



Minutes of a meeting of the GBR IRC Committee held on Thursday 13th Sept 2018 at the Royal Southampton Yacht Club

Present:

Chairman: Mel Sharp
Andrew Pearce (Poole & RORC)
Andy Hill (JOG)
Stephen Parry (SIRCOA)
Stephen Tudor (Wales)
Rob McClean (Sussex)
Richard Woof (Weymouth)
Chris Brown (co-opted)
Jack Fenwick (RYA)
Chris Stone (RORC)
Jason Smithwick (RORC Rating Office Director) JETS
Jenny Howells (RORC Technical Manager)
Emma Smith (RORC Technical Team)
David Murrin – Observer (BCYC)

1. Welcome from the Chairman and introductions

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Michael Webster (Vice-Chairman), Peter Wykeham-Martin, Barrie Martin, Des Balmforth, Richard Babbe, Terry Hunt, Nick Jones, John Stewart, Phil Hagen, Frank Reed, Paul King, Ian Macdonald, Eddie-Warden Owen, Janet Grosvenor, Andrew Yates.

3. Committee membership –

New members and other changes – members are invited to suggest suitable additional members

The Committee is continually looking for new members. In particular it would be good to have representation from the East Coast and Northern Ireland.

4. Minutes of the meeting of the GBR IRC Committee - held on Thursday 14 September 2017 (copy attached)

a) The 2017 minutes were signed as an accurate record.

b) Matters arising - for items not covered elsewhere on the agenda
There has been no tangible development re 'exotic' autohelms.



5. GBR Rule Authority (Rating Office) Annual Report (reports are published separately on rorcrating.com)

JETS commented on the report. Regarding the statistics, it was noted that numbers tend to be lower in a non-Fastnet year. The central south coast is the area that has reduced the most; it remains the strongest area with 603 boats.

Comments and discussion:

IRC is now bedrock at Weymouth SC which is where all the sailing happens, in the bay area. Solent IRC Owners had 126 boats racing in 2014 (peak). 104 boats so far in 2018 with one event to go. The biggest drop is class 4, others are stable.

Fee levels and payment:

- Suggestion of direct debits, but the revalidation process requires interaction with owners. D/D payments cause their own set of problems.
- Charge a reduced fee for early revalidations, rising after a certain date.
- Look at automation of certificates. JETS reported that he has been recoding IRC into a new system that we would be able to link into automation, for instance for simple trials. DM commented that trials allow owners to feel involved in IRC.

JETS reminded the group that events sell certificates – owners do not buy certificates to put on the wall.

Policing and inspection discussion

AH - clubs need to address the self-policing element.

DM – classics are mostly one-offs, the top 3 placed boats have to get an Endorsed certificate for the following season. Pre-event checks are also done and these act as a deterrent.

CS – RORC committee has had discussions about policing, inspection & spot checks but these are difficult to do for ocean races. There is a need for an education process about what is expected by the club; RORC is going to produce videos for OSR safety items to alleviate problems. It was agreed that being seen to be doing pre-event or spot checks is what is important.

RW - Owners should be encouraged to contact their Advocate or the Rating Office if they have questions about their certificate or that of a competitor, rather than complaining about it locally.

JETS - the new Race Management document will include Equipment Inspection guidelines (currently on IRC website). JF advised that the RYA is producing an Equipment Inspection course so that will be available soon.

ST suggested that extendable bowsprits should have a band where it goes into the hull to show the limit of extension [for the STL on the certificate].

It was suggested that every club should be encouraged to require endorsement or require winners to get Endorsed. However, this makes things expensive for owners and could be a deterrent to racing IRC.

Administration:

JETS said the Rating Office is reconsidering the winter weighing discount scheme and asked for



comments. It was agreed that it does not always fit with owners/measurers and it is better to have a weighing day with the local measurer. (Update: the winter weighing discount offer will not be continued this year)

MyIRC is the main application portal for GBR boats and owners can now see their certificates online [those issued after 17 July 2018]. The Rating Office is considering further development.

The RORC Rating and IRC websites are being redesigned and should be much clearer.

6. IRC Incentive and Support Schemes

It was noted that Charlene Jackson left the Rating Office in August. MS thanked her for her work especially on Start Up. A replacement member of the Technical Team will be employed, but the timing is under review.

Start Up and Club Loyalty Scheme

13% of GBR boats are rated through SU or CLS (mostly CLS) and local advocates are the main driver for the scheme to succeed. Weymouth wishes to continue and are subsidising the certificates.

Alternative possible schemes were discussed; it was also noted that Spinlock are keen to give prizes to clubs for IRC, this could perhaps be integrated into a Club scheme.

Single Event Ratings (SERs)

It was suggested that boats should only be allowed to get an SER for a limited number of years and then need to upgrade to a full certificate. However, it was argued that there are some people who will only ever do the Round the Island Race (the race for which SER was introduced) and it is better to have them in IRC with the possibility of them upgrading. SER remains limited to only a few specific events.

The Rating Office is currently in discussion with a marketing company.

IRC Advocates

It was suggested that the link to the Advocates web page is added to the certificate letter. The Advocates list is to be reviewed. Richard Woof to be added.

7. David Murrin – history of British Classic Yacht Club (BCYC).

DM gave a brief history and explanation of the British Classic Yacht Club and how it works with IRC which it has been using since 2003. There are around 80 classics currently rated in IRC, with the top boats well optimised. There is potential for an IRC fleet in the Med (currently using CIM).

JETS acknowledged the problems of high DLR, low relative sail area and slow manoeuvres and acceleration. A solution to be agreed with French should help and also help with other heavy cruisers. Agreed changes will be applied across the fleet.



JETS invited opinion on classes asking for additional customisation within IRC, for instance should there be a 'classics' IRC? The consensus was that IRC should not be split into separate rules and DM agreed that the classics wanted to remain part of mainstream IRC.

There was a discussion about how much detail IRC takes account of in classic keel designs.

8. Development of IRC

- a) mid-level club racing
- b) IRC and UK rating systems, the next steps?
- c) Promotion and development of IRC in the UK

JETS noted that club inshore racing is declining but offshore racing is booming. The possibility of a mid-level club racing system, all automated, was raised; some would support a non-travelling club level system or a non-progressive lower level system.

JETS - the RYA is very supportive of the Rating Office and IRC, and the Rating Office does not want to disenfranchise NHC and questioned whether there is room in the UK for another system? RW thought this would be a mistake and would be very detrimental to IRC and those who support it.

JF – the RYA does not want to see self-contained rating pockets of racing. The RYA encourages compatibility and cross-pollination between clubs.

A discussion was held about local cruiser racing and attracting others. IRC is considered the gold standard for racing and it is up to clubs to promote the sailing as long as IRC produces a level playing field. The main threat in the UK is not ORC but the local handicaps.

A winter roadshow was suggested, as has been done in previous years. JETS said the Rating Office should give advocates the tools to do this for us. However, AP said a better idea would be specific meetings with clubs rather than owners.

RYA has 7 affiliated club conferences (7 regions) but these are in Nov/Dec so it would be too late to join in with them this year.

More co-operation between clubs in the same area would be beneficial to all.

9. IRC Championships 2018 & 2019

IRC Europeans, June 2018, Cowes, UK

This was a good event although not as high an entry as expected. The Round the Island race was very popular and the offshore unpopular (in the end it didn't happen due to weather). It was suggested a better format would be 4 days of varied racing.

The 2019 event will be in San Remo, Italy (23-29 June). This will be administered by UNCL/UVAI with some RORC involvement.

IRC/ORC Worlds, July 2018, The Hague, Netherlands



JETS gave a brief report. [A full report is published on the IRC website under IRC Congress]

There were not many 'IRC' boats, and a lot of time was spent getting ORC/IRC data aligned. No decision had been made yet about the next event. A discussion was held about the cost of getting and ORCi certificate, and the fact that ORC owners did not get invested in the process of getting and IRC certificate as the data came from the ORC certificate – they are not aware how simple IRC is.

2019 GBR IRC Championships

Nationals 5-7 July Cowes (RORC)

The following regional applications were approved

Welsh – Pwllheli Celtic Regatta dates TBA

East - Ramsgate 22-27 July

Scotland – Scottish Series 24-27 May

Sussex – Sussex Regatta 8-9 June

Southern - Weymouth 14-15 Sept (Poole & Weymouth alternate)

Solent – SIRCOA May-Sept

South West – Dartmouth, dates TBA. Dartmouth has joined onto club rotation. Committee should wait for dates before confirming.

GBR Nationals – format and location

JETS had pushed to have the Nationals 2018 at Poole to cater for smaller boats but RORC could not fit it into the calendar. It would really boost IRC to move it around the UK.

ST suggested having an English Nationals, as Pwllheli have the Welsh, and Scottish Series consider themselves the Scottish national championship.

The highest volume of people sailing is on the south coast, it would be good to move it in small steps along the south coast and use Cowes every other year.

AP – the nucleus of boats doing the GBR Nationals are Solent based, however 50% of the 158 yachts competing in the International Paints Poole Regatta were visiting boats of which many were from the Solent, so the feeling is that boats will leave the Solent for the right event. Poole would be delighted to host a GBR National Championship. *(updated 22/10/18)*

Vote of support for Poole to apply for 2020 – unanimous.

RW also pointed out the good facilities at Weymouth.

It was noted that the Rating Office will be expanding the IRC Race Management guidelines.

10. Rule changes to IRC

a) RRS 49.2 rule change – Notice 2018/01, 23 March 2018 (*see ircrating.com Notices & Interpretations*) was noted.

b) Proposed 2019 IRC Rule Changes from the IRC Technical Committee

JETS explained the proposed rule changes (*see ircrating.com – Committees – Congress*)



11. Meetings and Submissions

- a) IRC Submissions to World Sailing
Only 49.2 as above.
- b) Proposals from the GBR IRC Committee and any Submissions to the IRC Congress
None
- c) IRC Congress Chairman
Peter Wykeham-Martin will be stepping down and it was hoped that Michael Boyd would be the new Chairman, no other nominations had been received. Alp Doguoglu (Turkey) is also stepping down as Vice Chairman, at the time of the meeting there was no proposed replacement [Note: Carl Sabbe from Belgium has replaced Alp]
- d) GBR Report to the IRC Congress – 6-7 October, Dunlaoghaire, Ireland
Rating Office will produce this. (see *ircrating.com – Committees – Congress*)

12. Area and fleet reports - reports received are published on rorcrating.com

To note the reports and any questions as necessary:

Andrew Pearce	Poole – Report received
Richard Woof	Weymouth

Buoyant racing and good, mixed fleet of boats. Weymouth regatta report had been published in Yachts & Yachting. There were very few visitors, it was mainly local home boats. Some fun raft races etc. were popular. Strong IRC racing. 6 boats from Weymouth had gone to Poole regatta and some to Dartmouth. Good results had been achieved for Weymouth boats coming to the Solent to do Round the Island Race and Cowes Week.

Mike Webster	Dartmouth/Devon – Report received
Mel Sharp	Cornwall/South West

IRC is a good system and strong in the South West. IRC has stopped all the bar talk. Old boats are being rebuilt, ergonomics updated and decks rebuilt – this led to a question about age date.

JETS reported that IRC is looking at extending age allowance further back. RW agreed that good older stock needs to be looked after.

Stephen Tudor	North Wales – Report received
Des Balmforth	Scotland – Report received
Rob McLean	Sussex – Report received
Barrie Martin /David Murrin	Classic yachts –see section 7.
Chris Brown	High performance fleet

Chris suggested it was time for him to resign from the committee, but it was unanimously agreed that his contribution is valuable and he agreed to stay.

Andy Hill	JOG – Report received
Stephen Parry	Solent (SIRCOA)

Statistics remain level. The Solent Championship consists of 4 x 2-day events + 1 day inshore passage race with the Island SC. The Solent is very difficult for coordinating fixtures as there are so many.

13. Proposed date of 2019 meeting

To be confirmed, date will be similar time of year



14. Any other business

None