



GBR IRC Committee
representing GBR IRC Owners

Annual meeting at the Royal Lymington Yacht Club
Thursday 17th September 2015

MINUTES

Present:

Full members	Ian Macdonald - Scotland (Chairman) Ray Redlinghuys – Guernsey (Deputy for Richard Babbe) David Cooper – JOG Peter Wykeham-Martin - Solent Mel Sharp – South West Barrie Martin – Classics Stephen Parry – Solent Des Balmforth – Scotland Stephen Tudor – Wales Andrew Pearce – Poole/RORC
Co-opted Members	Chris Brown
Honorary Members	Paul King
RYA/RORC Nominees	Nigel King (RYA) Nick Elliott – RORC Race Director
Observers	Peta Stuart-Hunt – PR Works Jan Grosvenor – RORC/ISAF Rob Maclean – Sussex Stephen Homan-Berry – Weymouth
RORC Rating Office	Emma Smith - Technical Team (Secretary) Charlene Jackson - Technical Team James Dadd – Technical Director

1. Introduction and Welcome from the Chairman

Ian Macdonald welcomed everyone to the meeting. It was noted that Chris Brown and Ray Redlinghuys had called ahead and would arrive late.

2. Committee membership – New members & other changes

The chairman welcomed the new members and observers and congratulated James Dadd on his new role as Director of the Rating Office. James explained the new responsibilities of Andrew, Mike and himself following Mike's retirement.



Ian Macdonald reported on progress in recruiting new members for the Committee following the proposals circulated in April. Rob McLean and Stephen Homan-Berry were attending today with a view to becoming full members representing their areas. Discussions were still under way about other possible additions.

3. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from: Richard Babbe, Jason Payne-James, Syd Thomas, Bas Edmonds, Eddie Warden-Owen, Jenny Howells, Andrew Yates and Mike Urwin.

4. Minutes of the meeting of the GBR IRC Committee held on Thursday 16th September 2014

Ian Macdonald asked the committee if anyone had any changes to make to the minutes previously circulated. The minutes were signed as correct.

5. Matters Arising:

Offshore Special Regulations

James Dadd reported on the changes being made to Offshore Special Regulations:

- 1) a total rewrite to make them easier to understand. Intention is boats that are Cat 3 can log on to the website and see everything that is needed for Cat 3 racing, same with Cat 2 etc, no need for the 'complicated book'
- 2) Cat 5 to have a complete re-think as OSR is mainly aimed at offshore sailing and it is hoped to make it more appropriate also for modern inshore racing.

Nick Elliott added that RORC have submitted a submission to ISAF from RORC for compulsory training, such as man overboard. Chris Brown questioned how this would be policed and it was confirmed by Nick that it would involve comprehensive checklists as well as self policing.

(10.15 Barrie Martin arrived)

Boat Shows

Ian asked the Rating Office to report what progress it had made with the suggestion of a presence at a Boat Show as suggested at last year's meeting. It was agreed that Southampton was a better show to attend than London.

Charlene Jackson reported that she and Emma Smith attended the Southampton Boat Show on Monday 14th September. She had costed it out beforehand to see how much a stand at the show would be and it would be around £4,000. She noted that many of the yacht agents' stands were surprised we didn't already have a stand there.

Mel Sharp added that he thought it was a great idea, this would help many new and old customers with any questions/problems.

It was agreed to approach Spinlock and Ocean Safety to see if we might have a space on one of their stands next year. Manning would be important and we should approach IRC Advocates to help.

IRC/RYA Seminars

Ian Macdonald commented that at last year's meeting we should be doing more 'road shows'.

Nigel King added that he did a 'road show' in Scotland this year and found it hugely beneficial. He also noted that an attendance at regattas would be beneficial for IRC & the sport.



Peter Wykeham-Martin added that club winter evening seminars would be attended by many and not just racers.

James Dadd commented that the Rating Office doesn't know all areas wanting a seminar so are always open to suggestions/invites. Ian added that we have the resources, ie RYA, Rating Office and Advocates and presentation formats so let's use them!

(nb. since the meeting the Rating Office has circulated Advocates about possible seminars)

(10.45 Ray Redlinghuys arrived)

6. GBR Rule Authority (Rating Office) Annual Report

James Dadd reported that it had been a positive year in the Rating Office and numbers have increased everywhere apart from the Channel Islands.

The startup schemes have also done well this year and Single Event Rating (SER) has also continued with an increased uptake.

James added that the Rating Office needs to do more Start Up schemes to encourage growth.

MyIRC is being overhauled in 2016 to improve the experience and become more user-friendly, and Spinlock will also be working closely with the Rating Office to make the improvements.

Peter Wykeham-Martin asked whether SER was going to be made available in other countries, James advised we run SER at a loss and Rule Authorities would have to be willing to absorb the cost.

7. Comments on Area Reports

SEE APPENDICES

Ian Macdonald thanked everyone who had sent a report.

Andrew Pearce said he spoken to a good cross section of boat owners in Poole for their feedback, everyone agreed that Poole was once dominated by IRC but recently VPRS is becoming more popular. IRC is holding its own and there are more boats racing with RORC. A winter seminar would be greatly received in Poole to offer encouragement.

He congratulated Weymouth on their successful year,

Andrew noted that it had been a great year for RORC, the Fastnet was a great success and had been organised very well.

Stephen Homan-Berry confirmed that they have had improved turnouts with an increase in IRC rated boats, which is due to the great success of Start Up, and there has been a 20% increase in the turn out on the start lines.

More PR is being done with the owners to promote racing and IRC in Weymouth.

Mel Sharp held an IRC meeting for owners and club representatives in Plymouth Yacht Club which attracted many people and led to lots of interesting discussions.

He expressed his disappointment with the turnout at the IRC SW Championships in Fowey; he felt this was because it was held during Fowey Week and confirmed that in 2016 the Championships would be a standalone event.

The four Clubs in the South West (Plymouth, Torbay, Falmouth & Fowey) have agreed that they will host the Championships on a rotation basis. Dartmouth are currently not involved as they do not run much IRC racing apart from Dartmouth Week.

It was also noted and agreed by majority of the committee that the IRC Nationals are always held in the Solent and the feeling was that it should change location.

Richard Babbe reported there are approx 80 boats racing in Guernsey and Jersey.

The evening race attendance is down slightly and it seems to be same 3 to 4 boats that win everything. He commented that the club race fees are high so that, plus membership, plus IRC is putting people off racing. In a small area, the number of crew is limited and this may be affecting turnouts.

Stephen Tudor (North Wales) reported that they are trying to incorporate boats in all areas close by.

Des Balmforth advised that it is only Clyde that uses IRC. They had a great turnout for the Scottish Series, over 100 boats and have a big sailing calendar (probably too big) for 2016.



Barrie Martin (Classics) reported record numbers at the British Classic regatta with over 70 boats. The classic fleet all agreed that IRC is doing a great job. They have decided to drop the compulsory endorsement.

Barrie also welcomed a winter seminar at Little Ship Club and asked for the Rating Office to contact him to organise this.

Chris Brown said there were very few gripes on ratings this year.

David Cooper from JOG reported that the JOG & RORC calendar clashed this year which caused problems. He also reported that there were boats winning races that do not normally win, which was good to see.

Stephen Parry advised that numbers were down especially among smaller boats and that IRC racing is becoming more specialised with less scope for cruiser racers.

Following on the reports, one of the questions was 'are the fleet aware of Advocates' and the majority answered No.

Again there were varying reports on whether sportboats of various types are (dis)advantaged in IRC mixed fleets. There are a number of different styles, sizes and ages of sportboats now racing which makes it difficult for race organisers unless there are sufficient entries for a separate class.

James Dadd reported that the Rating Office haven't seen many of the new 30' sportsboats appearing and not a huge amount of research had been carried out on those. He added that a lot of the problems are down to the sailplan.

Mel Sharp noted that 707/First Class 8's seem to get penalised a lot under IRC.

The Committee noted that a number of themes had emerged from the reports and discussion but none seemed to indicate major issues with IRC. The points were:

- Sportboats
- Rating new styles of boats, especially pure racing designs
- Rebuilt boats retaining their Age Date
- Traditional boats
- Pogo and Mini Transat style boats
- French boats, especially JPKs
- Older designs apparently favoured – Impala, J24, Laser 28, Sonata (all familiar names!)
- Code Zeros
- Misleading comments in yachting press

8. Encouraging Yacht Racing

A number of comments and ideas for encouraging boats to race came up in the area reports and discussion including:

- Clubs in each area should liaise to prevent clashes of events
- Don't try to run too many events
- Fix and publicise race dates well in advance
- Offer substantial discounts for early entry to increase entry lists quickly and encourage more boats to enter
- Simpler NOR, SIs and arrangements for entering.
- Offer social events ashore after racing
- Different types of race course in each event or series
- More short-handed racing (perhaps with a maximum of HALF the certificate crew number rather than double-handed only?)
- Clubs should explore ways of getting new crews involved in sailing and racing as well as new owners. Both are equally important.



- Good dedicated websites for major events rather than a section of the club website which can be difficult to find
- Keep websites up to date with news and entries
- Involve the IRC Advocates more.
- Wider use of SERs and StartUp (see next section)
- See also the new Appendix to the Guidelines of IRC Championship organisers!
- Use material available from the Rating Office website in club newsletters
- Rating Office can supply (for a small charge) a list of all the boats rated in a particular area to allow email to be sent to all boats about events
- Dual scoring has been successful in the areas which have adopted it but not many have done so
- Better weather would help!

9. IRC Incentive Schemes

a) IRC start up

Charlene Jackson advised that she was now responsible for the Start Up scheme and has spent a lot of time talking with the clubs and owners who have taken up the offer.

Stephen Homan-Berry from Weymouth told the committee that this was their first year using Start Up and it had been very successful with over 50 boats rated.

Charlene Jackson presented more information about Start Up.

Des Balmforth asked the question, could it be individuals as well as clubs who could set up as a coordinator? He suggested that not everyone in an area who might be encouraged into IRC were members of a single club. James said that these were just guidelines and we can look at each case individually so he suggested Des contacted the office to discuss further.

b) SER

James Dadd told the committee that 2015 had been a good year for new takers for SER, there have been more people that are new to IRC apply for SER rather than people with a full certificate downgrading (statistics were shown to the committee) (Attached)

James advised that the Rating Office has seen this an advantage to IRC. In the future the Round the Island Race could replace ISCR with SER.

10. IRC Championships

a) Dates & Venues

The following applications had been received:

Poole Regatta – 28-30th May 2016

IRC Sussex Championships – 25th – 27th March

IRC Welsh Championships – 12th – 14th August (Pwllheli)

IRC Welsh Championships – 12th -14th August (Abersoch)

IRC Small Boats Championships, Weymouth – 3rd – 4th September

IRC Double Handed Championships, Solent – 9-10th September.

IRC Scottish Championships – 11-12th June

It was noted that at the present date, there were no applications from CI but they were waiting for their event 19/20 Sept to complete, nothing from the Solent or the East Coast but Emma Smith would follow these up.

The Committee approved all the above IRC Championship applications apart from Abersoch. Pwllheli were awarded the Welsh Championships but asked Stephen Tudor to involve the SCYC at Abersoch and see if they can join together for the Championships.

Ian asked for everyone to send their IRC Championship web links to Emma Smith so they can be put on the Rating Office website.



b) Revised IRC Championship Guidelines

Ian confirmed that these had been sent out prior to the meeting and asked for any comments to be reported to Emma Smith at the Rating Office.

11. Proposed 2016 IRC Rule Changes

a) from the IRC Technical Committee

All proposed changes were agreed and accepted.

b) Submissions to ISAF

James Dadd confirmed there are 2 submissions to ISAF

1. Definition of a batten
2. For IRC to be permitted to hold a World Championship

c) From the GBR IRC Committee to Congress

None

d) GBR report to IRC Congress

James Dadd to write the report which Emma Smith will then circulate. (Attached)

e) GBR representative at Congress

Ian advised that he is unable to attend the Congress in Marseille on 10th October but is delighted that Mel Sharp (Vice Chairman) will attend as the GBR representative.

12. Proposed Meeting Date for 2016

Emma Smith confirmed the date would be Thursday 15th September at the Royal Southampton Yacht Club

13. AOB

Time ran out to do the presentation on ways of promoting IRC through social media so Emma will send round the presentation after the meeting (slides attached)

Nigel King asked for the IRC Rating website to be updated with the full racing calendar for 2016

Ian Macdonald thanked all the Committee members for attending and the Rating Office staff for their work in setting up the meeting and throughout the year. He asked all members of the Committee to continue to feed in to the Rating Office with comments and ideas on IRC, encouraging racing and the development of the GBR Committee.

END

Appendices can be downloaded from www.rorcrating.com