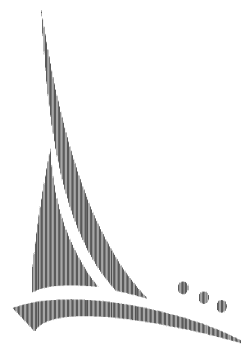

International Dragon Association



Minutes

2006 Annual General Meeting

Royal Thames Yacht Club, 60 Knightsbridge, London SW1
Saturday 28th October 2006 at 11am

Name	Position	Country	Representing	Also Representing
Chris Dicker	Vice President IDA	UK		
Rupert Fischer	Chairman IDA	Germany		
Andrew Craig	Treasurer IDA	Ireland		
Xavier Rouget –Luchaire	Officer NDA	France	Spain	
David Dale	Secretary IDA	UK	Australia	
Mike Hayles	Technical Committee	UK		
Antonio Cardona	Chief Measurer	Spain		
Jorgen Bonde	Officer NDA	Denmark	Denmark	
Karl Odent	Chairman NDA	Belgium	Belgium	
Mr. Xavier Vanneste	Vice President NDA	Belgium		
Mini Jaatinen-Genevet	Secretary NDA	Finland	Finland	
Christin Borenius	Vice Chairman NDA	Finland		
Lauri Rechartd	Officer NDA	Finland		
Eric Lebon	Secretary NDA	France	France	
Thomas Mueller	Officer NDA	Germany	Germany	
Gerd Koepcke	Officer NDA	Germany		
Ferenc Zenthe,	President NDA	Hungary	Hungary	
Vilmos Naray	Secretary NDA	Hungary		
Andras Simon	Organising Committee	Hungary		
Tim Pearson	Europeans Secretary NDA	Ireland	Ireland	
Michiel van Dis	President NDA	Netherlands	Netherlands	
Marc van Bommel	Technical Officer NDA	Netherlands		
Pim ten Harmsen van der Race Beek	Officer	Netherlands		

Rov Giske	Secretary NDA	Norway	Norway
Einar Moen		Norway	
Tor Moenichen		Norway	
Steff Herbern		Norway	
Igor Frolov	Vice President	Russia	
Pedro Alemão*	Secretary	Portugal	Portugal
Ulf Bjurman	Secretary NDA	Sweden	Sweden
Dieter Schmid	Chairman NDA	Switzerland	Switzerland Austria
Gavia Wilkinson Cox	BDA	UK	
Jill Hayward	Assistant Secretary IDA	UK	

1. Apologies for Absence

Robert Alpe (Aus), Miguel Casellas (PR), Ali Doganar (Turkey) Antonio Viretti (Italy), Peter Warrer(Denmark) Thomas Olrog(Sweden)

2. Declaration of Proxies

Xavier Rouget-Luchaire (France) for Spain, David Dale (UK) for Australia, Dieter Schmid (Switzerland) for Austria.

3. The 2005 Minutes

The 2005 Annual General Meeting Minutes previously circulated were approved.

4. Chairman's Report

Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear Dragon Sailors and Friends

The sailing season 2006 is more or less over and in the files .An excellently organized European Championship in Cowes saw a new Champion, Lars Hendriksen from Denmark, former member of our Technical Committee (and winner for the second time). An equally superb Gold Cup in Douarnenez ended with Werner Fritz as winner. Werner is known to most – if not all – as one of the leading sailmakers of our Class located at beautiful Chiemsee in Southern Germany. Additionally we had the usual rota of well-organised and well attended International events and numerous National Championships as well as regattas at the club level. Many Dragon races see more than 40 participants nowadays and twice this year we had more than 100 Dragons at the starting line. For the first time this year we held the German Dragon Grand Prix in Kiel/Strande. In this we tried to establish another great Dragon regatta with truly International standards and the comments we have received from competitors suggest that we achieved this.

This racing programme is continuing evidence that the International Dragon Class is up and running more than ever and continues its successful development.

However we must also remember that we lost 6 boats whilst racing during the season. Two during the Edinburgh Cup at Cowes, one during Cowes Week, one in Ireland and two reported from Russia. The Officers – and I believe all of us – are very concerned about this. Not only is it bad publicity for the Class but we are very aware of the possible risk of crew injury and even loss of life. We have not remained passive about this and Technical Committee Chairman Mike Hayles will outline our thoughts about how to address this issue, and invite your comments for discussion. The recent loss of 2 “unsinkable” Solings during their World Championships, maybe suggests that the solution lies not only in new Rules and techniques but also in defining realistic limits for the conditions in which we race.

For the moment let us return to the more positive recent developments:

- New countries (like Russia, Ukraine, Estonia) join our community; others (like Italia and Hungary) seem to be re-activated. Vice-Chairman Peter Warrer helps them establish National Associations, National Championships and qualification processes for International Championships.
- As far as we can see we have only very few and marginal problems with our ClassRules. We have asked for a measurement report from every big Dragon event, and from them, we can say that most of the boats, rigs and sails entering these big events comply well with the rules. It is a vital part of our work to continuously measure and monitor this compliance. The Class Rules are the basis of a one-design class. If they are not comprehensive and up to date then no matter how good your monitoring and measuring process is they will be seen as flawed. Vice-Chairman Xavier Rouget-Luchaire oversees our class rules, well supported by Mike Hayles, his Technical Committee, Chief Measurer Antonio Cardona Espin, as well as Gunter Ahlers who continues to help us internationally with his expertise in classic as well as current boats.

We have also identified areas which require more attention and action going forward:

Area 1, Class Development: The Dragon Class needs a good self-awareness and based upon this a development strategy. Vice Chairman Robert Alpe has spent much of his time summarizing our views and publishing them on the internet forum. But there is still a need for a broad discussion of this issue before we can agree on an acceptable development strategy for the future.

Area 2, Standard of Regattas: We have to continuously improve and upgrade the standard of our races. We expect jury reports from all our big events and from them have concluded that one developing problem for the Class is the increased use of coach boats. We will be recommending greater restrictions for them in future within our Regatta Regulations. In addition we plan to give more guide lines to Principal Race Officers regarding the conditions under which we want to race. In general Vice-Chairman Peter Warrer has outlined his thoughts on the overall direction for the regatta activities in a corresponding document.

I encourage all of you to discuss with us these ideas. Personally I feel that we have to establish mandatory requirements for the World and European Championships and Gold Cup as well as for other the top level races; for the moment I would like to call them “Grade 1 Dragon events”.

In the next step we have to identify venues and organizations which can fulfil those requirements. To recognise the high-standard of such an event we should guarantee a fixed time in our racing schedule free of overlap with International and National championships. We should also discuss if it is desirable to have 100+ boats at one starting line. I participated in the Gold Cup last year and in my view it is not, not even in a large and empty bay like Douarnenez. We also need top class shoreside facilities at our major events, and in the light of some recent experiences, the Officers will try to ensure that this is the case in the selection of future 'Grade 1' venues.

Area 3, Boatbuilders: Currently we have 1 large and 3 other main boatbuilders. I believe it is vital for a Class like ours to have capable and well-run yards which can supply our need for perfect yet affordable boats. A look over the fence, again into the Soling class, shows how vulnerable a Class with just one supplier is. The Abbott yard, principal supplier of the Class, burned down earlier this year leading to a dramatic shortage of new boats and specific parts. We know that the cost of entry to the market is very high because of the extraordinary standard necessary for a competitive boat but we should and do, support and encourage everyone attempting this venture in an equal way but at the same time we also have to insist that our Class Rules and measurement procedures are strictly maintained.

Area 4, Fees for National Associations: Today, I learned that 11 Nationals Associations have not yet paid their IDA fee for 2006. Most of them have voting delegates at this meeting and I regard this as completely unacceptable. The IDA is a joint venture of the whole Dragon community, and one cannot sit around this table, discussing and voting with the community with a subscription outstanding.

Now a few words on the internal organization of the IDA Officers:

The Class is growing in almost every respect, numbers of boats, numbers of National Associations, numbers of events every year etc. etc. Naturally this requires more attention and work to monitor and control all relevant activities. Resources in an organization are always scarce and particularly if the organization is run mostly on a part-time and voluntary base. Therefore we have identified areas of responsibility and divided our limited forces to cover those areas. As a result since the beginning of 2006 each Officer is in charge of a particular area:

- Vice-Chairman Xavier Rouget-Luchaire takes care of Class Rules and Measurement
- Vice-Chairman Peter Warrer is in charge of Development of National Associations and our Communication Channels (Internet and Newsletter)
- Vice-Chairman Robert Alpe covers everything to do with Regatta Regulations, the Race Calendar and the Development of new or modified race formats.
- I myself focus on activities around the "classic" Dragons.

Your Officers are all involved in discussions about, and the business of the Class, and I would encourage you to contact them directly if you want to discuss any specific Class issue. Additionally we have continued to improve our internal communication methods.

As in the past we aim to have at least two Officer's Meetings between AGMs often at the Gold Cup or other Major Championship. In between we use Skype for conference calls at regular intervals. We will enhance this in the very near future by means of internet collaboration and I am confident that this will speed up our work on behalf of members.

Recently we have set-up a format for our Forum within the IDA homepage. It is far better structured, topics are ordered and listed and it is easy to follow discussion threads and post answers or new topics. Special credit for a very quick implementation of this goes to Mini Jaatinen and her husband Daniel Genevet. As a tool for open discussion the forum is a perfect place to exchange opinions and ideas and I would encourage all of you, in your function as Representatives of a National Dragon Association to visit the forum regularly and see what is going on. Your input and feedback is of vital importance to discussions started there.

I have to report that during last years AGM we decided on a paper regarding a European ranking list. Now we are at the next AGM and no European ranking list is on the table or online in the Internet. One major reason for this is that we could not use the software developed in the Netherlands due to organizational and technical problems. This meant that I had to start the development of a new application in August 2006. This development is financed to a small part by the German Dragon Association, to the larger by myself. The software will be up and running very soon. If we finally can spot a volunteer to input the necessary race results of 2006 then we could have the first European Ranking List early in 2007.

Now, before the end of my first report as Chairman of the IDA I would like to do two things.

First I would like to say "Thank you" to our team:

- The Technical Committee with Mike at the helm crewed by Marc van Bommel, Philipp Ocker, and Andy Johnson. They had several personal meetings and a constant flow of e-mails while they worked on the issues resulting from last years AGM and matters arising during the season.
- Our Chief-Measurer Antonio as well as Gunter. Antonio has taken a firm grip on our rules and extends his experience from the Starboat to the Dragon. Günter, though not here today, is still extremely committed to the Class and ready to help in all technical matters.
- I am very glad to say that Assistant Secretary Jill Hayward is recovering from a serious illness and today is here supporting this meeting as in previous years. Apart from the constant daily IDA business, she is very focussed on our communication tools, the IDA website and the newsletter.
- My fellow Officers who are available – thanks to modern communication technologies – more or less around the clock. They have all accepted the newly created model of responsibilities. They have always responded – at least after a short moment of shock – to my ideas and plans and they always take the initiative and bring in their point of view.

- And a very big “thank you” goes to our Secretary, David who is the perfect First Lieutenant on the bridge of the IDA. David can be reached at any time and brings not only his broad experience as a Dragon sailor but his comprehensive organizational skills. He offers sound advice to the Officers on a range of issues and ensures that we follow up the decisions that we have made. He is an excellent, driving, co-ordinating and regulative hand behind the scene. Thank you David, for your outstanding work for the IDA.

Secondly I would like to express the following on behalf of the whole team: Being in charge of an Organization like the IDA requires constant attention, activity, deliberation and often it is not free of trouble and stress. But we all feel that it is a great honour and a pleasure to act on your behalf and on behalf of the whole Community of Dragon sailors around the world. We do it for our sport and for the sailboat class from which we take so much pleasure, the best One-Design Keelboat class in the World, the International Dragon Class.

5. Treasurers Report

In presenting his Report, the Treasurer was pleased to say that despite an overall decrease in revenue he had been able to increase reserves by £1629 giving a closing balance of £43123, in line with his target reserve. He was sad to point out that to date there were still 9 countries this year owing subscriptions to the IDA, the Chairman had said that the IDA relied to a very great extent on the receipts from National Associations to be able to continue it's work on their behalf, and those still owing subscriptions at next year's AGM would be named.

Whilst payments were some £3500 under budget receipts had reduced this year by some £3000. This was largely explained by a shortfall in the sale of sail labels which he thought was probably because of an exceptional year in 2005 and the build up of stock across the lofts this year. The actual number of new sails sold was 1233 slightly below the 5 year average of 1300 per year. However, Building Fees were up with 44 plaques sold reflecting the continuing strength of the Class.

On the payments side costs had largely been contained with savings on Computers, admin expenses and cost of measurers

6. Budget for the Year 2007

In his Budget, the Treasurer was looking for some increase in sail label sails, but otherwise intended that costs should be held at around current levels with, some saving on the Newsletter. He was aiming for a closing cash balance in 2007 of £43123.

7. Technical Committee Chairman's Report

2006 has not yet proved to be controversial from a Measurement point of view. It has, however, been a year of some interesting discussions.

In the spring we introduced self-certification of masts by the Mast Manufacturers. This appears to be working satisfactorily, partly because of the limited number of manufacturers.

As Rupert has mentioned, there have been 6 Dragons sunk during the year of which 3 are known to have been recovered. There has been concern that the Class Rules are not adequate in this respect, in particular 2.191 which requires yachts built or measured after 1st March 2000 to have positive buoyancy of 1700 litres. This is the absolute minimum amount of buoyancy to keep a boat afloat without a crew. The Technical Committee, following a test, believe that 2500 litres would be a better requirement since it recognises the crew weight and would give a greater safety margin. We therefore propose to advise builders that we will be changing the rule with effect from 1st March 2008, subject to any recommendations and comments they may make.

Many of you may know that I was one of the crew on board GBR681 Kraken when she sank in the Solent during the Edinburgh Cup and whilst she floated for some five minutes lying head to wind, it was not until we put up a flare that our fellow competitors realised we were in difficulties. I would encourage you all to carry flares which, incidentally, are a British Dragon Association requirement for our UK regattas. I would also recommend that the bucket is carried in a readily accessible place, not stowed up by the mast. I know that some yachts are racing without the forward hatch and the drainage bungs in the bulkheads in position and in these cases the yacht is racing without effective buoyancy in contravention of the rules.

We deal with these years' recommended Rule Changes under Item 9 of the Agenda, but for the record I would like to comment on the three significant ones;

Corrector Weights
Total Mast weight
Shroud Adjustment

Corrector Weights

This change is to allow older boats which have increased in weight to reduce it more easily thereby helping them to remain competitive. By removing correctors from only around station 8 will not effect the weight distribution in the boat and therefore the necessity to re-swing the boat is eliminated.

Total Mast Weight

This will enable checks to be made in the field without the need to strip the mast.

Shroud Adjustment

This is a controversial issue which was raised and rejected in 2004. The Officers remain concerned that rig adjustment during racing is still occurring in the racing fleets despite constant reminders that it is not allowed under the Class Rules.

It is a rule which, unless turnbuckles are sealed before a race and inspected afterwards, is virtually impossible to police, and it is now felt necessary to bring back this recommended rule change to prevent dishonest sailors having an advantage.

It does however; also mean that the better sailors will have more opportunity to optimise their mast adjustments whilst sailing to the disadvantage of the less skilled. It should be noted that the fore and aft position of the shrouds shall be fixed at deck level, hence the use of the word 'horizontally'. Under ISAF rules, fixed means requiring a tool to adjust or remove, and therefore adjustable shroud deck plates located with a screw, removable or adjustable by hand, are prohibited.

Measurement

I am pleased to report that following a visit to St Petersburg, by Gunter Ahlers we have appointed a Measurer in Russia.

Finally, on the 17th and 18th of November we are holding a Measurer's Seminar in Burnham on Couch by kind permission of Petticrows and the Royal Corinthian Yacht Club in order to ensure that there is consistency among the Measurers.

8. Class Rule Changes

Having presented his report, he then went on to present this year's Rule Change proposals and asked that changes to CRs 1.65, 2.15, 2.504, 6.103, 6.104, 6.110, 6.112, 9.32, and 11.10.4, to clarify existing wording or recognising current practice should be voted together. He also asked that proposed changes to CRs 4.40 and 4.50 should be withdrawn and this was agreed. The proposed changes were then voted and approved with the required 2/3rds majority.

The proposed Rule Change regarding changes to rig tension whilst racing had been summarised in his Report, but further comment from the delegates was invited before a vote was taken. There was some opinion that 'because it was extremely difficult to police' was not sufficient reason to relax it, and also, it was asked if the Class had fully explored methods of sealing the shrouds and inspecting them before and after a race. It was pointed out that whilst this might be practical for a series, it would not be on a day-to-day basis, and since there were an increasing number of Regattas where 2 races per day were being sailed in varying wind conditions competitors should be allowed to vary their rigs between races which would further make the 'sealing' option impractical. Others felt that adjusting tensions whilst racing was a recognition that the Class was continually developing, and that allowing the relaxation was one more step in being able to further control the rig and performance in a range of wind conditions. The Chairman pointed out that mechanisms allowing fore and aft movement of shrouds at deck level were, and would remain, prohibited. At the subsequent vote the proposed Rule Change was approved by the required 2/3rd majority.

The Chairman also advised the Meeting of the proposal the Class had put to the ISAF Annual General Meeting to allow Classes sailing under the Category an Advertising Code to be able to provide 2 sponsors with suitable advertising space on competing boats by allowing both bow stickers **and** booms or backstays to be used.

Following Mike Hayles' comments on buoyancy and accompanying safety aspects, he asked the delegates for their thoughts on whether VHF should be allowed for emergencies only by the Class.

After some discussion it was thought that Sailing Instructions should carry an emergency number for the Race Committee (afloat) to be used for the reporting of emergencies during a Race. (also to be added to the Regatta Regulations).

The Chairman also asked for views on the provision of GPS tracking devices to boats taking part in certain events. This had been achieved during this year's Danish Championships and the general feeling was that, apart from some small technical problems, it was an excellent method of enhancing spectator and supporter interest as each individual track could be monitored during racing, and retrieved later for the information of the competitors themselves. It was felt that certain delays should be built into the system to prevent the possibility 'real time' information being communicated to the Fleet and support boats. Generally the meeting agreed that the possibility should be pursued for some of the larger Regattas and Mini Jaatinen agreed to try to have transmitters provided at the Europeans tune –up Regatta.

(Please note that final wording of the Rule Changes will be communicated when agreed by ISAF, on the website and in the Newsletter)

9. Election of Officers.

The Chairman advised that Robert Alpe had completed 2 years as a Vice –Chairman, and offered himself for re-election for a further 2 years in accordance with the IDA Constitution. The Chairman added that Robert had made a significant contribution to the Class generally and to the Officer's debates over a range of subjects.

He was very active on the water both in Australia and in the recent Europeans and Gold Cup this year and was working hard on the development of Regatta formats, clarifying the regatta Regulations where necessary and the development of the Class both in Australia and generally. He hoped that the Class would re-elect Robert for a further two years. Robert was then proposed for re-election by Andrew Craig, seconded by Mike Hayles and re-elected unanimously.

10. Items for Discussion

Venues for Major Events and update of Rota

4 short presentations were made by the Hungarian Dragon Associations bidding for the Europeans in 2010, the Russians bidding for the Europeans in 2009, the Swedes for the Gold Cup in 2010, the Norwegians summarising arrangements being made for the Europeans in 2008 and the Finns confirming arrangements for the Europeans next year (2007).

Medemblik was confirmed for the Worlds in 2009 and it was agreed that a final decision on Dubai would be made following their presentation to be made at the Gold Cup in Palma in April.

Further bids for the Gold Cup in 2011 had been received by Spain (Vigo) and Belgium (Ostend). Bids from France for future Worlds and Europeans at one of their excellent venues were also noted, as was a similar bid for a Europeans from Lake Garda, Italy.

Worlds 2011/12

The Australian Dragon Association had resubmitted its bid for this event to be held in Melbourne in January 2012. They had provided further weather information and confirmation of the excellent facilities of at the RVYC, Brighton. There seems little doubt that they would be able to provide a top class Championship. However, delegates were still unconvinced of the venue and concerned that there was still no indication of the likely shipping costs or an indicative 'package' to include shipping, air fares and accommodation for say 6 people per boat. The AIDA would be asked to try to re-assure the European sailors on these aspects, before the next AGM and by a further presentation next year.

Finally, the British Dragon Association also made an indicative bid to hold the World Championships in 2013 at the Olympic Yachting Centre in Weymouth (South Coast).

Regatta Regulations

The Chairman explained that the Officer's had been reviewing advice currently given to Organizing Authorities in the light of changes in recent events on the race courses, particularly concerning, rule observation by participants, safety issues, and control of the increasing number of coaches and coach boats attending the premier events. A number of recommendations had been proposed to National Associations for comment and agreement. Generally the Meeting was in agreement but suggested a number of minor changes which were accepted.

(The changes will be shown in the Regatta Regulations on the website.)

The Officers had also been reviewing the Rules of the Europeans and Worlds, with a view to proposing minor alterations to them if necessary to reflect current practice and to pre-empt any possible difficulties in certain circumstances. Having recommended more races in per series last year, the current area of difficulty is in defining 'eligibility' in the light of current living and sailing practice (i.e. 'cross border' issues).

After some discussion delegates agreed that the scoring system for the World, Europeans and Gold Cup should be stated as 'the bonus system'. And that an additional paragraph should be recommended, stating that;

'A helmsman may elect to race for a country other than that of his passport, but only for a Country/Fleet that he has raced in regularly during the preceding 2 years. In this situation the other two crew members shall be members of the country making the entry and either of them may take the helm.'

This suggestion will be put to the Championship donors, and if agreed, included in the Regatta Regulations.

Safety Issues

See in Para 8 above

Development of the Class

The Chairman outlined the ideas behind Peter Warrer's Paper and said that he felt that whilst it defined some ways of thinking about the Class, its identity and ways ahead, he hoped it was the starting point for a Class wide debate on the future and not a final position. He found many positive ideas in it particularly the attempt to define certain categories of events and how classifying them could help in attracting sponsors for the future and the Officers would be working on that and other associated ideas to try to make the Class more attractive to sponsors.

He asked delegates to encourage contributions to the 'development debate' on the IDA Forum over the coming months.

11. Any other Business

a) Dieter Schmid (Switzerland) informed the meeting that the event in St Moritz for **Classic Boats** proposed for 2009 has had to be cancelled because of lack of facilities. However he advised that it was hoped to move the venue to Lake Lugano and he was confident that all the necessary facilities for an excellent event could be provided. He would confirm the date in due course.

b) Invitations to race in 2007 for the Marblehead Trophy (currently held by Frank Berg), would be issued by the Royal Danish yacht Club by 1st January.

c) The IDA was awaiting details of the formation and operational plans of the **Vintage Yachting Games** an organisation formed to promote a regatta to be held every 4 years with a limited number of some of the ex-Olympic Classes (including Dragons). Though few details have been confirmed, the intention is to hold the first event in 2008 in Medemblik (Holland). Further details when known will be posted on the Website.

12. Date of Next Meeting

The next AGM will be held on Saturday 27th October 2007. It was proposed that this might be in Dubai (subject to an acceptable travel and accommodation package being available for delegates). In the event that this is not possible AFSID kindly offered a suitable venue in Paris at the Yacht Club de France.