have a spectacular and memorable evening's entertainment, befitting the anniversary we are celebrating.

To end the season we can look forward to St Tropez with 250 entries. It should be a great week to end a great year.

James Mehew

DRAGON GOLD CUP 2004 Falmouth
Enter on line:
www.dragongoldcup.com

BRITISH DRAGON ASSOCIATION

NOTICE OF AGM

The Annual General Meeting of the British Dragon Association will be held at The Four Seasons Hotel, Hamilton Place, Park Lane, London W1A 1AZ on Monday January 16th 2004 at 6pm

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of last meeting and matters arising
3. Chairman's Report
4. To receive and adopt the accounts for the year ending 31st October 2003
5. Subscriptions
6. Class Promotion
7. Election of Officers

8. IDA Report
9. Gold Cup, Falmouth 2004 and Europeans Cowes 2006
10. Any Other Business

RE ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The BDA Committee propose the following officers for re-election at the AGM:

Chairman – James Mehew
Vice Chairman – Rory Bowman
Hon Secretary – Julia Bailey
Hon Treasurer – Gill Smith



75th Anniversary DRAGON Jubilee Ball

Friday 16 January 2004
Four Seasons Hotel
Hamilton Place, Park Lane,
London W1
Ball Office Tel: 0208780 5270

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SOUTH COAST CHAMPIONSHIP

Thirty Dragons visited Cowes for the South Coast Championship hosted by the Royal London Yacht Club. It was clear from the entry list that racing would be on the hot side of spicy. Eric Williams in his new machine was going to be a tough man to beat, Andrew Craig from Royal St George YC Ireland, having had a good run at the worlds in Tasmania earlier this year, would be on the pace. Richard Hoj Jordan, having just won the Easter Regatta event at Burnham, has already proved himself a winner this year. And Julia Bailey has put so much time in on the water recently some think the only thing she can't do is walk on it – fresh from Star sailing in Palma – she was bound to be up there. Local Cowes sailors Peter Nicholson, Chris Caws, Neil Payne and Paul Patenall have all drunk from the cup of victory and were bound to put in a challenge. Visitors in the form of Len Jones, Owen Pay, Mike Hayles, Danny Sinclair, Ian Ratnage and James Mehew are all able to put the results in. So with all that taken into account, the winner of this event was going to have to pull something special out of the hat, and I don't mean a rabbit.

The fleet enjoyed three races on Saturday and two races on Sunday, all over windward leeward courses in the western Solent. The chief officer George Chapman, and his team did well to get all three races in on the Saturday in a dying breeze. Classic division, which as always was a hard fought affair, was won by *Meteor*, a rather lovely 1963 Pederson & Thuesen sailed by Laurance Jacobsen, from *Moonbeam* and *Mistress*, the 'old ladies' of the fleet race as hard to beat as their more up to date, if not slightly uglier, plastic rivals – always great to see the wooden Dragons on the water.

It was unfortunate that both *Supremacy* and *Temeraire* were unable to join the race course on either days. Even more upsetting was the absence of Peter Nicholson who had a touch of boat trouble on the first day keeping him off the course. He was able to join us on the second day and put in a display one would expect from a seasoned campaigner posting a two and a three – Peter managed to prove that you can get good results even if you have Justin Biddle running the middle of the boat.

Sixth overall went to Danny Sinclair, bearing in mind he travelled all the way from Scotland hopefully the overall result and the win in race two made the journey worth while. In fifth place was Mikes Hayles sailing the brand-new *Kraken* with his daughter Melanie Hayles and the ever vocal Michael John Gifford – a good first day wasn't quite matched in day two – but a great result for this new boat all the same. In fourth place overall Richard Hoj Jordan with Bully and the Little Lad sailing *Chaotic* had a consistent event both on the water and in the bar – most importantly the fact remains that they were the best looking crew on the race course. In third place Andrew Craig on his brand-new boat *Chimaera* had a cracking weekend posting a 2,10,6,2,1. A good omen for the new boat and Andrew went home to the poppy fields of Ireland with his head held high. Second overall Eric Williams in *Ecstatic*, with his North Sails team of Nigel Young and Jamie Lea, posted a consistent set of scores in the form of a 1,9,2,4,3. Eric has been around the Solent for a few years and no doubt, with his new speed machine better things are to come from this dream team.

And so the title of South Coast Champion for 2003 went to Julia Bailey sailing *Aimee* and crewed by a couple of newcomers to racing, Graham Bailey and David Heritage. A superb series of 4,2,1,1 enabled them to win the regatta with a race to spare, which is a good job as they will be the first to

admit that their race five was a bit of a clowns' day out. That one race aside, team *Aimee* sailed the most consistent regatta and ended up deserving winners – so to Julia, Graham and H, good effort all round, A+, you can all go straight to the top of the class.

Competitors enjoyed a drinks reception on the Saturday with the memorable championship dinner and prizegiving in the splendid surroundings of the Royal London YC on the Sunday night.

A great weekend's racing, thanks must go to the Royal London for all their efforts with drinks and especially to the race team headed by PRO George Chapman for organising some excellent courses. Also thanks to fleet Captain William Daniels for all the effort he put in to making the weekend a huge success.

Matthew Armstrong

South Coasts winner *Aimee* – photo Hamo Thornycroft



SOUTH WEST AREA CHAMPIONSHIP

The Royal Torbay Regatta 25-27 August 2003

Those Dragon crews who accepted the challenge of the South West Area Championship, on 25-27 August, enjoyed Torbay at its best with near perfect conditions for keelboats on the water and on shore at the Royal Torbay Yacht Club.

Visitors came from The Solent and Falmouth to join the Torbay fleet in anticipation of the Edinburgh Cup, which will be staged here in June 2004. The Edinburgh Cup will be followed by the Gold Cup to be held in neighbouring Falmouth. These two events will be sure to attract a huge international entry.

The regatta precedes Dartmouth Week and comprises two races back to back on Monday and Tuesday, with one race on Wednesday. For the whole of the series of five races Steve Birbeck, the race officer, set well-considered Olympic-style courses. As the wind came from a fairly constant easterly direction, the windward mark was always inshore and with the easterlies came the swell from Lyme Bay. The



ROUND THE ISLAND RACE

ON JUNE 21st 2003, the 67th Round the Island Race attracted 1,595 entries. At over 60 miles this is a long distance challenge for the Dragon. Although conditions were forecast to remain light, the wind freshened to 17 knots as the fleet rounded The Needles and headed for St Catherine's. The breeze held steady for the remainder of the race, allowing most competitors to finish within the time limit.

The day started at 0630 with the Multihull fleet hoisting spinnakers in the light north-easterly and running down the western Solent towards Hurst Narrows.

The Dragons started at 0700 with the Etchells, Sportsboats and Hunter 70's.

Moragwr, crewed by our offshore and ocean specialists Messers Hannay and Bate of the Army Sailing Association, got away on the first run, rounded the Needles in the lead and maintained it throughout the day.

Chaotic, skippered by Duncan Grindley, caught them up

on the beat to St Catherines Point, but Dave Ross sailing *Rampage* found a breeze out to sea round the back of the island to pull through to second place by Bembridge.

On the run from the Forts to the line off East Cowes, there was a 10-mile running battle for second place with *Rampage* settling it on the line, in an exciting finish. So *Morgawr* won the coveted Royal Singapore Yacht Club trophy this year for the first Dragon home in an elapsed time of 09:13:51.

In the other fleets, whilst Francis Joyon's ORMA 60 *Eure Loir-Idec* was the first round in 4 hours 5 minutes 21seconds, it is interesting to note that the major prizes went to low handicapped boats, all 'Dragon sized'.

Overall winners for the second year (The Gold Roman Bowl) were brothers Simon, Kit and David Rogers, sailing their father Jeremy's Contessa 26 *Rosina of Beaulieu*. Edward Donald's Folkboat *Madelaine* won the Silver Roman Bowl as runner-up, with Martyn Wheatley's H-Boat *Cloud Nine* third. Both have won the Round the Island Race before. The last recorded finisher was at 21.58!

Barnacle Bill

start lines were well set but with the occasional bias to the pin end and as the line was quite long, it inevitably paid to start at the pin end and "head for the Imperial".

Excalibur (GBR576), helmed by Paul Patenall with Martin Payne and Bill Daniels, secured the series with five wins. Competition for the next three places was tough and the final order was not secure until the last race. *Jerboa* (GBR 671) sailed by Gavia Wilkinson-Cox and *Heuschereuke* (GBR 422) sailed by Sandy Ellis with Jim White and Dave Ellis, finished equal on points but on countback *Jerboa* took second overall, with *Heuschereuke* first Classic Boat. *Moonbeam* (GBR434) sailed by David Jephcott with Jean-Pierre Villon and Justin Pirie was a very close fourth.

We were entertained with fireworks and the Red Arrows after the prize giving on the Thursday. The Dragons' silverware for regatta week is impressive. The Dragons have

enjoyed a long association with the Royal Torbay YC, confirmed in the 1948 Olympics and subsequent years. Currently the fleet is at a low point. The competitors in the 2003 regatta hope that the 75th Anniversary of the Class and the Gold Cup in 2004 will help the fleet to regroup at Torbay, where the yacht club and facilities are excellent.

Paul Patenall

South and West Area Championship Overall Results:

1st 576 *Excalibur* Paul Patenall, Martin Payne, Bill Daniels (Royal Torbay YC) 4pts, 2nd 671 *Jerboa* Gavia Wilkinson Cox, Vincent Hoesch, Fred Imhoff (RTYC) 10, 3rd 422 *Heuschrecke* Sandy Ellis, Jim White, Dave Ellis (RTYC) 10, 4th 434 *Moonbeam* David Jephcott, Jean Pierre Villon, Justin Price (Royal Western YC) 13, 5th 256 *Buccaneer* Bernard Bagley, Brian Rosevear, Sue Rosevear (Mylor YC) 19.

TEAM RACING THE CANNON BALL

September 6th & 7th 2003

Host Club: Koninklijke Nederlandsche Zeil & Roei Vereniging (Royal Netherlands YC, Muiden)

The Teams:

Royal Netherlands YC 1: Frank van Beuningen & Dries/Jasper, Ronald Pfeiffer & Jaap, Jan Romke & Echbert de Sauvage

Royal Netherlands YC 2: Michael van Dis & Sjaak Haakman, Andre Dupont & Lude Leuvelink, Nick Andrisse & Lydia Verduyn/Genevieve

Royal London YC: Alan Bulmer & Ninx, Bill Baniels & Paul Patenall, Fred Solly & Ben Rogerson

Royal St George YC: Andy Craig & Jon O'Connor, Tim Pearson & Peter Bowring, Jimmy Fitzpatrick & Ailbe Millerick

The Boats and representatives: Conickskint NED 1 Joop, Hestia NED 300 Wouter van Dis, Tijl uilenspiegel NED 24 Hans of richart Blickman. Bluesette NED275 Romke, Villa Amuda NED278 Hay Winters, Kartenaar NED314 Peter Hoekstra. Warm Red Yellow Bleu NED 344 Frans Brand, POSH NED238 Ronald Schaap, Porik NED347 Simon Wierper

The Racing

The RLYC team were surprised to be the first to arrive at Muiden on the Friday afternoon and set to helping Frank and his men launch boats from the Dragons' own crane at Muiden (well we watched them anyway) and paddle them around to the marina by the clubhouse.

After a few beers at the club it was decided to head for town on the heels of the defending Cannon Balls the Royal St George YC Team, and the three Commodores kept us out until the early hours!

Our hosts arranged some fine accommodation in the form of a 108 ft Dutch barge, moored outside the yacht club, fantastically convenient but pleased I didn't bring the wife as the Irish and English shared, without squabbling nor firing any cannons at each other, and morning arrived all too quickly. After a fine breakfast, we set sail without spinnakers for the programme of six races.

RLYC seemed to do so much team racing that we sailed ourselves to the front in the first round and then to the back again against both of the Netherlands teams losing the first rubber 2, 5, 6. Frank picked on his old flat mate Alan and RNYC1 beat RLYC narrowly with a 1, 4, 5 in race 4.

RNYC2 then did well in race two to beat the RStGYC by 1 point with a 2,3,5. Then in race three the Irish, having lost to RNYC2, won against RNYC1 with a 2,3,4.

In race 5 RLYC were ahead of the RStGYC but snatched defeat from victory when superior team racing by Andy Craig got his team through from a losing 2 4 6 to a winning 2,3,4 in an exciting finish. In the last race of the day, RNYC1 beat RNYC2, scoring 1,3,5 a 3 point win.

So at the end of Day One RNYC1 led with 27 points on race wins, and RStGYC were level with 27 points, RNYC2 behind with 34 points and RLYC on 36 points.

Back ashore we enjoyed beers in the Pampas bar followed by dinner, rounded off with some Genevas and excellent speeches from the three Commodores and Team Captains. The floating accommodation was by now not so fantastic, with the drains overflowing like a bad dream, but we made the best of a bad situation, one or two decided to sleep in the bar, John sitting on his stool, some others under a table!

IRISH NATIONALS

Pictured in action on opposite page and this page below, is *Phantom*, winner of the Irish Nationals and top Irish performer at the European Championship – sailed by Neil Hegarty, with Peter Bowring and David Williams.

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Light airs on Sunday forced the race committee to limit the course to one round, a beat and a run, so no scope for a bad start nor any mistakes upwind! RStGYC managed to beat RNYC1, RNYC1 lost to RNYC2 who lost to RStGYC, who then thrashed RLYC 1,2,3 in faint zephyrs in the final race to secure a fine victory and retain the Cannon Ball. Only problem was, how to get it home again?

The competitors were grateful to the owners who lent their boats. The Royal Netherlands Yacht Club made the visitors most welcome and the event was a great success.

W von Daniels



THE HORGAN LYNCH & PARTNERS DRAGON IRISH NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP 2003

Less than a fortnight after the highly successful Dragon European Championship, sponsored by Setanta Asset Management at Kinsale YC, several of the international teams were back in West Cork to again do battle with the cream of Irish Dragon sailors. This time it was for the Horgan Lynch & Partners Dragon Irish National Championship.

The Irish Nationals were hosted by Glandore Harbour YC for the very first time, although the club has previously hosted many very successful South Coast championships. This would be a six-race event, held over four days, with OOD Alan Crosbie in charge.

From the first race on Thursday it was obvious that this was going to be quite a battle between two of the Royal St George YC teams – defending champions Neil Hegarty, Peter Bowring and David Williams in *Phantom*, and former champion Andrew Craig, Claus Hoj-Jensen and Graham Elms in *Chimaera*.

Almost 70 per cent of the first race was led by *Phantom*, hotly pursued by *Chimaera*. The two boats pulled away from the rest of the fleet and *Chimaera* eventually overtook *Phantom* on the second beat to win the race.

Friday morning's race, the second in the series, was led by John Lavery, Paul Maguire and Aidan Tarbett in *King Rat* at the start. However, on the second beat *Phantom* got inside at the weather mark and finished a distance ahead of *King Rat* and *Chimaera* in that order.

Race three was won by the veteran champion Nick Cotter, racing *Whisper*, with Poul Ricard Hoj Jensen and Don O'Dowd ("Watch the genoa Mick, too high!"). *Whisper* went hard right on the first beat, rounded the weather mark in first place and never lost the lead after that. *Chimaera* was second, and *Jessica*, raced by Ward Woods, Brian Mathews and Mark Pettit was third. A bad result for *Phantom*, they finished fifth.

The fourth and fifth races were held on Saturday. *Chimaera* led the fleet from the start and raced down the

right-hand side of the run. *Phantom* recovered from a bad start by going to the left, positioning them on the inside of the mark. They covered *Chimaera* for the rest of the race and finished first. *Whisper* was third.

Encouraged by this success, *Phantom* got off to a flying start in the afternoon race. They were first at the weather mark, followed closely by *Puca*, raced by Jay Bourke, Ben Mulligan and Stormin' Norman, and *Jessica*. Not such a good beat for *Chimaera*. *Phantom* gybed over to cover *Chimaera* at the weather mark, while *Puca* pulled ahead to the right and took the lead.

However, they slipped from first to fifth between the leeward and the second weather mark by going too far to the right. *Puca* pulled back to leeward again, to regain the lead and win the race. *Phantom* was second, while *Chimaera* put in a tremendous performance, coming from tenth place to fourth down the second run.

Light airs on Sunday morning for the final race resulted in one general recall and some boats being on course side. On the second restart, *Phantom* tried to cover *Chimaera* but was unsuccessful. Instead they picked up breeze to the left and were first round the weather mark, followed by *Jessica* and *Chimaera*. *Phantom* and *Chimaera* then engaged in a gybing duel, resulting in *Chimaera* having an inside overlap on *Phantom* at the leeward mark.

However, *Phantom* edged ahead to secure second place in the race and a win overall – retaining their title as National Champions. *Chimaera* was second overall. *Jessica* meanwhile won the race comfortably to secure a third overall result.

Neil Hegarty and Peter Bowring went on to represent the Irish Dragon fleet in the Champion of Champions event run by the Irish Sailing Association at the end of the season. Hegarty and Bowring won the event, making them the top sailors in Ireland for 2003.

Tim Pearson

MISTRESS AT FALMOUTH WEEK

*The British Dragon Classic Open Championship
Sunday 10th – Saturday 16th August 2003*

Falmouth Week follows Cowes Week and attracts a 400-boat entry. Each of the six yacht clubs hosts a day when up to 100 club members can be involved manning everything from teapots to rescue craft. A huge marquee at the Maritime Museum provides a live music venue for 2,000 revellers, while Royal Cornwall YC, St Mawes and Mylor YC put on entertainment around the harbours. Not forgetting the excellent restaurants, fireworks, characterful pubs and the Marine Band.

Falmouth Dragons are spread around the clubs in Carrick Roads and comprise mainly older boats, which makes for fun and competitive racing, all at a reasonable budget. The nine locals were joined by *Moonbeam* (GBR 434) a varnished Borresen with a leak top, owned by the Jephcott family and based at Plymouth, Richard Green's *Sagitta* from the Medway, and *Mistress* (GBR 363). The last of three built at Morgan Giles before closure of Teignmouth in 1964, *Mistress* was originally a Torbay boat now based at the Classic Boat Museum at Newport.

The pre-regatta Falmouth Classics Day is on Saturday. The first day of Falmouth Week proper is hosted by the Helford River SC, so it is necessary to sail around to the course area off the Helford River on the Sunday. The marks are fantastically small so it is crucial to arrive early to identify them.

In a variable north-easterly breeze, local boat *Rainbow* (GBR 686) Mark Webster, Mike Cowdry and Ian Wiznar – formerly the *Buccaneer* team) took the inshore route and led by the windward mark, closely pursued by *Sagitta*. *Mistress* and *Moonbeam* vied for third place, trying to keep ahead of *Bluebottle's* sistership *Buccaneer* (GBR 256) Bernie Bagley with Brian and Sue Rosevear of Mylor YC). On the second round *Mistress* led, followed by *Rainbow*, *Sagitta* and *Buccaneer* finishing in that order and all within a boat length of each other – an indication of some close racing to come.

Race Two Monday Mylor YC

Moonbeam, sporting a plaster patch "Aim Here" on her port quarter after a coming together with *Buccaneer* at the top mark the previous day, led at the windward mark, closely pursued by *Mistress* and *Sagitta* on the three-sail reach to Penarrow and run to Velt. *Quicksilver* were obliged to set the spinnaker without their broken pole. Meanwhile, after a luffing match, *Mistress* keeping her spinnaker, managed to pull ahead on a close reach to Boathouse.

On the next two downwind legs *Sagitta* caught the leaders, and on the final round *Penguin* (GBR 324) Peter Crowther missed the start finish gate. The race for second place became intense, resulting in an altercation at the windward mark but *Sagitta* prevailed – aiming at the starboard side of *Moonbeam's* varnished hull. The placings were *Mistress*, *Sagitta*, *Moonbeam*, *Rainbow*, *Buccaneer*, *Wizz Too* (GBR 343) owned by William Shawcross of St Mawes.

Race Three Tuesday Restronguet SC

We raced the same course which was just as well following the beers at Mylor YC the previous evening.

Mistress won the delayed start on starboard tack nearer the committee boat. *Fennis Wolf* (524) sailed by Clive Hoyle and daughter Susie were going fast and overhauled *Mistress* to leeward, then a small coaster also steaming to the windward mark obliged *Mistress* to tack off. *Quicksilver* GBR 534 (Peter Flutter, Captain of the Falmouth Fleet), *Tana* GBR 498, *Isis* GBR 483 and *Buccaneer* were all closely packed at the first mark just behind *Mistress* and *Fennis Wolf*.

Isis is sailed by Peter Larnar, Jenny Leathes and John Bramley. This is Peter's first year of racing and of Dragon ownership. He obviously felt at home in a Dragon with the complexity of the dashboard matching that of his previous occupation as an airline pilot.

Sagitta worked her way up to second place during the first round, with *Moonbeam* up to fourth. In the light airs the course was shortened at Govenor, but all the Dragons continued racing to the committee boat in an evening breeze. At the prize giving Restronguet SC (home of Ben Ainslie) had ran out of beer, so we moved on the Mylor YC where the Buccaneers organised a fine barbecue for all the Dragons.



Mistress, seen here on the Solent – photo by Hamo Thornycroft

Race Four, Wednesday Flushing SC Regatta

The start was again delayed for lack of wind, and the same course was set thus saving us navigation. *Mistress* were so preoccupied trying out the first beat that they missed all the guns. *Sagitta* had an excellent start moving fast in the light airs with *Fennis Wolf*, *Moonbeam*, *Rainbow*, *Tana* and *Isis* all going well when the wind died, yet *Sagitta* continued to move ahead! When the wind then filled in from the south east *Sagitta* opened up an enormous lead, followed by *Fennis Wolf* (who were not seen again that day) with *Moonbeam* in third.

Race Five Thursday St Mawes SC Regatta

Moonbeam needed to win races to secure the Classic Trophy, *Sagitta* needed to win races to win the Week, so the pressure was mounting. The wind was light from the south east, resulting in a new course using a specially-laid windward mark this day. After a late start, *Mistress* found more pressure and prevailed in shifty airs near the windward mark but with *Sagitta* and *Moonbeam* close behind the racing was tight. *Mistress* struggled to hold on until the end of the second round when *Sagitta*, with one or two others, unfortunately (or fortunately depending which boat you were sitting on) sailed the wrong (Flying Fifteen) course! By the end of the third lap the fleet was spread out but the finishing order became *Mistress*, *Moonbeam*, *Fennis Wolf*, *Buccaneer*, *Isis*, and *Quicksilver*. Competitors enjoyed an evening liberty ferry trip to St Mawes – jazz band with pasties and beers on the town quay.

Race Six Friday Royal Cornwall YC

Another close race despite *Mistress* and *Tana* being OCS. After restarting *Mistress* managed to tack round the windward mark and squeeze in just ahead of *Moonbeam* and *Sagitta* on the specially-laid windward buoy. For the first two rounds the race for first and second, and for third and fourth places was intense until the start of the third round when *Moonbeam* took the lead. The close racing continued and *Moonbeam* prevailed, with *Mistress* second followed by *Sagitta*, *Rainbow*, *Buccaneer*, and *Tana*.

In the marina the Classic Champion Bill Daniels, skipper of *Mistress* was summarily thrown in the briny, followed shortly thereafter by the runner-up skipper David Jephcott. America's Cup-style, David went on to provide Champagne for the winning crew, a great sporting gesture. But the real classics were racing *Encore* – GBR 488 is owned and crewed by the self-styled 'Last of the Summer Wine' team with sun total age 200 and nick-names like Compo and Cleg! *Encore* une fois!

The Town Regatta is held on the final Saturday with the Port of Falmouth as the organising authority. The Mayor is joined by leading local yachtsmen on the race committee. The classes race for champagne prizes, a tradition set by Lord Shawcross back in 1951 when he raced against Jack Silly for a case of champagne wager. Team *Moonbeam* went on to win the Town Regatta from *Sagitta* and got to drink all the champers this time.

The Classic Regatta is the brainchild of Sir Richard Rycroft owner of *Logie*. The competition is held during the regatta week at a venue where Dragons exist, and has been at Burnham and Medway Weeks in previous years. Local regatta weeks are a great fun alternative to the BDA championship events, with some competitive but not too aggressive racing and long socials. Team *Mistress* recommends local regatta weeks to you. This reporter favours supporting "emerging fleets" with this event and suggests Dartmouth Week or the Royal Torbay Regatta for 2004.

Bill Daniels

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"Tack Edouard... tack Edouard, tack, tack!"

DRAGON SCOTTISH CHAMPIONSHIP AND EDINBURGH CUP 2003

It was a relatively small band of travellers who made the trip to the Royal Northern and Clyde Yacht Club for this year's Scottish Championship and Edinburgh Cup, affected by major Regattas shortly in Holland and Ireland. It seemed, sadly, that there were more than a few 'Sassenachs' who had deemed the journey north to be just too far, or the event just too cold and wet, but the reduced entries from the south were offset by an invasion from the Irish Dragon fleets. Those sceptics who expected the Scottish weather to give them a good soaking just rigging the boat were emphatically disproved, with warm glorious sunshine bathing the car park at Rhu marina whilst putting the boat together on both the Friday and Saturday.

The Clyde Dragon fleet has sadly dwindled over the years, but the welcome at the sumptuous Royal Northern and Clyde YC was nothing less than convivial, with pretty much every member of the club and its staff, whether they were involved with the championships or not, falling over themselves to make the whole Dragon fleet extremely welcome.

Racing for the Scottish Championship started on the Sunday lunchtime, which saw patchy sunshine and not much breeze, ensuring that the ever-patient and highly professional Principle Race Officer David Witton was forced to wait for the wind to fill in while the fleet drifted aimlessly for an hour or so. The race finally got underway in testing conditions, where the windward mark became a leeward mark half way up the patience-testing first beat, and it was Irish visitor Simon Brien in *Kin* who made the best of the lottery, clinching a sensibly foreshortened race win, trailed by Rob Campbell in *Quicksilver* and Nigel Cole's *Tsunami*. The afternoon's race was slightly breezier, by comparison, and it was Rory Bowman in *Yeah Baby* who made the best of the somewhat strengthened airs, with Owen Pay's *Njord* and Ron James's *Fei-Linn Flirtation* trailing. However, Clive Morgan in *Amok* amazed many by becoming the overnight leader in his first championship, proving that consistency pays with two fourths.

Monday was a long day for many, not only because of the schedule of three races to sail, but because the breeze,

although a little more consistent in strength, was blowing from the tall hills behind Greenock, providing the fleet with more than a few testing wind shifts. Rory Bowman read the shifts to best effect in the day's first race, trailed by Danny Sinclair's *Eclipse*, and Rob Campbell in *Quicksilver*, who came out top of the pile in Race Four, followed by Martin Makey in *Ganador* and Simon Brien's *Kin*. *Eclipse* gained line honours in the long fifth and final race with James Mehew in *Comanche* and the omnipresent *Kin* boys chasing close behind, but it was the consistent Bowman who wrapped up the series with two firsts, two fourths, and a discarded first race eleventh. Campbell came in second overall, trailing by just one point, while Sinclair was two points adrift and third overall.

After Tuesday's layday, the 14-strong fleet was strengthened on Wednesday to a more respectable 26 boats on the start-line for the first race in the Edinburgh Cup 'main event'. Everyone was obviously keen to get the event underway, with a couple of general recalls before PRO David Witton hoisted the black flag and bagged three premature starters. Once the fleet was properly out of the blocks, Race One was eventually won by Eric Williams' *Ecstatic*, followed by *Yeah Baby*, and Claire Hogan in *Cloud*. The day's second race was won by Brien and the *Kin* boys, with *Quicksilver* in second place, and trailed by Danny Sinclair in *Eclipse*.

Thursday's racing was no less intense, with Race Three falling to Martin Payne helming *Elusive*, chased hard by *Kin*, and followed by *Yeah Baby*. Race Four was won by Ricky Gillingham in *Navaho*, with Bowman starting to stamp his authority on the series in second place, and Claire Hogan in *Cloud* on the bottom step of the podium.

After Thursday evening's Crews Union dinner still thumping in many heads, the fleet were relieved to only have to do one race on the Friday, which was won by the sensibly sober 'daddy' Bowman, followed by a doubtless slightly less sober Payne, and Brien with his infamous *Kin* drinking team.

Hot, sunny, and airless weather returned for Saturday morning's final race, in which only *Kin* or *Yeah Baby* were able to win the series. The light winds and huge wind shifts



(above) *Feillins Flirtation* powered up on the Clyde
 (below) *Kin* – the dapper drinking team
 (above right) The fleet emerges from the mist
 (right) Claire Hogan bears away



once again shook up the usual pecking order. Hogan's win and Gillingham's third place gave them both a boost up the order, whilst Payne's second placing allowed Ivan Bradbury's *Elusive* to leap-frog into second overall, pushing *Kin* and *Quicksilver* down to third and fourth respectively.

However, it was Rory Bowman, ably crewed by Chris Pank and Duncan Grindley, who, having had rotten luck in the final race, held on to first overall by two points, which allowed him to engrave his name on the Edinburgh Cup for the fifth time.

Toby Marshall

Edinburgh Cup Overall Results: 1st *Yeah Baby* Rory Bowman, Chris Pank, Duncan Grindley, 14 pts, 2nd *Elusive* Martin Payne, Ivan Bradbury, Theis Palm, 16, 3rd *Kin* Simon Brien, Mark Brien, Davey Gomes, 17, 4th *Quicksilver* Rob Campbell, Jonathan Hill, René Nel, 22, 5th *Cloud* Clare Hogan, Mel Collins, Michael, 24.

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Technical Tips

1 – Mast, the Mast and the Mast

THE THREE MOST important concerns for house buying are, the Site, the Site and the Site.

When I first met Poul-Richard, he told me a similar thing with Dragons, the Mast, the Mast and the Mast. The Mast has to be right or everything else goes pear-shaped.

Most of you already have the correct mast step position, so DON'T move it.

Some, and I mean only some, could try ONE hole back or one forward. If you have a very light helm try moving mast back, if too much weather helm, try moving it forward. Only move the mast if you think you are slow! Please realise these guidelines are only experimental ideas.

Next, make sure the mast at rest, i.e. no runners, no backstay, no ram, boom out of crutch support etc, is sitting where it wants to be. Give it a shake. Then offer the mast ram to the mast and the pin should go in without forcing the mast aft or forward. If it does fine, if not, adjust bottle screw until it does, so that with the ram cleated aft the mast is not forced to be inverted or pre-bent. Now we can get the maximum power and also de-power the mast at the appropriate times.

Check the rake, 122cm from top of Black Band. Try 123cm if windy or 121cm if light. Then tape up the remaining holes and just experiment with those three settings.

Next, mark middle of mast at deck, then measure 1cm and 2cm forward. Pull the mast ram slowly forward until mast centre mark is in line with 1cm mark on deck, then marker pen your mast ram rope.

Continue forward until midway between 1cm and 2cm mark, then make two pen marks on rope, one big one small (means 1 & half cms). Lastly go the whole 2cm and make two big marks on your rope with your permanent marker pen.

You are now able to de-power your mast during the upwind legs, knowing exactly how much pre-bend you are using. For example, if you are overpowered, put on 1cm of pre-bend, or more if you can still not keep boat upright.

With the three settings you are able to reproduce the pre-bend on each beat, but more importantly make a note at the end of the race of what was good. This can also work in very light conditions to help open the top of your mainsail and flatten out the lower part.

Higher, Faster, Longer

Stavros

Great value, top tips from

David Dellenbaugh's
SPEED&Smarts



DAVID DELLENBAUGH

Starting helmsman for *America 3's* successful defence of the 1992 America's Cup and coach and tactician for *Mighty Mary's* 1995 campaign... there is a wealth of knowledge in David's monthly newsletter, *Speed&Smarts*, packed with "how-to" tips for racing sailors.

The Dragons are grateful for his permission to reproduce articles from *Speed&Smarts* on a regular basis.

We start in this issue with Tool Box – Setting Priorities on pages 14 and 15 overleaf, and Rules Corner on page 25

Check out his sample issue of *Speed&Smarts* on www.paw.com/sail/speedsmarts/

Wet decks are no longer the enemy

Competitive sailors are particular when they select gear for their boats. They should be. On a wet, rolling deck there is no time to question the equipment. That's why racers choose Harken—not just for blocks and winches, but for critical gear like shoes. Available in seven styles that look great and grip in any kind of weather.

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Want better results? Get in the groove by setting priorities.

Inconsistent finishes are one sign that you may not be following the right priorities while racing. It's hard to find the fastest course to the finish line without a map. That's why I've created the chart on these pages showing one way to approach the subject of setting priorities.

Identify the question you need to answer. Every time you sail a race, whether you're the skipper or crew, you have to make hundreds (or thousands!) of decisions. Should you go left or right? Tack now or later?





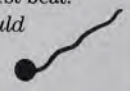
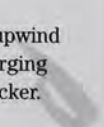
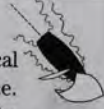
Trim the jib sheet a little more or not? In the first column at right, I've described a number of common situations where you must make choices.

The quality of the decisions you make will determine your chances of success in any race.

Collect information you need to know. In order to make a good decision, you must be prepared. That is, you can't (or shouldn't) make choices in a vacuum. Every decision you make should be consistent with a larger strategy. So before you decide what to do, think about the big picture. Ask yourself questions like the ones shown in the middle column.

For example, are you willing to assume a lot of risk or just a little? Are you faster than most of the other boats, or slower? You can answer many of these questions well before you are faced with a crisis. The more time you have, the more information you can collect. And this will help you set more effective priorities.

Decide on your priorities. As I said before, priorities are mental tools that help you get organized to sail around the course as quickly as possible. They help you focus on the most important elements in any particular situation. In two columns at the far right, I've made up some sample priority lists based on different answers to the info questions. •

Situation/Question	Information you need to know	Sample priorities 1	Sample priorities 2																								
<p>Practice time It's a few days before your big regatta, and you have one afternoon set aside for some on-the-water practice. <i>What should you work on?</i></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In recent races, what have been your relative weak points? What skills will you need to do well at your upcoming regatta? Do you have all your regular crewmember(s) aboard for practice? Is there another boat like yours that you can practice with? What wind conditions do you expect for your practice? 	<p>You have all your crew but not another boat to sail against.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Spend almost all your time on boathandling practice. Review regatta schedule and SIs. 	<p>You have another boat but not all your crew.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Work on straight-line speed and changing gears. Test speed variables. Work on your "fix it" list. 																								
<p>Pre-start preparation You are sailing a singlehanded boat and you get out to the starting area almost an hour before your warning gun. <i>How should you prepare for the race?</i></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="875 654 1017 824"> <thead> <tr> <th>Port</th> <th>Starboard</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>355</td><td>265</td></tr> <tr><td>345</td><td>250</td></tr> <tr><td>356</td><td>262</td></tr> <tr><td>344</td><td>255</td></tr> <tr><td>358</td><td>270</td></tr> <tr><td>350</td><td>256</td></tr> <tr><td>002</td><td>248</td></tr> <tr><td>348</td><td>245</td></tr> <tr><td>355</td><td>260</td></tr> <tr><td>346</td><td>252</td></tr> <tr><td>355</td><td>265</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Port	Starboard	355	265	345	250	356	262	344	255	358	270	350	256	002	248	348	245	355	260	346	252	355	265	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the wind conditions? How familiar are you with the wind and current in this area? How good do you think your speed will be compared to? How valuable would it be for you to have some boathandling practice before the race? 	<p>The wind is quite shifty.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Spend a lot of time sailing upwind collecting wind readings. Find a "buddy" and split apart on the beat, checking the wind. 	<p>You have not spent much time in this type of boat.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Find a "buddy" and work on straight-line speed upwind. Practice tacking, jibing, turning, accelerating, etc.
Port	Starboard																										
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<p>At the start You are the tactician on a J/24 and you're about to start a race in a fleet of 50 boats. <i>Where on the line should you start?</i></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Which end is favored (i.e. more upwind)? Which side of the course do you like on the first beat? What is your series position and what do you need in this race? Where are most of the other boats going to start? How is your speed relative to the rest of the fleet? 	<p>It's the first race of a series and you expect to have good speed.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Start between the favored end and the middle of the line. Start away from other boats. Minimize risk. 	<p>The pin end is "favored," but you like the right side.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Start to windward of the pack at the pin end. Try to tack as soon as you can. 																								
<p>Steering upwind You are the helmsperson of a one-design keelboat and you are racing up the first beat. <i>While you are steering, where should you be looking most of the time?</i></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How easy is it for you to keep the boat in the groove? How much help are your crewmembers giving you with information about the race course? What are the wind and sea conditions? Do you have many other boats close around you? 	<p>You are less experienced than your crew.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on the jib telltales to help you keep the boat in the groove. Ask your crew for continual input on strategy and tactics. 	<p>You are more experienced than your crew.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Spend less time on telltales and more time looking around. Talk to your crew steadily about speed, tactics, strategy. 																								
<p>Converging with another boat You're steering a doublehanded dinghy upwind on port tack. You see that you are converging on a collision course with a starboard tacker. <i>What should you do?</i></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are you in a position where you could lee-bow the other boat? Which side of the course do you prefer? Where is the windward mark? Are there other boats affecting your decision to tack or duck? 	<p>You like the right side.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Duck behind the other boat and stay on port tack. Aim at the other boat and duck late so she can't tack on you. 	<p>You like the left side.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> If you can lee bow the other boat, do that. If you can't lee bow, tack several lengths earlier so you aren't pinned from tacking again. 																								
<p>Light air downwind You're sailing a boat with an asymmetrical chute down the last run of a light-air race. There are other boats around you, and the wind is shifty. <i>Which way should you go?</i></p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Which is the longer jibe to the leeward mark? Do you see more wind velocity on either side of the course? In which direction do you expect the wind to shift next? What's the best way to sail with clear air? What is your series position and what do you need in this race? 	<p>The situation as described.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Sail toward the best pressure. Keep your air clear. Sail the longer jibe to the finish. Stay on the headed shift. 	<p>The wind is heavy, not light.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Sail the longer jibe to the finish. Stay on the headed shift. Sail toward the best pressure. Keep your air clear. 																								



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HOLT

Crews Union Guide to the Perfect Crew

Toby Marshall with the first of a series

To continue the development of the class (and in a desperate attempt to find some more people to bum drinks off when we're skint) the Crews Union has produced this helpful guide (beneficial to helmsmen as well for once – we'll call it a temporary lapse) to the perfect crewing partners. It takes two to tango (or tack for that matter), but allow the helmsman to get involved and it turns it into a threesome – you normally want to know the people involved pretty well at that point.

Training crew should start early: While most smart crew will not have done anything likely to interfere with their sailing such as acquiring offspring,

...ability to read minds in at least two other languages...

unfortunate mistakes do happen. The following test can be used for either your own ankle-biters or any that get dumped on you.

In a solemn ceremony on its first birthday, the child should be presented by your local Class Captain (if necessary, ask the BDA Chairman to officiate) with his or her first length of brightly coloured Dyneema (or for those who prefer Classic Dragons, tarred hemp). If the child throws it away, it is almost certainly destined to become a helmsman. If said child ties it in a knot, it is probably a middleman, but if he or she puts the line in his or her mouth, you can rest assured it will probably be a foredeck.

The exception to the above arises when the sprog is presented with tarred hemp. Anyone daft enough to chew tarred hemp at that age is almost certainly destined to buy a Classic at the first opportunity, becoming an Owner with the budget and sensibilities of a foredeck crew. Given the current attitude towards litigation, it is highly recommended that this procedure be carried out under supervision of the club Health & Safety Officer.

Perfect Crew are generally single, allowing them to devote all their time and energy to the season's racing. However, recent experience suggests that in certain conditions, marriage may be a good thing provided you have selected a partner with adequate sailing experience. Who else but a loving husband or wife would be on hand and willing to step in on a Sunday morning when the helmsman suddenly calls to say, "I can't sail. You must take the boat to keep us in the Sunday points."

The Perfect Crew should have the following attributes:

1. It is essential that the Perfect Crew has a sense of humour, considering the predicaments the helmsman gets the boat into and then blames the crew.

2. The Perfect Crew must float like a butterfly, sting like a bee, land on the rail like a giant mutant hippo and hike like a b****d so the helmsman doesn't have to...since they usually don't.

3. The Perfect Crew must have at least eight long arms so as to be able to simultaneously reach every rope in the boat during that windy kite drop under pressure.

4. The Perfect Crew must have the eyes of an insect, capable of seeing in every direction simultaneously so as to be able to tell the helmsman which way to go down the run and how the opposition is doing whilst flying the kite.

...to translate the gibberish being screamed...

A neck capable of swivelling through 360 degrees is also advantageous.

5. Clairvoyance is a skill that the Perfect Crew must have, in order to keep up when the helmsman throws in a tack or gybe without telling anyone. Ability to foresee what surrounding boats are about to do, so as to be able to forewarn the helmsman. To predict exactly where the boat should tack without running aground is also an advantage. The ability to read minds in at least two other languages (Danish & German preferred), is often necessary to understand which particular piece of string requiring adjustment the phrase 'now we go' refers to.

6. The Perfect Crew has somehow or other in his mysterious past become the proud owner of a 'Babelfish' of Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy fame, enabling him to translate the gibberish being screamed by the nut with the stick in his hand and turn it into a set of instructions capable of keeping the three of you alive.

7. The Perfect Crew has nerves of steel – doesn't bat an eyelid when faced with a couple of dozen starboard-tackers on the starboard layline, while approaching

the windward mark on port. Also may have contacts with opticians selling cheap peril-sensitive sunglasses that turn dark when approaching a packed starboard layline on port.

8. The Perfect Crew is fully conscious and firing on all cylinders, despite drinking the brewery dry last night, and not going to bed before 5 am but only admitting 'half past', to the disapproving question from the helmsman "What time did you get in last night?"

9. The Perfect Crew is possibly more capable of driving the boat than the helmsman, but would never stoop to the wrong side of the traveller beam. However, he is perfectly happy to be handed the end of the tiller extension while the helmsman answers the call of nature, puts on oilskins, searches in kitbag for contact lenses, pacemaker, brain, etc.

10. The Perfect Crew must be at least 6ft tall to allow maximum leverage upwind and pushing off when inevitably run aground by 'him/her back aft'. Feet must resemble snowshoes, to push off without sinking into the mud. However, said feet must also be small and nimble enough to never stand on any bits of 'string' the other crewmembers are trying to pull in or ease off. The Perfect Crew must also be compactable enough to crawl through bulkheads to sort out non-furling gear or other similar breakages.

...be compactable enough to crawl through bulkheads...

11. The Perfect Crew is always fully equipped with various oddments of rope and shackles to sort out any gear failure mid-race, generally generated by owner neglect.

12. The Perfect Crew must possess a high pain threshold and ignore the 'bites' that the Dragon inevitably takes out of them during the race. If it's hurting them, it's not likely to hurt the helmsman! (Note from helmsman proofreading this piece – *the Perfect Crew would be more accurately described as a sado-masochist due to the level and nature of injuries 'accidentally' inflicted on those helmsmen that place parts of their anatomy in positions that are under crew control.*)

FLEET REPORTS

ALDEBURGH

THE ALDEBURGH Dragon fleet has recently been divided very clearly into three 'travellers' and a balance of 'locals'. This year the pattern changed. The Gifford/Hayles combination, first with *Pongo*, then with *Kraken*, travelled ever further, notably to Australia for the Worlds. *Yeah Baby* actually had a baby and Molly transformed Rory into a super-competitive local sailor, only visiting Burnham and the Clyde for the Edinburgh Cup, which he won. *Navaho* had an attack of lust which meant that she didn't travel so much and therefore won the Seasons' Points, though she did go to the Clyde.

There were mixed fortunes among the other contenders. *Apache* definitely wins a prize for persistence. *Hawkeye*, chartered by Jack Bielecki, re-appeared in the fleet and we were reminded of Jack's super-competitive instincts.

Never try to pass to windward. However, there is always a good chance that he will cut a corner and park, or that his mast will unaccountably lean over just too far.

This last incident gave the opportunity to prove that our ex-*Basilisk*, ex-*Wisp* 1986 mast was a surprisingly quick replacement. *Harkaway* was put in the water for August, which nearly proved too much for her. As we all know, a litre of water weighs a kilogram and Peter and Tim found it very difficult to keep the water below the floorboards. Many kilos. Even one of the smart new electric pumps might have struggled. *Harkaway* was removed from this troublesome liquid at the beginning of September and now awaits remedial surgery. She appears to be in a queue of elderly Dragons requiring TLC led by *Sirenia*. Let's hope she isn't a cobbler's child.

The Regatta provided the best racing of the year, even though the wind was mostly light. The result couldn't have been closer. Rory and I tied on points and positions, so that the overall result was decided on the last race, a system designed more for the Olympics than a Club regatta. I owe a great debt to Rick in *Navaho*, who twice appeared to be my team mate. In the first race Rick seemed to wave us through on the run with no resistance and in the last one he covered and then attacked Rory with a spirit that Mike, Jonathan Penn and I applauded vigorously from in front. Many thanks. *Pongo/Kraken* has now won three Aldeburgh regattas in a row, by ever decreasing margins. The stress is telling. My nerves have deteriorated and Rory has tried everything – new crew, old crew, wife as helmsman. Any ideas?

Next year we will be joined by Dusty



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Out in Front!



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Hughes, the new owner of *Pongo*. Patrick and Mike decided to win the 'Concours d'Elegance' with *Kraken*, setting a new trend for non-white Dragons, but didn't want two boats, since their offspring, while keen to sail, were less interested in the financial side. I trust Aldeburgh racing won't become as macabre as Dusty's television writing, and hope that he will enjoy the river.

The Dragon class spread itself this year. If, Peter Wilson's 8 Metre, continued to attract much support, including a trip to La Trinité. She was supported by *Cyclone* which provided the Dragon class with a win in the Regatta cruisers and *Zimmer* in the Loch Long worlds in which I was reduced/lucky to be allowed to crew for my daughter Frances. In 'A la recherche du temps perdu' Rory and Shelley failed to win the 1970s Junior Lapwing retrospective – a blow to the Class's reputation, which presumably requires a re-match next year.

We continue to hope for visitors, and envy Falmouth Week, which now has several. Aldeburgh provides a contrast in conditions, and very competitive racing. However, we don't aspire to stage the Gold Cup though some of us would fancy our chances if we did!

Patrick Gifford

www.aycdragons.com

BURNHAM ON CROUCH

IT'S THAT TIME of year again – to plan for 2004, to record events, good (and not so good) in 2003 and review how we can make improvements for the new year.

I am kicking myself (again) for not keeping my own detailed weekly record, and making this report a lot easier to compile. But to my rescue came the 'Dragon Diary', which we introduced behind the club bar for members to record ideas and views, as they felt the need. I thought there might be a few more 'choice' reports than we have, but the idea will grow and I am sure next year will show more budding authors committing their sense of humour to paper

Our Burnham Dragon fleet web site, www.burnhamdragons.co.uk, is up and running, thanks to the efforts of Roger Clarke, to Toby Marshall for 'away' reports and to Rene Nel for writing an



Sunshine and spinnakers at Burnham Week 2003 – photo by Hugh Bourn

enjoyable weekly report and making sure it all gets posted on the site. I am not sure how many 'hits' we get each month, but we are slowly moving into the electronic age!

Quote of the year, "Dragon racing is like a good wine...it ages well and just keeps getting better", so there is hope for me yet! I still have time to peak, become the finely-honed racing helmsman of my dreams...the perfect start... waiting for the rest of the fleet at the windward mark (in every race) back in the bar early...on my second pint, I can but hope. I am not alone, our fleet just keeps growing and now stands at 26 boats

This year, two Dragons joined us, Mark and Mandy Wade re-introduced a famous name back into the class, and they are racing *Avalanche*. Dan Wastnage fell in love with Dragon racing, and now races *Vivacious*, and Martin Fogg took ownership of *Hat Trick*. I know all three helmsmen and crew are having a good time, and may there dreams come true.... after mine.

Our race programme started in mid March and will conclude at the end of November. Seven and a half months of good varied racing, good banter in the bar, and the occasional highlight of a protest. I think we are the only fleet in the country with such a full programme, racing every Saturday and Sunday, nine series of races, three crews races, and to add to the fitness level, three series of windward/ leeward.

Add in a healthy Easter regatta, Burnham Week, and a trip to Hamburg to team race, and 2003 has been a

busy year.

I reported last year, we travelled to regattas in France, Switzerland, Scotland, and Belgium, as well as the 'local' events in the Medway, Lowestoft and Cowes.

Well, you can't keep Burnham Dragon Sailors down – they did it all again this year, adding Holland, and Ireland to the list. As always the travellers return with glowing reports of a brilliant racing and social scene, and the experience of racing in 100-boat fleets is a great leveller after racing on the Crouch.

2003 really kicked in with our Easter Regatta (now famous throughout the land), and again we recorded 33 entries, from our own fleet, visitors from Holland and Belgium, and from fleets in the UK. We revelled in the excellent competition.

Even though many in our fleet have been away at regattas, the turn-out for racing on the river has been excellent, the competition hot and complemented by this summer's glorious sunshine. Many an evening has been whiled away on the club balcony after a race, and with a barbecue and a beer, the stories inevitably get wilder as the evening draws on.

With nine Saturday/Sunday series to compete in, there has been plenty of choice for the home fleet, and our ability to punish ourselves is borne out by the high attendance for our four-race Windward/Leeward series. In fact I often heard the comment after one of these days... 'we could do that every week'. Unfortunately we need a wider

FLEET REPORTS

river or control of the wind direction to guarantee that, but notwithstanding this control, we still have enjoyed wonderful racing.

In July a group of us flew over to Germany for a return team race meeting with the Hamburg fleet. We took only our spinnakers and borrowed German Dragons (complete with an owner's representative) and enjoyed a six-race series on 'the lake' in Hamburg. Our leader and co-ordinator for this event was Nigel Cole, and thanks to him we all had a great time.

We made many friends and rekindled the relationship between the Nord Deutsche regatta Verein (NDRV) and the RCYC, first established in 1934 when a group of Sharpie sailors from Hamburg visited our club to team race on the river. We are looking forward to continuing this competition.

Our programme for the year concludes on the weekend of November 29-30th, with the Pete Mathews Memorial Trophy, and then the last crew's race on the Sunday.

We will celebrate the year on December 6th when we will dress up in our best black ties for our annual class dinner and entertainment.

There is a reward for those of us involved in planning events, when the participants have a permanent smile on their faces, and promise to come back next year to our club and the river.

Our success as a club and a fleet throughout the year, depends greatly on those who give up their precious time to help out.

There are many in the team, but I should I record special thanks to our race officers Edwin Buckley and Bruce Burnett, and their assistants, who help to plan our courses, start and finish us, and generally put up with our emotions when the wind is in the wrong direction! Thanks also must go to Paul Noonan and his trusty computer for giving us speedy race results each week.

Work starts to plan for 2004, and though too numerous to mention every individual by name, thank you to those of you who have contributed to our enjoyment and success in 2003, we are proud of you.

Colin Woodcock.

FALMOUTH

WE ENJOYED a good year in Falmouth. Club sailing again centered on Mylor YC who provided good courses and a good welcome after racing. Five Dragons usually turned out on a Friday evening.

Falmouth Week, with the National Dragon Classics running parallel, was probably our best ever. The weather was good with good wind on all but one day. Ten Dragons raced most

days. Our visiting classics *Mistress* and *Moonbeam* saw off the local challenge led by *Buccaneer*.

The social events at two venues gave competitors and friends a good choice. The Royal Cornwall Yacht Club Gold Cup Committee has been busy getting the main elements of the Regatta organized.

We hope to welcome major numbers of national Dragons as well as our overseas visitors.

Our local Fleet has recovered from a dip in numbers has more committed helms and even has a Petticrow to set the pace!

Peter Flutter

LOWESTOFT

LOWESTOFT FLEET was founded in 1938 and the next year class racing was organised during regattas at Oulton Broad and Lowestoft. The entrance fee was 5/- and the first prize was £3, second was £2. By 1948 the Dragon class had 11 yachts listed in the Royal Norfolk & Suffolk YC Handbook.

Passage races were listed from Lowestoft to Harwich and return a week later, and a month later a shorter race from Lowestoft to Aldeburgh and return. The crews were certainly tough in those days.

Some 30 years later, in 1978, there were still 11 Dragons listed as racing and one of those, *Sirenica*, was in the original fleet.

The Lowestoft 2003 season started at the May Bank Holiday with the Dragon East Coast Championship. This is always a popular event with visitors travelling from as far away as Scotland and Holland. With 20 entries, the racing was very competitive with the first local boat finishing fourth.

Having the Chairman of the Class in the fleet and a former chairman, means that we have yachts away racing abroad for part of the season and our Class Captain James Mehew even went to the Southern Hemisphere Championship in Australia.

The weather has been superb this season and with the changing sandbanks off Lowestoft we no longer have the traditional square waves but now have large rollers especially next to the Newcombe sandbank, which,

The Dragon class at Burnham Week 2003 was well supported – photo Hugh Bourn



incidentally, now dries out in places at low water.

Our next event was the June regatta. With a number of visitors, racing was very keen, but again the locals could not stop Rob Campbell in *Quicksilver* from winning the weekend.

Some of the fleet members seem to have two or three yachts and as the season progresses the racing fleet gets smaller. Not all the fleet had returned for Lowestoft Week and this probably helped Peter Pank in *Blue Flame* to take the Stevenson Cup and the Corporation Bowl.

The Blaxter Salver, a weekend series, was won by Peter Colby sailing his new Dragon *Tai Fun*, with Tom Mehew, one of our new young sailors, coming second

The season is still progressing in fine weather, but we have to pack up at the end of October because the boat park is given over to the sailing cruisers for winter storage .

Throughout the season we have had good support from Associated British Ports, who own the Harbour and operate the safety system for sailing out to sea and returning to the yacht basin.

The Class Dinner and prize giving has been arranged for Saturday 10th January 2004

Peter Pank

MEDWAY

THE 2003 RACING season on the Medway started in May with a good fleet of 16 out of our 22 boats all scrubbed up and painted for the forthcoming season, in what has proved to be a very competitive fleet.

This year at Medway YC we have had the advantage of having a new hoist (crane), which the Club was able to purchase though a fleet member from a well-known oil production company. They apparently no longer required the hoist, but it now has pride of place on our hard and it is great asset to the class and club. It has made life a lot easier, enabling us to launch and recover Dragons, do repair work and travel about to other events.

The class would like to extend their thanks to everyone involved in the process of getting the crane transported from Scotland, painted,



Burnham Week Dragon fleet racing on the Crouch – photo Hugh Bourn

erected and installed at the head of our scrubbing trolley 'Lady Di'.

Medway fleet started their season with five boats travelling the short distance to Burnham for the Easter Regatta. *Esoteric*, *Chouette*, *Wisp*, *Sagitta* and, of course not forgetting our newest boat, *BBC*, owned by Philip Clarabut, Bruce Boyd and Peter Booth (she is proving to be a hard boat to beat, we wonder what BBC stands for???) , together with their crews, all received the usual warm welcome.

Locally Len Jones, Nick Jenkins and Philip Catmur in *Chouette* won the first trophy of the season, the Proton Cup. The team then went on to achieve the overall trophy, winning 12 races out of 24 competed. John Field, Chris Field and Chris Burdett in *Vol de Nuit* came second and the boys in *BBC* third. Well done.

In May a training weekend was again arranged with Martin Payne coming to the Club to give us some tips. His advice and knowledge are always helpful and welcome. On the Sunday we had the opportunity for some short match racing. It was interesting to see other fleet members helming and crewing for a change. It is great to have this weekend at the beginning of the season, to encourage everyone to get out on the water and compete.

The Medway Regatta was held over four days at the beginning of July in what was becoming the norm for this season, very light winds! This is always an enjoyable event and it was great to see our visitors, Julian and Claire Sowrey in *Scimitar*, Colin Woodcock

and his team in *Rapid Transit* and the Ladies in Hugh Howard's *Tarakona*. Well done to Julian and Claire for taking away all the silver from the weekend.

On the Thursday evening of the Regatta Anne and Richard Green kindly offered the venue of their home for the fleet supper. This proved to be a pleasant evening with good food and friends. Talking of Richard Green, rumour has it that the restoration of *Aurora*, no.39 is nearing the end and we look forward to having a fully



See more East Coast Dragon photographs on my website at:

www.photosail.co.uk

photography by
Hugh Bourn

FLEET REPORTS

restored Classic Dragon in our fleet next year. I know he is spending many an hour beavering away in Jasper Wright's barn, which is also the winter home for many of the fleet and we thank Jasper for the facility to store so many boats.

Well, winter does not mean a quiet time for us at the Medway as preparations are now well under way for Medway Dragon Fleet to host the 2004 East Coast Championship next season, over the weekend of the 29th to 31st May. We are all looking forward to welcoming lots of visitors and hosting what we know will be a really great event.

Robert Sheppard

THE SOLENT

THEY SAY TIME flies when you are having fun. Time passes by fastest on a weekend at Cowes – probably the best known yachting venue in the world, and HQ of the Solent Division, home of the best keelboat class both on and off the water.

Our numbers have increased now to over 40 boats, with 10 classics, and with half the boats under 10 years old it is a good mix. We have 12 regular

travellers and the Cowes fleet has supported many Dragon events elsewhere in UK and Europe this year. With so much travelling, around ten boats race most weekends, with the Red Funnel Championship Weekends being the best attended. So numbers are up, travelling is up, attendance is up, turnover is up, in fact everything is up at Cowes!

We welcomed Edouard Wyllemen BEL66, David Palmer GBR 687 and lately Ian Mackey GBR609 and *Octavia* GBR222 to the Solent Dragons this year and we were joined by hardened campaigner Chris Brittan and Gilliam sailing *Caramba* GBR618. Sadly Tony Dixon passed away before getting to grips with *Frantic*, he is now in the big yacht club in the sky.

The Solent Class Championship comprises 49 races in the Early, Mid, Summer and Late season series including six Championship Weekends sponsored by Red Funnel Ferries. This year over 20 boats took part in the Solent class championship. The regulars *Aimee*, *Apalala*, *Luder*, *Supremacy* have been joined by many 'occasional' boats with the result that a large number of crews have enjoyed racing at Cowes this balmy summer.

The first weekend saw a record number of 14 Dragons out racing, and the AGM and fitting out dinner at the Island SC were well attended. The following weekend was the South Coast Championship hosted by the Royal London YC, so we had a busy start to the season.

Aimee sailed by our first lady Julia, Graham Bailey Steve Richardson and David Heritage have prevailed this year. We are lucky to sail with Graham, whose yachting CV is too long to print in this fanzine, but Julia says, "I wish Graham would pay me more attention, but he keeps looking at the compass, even at home in the week".

Our John Mellows is a stalwart of the fleet, some are lucky to have one of his hand-built Azure Dragon trophies in their cabinets, he is now so popular he regularly has six or seven crew waiting on the dock to race on *Ariadne*. He is also a great ambassador for the Dragons, particularly encouraging new owners of the older boats.

On *Apalala*, Chris Caws and Jeremy Field have not travelled so much this year so completed 31/42 races and Chris, who does much for the Cowes clubs 'behind the scenes', has put in

some good results as we have come to expect from the 2000 class champion.

Ben Hancock has done well again in 2003 winning the classic boat competitions in his yacht *Asa*. Surprising really as he has mentioned problems with on the water concentration having the lovely Diana and Amanda (and sometime James) to focus on all day long. On the last Championship Weekend Ben looked up at the finish and noticed he had won, a most creditable result for a Classic Boat, and not the first race win for *Asa*.

On board *Chaotic* Richard Jordan just keeps on getting better, rarely out of the top three in Cowes racing and had emphatic wins at Burnham Easter Regatta and Cowes Week to savour this year, and all this while trying to prevent his crew Little Lad (aka admiral Rusty Grinwald) and Fletch (aka Laurence Porridge) from chaotically mounting huge late night drinks tabs at yacht club bars.

Meanwhile, Brian and Gill Smith have had classic boat *Gem* rebuilt from the gunwales up. Unfortunately the boat arrived back in Cowes with an enormous bag of new fittings and a mast but no instructions where (or how) to fix them on, so Brian has been busy with his drill and screw driver.

All the way from the X332 class, Edouard Wyllemen arrived with his new boat the latest *Danish Blue* at the South Coasts and remained with us before channelling off to Belgium to win the Nationals there, with the pick of his X rated crew. In a sporting gesture Edouard named his boat *TeamC3* for short, *Carabistouilles 3* is quite difficult to announce when conducting a prize giving (or a protest!). Chris Brittain and Gilliam stayed on after these championships with *Caramba* too – they are most welcome.

Seasoned big boat campaigner Fred Solly has been thoroughly enjoying his weekend commute from Emsworth to sail *Luder* at Cowes. Of a weekend Fred has been lodging with former Solent Fleet Captain Brian Orr who lives in a converted Inn, staying in the saloon bar most weekends. Fred, reports that he has been sailing *Luder* fast, but not necessarily in the right direction at the right times but should be congratulated for completing 33/42 races this year.

Mistress hasn't been out so much in the summer because the Captain has been showing off on *Aimee* and later

Richard Jordan's *Chaotic* with Little Legs sitting out as far as possible – photo by Hans Thornycroft



with Paul Patenall on *Excalibur*. Paul said after one regatta "I can't wait to get home" while Martyn Payne said: "sailing with the Captain is really an experience I shall never forget, but I am trying to".

Richard Cullen has been working his crew so hard on *Supremacy* this year that one fell overboard (a common occurrence in Burnham) Richard said 'I only got him with the boom on the third attempt'. Richard has been sailing Dragons for 40 years and is not stopping now, *Supremacy* has sailed so many races this year (35 of the 42 races held, a great effort) that her surviving crew Mark Hart has decided to go full time boating.

Meanwhile Mr Nicholson, a mariner who has competed in more yachts and classes than most, was back where he belongs in the cockpit of a Dragon, occasionally issuing orders to Tim Squire-Saunders and Justin Biddle or Colin Lloyd in the front end. Rumour has it that a new boat is on order from Petticrows, let's hope it is a Dragon. This team might have won the South Coast Championship this year but for gear failure. *Virago* won the only race in the 2002 gale, so will 2004 be new *Virago's* year?

Gavia Wilkinson Cox, despite preparing for the 75th Anniversary Ball all year, has been sailing extremely fast in *Jerboa IV* and was rewarded with second overall at the Torbay Regatta SW Areas. Rob Gray, experienced Star sailor and one of the most handsome yachtsmen on the Solent, appointed H to spruce up *Rackham*, the boat is now so handsome, this reporter mistook her for a new model. Rob's RIB is bigger than Eric's, can anyone beat that?

John Dudley has taken time out from pile driving at the weekend to race *Phase 2* with another Cowes man Glynn Davies. John likes sailing his Dragon as it gives him more time at the Island Sailing Club.

The rampaging trio Neil Payne, Dave Ross and Jon Mortimer arrived at the marina one day in September but couldn't find a boat to sail, realising they had sold *Rampage* before Cowes Week, off in a stampede they went to Burnham for a new Petticrow boat, collecting the Hon Secretary Steve Richardson along the way, so the trio are now a quartet next year.

A man who has sailed just about anything fitted with a keel arrived at the Cowes Week drinks reception and



Brian and Gill Smith's re-built classic *Gem* – photo Hamo Thornycroft

announced "I am going to buy a Dragon". And he did, now delighted with his new Petticrow, David Palmer reports "it is really fast like a dinghy compared to my Sunbeam which weighs in at four tons". David went on to buy everyone a drink at the ISC to mark the arrival of *Princess Jalina*. Ian Mackey wandered into the same bar that same day in September, decided he was going to buy a Dragon too and did so ten minutes later, in the Cowes Yacht Haven!

At the sweltering Cowes Week party, Eric Williams and Chris Caws celebrated 30 plus consecutive years of Dragon racing in the regatta this year. The Cowes Week results revealed an odd Bridlington effect: the first, third and fifth placed helmsmen overall all hailing from there. Apparently, sailors from Bridlington are super competitive having raced the trawlers for rights in the harbour entrance throughout history. *Chaotic* won the regatta scoring top three results in all but the final race.

Abroad, Richard Jordan took *Chaotic* to an emphatic win at the Burnham Easter Regatta by sailing on the right-hand side of the river looking downstream, meanwhile, the locals sail on the right-hand side of the river looking upstream. Richard did so well that the locals swapped sides the following day, while RJ reverted to the original advice and the left-hand side paid.

Later in the year Paul Patenall in *Excalibur* won the Eastern Areas and South West Areas with Martin Payne, and Paul even beat the Citron Trophy winner with a fourth at the Northerns!

Meanwhile the Captain, after finishing first classic boat at the Easter Regatta, was pleased to take *Mistress* to Falmouth Week and come away with the Week and the BDA Classic Boat Championship.

Sailing *Ecstatic*, Eric Williams and the



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FLEET REPORTS

North 'dream team' Jamie Lea and Nigel Young won the Northerns and did well at the Medemblink Gold Cup being the first Brits and sixth overall. What a fantastic effort.

The Cowes fleet was well represented at the European Championship at Kinsale. Of the nine UK qualifiers most were Solent Division boats, and once again *Ecstatic* did us proud in Ireland.

Ivan Bradbury did even better with Martin Payne and Jon Mortimer at the Cannes Regates Royales with an impressive second overall in *Elusive*. Best of all was Duncan Grindley winning the Edinburgh Cup from the front of Rory B's boat.

Cowes Week 2003 Overall Boat 1st *Chaotic* 13pts, 2nd *Ecstatic* 23, 3rd *Aimee* 25, 4th *Apalala* 29, 5th *Rackham* 43; 1st Classic 13th *Reprise*.

Red Funnel Cowes Keelboat Championship 2003 1st *Aimee*, 2nd *Excalibur*, 3rd *Supremacy*.

Solent Class Championship and SCRA Medal 2003 *Aimee*, Runner Up: *Apalala*; 1st classic *Asa*, 2nd classic *Mistress*.

The Class Champions have overcome the opposition this year only by putting in consistently good results and taking part in most of the weekend racing. Our first helmswoman, Julia with the evergreen Graham Bailey, Steve Richardson and H have triumphed for a second year running **Bill Daniels**

TORBAY

THIS TIME last year I produced a fairly bleak report on the future of the Dragon Fleet in Torbay and as the season started it got bleaker. However, as it is when you are at the back of the fleet, you are never quite sure if there is going to be a 180 degree wind shift! And so I am very pleased to report that I have very high hopes for next season.

Although there are only two or three boats racing regularly, for the Torbay Royal Regatta, Martin Payne and Bill Daniels joined me in *Excalibur* and, along with visitors from the Solent and Falmouth who rallied to the call following support from Torbay at Falmouth Regatta, Torbay Royal Regatta was a most enjoyable bank holiday weekend. Thank you to those Dragon sailors who supported this event.

A combination of two factors have been instrumental in the revival of the Dragon Fleet in the South West. First, a number of good sailors have expressed a great deal of enthusiasm to take part in the Edinburgh Cup in Torbay and the Gold Cup in Falmouth, not forgetting St Tropez, which of course they may have confused with the English Riviera! I am confident that we will see a number of new Dragons and in fact new sailors to the Dragon class sailing with us next year!

I cannot commend to you enough what great events these will be and I do

not only mean the location in terms of sailing waters. The organisation both in terms of race officers and shore activities will be excellent.

Second, along with our friends at Plymouth, Dartmouth and Falmouth, we have come to terms with the fact that we do not have the catchment area that serves The Solent or Burnham and we cannot rely on sufficient numbers to swell the fleets in each of these locations. I have therefore proposed to the fleets that we develop a South West fleet comprising each of the areas where there is support for the Dragon Class. Local sailors will be more inclined to travel the smaller distances to attend periodic keelboat regattas arranged by each of the four clubs in Devon and Cornwall. Concentrating on these, along with their annual regattas, should encourage other sailors to accept that sailing a Dragon both in terms of the social activities and the sailing activities is great sport.

I hope that by the time many of you come to the Edinburgh Cup in June 2004 you will already begin to see the growth of the Dragon fleet in the South West. If I or the Royal Torbay YC can assist you in anyway to take part in this South West bonanza, please do not hesitate to contact us. My number is in the white book and if you visit the website www.dragongoldcup2004.com there is a link to the Royal Torbay YC and the Edinburgh Cup.

Paul Patenall

SOLENT DATES 2004

Round the Island Race
Saturday 26th June 2004

Cowes Week
Saturday 7th – Saturday 14th
August 2004

South Coast Championship
Island Sailing Club,
Saturday 4th & 5th September
2004

The 2004 Red Funnel
Championship Weekends:
15th & 16th May ISC
5th & 6th June RYS
19th & 20th June CCYC
24th & 25th July RLYC
11th & 12th September RCYC
25th & 26th September RTYC

Great value, top tips from DAVID DELLENBAUGH

Starting helmsman for *America 3's* successful defence of the 1992 America's Cup and coach and tactician for *Mighty Mary's* 1995 campaign... there is a wealth of knowledge to be gained from David's monthly newsletter, *Speed & Smarts*, packed with "how-to" tips for racing sailors.

The Dragons are grateful for his permission to reproduce articles from *Speed&Smarts* on a regular basis, starting in this issue – Rules Corner on the opposite page and Tool Box – Setting Priorities on pages 14 and 15

Check out his sample issue of *Speed&Smarts* on
www.paw.com/sail/speedsmarts/



RULES CORNER

When is your course "proper"?

If you want to know your rights and obligations when you're near other boats on a reach, it's important to understand the concept of proper course. Your proper course is defined as the course you would sail in order to finish as soon as possible (see box below).

To figure out your proper course, you must take into account a number of strategic factors including wind speed, wind shifts, current, waves, your boat's performance, the position of the next mark, the presence of other boats, and so on. By considering what may happen with each of these factors in the near future, you make your best guess about where you should steer to get to the finish line fastest. This is your proper course.

The flexible nature of proper courses

By definition, a proper course is subjective. It's based on your own opinion about a complex set of variables, and this means several things: First, since it's unlikely that two sailors would come up with exactly the same solution to those complex variables, almost every boat will have at least a slightly different proper course (even when boats are identical and very close to each other on the race course).

Second, since the wind, current and other variables are always changing, and boats are constantly moving, your proper course is always changing too. The fastest course to the next mark at one moment may be entirely different a few moments later.

And third, a proper course is seldom black or white. Any course that you can reasonably justify as being the fastest way to get to the next mark could be considered "proper." For this reason, it's often difficult to figure out if other boats are sailing their proper course or not. As far as the rules are concerned, sailors usually get the benefit of the doubt on this unless they are obviously sailing a course that won't get them to the next mark quickly.

More thoughts about proper courses

Here are some other things you might need to know:

- There is no proper course before the starting signal. Since you aren't going anywhere before the start, you can't have a course that will get you there as soon as possible. At the moment the gun sounds, however, you begin to have a proper course, even if you haven't

Definition: PROPER COURSE

A course a boat would sail to finish as soon as possible in the absence of the other boats referred to in the rule using the term. A boat has no proper course before her starting signal.

yet started (i.e. crossed the starting line).

- It is possible – even likely – that you may occasionally have more than one proper course. When you are sailing upwind, for example, there are times when both tacks will appear equally advantageous. In that case, your proper course could be closehauled on either port tack or starboard tack.

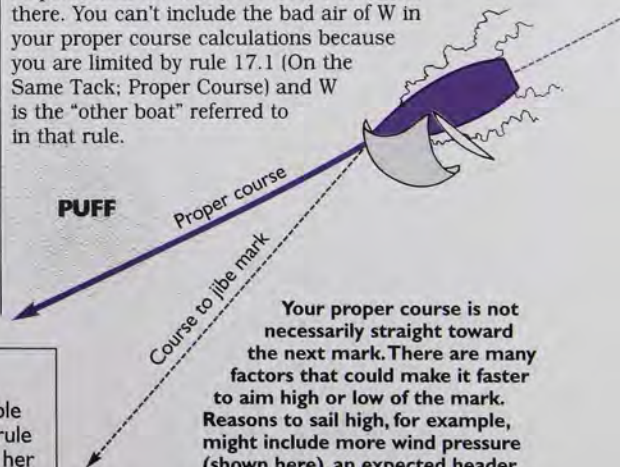
- There are only three right-of-way rules that mention proper course (17.1, 17.2 and 18.4). None of these rules ever require you to sail a proper course, though there are times when you can't sail above it and other times when you can't sail below it.

- One common misconception is that you must be aiming right at the next mark in order to be sailing a proper course. That is incorrect since you may need to steer high or low of the mark due to current, changes in the wind and so on. And on a beat or run you usually can't aim right at the next mark because of tacking and jibing angles.

- The concept of proper course has nothing to do with speed. When you are sailing a proper course it doesn't matter how fast you are going – it only matters where you are steering.

- When determining your proper course, you can factor in any possible variable (wind, current, etc.) except for one. The only thing you can't consider is the position of "the other boats referred to in the rule using the term."

Pretend you are sailing down a reach on starboard tack, for example, and you establish a leeward overlap on another starboard tacker. Your proper course is the course you would sail to reach the next mark as fast as possible if the windward boat (W) wasn't there. You can't include the bad air of W in your proper course calculations because you are limited by rule 17.1 (On the Same Tack; Proper Course) and W is the "other boat" referred to in that rule.



Your proper course is not necessarily straight toward the next mark. There are many factors that could make it faster to aim high or low of the mark. Reasons to sail high, for example, might include more wind pressure (shown here), an expected header, current pushing you to leeward or a pack of boats going high behind you.

JUBILEE RAFFLE TICKETS

The following is a list of Jubilee Draw tickets earned that we had on file to 18th November, but we still have queries to resolve. Please check the BDA website for an up-to-date listing.

Owner	Boat	Tickets	Owner	Boat	Tickets	Owner	Boat	Tickets
Adams Steve	Chase	2	Gallo Hilary	Wisp	5	O'Reilly Peter	Chaos/Electra	10
Allen/Holmes			Gibbons Encore			Orr Ian	Phantasim	5
	Hat Trick/Hand of Fortune	8	Gilday Rufus	Orion	3	Owens/Fleming	The Snapper	14
Andrassy David	Magic	4	Gillingham Richard	Navaho	12			
Anthony Fred	Wish	2	Good Cameron	Tatsu	16	Pank Peter	Blue Flame	6
			Goodbody/Johnson			Patenall Paul	Excalibur	19
Bailey Julia	Aimee	13	China Blue/TBA/Diva		12	Payne Neil	Rampage	17
Bate Nick	Morgawr	1	Gray Brian	Phantom	4			
Bendon Adrian	Mystery	7	Gray Rob	Rackham	6	Rankin Mottram	Delilah	8
Bergin/Pearson/Balasz			Green Richard	Sagitta	9	Ratnage Ian	Water Rat	11
	Lucky Lucky	10				Rees Alan	Spoof	5
Bergin Rob	Kim/Jee	7	Hall David	Flame Again	5	Ridsdill-Smith Robin	Tia	4
Bevan Mark	Thunder	2	Hall John	Fistral	6	Ross-Murphy John	Topaz	9
Biddle Donald	Sapphire III	5	Halpenny Michael	Susele	6	Rowntree/Black	Black Mark	5
Bielecki Jack	Hawkeye	1	Hancock Ben	Asa	7	Rumbelow Peter	Dragonet	2
Billings Sean	Rebel	2	Hannant Edwin	Gandalf	3	Rycroft Richard	Logie	7
Bishop Paddy	Elsa	12	Hayes Declan	Sabbatical	5			
Booth/Boyd/Clarabut			Hayes Donal	Nataraja	2	Shapiro/Howard	Tarakona	13
	BBC	3	Hayles/Gifford	Pongo/Kraken	21	Sheppard/McMillan	Esoteric	7
Bourke Jay	Puca Two	15	Hellstern Matthias	Eve	5	Shilling John	Ulysses	4
Bowles Michelle	Tana	2	Hennessy Robin	Rat Three	4	Sieweck Peter	Flirt	4
Bowman Rory	Yeah Baby	17	Hogan Clare	Cloud	18	Sinclair Danny	Eclipse	17
Bowring/Hegarty/Murphy			Horgan Dave	Tog Go Bog E	9	Skelsey Keith	Reprise	5
	Phantom	16	Howland/Strauss	Whistle	3	Slatter/Goodman/Moore		
Boyd Henry	Sieglinde	1	Hoyle C Fenris Wolf				Chica	3
Bradbury/Payne	Elusive	4	Hunt Jonathan	Panther	3	Smith Brian	Gem	9
Brien Simon	Kin/Aphrodite	13				Solly Fred	Luder	9
Brittain Chris	Caramba	5	Issaias Michael	Fanfare	7	Sorensen Olaf	Christianna	19
Bulmer Alan	Temeraire	5				Sowry Julian	Scimitar	4
Butler Les	Solan	3	Jacobsen Laurence	Meteor	9	Stephen ?	Dragonfly	2
Byrne Martin	Rigmarole	2	James Ron	Feilin's Flirtation	15	Storton Colin	Djinn	2
			Jenkins Graham	Basilisk	4	Street Donald	Fatner	2
Campbell Rob	Quicksilver 2	20	Jenkins Nick	Chouette	4	Streeter Nick	Sandpiper	4
Caws Chris	Apalala	9	Jephcott David	Moonbeam	9	Sullivan Sarah	Ygraine	18
Clarke Roger	Mythrandia	1	Johnson Michael	Mustang IV	10			
Colby Peter	Merlin Scaramanga	6	Johnstone/Proutt	Peer Gynt	2	Tait John	Thalasso two/OTT	8
Cole Nigel	Tsunami/Smaug	13	Jones Len	Rumours Chouette	16	Threlfall Rachel	Mushu	3
Coltart Stewart	Tucano	5	Jordan Richard	Chaotic	8	Tracey Peter	Perspicacity	4
Corboy John	Infinity	2				Treacy/Lavery	King Rat	18
Cotter Mick	Whisper Three	15	Keert Eiki	Mustang	1	Trist William	Eva	8
Coudry	Rainbow		Kidney/Kidney/Nolan	Merette		Twomey John	Mar-J	10
Crabb David	Seafire	11						
Craig Andrew	Chimera	19	Kingston Tony	Summer Wine	14			
Cullen Richard	Supremacy	7		Stormvogel	5	van Beuningen Frank		
			Lady William	Chaing	2	van Collie Gerome	Hestia	2
Dale David	Lightning	3	Larner Peter	Isis		Vandamme Jan	Roodt	1
Daniels Bill	Mistress	10	Lutener/Elphick	Dax	4	van der Poul Jan	Mamselle	1
Dann Barbara	Njord	16	Lynch Frances	Phoenix	4	Vass/Wilkinson-Cox	?	3
Dare John	Quartet	1					Jerboa IV	2
Davies Richard	Flotation	10	Macleane Shaun	Secret	5			
Dawe Roger	Royalist	1	Makey Martin	Ganador	9	Wade Mark	Avalanche	2
Dee Peter	Rainbow	11	Mathews James	TBB	12	Ward Chris	Snark	3
Denton Aubrey	Nimrod	2	Mehew James	Comanche	17	Webster/Bagley	Buccaneer	5
Dicker Chris	Scorpio	7	Mellish Nick		1	Williams Eric	Frantic/Ecstatic	11
Dudley John	Phase 2	7	Mellows John	Ariadne	7	Wilson Peter	Harkaway	3
			Morgan Clive	Amok	11	Winn/Fysh/Hay	Beowulf	4
Ellis Sandy	Heuschrecke	3	Moody/Noble/Carpenter	Zin Zan	2	Woodcock Colin		
			Moriarty Paul	Zinzan	5		Rapid Transit/Hectic	9
Field John	Vol de Nuit	4	Murphy Pat	Setanta	10	Woods Ward	Cojo/Jessica	12
Finnegan John	Jane	1				Wright Jasper	Moonshine	2
Flutter Peter	Quicksilver		Newton Richard	Polly	1	Wylleman Edouard	Team C3	4
Fogg Martin	Hat Trick	1	Nicholson Peter	Virago	10			
Fort Edward	Fortitude	0						
Freivokh Ken	Spitfire	5	O'Donoghue Don	Seabird	7			
			O'Donoghue/Nash	Sonata	6			

Please check the BDA website for an up to date listing.

TECHNICAL TIPS

2 – Going to windward in a chop

THESE ARE HORRIBLE CONDITIONS. Typically they occur towards the end of a race as the wind dies, when concentration may be weakening. They can be exacerbated by a windshift which makes the course on one tack head more into the waves.

A Dragon hates them because of its round, blunt, bow sections and weight. They are, however, conditions in which enormous VMG (speed made good to windward) differences can exist. Here are some tips that have worked for us.

1. Always keep speed on. The tacking angle will deteriorate badly, but unless it hits 180° you are making progress. The guy who is desperately trying to point but not moving is achieving nothing. Don't sheet in too hard. You should find that there is an angle above which the helmsman cannot point and keep going. Set the sails to that rather than the other way round.

2. Twist the sails. The gradient of windspeed relative to height above the water is apt to be greater in these conditions requiring more twist as the apparent wind is freer higher up.

It is also likely to be more veered higher up, requiring more twist on starboard tack than port, since the top of the sail will be sailing in a freer wind on starboard and will

be headed relative to the lower part of the sail on port tack.

In addition the whole rig is pitching, causing major and erratic variation in apparent wind, and lacks a constant angle of attack. At least if the sails are twisted part of the rig is always working rather than stalling out completely.

Remember to twist the genoa by easing the barber-hauler. Make sure the kicking strap is off, and, if necessary, open the leech with the backstay.

3. Roll tack. Really go for it to keep way on through and after the tack.

4. Don't sheet in too quickly after tacking, and ease the mainsheet as you tack. The top of the main particularly will stall badly unless the sheet is eased quite a lot until speed has built up again.

5. Many boats will try to point. You can only pass them to leeward or on the other tack.

6. Keep still and use minimum helm. If the boat is properly set up, the rudder will feel as though it is flopping around, yet the boat will keep tracking.

7. Remember that these conditions are hell for everyone else and that it can be very satisfying if they are properly handled.

*Note to helmsmen – for clarity:
DO NOT LOSE YOUR COOL and blaspheme, it does not make for good team work. MG*

Patrick Gifford (and Mary)

BDA YOUNG PERSON'S REPRESENTATIVE

Matthew Armstrong defines the role

I AM DELIGHTED, at the age of 32, to take over, from Katie Cole, the role of Young Person's Representative for the BDA.

The Crews Union has been overlooked for the past few years...

For those of you who don't know me, I have been racing Dragons for the best part of 10 years on the waters of the Solent crewing for Richard Jordan. He is actually younger than me so if I have to represent people

like him then I reckon I'll have plenty to do.

Having spent some time over the past few months trying to work out what the role involves, it seems quite clear that no-one really knows what the brief is. Therefore I thought the best way forward was to define the role.

It is clear that young people are the future of the class – I remember in my late teens and early twenties sailing in J24s and the number of people of the same age was very noticeable.

The superb quality of racing that is available to Dragon sailors in the UK is, although an excellent motive, not a guarantee that

new young blood will join the fleet. In my view, the role should be targeted towards the crews, both young and old, encouraging new people to join the class, making people feel welcome both on the water, and, sometimes more importantly, off it.

The Crews Union has been overlooked for the past

few years and I intend to rectify that with immediate effect.

The Dragon Class has always been known for its great racing and great parties – once word gets round that us Dragon sailors are a good friendly social bunch then new faces will follow.

BOATS FOR SALE

Large numbers of Dragons are advertised for sale on the BDA website together with trailers, gear and equipment, and wanted ads

www.britishdragons.org

TECHNICAL TIPS

3 – The Start

“Try to have a routine that your team knows inside out for pre start work. Think about all the data that you will need to process in order to make the decision on where you will start on the line. Every team will have their own personal preferences in which order they do them, but all should include at least the following:

- Bearing of the line.
- Wind direction. Checking regularly to monitor line bias and general overview of what the wind is doing.
- Work out bias. 90 degrees onto line bearing gives you a square line. Work out the bias by what the actual wind bearing is. If it is less, it's port and vice versa.
- Line transit (if possible) preferably through the pin end as this is easier to see. Or a back transit through the committee boat. This is crucial if you want to start in the middle of the line and want to avoid the mid line sag.
- Windward mark bearing.
- Leeward mark bearing from Windward mark. Use a system that your team is happy with and get in to a routine whereby you use it on every start. In time it will become second nature and should improve your pre race strategy.”
Jamie Lea

4 – The Leeward Mark

“When approaching the leeward mark with a boat in front of you, try not to round the mark directly astern of her. By doing so you will limit your choice of attacking or escaping the cover. If you round nose to tail, you will be experiencing the dirty air being exhausted from the sails in front. Speed will be seriously affected and you will lose the ability to climb off her and attack. To gain the speed needed, you will be forced to ease sheets and drop to leeward slightly. By doing this you will more than likely have lost the opportunity to tack off and escape the cover because boats behind will now have rounded and could be holding their height, blocking your escape route.

You are left with only one option – to continue to sail a lower angle to break into clear air. Sailing further distance and in dirty air is not a good idea.

In the build up to the rounding, try to anticipate if you are going to round too close to the boat in front and act in order to prevent this from happening. Possibly drop the spinnaker slightly earlier to drop back off her. This also gives you more time to tidy the cockpit and ensure you are completely ready and set up for the next beat.

Just prior to rounding, put some distance between the two of you by sailing lower. This will enable you to execute the perfect rounding of wide in, close out. With distance to play with, you can now concentrate on trying to climb off her.

If this is not possible, you should be able to escape by tacking off because you have better speed around the mark and have held height stopping boats behind getting inside you.”
Jamie Lea

2004 EAST COAST CHAMPIONSHIP

THE EAST COAST CHAMPIONSHIP will take place over the second May bank holiday weekend of May 29th – 31st 2004 and will be hosted by the Medway Dragon Fleet. This is a new venue for the East Coasts and we are working hard to make sure that we can give you a great weekend.

Unknown to many Dragon sailors, the Medway has a large sailing area in the main body of the river just before Sheerness port and the Thames Estuary. This gives us a wide expanse of water and the advantage of two parts of the river (Saltpan and Kethole Reaches) that are almost at a right angle to each other allowing us to set full windward/leewards. It is usually relatively flat water but a sea can develop.

The Medway fleet itself now has 22 boats and has developed considerably over the past few years. On the social side – at least as important as the racing – there will be a welcome drink on the Friday night, a casual hog-roast-

type event on the Saturday night and a formal dinner on the Sunday night at the Medway Yacht Club. Anyone who decides to come earlier or stay longer and/or join in our club racing on a Saturday will be very welcome.

If you are planning to bring along non-sailors, there are also many things to do nearby varying from the Kentish history such as Upnor and Rochester Castles and the Dickens past of Rochester to the shopping at Bluewater and amusements for children; not to mention the Historic Naval Dockyard at Chatham. There should also be opportunity for spectators on support boats.

So how do you get there? Actually, it's surprisingly easy, the Medway YC is situated about 20 minutes down the A2 from the M25 and most of the journey is on dual carriageway.

For launching and recovery, we have our own crane but, for the event, launching and recovery on the weekend will be at the new neighbouring Chatham Marina. MDL, the operators of the marina, are also sponsoring the event.

Full details of the event including logistics and accommodation will be posted on our dedicated web-page at www.medwayyachtclub.com/dragons/eastcoast.htm so please look for more details there.

Telephone enquiries to Philip Clarabut (07770 690758) and Hilary Gallo (01763 288 181)

We look forward to welcoming you to the Medway in May.

www.medwayyachtclub.com/dragons/eastcoast.htm

Dragons racing on the large Medway sailing area



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- WINNER** - North German Championships
- WINNER** - Belgium Championships
- WINNER** - Irish Championships
- WINNER** - Regatte Royale Cannes

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Email: Petticrows@dial.pipex.com Website Address: Petticrows.com



DRAGON 75th JUBILEE BALL

16th January

Four Seasons Hotel, Park Lane, London

His Majesty King Constantine, President of the International Dragon Association and President of Honour of ISAF, accompanied by Her Majesty Queen Anne-Marie will be attending as Guests of Honour.

We now have over 200 coming to the Jubilee Ball and will be mailing tickets to those who have applied for them on 15th December. They should arrive by Christmas.

Absolutely Final Closing Date for Applications - Friday 9 January 2004, but if you are still thinking of coming and have not yet applied for tickets please do so now!

Applications (with cheque £125 per ticket payable to BDA) and enquiries to Gavia Wilkinson-Cox, Dragon Jubilee Office, 5 Albert Drive, London SW19 6LP

Tel: +44 (0)8780 5270 email: jubileeball@eventnetwork.demon.co.uk

JUBILEE RAFFLE

The raffle will be drawn at the Jubilee Ball by His Majesty King Constantine. The latest list of ticket entitlements is on the BDA website at www.britishdragons.org and it may have a few updates from the list printed in the newsletter. Please check your tickets and advise any errors immediately.

If you are not attending the Ball then you must appoint a nominee who is attending the Ball or your tickets will not go in the hat. If you have not yet done so, please Email jamesm@meltemi.co.uk or write to: James Mehew, The Old White House, Quidenham, Norwich, NR16 2NY. All nominations will be acknowledged by email or post by 4th January, so if you have not heard by then please ask for confirmation that we have received it.

GOLD CUP Falmouth, 11th – 17th July

You can now enter online at www.dragongoldcup2004.com If you are planning to come, please enter as soon as you can. It helps with planning, and a good list of entrants helps encourage the others!

BRITISH DRAGON ASSOCIATION

INCOME & EXPENDITURE STATEMENT FOR YEAR TO 31 OCTOBER 2003

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 OCTOBER 2003

	2002/03	2001/02	2003	2002
	£	£	£	£
INCOME				
Subscriptions				
Received	7,168	11,441	360	360
Owing	3,605	635		
From last year	(635)	(965)		
	<u>10,138</u>	<u>11,111</u>		
Advertising & Sponsorship	12,250	20,250	3,855	885
Bank interest	251	235	10,000	10,000
	<u>22,639</u>	<u>31,596</u>	<u>40,876</u>	<u>33,009</u>
Annual Dinner Account				
Receipts	3,100	4,144		10,800
Less: costs	(3,204)	(4,032)	(14,270)	
(Deficit)/Surplus on Annual Dinner	(104)	112		
Total Income	<u>22,535</u>	<u>31,708</u>	<u>26,605</u>	<u>22,209</u>

EXPENDITURE				
IDA & RYA Subscription	1,970	1,727		1,025
Handbook, IDA & BDA Newsletter	8,540	4,513		591
Advertising & Promotion	28	226		95
Jubilee Dragon, inc expenses	3,443	21,628		1,835
Hon Secretary	1,000	750		210
Treasurer	1,000	750		470
Web Master	300	500		265
Postage, telephone & stationery	1,617	318		552
Committee room hire	150	257		445
Sundries	0	551		1,380
Bank charges (BACS)	91	36		1,690
Depreciation & Subs write off	-	-		305
	<u>18,139</u>	<u>31,256</u>		800
Total Expenditure				
	<u>18,139</u>	<u>31,256</u>		<u>11,441</u>
SURPLUS FOR YEAR	<u>4,396</u>	<u>452</u>		<u>(965)</u>

Less: CURRENT LIABILITIES				
Creditors				
Borresen				10,800
Accruals			(14,270)	
Total Net Assets			<u>26,605</u>	<u>22,209</u>
REPRESENTED BY:				
Balance brought forward		22,209		21,757
Surplus for the year		4,396		452
Total		<u>26,605</u>		<u>22,209</u>

NOTE: ANALYSIS OF 2003 SUBSCRIPTIONS

Received in year:				
Affiliated	1,088			1,025
Aldeburgh	40			591
Belfast Lough	95			95
Burnham	1,485			1,835
Clyde	240			210
Falmouth	135			470
Forth	265			265
Lowestoft	445			495
Medway	1,380			1,600
Solent	1,690			3,228
Torbay	305			540
Irish Dragon Association				800
				<u>11,441</u>
Less: 2002 Debtors (less unpaid)	7,168			(965)
Owing at Year end	(635)			635
Total	<u>10,138</u>			<u>11,111</u>



JPMorgan Fleming Asset Management, one of the world's leading asset management companies, is a proud sponsor of this year's Dragon Gold Cup.

For more information on either JPMorgan Fleming or the Dragon Gold Cup, please visit www.dragongoldcup.com

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