

## OFFSHORE ONE DESIGN CLASS ASSOCIATION

### CHAIRMAN'S LETTER - JUNE 2012

11<sup>th</sup> June 2012

Dear Fellow Class Association Members,

One final newsletter ahead of the Championships, AGM, and summer months of racing and cruising. And my apologies if you feel over-communicated with, but it has been a busy year. As I have said before, only a limited number of members are present at our AGMs, and I am anxious to create the opportunity for the "silent majority" to offer any comments for inclusion in AGM discussions.

#### Sails

Feedback so far on the 2012 sails has been positive. Jeremy White as the new face of Elvstrom has been very helpful in his efforts to restore faith in our Approved Sailmaker and, after a long discussion, the committee has decided that this recovery process should be allowed to run its course without introducing further confusion. You will recall, I hope, that our winter 2011 agreement with Jeremy was that he would offer 2013 sails at the same prices as for this year, and we had agreed that we would not seek an alternative Approved Sailmaker during 2012 as long as quality, durability and customer service were perceived to be on an upward trajectory.

The committee is, however, well aware of disquiet about Elvstrom. Feedback from Northern Ireland and Scotland in particular has been critical, though not unanimously, and the whole question of "single sailmaker" has been a significant subject of discussion. It may well be that geographical proximity – or otherwise – has an important part to play in the relationship. We have sought indicative prices from other sailmakers (short of a full quotation, which would require a re-write of the sails-related rules) and these have been generally comparable with Elvstrom's 100% deposit Winter Offer prices.

I welcome further feedback on all of this to add to that which I already have from the northern fleets.

As a footnote, Elvstrom are proposing that the main panels in the large spinnaker should henceforth be "portrait" rather than "landscape" to improve durability and stability on close reaches. This is not a rules-controlled design point, and so I am inclined to agree that this is acceptable unless there are any significant concerns from within the membership. Tell me.

#### Masts

We are progressing with clarification of available parts and alternative sources. To re-iterate, Selden worldwide have virtually no stock left of many of the components required to fit out a new mast. The Association has 5 sections left, and these will be reserved for Association members only, pending acquisition of a new batch of extrusions. Please, if you have any sight of a mast which is being scrapped, make sure that Spreader Brackets and Heel Plugs are salvaged. These are by far the most critical components.

#### Rules and Ratings

My efforts to clarify Class Rule 16.1 have unearthed a few misunderstandings on the whole topic of IRC ratings and certificates. The following points are an effort to dispel the confusion:

- The Class Association Certificate is only available when a boat has had a valid IRC One-Design certificate in the name of the current owner(s). This provides a level of assurance about "one-design" compliance without the Association having to introduce its own measuring regime.
- The Class Association Certificate is primarily intended for those sailing only one-design, and/or competing on a handicapping system other than IRC, to save the unnecessary expense of on-going IRC certification.

- The Class Association Certificate *DOES NOT* confer any IRC Rating. The IRC One-Design Rating requires to be renewed annually by payment of the appropriate fee to the relevant IRC Rating Office
- A boat can only have *ONE* IRC Rating at any time. There is not an option to flip between the IRC One-Design Rating and an individual IRC Rating at will. To be re-certificated in either direction requires the appropriate fee to be paid (each time) to the IRC Rating Office.
- The IRC One-Design Rating is based on the datum weight of 4200 kg which was determined after various weighings in 2002-3. As the boats were nearing 20 years old at that time, the IRC Rating Office is absolutely *NOT* minded to consider any further relief based on weight. (They have indicated that the *WHOLE CLASS* would need to be weighed, which is clearly impractical.)
- Owners must remember that any individual rating (more advantageous than the One-Design Rating) based on old sails which may have shrunk is *ONLY VALID* when competing with these or similarly shrunken sails. Any plan to compete under IRC with new sails *MUST* be declared to the IRC Rating Office in advance, and may result in a less advantageous individual rating.

I hope this is clear. If there is any residual confusion please let me know.

#### Other Rules Items

I am reminded that our rules (which have generally stood us in good stead) were originally drafted quite some time ago. Committees have worked away at them, but anachronisms will continue to turn up. One which is exercising me currently is the requirement for the main anchor to be 25 lb or more. This was doubtless written when "CQR" was the state of the art. But if, for example, you are tempted to buy a more modern anchor, does the rule still make sense? For example, the "Delta" anchor is one of several which is rated far superior to a CQR – but a 10 kg Delta is the recommended size, and the next size up (16 kg) is intended for boats over 38'. So should we, instead, re-write this rule to specify a lower minimum anchor weight but a combined anchor + chain weight which still achieves the one-design intention?

You may have your own pet hate within the rules. I know that some people are agitated about the need for cockpit gratings – though I personally find some wood to be quite a relief from unremitting GRP! But, as always, we would like to hear from you.

I hope your various seasons are going well. Congratulations to Alan Harper and Eric Robertson ("Leaky Roof 2") who were the runaway victors at a "diamond" Scottish Series at Tarbert – steady winds and wall-to-wall sunshine. Fingers crossed for something similar at Dun Laoghaire ...

All the best.



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