

Commodore's Report

Past regattas: The first international event after the Covid Lock Down was the European Championship in Piombino ITA. What a pleasure to see so many international Fireball Friends after this crazy year 2020. However, the feeling of special conditions appeared to be still present: No social events, besides Nick and Evelyne only continental participants. But still it was a great success and I know, that this was mainly the Italian NCA which put all their energy into the organization (sometimes seemingly against the club and the Marina being part of the Organizing Committee). To be here now and attending the first World Championship since 3 years and having fun with over 80 boats on the water reassures me that our decisions from last year were right: Hold the Worlds in Europe and give the Irish fleet a second chance to use all their inputs already made for the Worlds in 2020. Many thanks to you guys!!

Next Events: Unfortunately this was followed by a second postponement: The Worlds in Geelong AUS. Here too we probably were right! Prices for flights and container shipping exploded, first due to the Covid mess in China, and now the next disaster did hit us: a war in Europe, unbelievable, but fact and followed by an energy crisis predicted for the next winter and again influencing the costs for travel massively. We now hope to realize our plans for 2023: the Europeans in Portoroz SLO and then our next Worlds Geelong 2024.

FI website including the FI calendar: We are trying hard to keep it up to date at any time. However, we also depend on you: Thus, please inform us always if you have an announcement to be made, an event to be published, or a missing out of something important you have found. Get your information at: www.fireball-international.com.

Technical Committee: We have changed the International Fireball Class Rules twice: First the carbon pole is now allowed. And second, we have added a rule which changes RRS 50.1 (b): On a Fireball the trapeze harness worn by a competitor may or may not be of the quick release variety complying with ISO 10862. Both requests were accepted by World Sailing. Unfortunately the building of new boats came to a nearly complete stop during 2020 and 2021.

Finances: FI is still in good condition. We have budgeted again 2000.- pounds to support young sailors mainly to make affordable the participation of international events.

World Sailing: For the first time our new International Measurer Chris Henderson is in action here in Dromineer. Thus, we will soon be able to comply fully with the WS requirements as World Sailing Class.

Thanks: Finally, I would like to thank all of you: It is a great pleasure to be surrounded by so many enthusiastic sailors from the very young to the white haired oldies as I am. This makes it so rewarding to help keeping the class going on!

It is with all my heart to thank all the members of the Executive, who support me at any time and which act as a real team, such that I am very confident, that we can solve the upcoming problems together.

Your FI Commodore
Christina Haerdi

Rear Commodore Asia JAP

Thanks for your concern, I am just surprised that so many teams are joining the Irish worlds, really want to join worlds again.

Japan situation is not so change. After losing 4 boats by typhoon attack a few years ago. 7 boat is active and 3-4 times/year fireball only race is hold (During worlds 20/21 Aug is Japan nationals)

Say hello to old fireball friend

Japan active boat is as follows

14808,14841,14902,14947,15009,15052,15104

I was considering to buy a new boat but on-hold due to bad economy and family stuff.

(buy boat in UK and join words in Europe and send boat to Japan was my original plan)

Hiroshi Kato, Rear Commodore Asia

Rear Commodore Afrika

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Rear Commodore Australia

Since the last World Championships in Montreal, like everywhere else, Australia experienced a couple of years of disruption to crewed boat sailing and competition during 2020 and 2021.

We were fortunate enough in summer of 2020-21 to have a lift in lock down protocols that enabled us to hold a replacement regatta. Because of last minute arrangements and some States unable to travel it was not a National Championship. Nevertheless it was great fun and well attended in combination with several other classes.

A side effect of the changes wrought by Covid seems to be less priority to sailing and the Nationals this year which originally were to be held in Queensland were re-scheduled and re-located to a country Victorian club in an effort to attract more entries. This was partially successful and the current National Champions are a young pair of sailors from Adelaide: Jalina Kambas-Thompson and Nathan Stockley. Geelong, the home of the Fireball World Championship 2024 was lucky to be located in regional Victoria and sailors there were less affected than city based sailors.

The "old guard" of office holders has stepped up to maintain continuity and ensure class association administration continues without hiccup. Ben Schulz, who many of you know, is filling the important roles of IFAA Treasurer. John Heywood continues to lead the IFAA team as President. Our long term and efficient secretary. Matt Carter who provided class secretary support for many years has swapped out to play a role in the South Australian class association. His succession plan for a young sailor to step up worked for a year but Elise Franson re-located for work and found the role was no longer viable. Fortunately another long term fireball sailor Myles Gavin from Royal Geelong Yacht Club has stepped up to take on the responsibility of IFAA Secretary. We hope between Ben's experience, Myles work ethics and my role as Rear Commodore that we can manage effective communication across FI and with Fireball sailors world wide.

It is great to see Susannah and Andrew here representing Australia at their first Fireball World Championship. Interest being expressed by several Fireball teams who have not sailed internationally before to come across and participate in the European Championship in Portoroz, Slovenia next year. This is an encouraging sign for the class of the sailing enjoyment and value of sailing based friendships.

Preparation for the World Championship 2024 at Royal Geelong Yacht Club is well underway, with great team work between IFAA representatives and the Club representatives on the Organising Authority. Sailors can see a lot of information at 2024.fireballworlds.com or access via Upcoming Events at fireball-international.com.

Heather Macfarlane, Rear Commodore Australia

Rear Commodore Europe Centre

Fireball racing in the “Eastern” part of Fireball Europe is back on track. We have survived covid and we’re racing again. In general, we can see young sailors join the class. Not in high numbers, as there are plenty of options for them (29er, RS classes, etc.), but still, there is some progress. The fleet in SUI is slowly growing, which is a great success. The CZE fleet is keeping its numbers, we can see some seasoned teams leaving the fleet, but they are being replaced by younger enthusiastic guys who keep the FB flag high. ITA fleet is active, with a lot of young sailors, but not so keen on travelling abroad. On the other hand, foreign sailors always receive a very warm welcome on Italian events.

Slovenian fleet had diminished in previous years, but they’re slowly gaining strength again. They are well motivated, and the upcoming Europeans next year could move things in the right direction. Hosting club, JK Pirat, provides great supportive environment for various world and European championships. Led by former Olympian Mitja Margon, the club do their best to host successful regattas.

The „Central“ European Cup has been discontinued for 2019. However, the short tradition of visiting our closest Fireball neighbours seems to continue. We keep in close touch and try to send at least a couple of boats to our friend’s Nationals and other important regattas.

Jakub Napravnik, Rear Commodore Central Europe

Rear Commodore Europe West

For the past two seasons, the summers of 2020 and 2021, Fireball sailing in Ireland has been badly impacted by the Covid pandemic. In the early stages of the lockdown in Ireland, March 2020, the annual Frostbite Series in Dun Laoghaire which runs from the first Sunday in November through to the last Sunday before Easter the following year (with the exception of the Sundays either side of Christmas) was cancelled. This impacted the hardy Fireballers who sail the Frostbites.

We also had a late start to the summer sailing season of 2021, with regular, points scoring racing, only permitted by the start of July. Normally dinghy racing in Dun Laoghaire gets underway in the last week of April and runs through to the last week of August midweek and to the last Saturday of September at weekends. A number of the regular Fireballers went out and bought singlehanded boats so that they could continue to sail through the early months of the pandemic because unless the crew were from the same family, double-handed sailing wasn’t permitted. As the Covid situation improved during the summer of 2021, we got back to a sense of normality, but just as an extension to the 2021 season was being contemplated (into October) the Government shut all sporting activity down again in mid-September.

Regatta fleet sizes were down to single figures in most instances, but we did run all our provincial events and we did have a Nationals. Fleet sailing was concentrated in Dun Laoghaire as there are no other regular fleets operating in the country. In order to improve numbers, we engaged with a sailing community based in Dun Laoghaire harbour and that drew in a number of additional bodies.

The 2021/22 Frostbites proceeded without any impositions due to Covid other than a dropping of the wind strength threshold for racing – to try and minimise capsizes and unnecessary engagement between racing crew and rescue crews. Again, the single-handers had the biggest fleets – ILCAs and Aeros, but a small number of Fireballs persisted in racing.

When the news broke that Ireland would host the 2022 Worlds there was a significant upswing in numbers sailing Fireballs. That has ultimately manifested itself with 30 Irish boats here at Lough Derg for the Worlds. Quite where some of the boats have come from, I don’t know. For example, the boat I sailed in my return to Ireland in (2002), 14750, which had disappeared for at least 5 years (if not more) is here and won the Irish Nationals last week. Boats have re-appeared from gardens

and garages in various states of repair to be here this week. Likewise, some of the old hands who had moved on from Fireballs, have come back in at the prospect of a Worlds here in Ireland, on their doorstep. While I am greatly encouraged by this reversal of fortunes, I am concerned that some of the pre-World enthusiasm will evaporate post-Worlds.

Frank Miller and Ed Butler took advantage of the UK Nationals being early this year and went across to compete. This had the added benefit of being able to promote the Irish Worlds in person. And as can be since by the size of the UK entry here, the attraction of Ireland being a car-ferry away has resulted in a big UK contingent being here. Barry McCartin and Conor Kinsella also contested a number of regattas in the UK to get a sense of where they were compared to the UK crews.

(However, as I write this note on 31 October, I am encouraged by the fact that 12 Fireballs have entered the 2022/23 Frostbites which start on Sunday next – this represents an almost doubling of the boats entered for last year's series.)

The Fireball Class was also invited to Irish Sailing's Champion of Champions regatta this year after a number of years of absence – Barry McCartin and Conor Kinsella finished 4th sailing GP14s. (The first three overall were regular GP14 sailors.)

The additional concern for the Class in Ireland is the membership of the committee. Like every other volunteer committee attracting new (and younger) people in is a major challenge. Our current Chairman and Secretary are both retired from 9 – 5 working and the balance of the committee is made up of people who are at the latter stages of their working lives rather than the start or midpoint.

The primary base for the fleet remains in Dun Laoghaire but we do have one active Fireballer who is resident in Northern Ireland, just east of Belfast, and he is very committed to doing the regattas with his regular crew based in Dublin.

Regards.

Cormac, Rear Commodore Western Europe

North America CAN

Memberships in the CFA have increased slightly from last year, with 12 paid/full members and 10 free/supporter members so far. Beyond club racing, an eight-boat fleet competed in Alberta in July, and regattas are planned in BC, Ontario, and Quebec in September. One of our goals is to continue to modernize our website and digital infrastructure, and our challenges include building and maintaining fleets at a sustainable level going forward.

Liz Brennan, President CFA

North America USA

US Fireball sailing and racing activities over the past 2 1/2 years has been at an all-time low due to Covid and the restrictions imposed during that period. United States International Fireball Association is struggling. Our membership numbers are down but hopefully they will be back stronger next year. It's hard to justify paying for a membership when there is nothing coming back from it, is what I'm hearing from a few members. We are seeing some new activity in the Southern California area, and a few boat building plans have been purchased around various parts of the USA. As our Fireball sailors grow older there aren't a lot of new sailors or updated boats coming into the sport. Other established sailing classes in the US continue to hold good average membership numbers. I think that this is because there are established fleets in many yacht clubs.

The Fireball hasn't had this since the early 1970's... One of the things that our Association needs to work on is to sail locally and grow the class within each sailing club. The lack of good boats is another issue. Most of the boats that are being purchased or resurrected are old boats from the 1970's that are barely sailable and not race worthy by any means. Our focus in the past fifteen years has been on racing and encouraging sailors to drive long distances when they are more interested in learning to sail the boat better and staying within a local traveling range. USIFA went through a period like this in the late 1970's and partnered with the Canadian Fireball Association to provide Fireball International memberships for those US sailors still wanting to race and support the class.

We now have another Fireball Facebook sites that competes with the North American Fireball Facebook site, and results from racing are posted on individuals personal Facebook pages. So our social media sites need some attention and direction. The loss of Mike McEvoy has had an impact within the North American Fireball Association as was the loss of Peter Kelley in Montreal.

Peter Wirth, President USIFA

SECRETARY'S REPORT

The year 2022 brought back some normality to the Fireball International class. The figures of this year are

- 15 National Class Associations (NCAs) have registered members and boats. We counted 3 NCAs being dormant or retired. In the previous year we counted 12 active NCAs and 6 dormant or retired NCAs
- 598 members were registered in our boat class, compared to 599 in the year before
- 343 boats were registered in our boat class, compared to 336 in the year before
- 2 new boats were built by professional boat builders
- 3 amateur builders started to build a Fireball International of plywood. So far none of these boats were finished and certified.
- We distributed about 10 Fireball International building plans. We expect that 2 to 4 boats are being built in the coming year by amateur builders.
- The highest sail number issued is now 15170

Linus Eberle, FI Secretary

TECH REPORT

I took on the role of Technical Chairperson at the end of 2019 with some persuasion from many sources!

There have only a few queries to deal with – but with the help from Tom and Mitja they have been sorted or answered.

There have been two major rules to deal with and change.

The first was after the class vote to allow carbon in the spinnaker pole, the submission was made to World Sailing. This took a little time, but with help from my team and those at WS we got it through for the 2021 season.

The second was to deal with the new trapeze harness hook rule from WS due to come into force in 2023. There was much discussion around the world and after a vote it was decided that since a class was allowed to change the rule within its own rule the Fireball class would and allow any hook on a harness.

This rule change was submitted early 2022 and the change is now included in the current rules published in July this year.

Dave Hall, Chairman of the Technical Committee

TREASURERS REPORT

FIREBALL INTERNATIONAL 2021 ACCOUNTS SUMMARY GRAPHIC

| | 2020 Income | 2021 Income |
|------------------------|--------------|----------------|
| Subscriptions | £ - | £ 3,688 |
| New Boats | £ 800 | £ - |
| Championship Fees | £ - | £ - |
| Measurement Form Sales | £ - | £ - |
| Total Income | £ 800 | £ 3,688 |

| | 2020 Expenses | 2021 Expenses |
|--------------------------|-----------------|---------------|
| Membership Costs | -£ 8,750 | £ 50 |
| Promotion Expenses | £ - | £ - |
| Administration Expenses | £ 405 | £ 249 |
| Training and Grants | £ - | £ - |
| Championship Expenses | £ - | £ - |
| Total Expenditure | -£ 8,345 | £ 299 |

Note: 2020 includes Norris Bros set aside

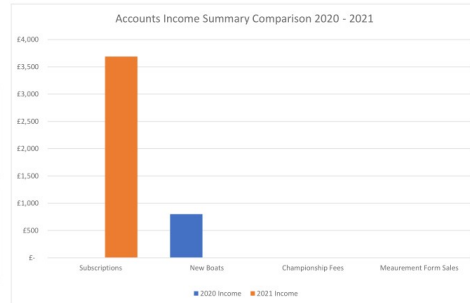
Balances are simplified and do not include special items such as debtors and creditors. They are actual bank statement balances not accounting balances

Balance Jan - Dec 2021

| | |
|---------------------------|----------|
| Opening balance from 2020 | £ 38,994 |
| In-Year Balance | £ 2,889 |
| Closing Balance | £ 41,883 |

Balance January - July 2022

| | |
|-----------------|----------|
| Opening Balance | £ 41,883 |
| In-Year Balance | £ 1,657 |
| Current Balance | £ 43,540 |



Guy Newsom, FI Treasurer