

Fireball Worlds to return to Ireland in 2022



Host to the 2022 Fireball Worlds – Lough Derg Yacht Club, Ireland.

So, as the sun rises hopefully on a welcome return to international regattas, the Irish Fireball Class, in tandem with Fireball International and the Lough Derg Yacht Club are delighted to announce that the World Championships of the Class will be hosted at the Lough Derg venue in August 2022.

The Covid pandemic has decimated the sailing calendar worldwide for the past 15 months and the Fireball Class has not been immune to the inability to host regattas due to a plethora of reasons including health issues, quarantining and the absence of international travel. Countries around the globe have had to endure different regimes of quarantining and rates of recovery from the initial and subsequent surges of the virus and this has played havoc with the original schedule of international regattas for the Fireball Class.

However, a combination of circumstances allows us to make this announcement now and a number of parties need to be acknowledged as being fundamental to the return of the Fireball Worlds to Ireland.

Howth Yacht Club initially sowed the seed of bringing the event back to Ireland to mark their 125th Anniversary in 2020. However, the onset of Covid caused that event to be abandoned and subsequently Howth's commitment to another international regatta in 2022 and the lack of certainty to the timetable for dredging works to Howth harbour in 2022/23 precluded them from hosting in 2022 or 2023. We thank them for their support of the Irish Fireball Class in promoting the 2020 event which included their Principal Race Officer and Regatta Organisers attending the 2019 Worlds in Canada.

The Australian Fireball Association were due to host the Worlds after Howth in 2022 but their domestic situation with respect to Covid led them to request Fireball International to defer this regatta. Fireball International were persuaded that with the time lapse since Canada in 2019 a European-based Worlds was more likely to attract a bigger fleet of boats. On that basis, Fireball International consented to the Irish Fireball Association seeking a venue for 2022 and we are delighted that Lough Derg Yacht Club have stepped up to the plate to host the event. Within the past few days, we have had confirmation from Fireball International's Executive Committee that the event can go ahead.

Established in 1835, Lough Derg Yacht Club (LDYC) is based in Dromineer on the shores of Ireland's third largest lake with a surface area of 118km². Their most recent international regatta was the Mirror Worlds which was a very successful event and they have a long pedigree of hosting National, Provincial, and domestic regattas and the Fireball Class have been regular visitors to their club. The club is ideally situated with easy access to a multitude of racing areas, has ample space for mobile homes, caravans and tents and has additional "roof and four walls" accommodation within easy access of the club. While it is an inland venue, travelling to the club from Ireland's major airports and ferry terminals is relatively simple with good roads and the journey will afford competitors a chance to see more of Ireland and its "forty shades of green"!

For the Irish Class Association, this regatta provides an opportunity for a re-building of the domestic fleet with the incentive of a locally based Worlds. It also affords the Race Management Team, which will be led by a well-recognised International Race Officer the chance to run a Worlds on "their own doorstep".

All parties to the regatta are excited by the return of international sailing with the regatta scheduled for August 2022 between the 18th and 26th consisting of a two-day Pre-Worlds, a day for measuring and the normal Sunday to Friday race timetable with a Wednesday lay-day.

We look forward to a great event and invite more Irish sailors to consider our high performance two-person dinghy for their next international challenge!