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International Secretary’s Report 2013

1. Introduction
   1. It has been a long time since the last world championships in Mandurah, Australia and consequently there is a lot of activity to report.
2. ISAF issues
   1. AD continues to foster good working relationships with ISAF secretariat to promote Fireball and ensure swift resolution of any issues the class may have.
   2. AD continues to administer the ISAF Plaques on behalf of the class and ISAF. This is a balancing act as AD has no formal way of knowing when plaques will be required from professional and amateur builders and plaques ordered from ISAF and held for issue by FI must be paid for on request. Consequently ensuring there are always plaques available is a challenge. The system set up with PG as Treasurer for invoicing Plaques is now working well. There is also a steady stream of sailors needing replacement plaques as they have lost or damaged the original.
   3. There have been several instances where AD has had to approach ISAF on behalf of individual sailors. AD has been able to contact the correct people in ISAF and resolve the issue with minimal delay.
   4. ISAF has a database of Fireball world championships. AD is assisting in ensuring the data is correct. Please let him know if you identify any corrections that are needed.
   5. To retain its International status the class must comply with ISAF’s regulations and complete annual returns. AD has submitted these and ensured they are completed in a manner which optimises the image of the class.
   6. AD was requested to make a presentation at the 2012 ISAF IM seminar on the Fireball method of event equipment checking (measurement).
   7. AD attended the 2012 ISAF annual conference in Dublin. In addition to attending the formal International classes’ meeting this is an important part of ensuring the class stays high on the international sailing radar.
3. Working with NCAs
   1. The issues in GBR with Fireball sails at one of the major multi fleet regattas were unfortunately too well reported in all the sailing press. AD assisted UKFA in securing a formal rule interpretation and preparing a press release on behalf of the class to clarify matters and limit the reputational damage.
   2. AD is working with Fireball owners in BEL to re-establish a formal NCA. He has also been approached by one of the premier clubs in BEL about the potential for Fireball joining a major multi class regatta they are proposing. The Fireball input is being progressed in conjunction with the RC Europe.
   3. AD has been approached by POL Fireball owners and is currently negotiating the potential to establish an NCA.
4. General Issues
   1. AD now has the codes to post to the new web site although there are still some issues with posting attachments to documents.
   2. The FI office continues to receive emails and enquiries on all subjects from how to run a world championship to advice on how to buy a boat.
   3. The latest sail number issued is 15103. The FI office continues to provide the documentation associated with registering new boats; ISAF plaques, sail numbers, measurement form etc and documentation for change of owner.
   4. There has been a steady stream of requests for self-build plans and then enquiries from the builders. The plans are then printed and despatched together with the building instructions. Like ISAF plaques there is a need to try and judge when to get plans printed so there is not too much stock but they are available for dispatch. Thanks should go to Architect’s practice AGD in Darlington UK who are happy to accommodate FI’s requests for A0 plan printing.
   5. The FI office has always issued the annual membership stickers to the NCAs. The introduction of the membership cards in 2013 has added to this task, particularly as it appears that some NCAs have not grasped the principle behind the membership cards.
   6. As usual AD has been liaising with builders and sail makers on a whole range of issues.
5. Championships
   1. AD continues to be instrumental in ensuring the class delivers the quality of championships sailors have come to expect.
   2. All the following events have had and will benefit from this invaluable input from AD.
   3. On the back of this reputation AD has been approached by other international classes seeking advice on how AD delivers the Fireball championship package. The classes have included Contenders, Enterprise, GP 14, 5O5 and RS.

2012 Worlds Mandurah AUS

* 1. AD combined the responsibilities of FI Secretary with being a member of the International Jury to assist with the budget. As being a member of the Jury is in itself is a full time job this placed additional pressures on AD.
  2. Customs and import regulations in Australia preventing the import of wooden goods meant that FI’s wooden trophies could not be presented at the championship. In addition all other trophies had to be removed from their wooden cases and repacked for shipping. Reuniting the trophies with their cases is still an ongoing issue and is unlikely to be fully resolved until the 2015 UK worlds.
  3. AD has also had a stream of contact about additional container charges post event. There is a need to nail this issue or it will have a detrimental impact on the number of boats travelling. It seems to be a particular problem in GBR at present.
  4. There have also been issues with locating trophies which were put in containers but this appears to now be resolved.

2012 Europeans Bracciano ITA

* 1. AD assisted the club in managing the additional requirements of the Italian sailing federation. The championship had the usual challenges and some new ones due to changes in the usual delivery team.

SLO 2013

* 1. As usual AD visited the site to ensure the hosts were clear what Fireball expects for its championships. He ensured the NOR and then the SIs were prepared to FI’s requirements and generally assisted the local organising committee and sailors with their pre event questions.
  2. If first impressions are anything to go by this is going to be a great event.

2014 Worlds RVYC Thailand

* 1. The process to confirm the venue for this championship has been much more complicated than most. AD had made approaches to a club in Turkey but following unfavourable reactions from some NCAs coupled with the current political situation in the area it was decided this was not an appropriate time to go with the location.
  2. Several other venues were considered; but wind strengths were not favourable or the venue was too industrialised etc so they were rejected. The firm favourite of Thailand was thus chosen although it was not until options for hosting from other locations in Thailand were rejected as logistically impossible that RVYC was confirmed as the venue. It is a good job that RVYC are understanding and have used the Fireball way as their template for delivering other classes. This meant they could agree at short notice and know exactly what is required.
  3. All issues are now in hand and AD is working with Rut Subniran and RVYC to build on previous events and ensure this will be another great championship.

SHE 2014

* 1. AD was asked to attend the Shetland boat show to assist with promoting the event and securing sponsorship. A promotional video was also made. He combined this with meeting the organising committee and viewing the amendments to facilities that have been made at Lerwick Boating Club and in the harbour. It is expected that any problems will be sorted out early as the organising committee have worked with AD before.
  2. Bruce Leask the PRO will be at the SLO worlds to assist in promotion and to catch up with Fireball requirements.
  3. The SHE organising committee is seeking sponsorship for the event but is being hampered by the lack of European presence on the FI web site.

GBR 2015

* 1. AD has been asked to organise the event for the UKFA based on his delivery record. He was asked to identify a venue and UKFA have chosen the venue from AD’s suggestions.
  2. AD has established contact with the chosen host club and had a long meeting to discuss FI’s requirements. This was very positive as AD was able to build on existing relationship with the club; all issues on track.
  3. The FI communications officer has been posting initial press bulletins.
  4. AD has established team with UKFA for delivery. They will be meeting shortly.

2016

* 1. RSA have made contact and are keen to host the event. AD has had two SKYPE meetings with their team. He has also spoken to his contacts who have knowledge of the area to get independent views on the venue suitability & security. The UKFA’s concerns have been passed on and will be taken into consideration in any final decision.

1. Conclusions
   1. This has been another busy year for Fireball.

Andrew Davies

August 2013