

## Western European Commodore's Report

**UK:** Regattas: UK Nationals, sailed in Penzance July 21 – 27, 27 boats  
1<sup>st</sup> Ian Dobson & Richard Wagstaff; 15141 2<sup>nd</sup> Heather Macfarlane & Chris Payne; 15152 (Aus);  
3<sup>rd</sup> Penny & Russ Clarke; 15096; 4<sup>th</sup> Anthony & James Willcocks; 14928;  
Hayling Island Open, 16/17 June, 23 boats: 1<sup>st</sup> Ian Dobson & Richard Wagstaff; 15141  
2<sup>nd</sup> Penny & Russ Clarke; 15096; 3<sup>rd</sup> Tom Gillard and Geoff Edwards; 15127  
Brightlingsea Sailing Club, 9/10 June, 13 boats: 1<sup>st</sup> Tom Gillard & Geoff Edwards; 15127  
Peter & Tom Kyne; 15124; 3<sup>rd</sup> Kevin Hope & Russell Thorne; 15133  
Blackwater Sailing Club, 28/29 April, 21 boats: 1<sup>st</sup> Kevin Hope & Russell Thorne; 15133  
Dave Hall & Paul Constable; 15122; Derian & Andy Scott; 14941  
Chew Valley Sailing Club, 24/25 March, 20 boats: 1<sup>st</sup> Tom Gillard & Geoff Edwards; 15127  
2<sup>nd</sup> DJ Edwards & Vyv Townend; 15144; 3<sup>rd</sup> Ian Dobson & Richard Wagstaff; 15141  
Upcoming Events: Staunton Harold SC Open, 22/23 September; Draycote water SC  
Inland Championships 13/14 October.

Social media: Class Chairman, Chris Turner is very active on Facebook with posts to Hayling Island Fireballs, UK Fireball and Fireball International. There are a number of others who are actively promoting Fireballs in dedicated areas of the UK, most notably Chris Thorne, who has set up a SW (England) Fireball Facebook site. There is a good amount of Fireball “traffic” on Facebook.

**Ireland:** Regattas: Munsters, Killaloe May 12/13: Postponed: Irish Nationals, June 8<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup>, Skerries Sailing Club; 7 boats: 1<sup>st</sup> Barry McCartin & Conor Kinsella; 15114; 2<sup>nd</sup> Niall McGrotty & Neil Cramer; 14938; 3<sup>rd</sup> Daniel Thompson & Dan Quaid; 14775  
Open Championships, 23<sup>rd</sup> June Greystones Sailing Club; 3 boats: 1<sup>st</sup> Niall McGrotty & Neil Cramer; 14938; 2<sup>nd</sup> Frank Miller & Cormac Bradley; 14713, 3<sup>rd</sup> Neil Colin & Margaret Casey; 14775. Upcoming Events: Ulsters, Lough Derg Sailing Club, 8/9<sup>th</sup> September; Leinsters, Dun Laoghaire TBA.

Other news: The “Father” of the Irish Fireball fleet and a two-term Fireball International Commodore, Louis Smyth, passed away on 24<sup>th</sup> June 2018 after period of declining health. Louis' last sail in a Fireball was on 29<sup>th</sup> August 2017 on the last Tuesday night race of the Dublin Bay Sailing Club calendar. Earlier that year he had competed in the Frostbites before celebrating his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday in March at a lunch in Dublin. He is survived by his wife Rosemary and son Hugo and four younger sisters. His life was commemorated in a humanist ceremony on 22<sup>nd</sup> July in the National Yacht Club, Dun Laoghaire, with speakers from Fireball International and the Irish Fireball Class, friends, neighbours and former colleagues. A large number of Fireball Class

Worlds 2018: 4 Irish boats will be in attendance; Barry McCartin & Conor Kinsella (15114) Niall McGrotty & Neil Cramer (14938) Frank Miller & Ed Butler (14713) Louise McKenna & Hermine O'Keeffe (14691) Neil Cramer is the Irish Class Chairman and Frank Miller, Louise McKenna and Hermine O'Keeffe are committee members. They will be bringing the fleet's attention to Howth 2020. The Irish Fireball Class has been meeting with Howth Yacht Club to work on the promotion of the 2020 Worlds. Howth approached the Irish Fireball Class as they were looking to host a major event in their 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Year. A date of early August 2020 has now been agreed after consultations with Howth and the UKFA. Among the attributes which make Howth a great venue for a Worlds are the following;

- Harbour launching to a large race area
- There is no commercial shipping activity in the proposed race area
- The Race Officer for the event is a Howth Yacht Club member, an IRO and a former Fireballer
- They have extensive experience of hosting International and National events
- They have an extensive clubhouse with ample changing facilities, a 180-seater restaurant and a large bar area

- Easy access from Dublin Airport and Dublin Port
- Easy access to tourist facilities
- Good eating in and around Howth which is a fishing “village”.

Social Media: The Irish presence on Facebook is not as pronounced as it was – a reflection on the modest numbers sailing the boat at present. However, there is a very dedicated core of people who are doing their best to promote the Class and an open event was hosted by the Royal St George Yacht Club a few weeks ago which attracted some very enthusiastic sailors.



Photo 1: Howth, Ireland.

**France:** Regattas: No results “extractable” from the Fireball France website.  
Social Media: Some Facebook traffic

**Belgium:** Regattas: No results available from the Belgian Fireball site.  
Social Media: Nothing of note

**Shetland:** Regattas: No information available  
Social media: Recently saw some drone footage on Facebook of Fireball sailing in Shetland.

July 2018

Cormac Bradley