

The British Finn Association



PUMP 2010





20 years of passion, love, professionalism quality, performance...

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PUMP 2010

RYA Dinghy Show Special



If you have picked up this magazine from the RYA Dinghy Show and are new to the class then may I extend you a warm welcome from the Finn Class Committee and hope that you find the contents of 'Pump' appealing.

If this has wetted your appetite then you will find much more useful information on how and where to get into Finn sailing on our website www.finnuk.org.uk

It only seems like yesterday when I wrote my last Chairman's report for the last years special edition of *Pump*, but my first job is to thank the Committee for all their help in the running of the association over the past year, the list is exhaustive – but rest assured without your help we would not be the successful and growing class that the British Finn Class is today.

We have a small stock pile of the 60th Anniversary Finn book, 'Photo FINNish', a wonderful record of 60 years of Finn sailing, with contributions from every major name in worldwide Finn sailing over those years. I know many of you have emailed me a request to purchase and they should be on their way to you, if not in your hands already. If any body else would like to buy a

copy, please do so through the BFA website, the small mark up we make goes back into BFA funds.

On the subject of books, I along with a lot of you have enjoyed reading Ben Ainslie's autobiography and, would thoroughly recommend it as a great read. A great inspiration and motivation to all us Finn sailors. (You owe me a pint Ben!)

I will finish by saying I am looking forward to seeing you all again, hopefully in Split for the World Masters Championship, Pwelli for the Nationals and I am proposing to attend some of the new venues on the circuit. I am particularly looking forward to seeing the fast growing vintage fleet at Roadford Lake in Devon and see what they have achieved with some of the Vanguard and Taylor built boats of the past.

For some of us it has been an eventful winters sailing at our local clubs and for the others I suspect the hikers have been washed and the sailing kit unfolded ready for the circuit in 2010.

See you on the water.

Andy Denison GBR-20
Chairman, British Finn Association

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Covershot: Ben Ainslie tests a new boat at Weymouth last autumn.

PHOTO: ONEDITION

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Secretary's report

I hope it is not too late to wish everyone a Happy New Year and good luck for the coming season. The programme is now finished and we can look forward to the Nationals in July at Pwllheli, Roadford Lake Sailing Club for the UK Masters in September plus all the other events.

Roadford Sailing Club is located in the West Country between Okehampton and Launceston and has an active Finn fleet, accommodation should be no problem as both camping and B&Bs are available, so book the date September 9th – 11th. Click www.roadfordlakesailingclub.org.uk

This year the Travellers Series will consist of all the J M Finn Ranker Events, the Nationals and the Inlands, for each event entered all sailors will receive a raffle ticket for a draw to be held at the Ranker in October. The prize will be a new North Sail. This must be an incentive to go to the events as more tickets = higher chance to win the new sail. There will be interesting prizes for the winners as well, with Neil Pryde again providing sponsorship with loads of great kit to win.

After discussion with the RYA the Ranker Series should be held in Portland Harbour and not in the Bay.

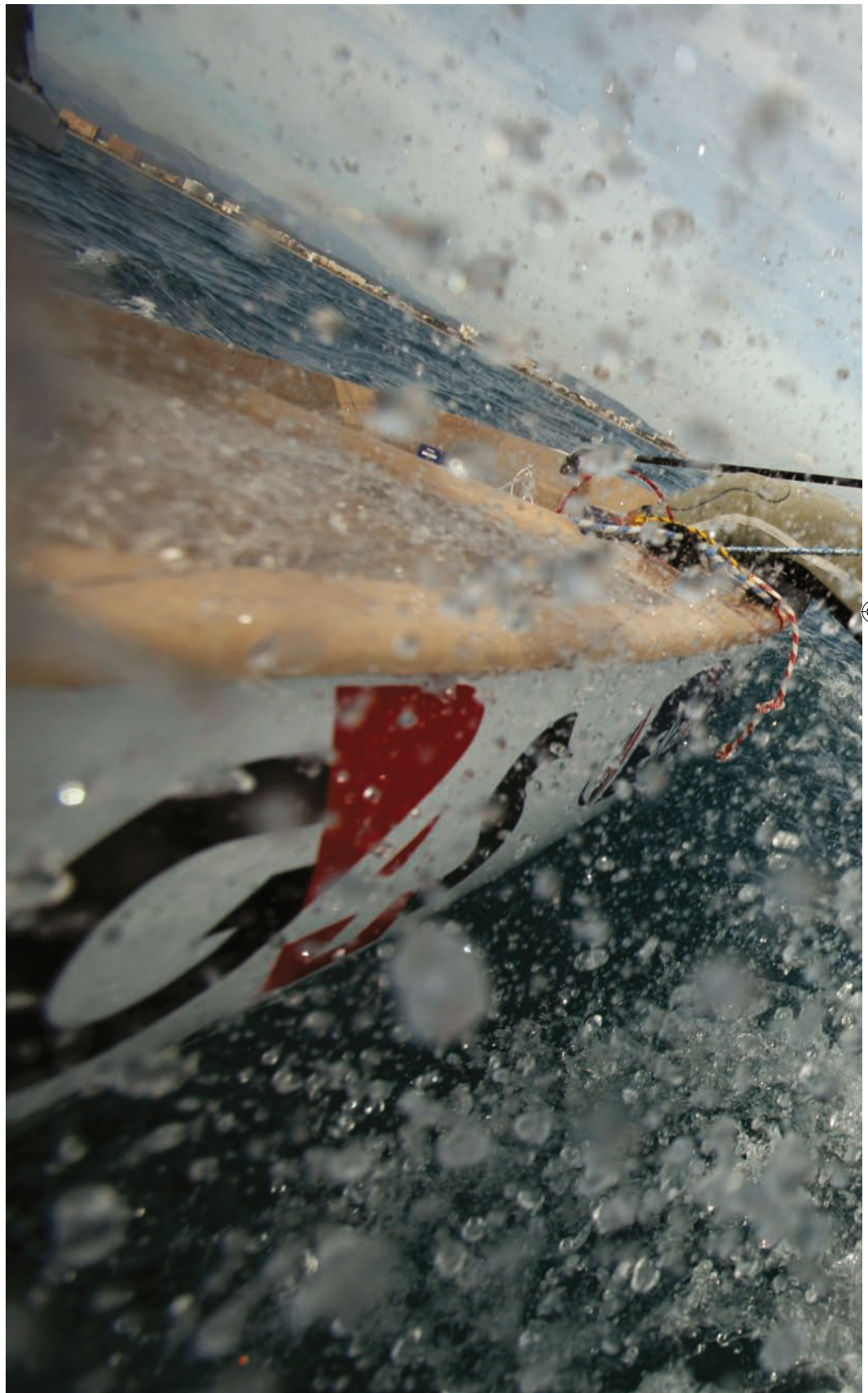
As always trying to find new venues for events can be difficult as some clubs want minimum numbers now, so please if you know of clubs wanting opens let me know, we can join together with other classes such as the OK or Europe. All views appreciated.

The arrangements for the Gold Cup 2012 in Falmouth have started and if the World Masters were to go to Pwllheli what a year for the UK, Nationals, Gold Cup, World Masters and Olympics!

Any time to work?

See you on the water.

Rory Barnes GBR-24
BFA Secretary





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The birth of a British Finn...





A design review of the new HiTechsailing Finn by **Paul Manning**.



“...enthusiasm is exactly what drove Walter Riosa and his small band of Finn friends to take on this challenge!”

It is never going to be easy to start up a new boat project, let alone a new project in a class such as the Olympic Finn where so much time and enthusiasm for the class from its sailors and by its builders alike has refined the boat to the point where it currently stands. Although this enthusiasm is exactly what drove Walter Riosa and his small band of Finn friends to take on this challenge!

This is not something that can be taken lightly. For many years the Finn was dominated by Vanguard as the premier builder, until Luca Devoti and Tim Tavinor started Devoti Sailing in the UK and relegated the other builder to the history books of the class.

That is not to say the HiTechsailing Finn is just a copy of the highly successful Devoti DBF mould (by the way, does anyone know what DBF stands for? I do!) but you have to start with the best if you are going to improve on it, or at least match it. So this is what Walter undertook, with months of long days in his workshop creating new moulds and hours of sitting in the various boats looking at the ergonomics and what may appear to be minor details that often are the difference between good and great. ➔

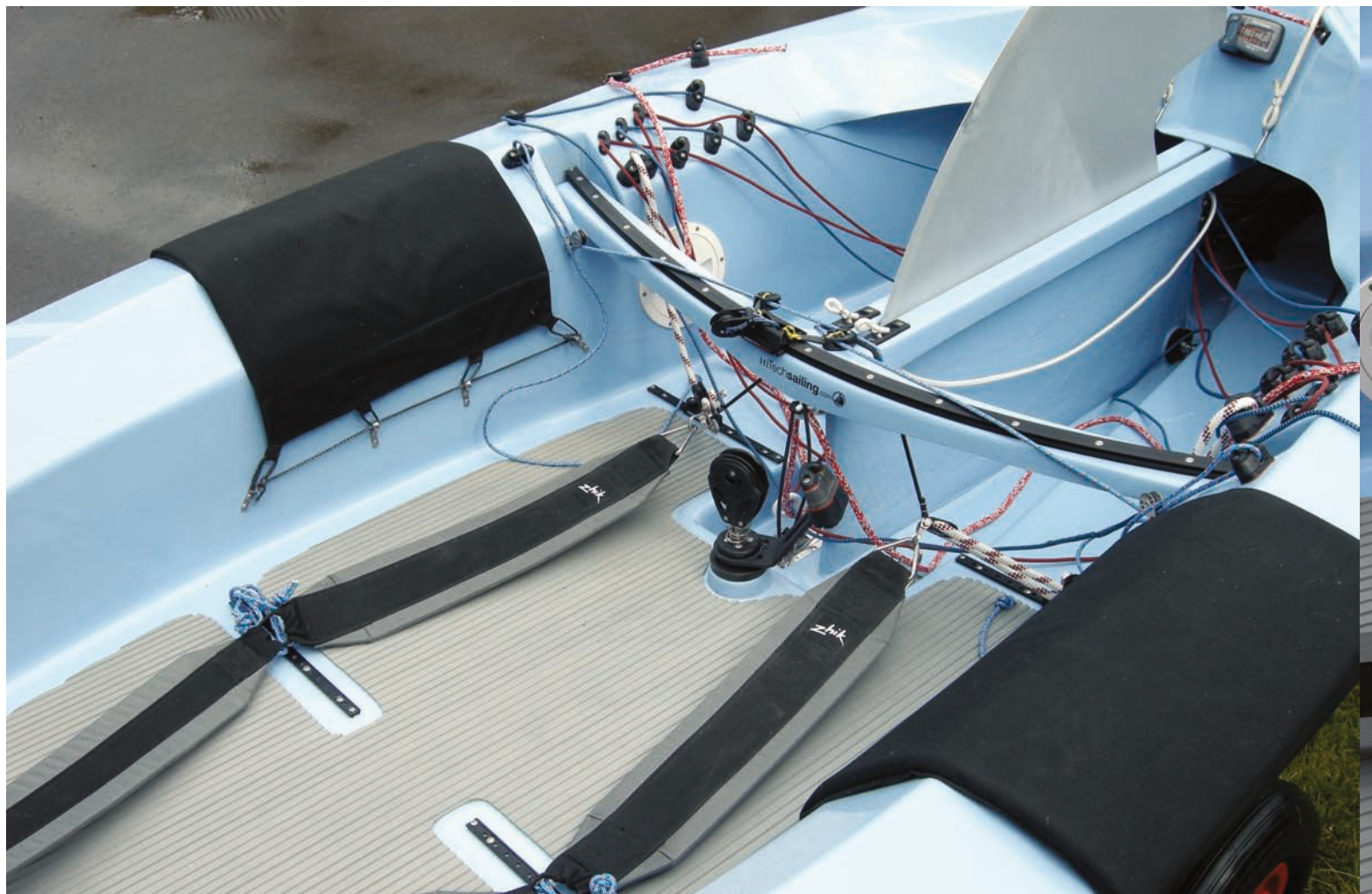


Walter adds the final touches to the new HiTechsailing Finn





The birth of a British Finn...



So where do you start, and what skills do you need?

Well, I guess having sailed the Finn at international level for a number of years, and being part of the team that built every gold medal winning boat since 1996 has got to be a good start. Walter's previous successes also include being heavily involved in other Olympic campaigns such as the production of two Gold medal and a Silver medal Olympic Yngling.

So what is the result?

Clearly the class rules preclude any major changes in hull shape from what has already been proven quick by the existing and previous builders, so most of the work has gone into the detailing of the deck, small changes to the hull, and the use of high quality laminate in an effort to produce a boat that is aimed to suit the latest techniques of Finn sailing, most especially downwind.

The aft profile of the cockpit has been given a progressively increasing radius from the centerline to the side deck to allow the sailor to move as far aft as possible, but with the added security of being pushed there by the change in radius. The side decks have a moulded-in nonslip, again to help the sailor maintain their hiking position downwind.

It is interesting to see that a majority of the sailors are now using the centre mainsheet swivel cleat. To allow a standard Harken unit to be used, the floor has a raised pedestal immediately behind the traveller beam. There is a restriction in the class rules as to how high any change in moulded shape such as this can be, so unfortunately, it is still necessary to use an adaptor moulding under the cleat to get the correct ergonomic orientation.

Interestingly, the centre cleat concept was used by Mateusz Kusznierewicz a number of years ago, but seems to have been adopted

throughout the fleet after Ben Ainslie used it on his earliest boats. The previous system using the two standard cleats mounted either side of the decks adjacent to the traveller can also be fitted to standard boats if preferred.

Continuing with the floor layout, a new lightweight nonslip material has been used, which is both more forgiving on your knees and very grippy. The excellent ZhiK toe-straps also add to the comfort and performance. Detailing either side of the centreboard case has been directed at removing lying water from the leeward side into the self-draining area around the case. The rest of the mouldings have been created to produce a more curvy shaped boat, rather than the more slab-sided shapes of earlier designs.

As people experiment with different systems, any builder has to have the





flexibility to produce control layouts that are both functional and fashionable within the class. A significant number of the fleet are now using continuous control lines for the inhaul, outhaul, cunningham and kicker, and both the positioning of these on the side decks and the spacing between them can be a personal liking. The builders have to create a standard layout, and so time has been spent with this, the final design allowing the kicker to be cleated and uncleated from a floating block on the gunwale edge as with the centreboard.

More restriction has recently been placed on the centreboard profile, and with the added reduction in all-up weight of the boat, there is benefit in having the largest and heaviest foil possible. This was taken to the extreme a few years ago, with the Devoti 'big nose' centreboard which basically made the swing test appear to show a heavy bow in the boat, as the

“It is interesting to see that a majority of the sailors are now using the centre mainsheet swivel cleat...”

centreboard is in the fully up position when the boat gets gyrated. Obviously, when the foil is lowered upwind, the added mass is moved aft and down to the centre of the boat. The class rules restrict the plan profile of the centreboard more than previously, but the advantage is still there, although to a lesser extent.

The rudder is produced by DEM Foils, from an aluminium CNC mould. Again, there is connection with the old UK based Devoti Sailing, as Dave Marchant was also a former employee along with Walter.

Laminate design, as with all builders, is a closely guarded secret, but the boats are made using the highest quality resin, gelcoat, foam and glassfibre materials. The ethos behind the building of this boat was never to compromise on materials or products, so in this vein the fittings are predominately Harken with custom fittings produced by local marine engineering company Allen Brothers. They have the latest CAD and CNC machinery for design work and a rapid prototyping system that allows samples to be produced and put on the boats to refine the design prior to production.





Classic Finns at Roadford Lake

(L-R) Graham Brookes' Vanguard, Peter Vinton's Fairey, David Harker's Pearson, Mark Wheatley's Morrison (and Mark Belshaw's Fairey hidden behind the Morrison)

PHOTOS: CVRDA



Older Finns can be outclassed at national level but some people are still finding them to be enjoyable and competitive at club level, using old alloy and Dacron rigs. There are usually two Finns or more sailing with the Classic and Vintage Racing Dinghy Association (CVRDA) where 1965 handicaps are used and the Classic Finn is at no disadvantage against other boats, all of a

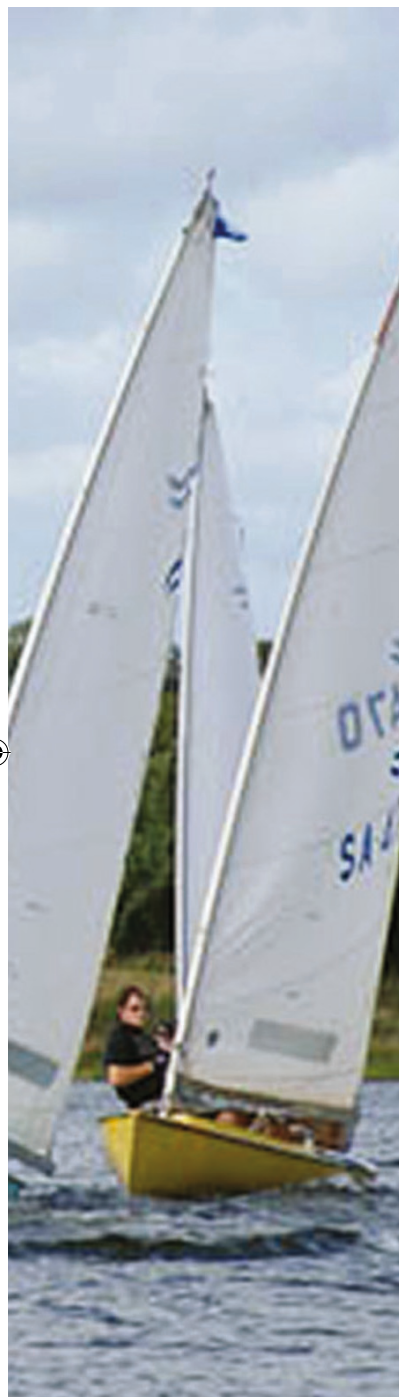
similar age. At Roadford Lake SC on the Devon and Cornwall border Graham Brookes, Alan Williams and Neil Witt have been collecting together old Finns and lending them out to others, who usually quickly become converted and buy a boat of their own, old or modern.

Over August Bank Holiday weekend Roadford Lake Sailing Club hosted the 2009 CVRDA National Rally, attracting boats from

all over the UK, all designed before 1965 and built over 25 years ago. The fleet of 32 boats included eight Finns; two Fairey Finns, a Raudaschl, Rogers, Taylor, Pearson, Vanguard and South African Morrison-built boat. In keeping with the spirit of the times all used alloy masts and Dacron sails, although one carbon topmast was hiding in among the fleet.

On Saturday an informal race round the





(L-R) Mark Wheatley's Morrison, Mark Belshaw's Fairey, David Harker's Pearson and Graham Brookes' Vanguard

lake was held, followed by a sail past (posing for the cameras) and then another informal Finn race. On Sunday the real racing started in damp conditions with a good breeze. A long beat was set up the lake and Graham Brookes in his Vanguard Finn arrived at the windward mark just ahead of Peter Vinton in his Fairey, but Peter nipped past at the buoy and increased his lead down the run. On the beats Graham came back and at the end Graham just held off Peter for first place. In the second race Mark Wheatley joined the leaders in his borrowed South African Morrison Finn and Peter won. In the third race Peter's mast step broke, slowing him down and James Cole, sailing a borrowed glass Taylor emerged at the front.

Bank Holiday Monday dawned and of course it was still wet and windy. Peter Vinton sparred all the way around with Mark Wheatley and finished almost tied but his

mast step had broken again so he couldn't sail the last race. Mark led this final race too and so took the place of first Finn overall, beating Peter by half a point. In the CVRDA fleet Mark was 5th, Peter 6th, Mark Belshaw 7th in another Fairey, James Cole 8th in the Taylor and Graham Brookes 9th in his Vanguard.

Peter Vinton



Peter Vinton's Fairey

“Over August Bank Holiday weekend Roadford Lake Sailing Club hosted the 2009 CVRDA National Rally...”



Classic Finn series



“...the CVRDA Committee have agreed to let us run our own travellers series within their 2010 events...”

After the huge success and fun of the Classic and Vintage Racing Dinghy Association Nationals at Roadford Lake in August which attracted an entry of nine classic Finns, the CVRDA Committee have agreed to let us run our own travellers series within their 2010 events. It is my intention to use these events as a means of increasing the participation of other classic Finns which are out there at various clubs but are not competitive enough, or their helms not really keen to participate in the normal Finn open circuit, as their boats and in some cases they themselves (although we will not admit it) are no longer competitive due to age!

The series will consist of six open meetings with the score from four to count, with as fair a geographical spread as can be achieved. The eligibility for boats will be as for normal CVRDA criteria (over 25 years old), as will handicapping. Currently we have two basic PY numbers for 'old' and 'classic' Finns and there will be a further number

introduced for eligible boats which now use carbon/mylar type rigs. The emphasis with CVRDA events is competitive racing with FUN and we also try to have as much enjoyment off the water as on. Generally the whole event is more of a family friendly social event than an Olympic Qualifier.

If you are not aware of the CVRDA ethos, please visit the website and forum at www.cvrda.org to get an idea of the types of boats and sailors who are involved.

The provisional 2010 Calendar is as follows, however dates may change as clubs firm up their programmes:

28 March	Whitefriers
1-2 May	Roadford Lake (bank holiday)
5-6 June	Nottingham SC
June / July (tbc)	Bosham

28-29 August Clwedog CVRDA Nationals
early Oct (tbc) Corus

It is my intention to publicise the series thorough the yachting press and I am in the process of firming up an agreement with a sponsor who will hopefully provide some end of season prizes and possibly discounted products to registered entrants.

At this stage I would appreciate if you could drop me an email to let me know if you are interested in participating or not, or if you have any queries or suggestions, so that I can get some idea of the potential numbers we can expect. It is my intention to update those of you who are interested as dates etc become fixed, please feel free to pass this on to any other classic Finn sailors I may have missed.

Graham Brookes GBR-74
fieldgate@msn.com

Finn coaching

Training events 2010

Training in 2010 is available to all BFA members and will be provided at many of the main events during the year, usually as a training day prior to some of the main regattas. We have organised some great days training from top Finn sailors and Olympic coaches, so it is up to you to make use of the resources provided by the Association. If you would like some coaching at your own club do let me know and I will see what can be done to arrange it. Keep you eye on the BFA website to keep you informed of any new coaching events and also to provide you with a way of contacting our top coaches through the coaching@finn.org.uk email link.

At each of the following events a coach will provide on-the-water support and post-race debrief for all BFA sailors who attend the event. These events have been organised to give BFA members the best possible support at a number of key events.

10/11 April

Weymouth & Portland National Sailing Academy
Part of the UK selection events – RYA Spring Series & JM Finn Traveller Circuit – likely to be sailed in the harbour.

24/25 April

Warsash Sailing Club
Finn training with Ex-Olympic Squad sailor Dave Mellor.

8/9 May

Hayling Island Sailing Club
Finn event with the other Olympic Classes – but

without UK Squad Finn sailors who will be at the Europeans. A great opportunity to receive some coaching input from Dave Mellor on the Saturday before heading off to the Masters World Championships in Split.

21/22 July

Pwllheli Sailing Club
Pre-Nationals training event – a great chance to get some help in setting your boat up to suit the conditions in Cardigan Bay ahead of the JM Finn National Championships.

1/2 October

Weymouth & Portland National Sailing Academy
part of the UK selection events – RYA Autumn Series & JM Finn Traveller Circuit.

9/10 October

Weymouth & Portland National Sailing Academy
part of the UK selection events – RYA Autumn Series & JM Finn Traveller Circuit

For more information please contact Martin Hughes GBR-567 at coaching@finn.org.uk

“...some great days training from top Finn sailors and Olympic coaches...”



PHOTO: ONEDITION

Winter sailing at Christchurch



This year's winter series at Christchurch Sailing Club was certainly dominated by the weather, of the eight scheduled Sunday mornings three were cancelled due to strong winds. The remaining races were sailed in generally strong breeze with one day wind speed gusting to around 30 knots, enough to get the hardened Christchurch helms hiking hard!

Once again the pre-series favourite was Andy Denison, (or so he told us) having had Ben Ainslie use his boat recently for some photo shoots Andy felt this was his year. Whether or not he had left it in a tuned state though was debatable.

Racing was held within Christchurch Bay which at that time of year is always full of water which makes a change! Two races were held on each morning and the fleet enjoyed some very close racing. Race wins were spread evenly across the fleet. The series ended with Simon Percival in first position, Andy Denison a close second and Ray New in third place in the highly acclaimed Winter Series.

The Christchurch Finn's have been back in action in the New Year taking part in the 'Icicle Series' hosted by Highcliffe Sailing Club and sailed in the harbour. Come along if you wish, two races each day, eight in total, scheduled to take place every other Sunday. For more information contact either myself, Andy or Rory Barnes.

Simon Percival GBR-635

“This year's winter series was certainly dominated by the weather, of eight Sunday mornings three were cancelled due to strong winds...”

Menegham Rythe Finn Fleet

How are we doing at MRSC?

Well, we have had a great time racing and socialising. I always look forward to that refreshing pint after working my legs and back as hard as possible. I am of course not on my own as the bar is lively with the banter you would expect. “What happened to you on that second beat then?” and “Shall we have another pint?” is probably the best reply.

The courses are prepared with a lot of consideration to angles and tidal effect, Graham Macdonald is instrumental to this and it is great having a Finn sailor running the races for us through the winter. No worries as to how much water we have, as most of you know we don't race on the mud, only masses of water will do for us and this makes the racing.

We have many a Finn sailor to mention at Menegham, apologies that I can't mention you all. We are missing Ian Frayne with his delightful Pata boat lying waiting for him; he's just had a back operation, which I gather went well. He can't wait to get in his Finn again. Paul Hide has turned out on many occasion missing only a few weekends which is nice to see in a new member. Mike de Courcy doesn't need much encouragement but again he has suffered to lesser an extent a bad back so we have missed him recently and we will see him soon, no doubt.

Graham Page and his skinny Pata just arrived back last week. I wonder if he's finished his kitchen? I know I haven't! Adrian Buswell has turned out for the racing with James Wyburd and Julian Smith – all keen motorcyclists. The Walkers have been busy shopping; that's Mathew and Anthony with

their new Wilke boats. Anthony has confirmed that he has a new Devoti on order for next season. This will go well with the new winch up double trailer that's on the way for him. We missed Mathew Walker recently due to a broken leg playing five-a-side football, he will be back soon and he's one of the younger ones whilst Mark Macdonald is away on his world travels. He'll be back as he's missing his Finn racing.

We have ex Flying Dutchman sailor John Galyer in the fleet this year. Simon Pettit has also joined us this year with his lovely new Devoti.

It would seem the level of enthusiasm from the national Finn fleet continues to attract others into the class and long may it continue.

Neil Robinson GBR-679
Fleet Capt MRSC

Finn UK Masters 2009 – Christchurch

After a night of fierce storms 15 Finns showed up on Friday 26th June at Christchurch to compete for the 2009 UK Masters Championship.

As duly the forecast, the wind was barely able to blow the cobwebs off Sanders's boat for the first part of the morning, but by mid-morning 5kts was registering on the Committee Boat and the fleet was released from the shore.

The start was delayed to 13.00hrs to allow sufficient wind to build to start the race and the fleet got under way on the first gun in a fitful breeze. Rory Barnes, Al Burrell and Graham MacDonald all tacked onto port and headed for the Mudeford shore as local knowledge was predicting a lift to the mark. The rest of the fleet were soon to follow but it was too late as the order was set around the mark. Graham Page took the gamble of the right hand leeward gate and went against the grain of staying in the middle; and it paid. With a controversial finish of boats crossing the line on both port and starboard, the order of finish was Graham MacDonald 1st, Rory Barnes 2nd, Graham Page 3rd, Al Burrell 4th.

As the boats awaited the start of race 2 the wind finally died and racing was canned for the day.

Saturday – day 2

Three more boats arrived for the weekend racing which swelled the fleet to 18 boats, as blue skies and a glittering sea welcomed the competitors to Christchurch Bay. The breeze was much steadier at around 10-12kts and all was set for an exciting day of four anticipated races

In race 2 the right hand side of the beat paid again but with a bigger sea and more wind the big boys dominated the front of the fleet, as John Tremlett, Al Burrell, Martin Hughes and Andy Denison rounded the windward mark in that order and the fleet began to split. The downwind ride was truly enjoyable with all the boats surfing under manageable conditions. After two laps the race concluded with Allan Burrell in the lead after surfing past John Tremlett who finished second, with Martin Hughes in third and Andy Denison a famous fourth!

Race 3 followed with pretty much the same pattern, no alteration in the course and the breeze held at 10-12knts. With three laps scheduled the race got underway with a couple of boats over the line that re-started

“With the final race of the day the Masters were now feeling the pain of four races in breezy conditions...”

including the unfortunate Howard Sellers who returned to the start line when he didn't need to! Again the right side paid and the middle of the fleet saw changing positions but at the finish it was 1st John Tremlett, 2nd Martin Hughes, 3rd Al Burrell, and 4th Andy Denison.

By the start of race 4 the tide had started to flatten out as the first high water approached and the right hand side became less crucial. Al Burrell had a mare of a start and struggled to get back into the race and Howard Sellers picked up an OCS, but the top bunch still led the way and the finish was 1st John Tremlett, 2nd Martin Hughes, 3rd Andy Denison, and 4th Graham Page.

With the final race of the day the Masters were now feeling the pain of four races in breezy conditions and as a result a few mistakes were made. Martin Hughes put in a capsize at the leeward finish gate and a lack of concentration from Mike Till left Giuseppe Di Stefano with a hole in the port side of his new boat. The sea state became more

confused as the pleasure boats came out for the day and drove across the race course, but the pecking order remained fairly consistent but with a couple of new faces showing themselves at the front as Dan Belton and Sander Kooij picked up places going down wind. The final race finished 1st John Tremlett, 2nd Al Burrell, 3rd Dan Belton, and 4th Sander Koori.

Sunday – day 3

As Sunday dawned the fleet were kept ashore whilst the Race Committee scrutinised the local internet weather station. The wind died as the morning drew on and the decision was finally taken to abandon racing for the day. The sailors enjoyed the wonderful tea and cakes provided by the Ladies of Christchurch Sailing Club and at the 15.00hrs prize giving, Andy Denison, Chairman of the British Finn Association thanked all those who were involved in the fabulous and sociable regatta and wished everybody a safe journey home.

PHOTO: ONEDITION



Photo FINNish

Photo FINNish 60 YEARS OF FINN SAILING



Compiled and edited by Robert Deaves
With a Foreword by Jacques Rogge

Unique book celebrates 60 years of Finn sailing

Marking the end of the Finn's 60th anniversary celebrations, the International Finn Association is delighted to announce the publication of 'Photo FINNish – 60 years of Finn Sailing', an extensive and highly illustrated volume compiled and edited by Robert Deaves, but largely written by some of the biggest names in sailing.

The book takes the reader from the boat's designer Rickard Sarby launching the first Finn in Uppsala in Sweden in 1949, full circle through to the 60th anniversary regatta and back there in September 2009.

There are more than 1,100 colour and black and white photos covering six decades of Finn sailing by some of the world's greatest yachting photographers.

In addition, more than 60 sailors have put pen to paper to describe their unique and personal stories in the class. The vast majority of the written accounts were specially commissioned for this book, and the sailors talk candidly and personally about their time in the class, and what it meant to them. Some are inspirational, some humorous, some emotional, and some even death defying.

The book brings together more Olympics medallists and former world champions than ever before. In all there are contributions from 22 Olympics medallists (9 of them gold) and 23 world and European champions.

Find out what happened to Jochen Schümann's gold medal winning mast of 1976, how Cam Lewis won his two Finn Gold Cups, how Stig Westergaard funded his campaign selling strong Danish lager, how Ralph Roberts met Paul Elvstrøm, how Peter Holmberg won a silver medal with a broken mast, how Oleg Khoperski defied death while training in Cuba, how Hubert



Raudaschl started in the sail making business, how Estonian Finn sailors were the first free Estonians to compete in an international sports event, (and Gus Miller's part in that), how John Bertrand became involved in the Finn class while at college, how Ian Ainslie went training with sharks and about what went wrong when Ben Ainslie first stepped into a Finn.

Other contributors include: Paul Elvstrøm, Paul Henderson, Hans Fogh, Valentin Mankin, David Howlett, Peter Harken, Jose Luis Doreste, John Cutler, Jose Maria van der Ploeg, Stuart Childerley, Xavier Rohart, Mateusz Kusznierewicz, Luca Devoti, Iain Percy, Gilbert Lambole, Zach Railey and many more.

This book is a 'must have' for anyone who has ever sailed a Finn or anyone who aspires to sail a Finn, or indeed anyone who ever wondered what it takes to be a Finn sailor. In this book you can find out, through the words of countless Olympic and world champions just what it takes to sail a Finn at the highest level.

At the recent World Yacht Racing Forum in Monaco, the first copies of 'Photo FINNish' were presented by Kiwi broadcaster – and a contributor to the book – Peter Montgomery, to former Finn heroes Cam Lewis, Russell Coutts and Scott McCleod.

Russell Coutts commented, "Robert Deaves has done a terrific job of pulling together



Russell Coutts reviews his copy

some great photos and stories from the Finn class over the past 60 years. It was great fun to review the book with PJ Montgomery and former American Finn sailors Scott MacLeod and Cam Lewis. The Finn is such a competitive class and has helped in developing some of the top sailors in our sport including Olympic legend Paul Elvstrøm

through to most recent Olympic Gold medallist Ben Ainslie. My years in this class were an important chapter in my sailing career and the catalyst for other sailing opportunities. The book does a great job capturing what is so special about the class."

More than one third of the initial print run was sold within the first three weeks, so if you want to ensure a copy, get your order in quick.

Copies of this book are available through various National Finn Associations (Contact Andy Denison via www.Finnuk.org) or direct through the International Finn class website at www.finnclass.org/finnshop.htm



Russell Coutts, Cam Lewis and Scott MacLeod receive their copies of Photo FINNish from PJ Montgomery

Photo FINNish – 60 Years of Finn Sailing

Editor: Robert Deaves

Pages: 224

SOFTBACK EDITION

Price: £25

ISBN: 978-0-9559001-1-2

HARDBACK EDITION

Price: £60

ISBN: 978-0-9559001-2-9





Photo FINNish

1949

For the Finnish Yachting Association (FYA), organizer of the yachting events in the 1952 Olympic Games, selecting the hulls was a hard task. But so for the longhanded Finn boats, the hulls were not as simple as many Scandinavian hulls. Neither did the German Olympic hull.

Actually, Scandinavia lacked a dinghy for international, or even inter-Scandinavian, competition. Finland had a fleet of Singers, Denmark had a fleet of Pintos, Norway some Singers and plenty of Skuas. Sweden, on the other hand, had a fleet of Finn boats to the south and some Singers to the east, but mostly outnumbering them were 500 sailing centers of a special Swedish kind: the Finn boats.

When the FYA decided on a design competition for an Olympic dinghy, their prime interest was to find an inter-Scandinavian dinghy that could be used for the Olympics, not the reverse. The FYA left all technical details to the Swedish FYA, which was supposed to have more knowledge about designing and sailing small boats. A committee of four Swedes set down to draw up a design, material and safety. On 1 January 1949, they came out with the following description (translated):

"The Finnish Yachting Association invites entries to a design competition for a longhanded dinghy to be used at the Olympic Games in 1952 and which is also suitable as an inter-Scandinavian dinghy. The dinghy shall give high class sport for well trained technicians, but shall also be suitable for less experienced training in all conditions where sailing is done within the Nordic countries."

"Building methods and materials are free. It should be possible to build hulls and rig as you wish, but the dinghy shall be built in a way that it can be sailed by one person."

"The following, not binding data are set down for the design. Hull: round-bellied, 100, 4.5 metres, maximum beam: 1.5 metres. Flying without tank, sail: 10 square metres in one set, not fully battened. Rig: mast: mast, grown for full rig. Boom: arranged for full sailing and ground for full rig."

"Designers should also provide a hull plan, predict a total weight, invent a name and a sail mark. Closing date for the competition, 15 May 1949."

Designing and building the prototype was done early in 1949. At this time the sail was a bit rough. An electric cutter snatched off a couple of days from a finger and I was plastered up in a real longhanded with plenty of time to fill. The plans were quickly drawn, in the usual sense manner - full size. When the time was finished in this manner, the building became an almost finished masterpiece without changing from plans.

One hand can build a mast, a boom and a rudder, but not a complete hull. Two of my brothers - after best try - came to help. The shell was built in a sort of double diagonal strip plating, which proved to be a quick way of building. The two layers were of pine strips, 6 x 20 mm. The layers were glued to each other, glued and screwed to keel, floor, timbers, etc. The prototype was launched the first week in May 1949. Total weight 150 kg. Everything was not quite finished, but every piece was on board. The most apparent to me was the entrance. And the plans could be sent to Finland. If only a name and a sail mark could be found, it was pressed for time and not worth properly. What it worked out was the name 'Finn', which in Swedish adds a positive name to practically anything. And, to fit the name, a black sheep for sailing on a blue team. What a name, and how black. Happily, this much was never seen to a sail. The prototype was still sailing in 1951, still fairly shapeless. Considering the year 1949, the building method must have been a hit.

Richard Hart



Above: The first Finn starts to take shape. The framework with applied timbers under construction in the spring of 1949 at the house of Richard's brother. Left: The hull of Finn No. 1 nearly finished. Opposite page: Top left: The Finn prototype in the foreground it had been renamed the Finn along with the other entries into the design competition. Top middle: The first Finn, first time afloat. Far right: Finn No. 1 sailed with three persons on board in 1949. Middle bottom: The Finn in the autumn of 1949 in Finland. Bottom left: Finn No. 1 being tested with four persons on board in 1949. Middle left: Finn No. 1 in a bank wind. Photos: Bert Sorby Archive



BIRTH OF THE FINN | 1949 | 21

Extracts...

Charles Currey:

The pre-selection trials took place in Cowes in 1950 and later the final 18 of us went to Torquay for the finals, which were sailed in the Cowes boats. Fairey Marine transported the boats to Torquay on a big truck and just for fun while they were in the workshop, I got two of them repainted to change the colour of the worst and the best as I thought the selection of boats for the trials might not be fair. I wasn't worried about it, though. It only took one tack after the start of the first race for me to sail through the chap who had the best boat.

Richard Hart:

At the opening ceremony, all the Finn sailors were wearing jacket and tie. Everybody was looking at a truly venerable single-engine biplane (I think an inter-war years Sikorsky). It was large for its one radial engine and had a large cabin. It flew very slowly and, privately, I wondered if it would fall out of the sky. Presently six parachutists jumped out, but we were reassured when the translated announcement came, "To celebrate the start of the Finn regatta, six parachutists will fall in the water." During the week, most of the Finn sailors also fell in the water.

Oleg Khoperski:

In 1984 we went to Cuba just before the Olympic Games to do some training. Once, a serious storm came through while we were at sea. Everyone broke masts, ripped their sails, and could barely come to shore. I had no chance to get safely back to

shore except to go around Varadero. I had to sail 36 km and it took five hours. The wind was strong, about 20 metres per second, and steep waves some 6 metres high. It was physically hard and dreadful. I could have easily died at any moment and I had to really concentrate on the waves. At the end of the peninsula it was very shallow and each wave had a crest. I had to bear off to a run - this was really terrible. Sailing at maximum speed, I tried to avoid the waves and it was the only thing that helped me to survive. By the time I got back, the people on shore had lost all hope of me surviving. They had even put candles on the table in memory of me.

Ed Bennett:

In 1971 I met John Bertrand 'Australia' at the Midwinters in Tampa Bay, Florida. Later that year he called and asked if he and wife, Rasa, could stay with us and do some training prior to his going home for the Australian trials. I lived a couple of blocks from the St Francis Yacht Club and owned two boats great for the purpose. The first day (Saturday) we sailed on alternate tacks, traded boats and started the process. I recall being faster on either tack and either boat that day. The following week I spent at work while John spent eight hours a day sailing all over the bay and brought himself up to speed. During the evenings, after some wine, we practised leaning over to get our medals. On Saturday we repeated the either tack, either boat programme. John was way faster, proving that time on the water, even if alone, is a winner. John won his trials and I won ours the following year. John's leaning-over practice almost paid off - fourth in 1972 and a medal in 1976. I was much further back.



Paul Elvstrom and Borge Schwarz traveling to the first Finn Gold Cup at Burnham-on-Crouch on the east coast of England. The boats and crew had to be lifted on to the ferry. Note the double traveler, tube hulls, no buoyancy or floorboards. Because the original Finn Gold Cup was presented to the club by FR Tony Mitchell, the first event took place at his club, the Royal Corinthian Yacht Club. David presented the Gold Cup, on the suggestion of Vernon Stratton, there was no real basis for the International Finn class, though boats existed in many countries. There is no question that the Finn Gold Cup and its deed of gift were the first instruments which, in fact, created the International Finn Association.
Right: Paul Elvstrom fits a self-bailer to his boat just before the racing.
Photos: Borge Schwarz Archive

36 | 1956 | FINN GOLD CUP - BURNHAM-ON-CROUCH



Top left: Die Gurner Frederiksen comes ashore from winter training with Paul Elvstrom, Borge Schwarz and Hans Pugh, outside Paul's house in Hellerup.
Middle: Peter Danby on Haddingworth Lake.
Right: Start at Uppsala in 1958.
Above: Richard Sarty and Bert Sarty in 1957.
Left: 1957 Europeans in Naples.
Photos: Peter Danby Archive, Paul Elvstrom Archive, Bert Sarty Archive

EXTREME TRAINING | 1957 | 37

1984

It all came down to one event between America's John Bertrand, Canada's Terry Nelson and Russell Coutts. First across the line would get the gold. My father's final words as I left the team were, "Remember, nothing fancy. Go and do your stuff and let the others make mistakes."
I didn't get a great start, but I wanted my eyes into that air early, got my rights on the other two and didn't let them get too far away. I was in front at the first mark but got blown away on the reaches. Whether I hadn't concentrated enough on downwind sailing before the second mark, or that I'd been over the top of the boat and went past and then Bertrand came from just astern and put 50 yards on me. The worst thing, though, was that there were more a lot of boats between me and the guys I had to beat. I knew it was going to be tough. We came around the bottom mark with no significant change in the situation, but then the breeze changed away a little to about 15 or 16 kts. My rig general absolutely ideal for that and I really got my act together. I passed Bertrand without any real problems and the next minute I was passing Nelson. I couldn't believe my luck.
Going over the line was a relief. I was really happy to see Nelson, who had been here very first on this point of sailing. But the wind and the waves must have been just right for me. I was going really fast and I had the bottom mark right on his tail. By this stage Nelson was looking around at me all the time and I got the impression he was really tired. He looked fast on the boat and was sort of wringing around, clearly nervous. We headed off for the right-hand side but I had a short hitch in his other side.
The breeze shifted left slightly and I noticed the distance between us. He must have realized that the line had been a little while before I hit it. He was going to underlay it. By this stage he was looking very tired, which made me work twice as hard. I pulled him on so he was standing still and went over the top of the line. As we approached the top mark, he must have been thinking, "Oh well, I'll pass him on the reaches again."
But I knew those reaches would be too close and he was running out of steam. The breeze picked up at this stage and I went over the line off the heels. I could only just manage it, but in those sort of conditions it really goes off if you can back it. Nelson, on fact, tried it. It was heading, but I knew if I gave up he would be gone. I hung on and he thought I was out and as a rule it was all over. He wasn't close enough to put me through a tacking duel on the final beat and Bertrand was no longer a threat, so I had no real problems. I think I'd have beaten Nelson even if he had managed to manage something, but, as it was, all I had to do was keep between him and the mark and make sure I didn't do anything individual in the battle.
Crossing the line and knowing I'd won the gold was a good feeling. Generally, you finish that sort of regatta and come home feeling you could have sailed a lot better. But I had the feeling that I'd achieved my best.

Russell Coutts

Top left: The Vanguard Finn supplied for the 1984 Olympics.
Top right: Russell Coutts, gold medalist at the 1984 Olympics in Long Beach.
Right: John Bertrand (US) leads Russell Coutts (NZ).
Photos: François Richard, Roger Roberts Archive

120 | 1984 | FINAL RACE SHOWDOWN FOR GOLD MEDAL

As told to Peter Montgomery, 1984



Above: Racing off Long Beach.
Top right: Coutts gets a special Kail reception after coming ashore from the final race.
Far right: Russell Coutts.
Middle: Russell Coutts waits nervously for results of a clothing weigh-in before celebrating. When his clothing was weighed after the final race, he was over the limit by 240 g, the limit then being 20 kg. On the second test his clothing was 192 g over the limit. Then Olympic manager Roger Roberts and coach Bert de Thier asked for the tent to be repaired and arranged the clothing on the line individually. The result was 1906 g and Coutts took the gold medal.
Right: Medal ceremony - Bertrand (left), Coutts (right), Terry Nelson (center).
Photos: François Richard, Peter Montgomery, PPS

OLYMPIC GAMES - LONG BEACH | 1984 | 121



172 | 1999 | FINN GOLD CUP - MELBOURNE
Philippe Rogge (BEL), Hong Kong (CHN), Leth Amund (NZ), 241, Vladimir Zinov (BLR), 13, Clifton Steele (NZ), 27, Marc Bess (FED), 10, Ian Austin (RSA), 10



Martijn van Marrewijk (FED), 10, Maratou Karamerenzou (POL), 13
Photos: Peter Bentley, Antonio Latorre, Richard Langston/Dream Images

FINN GOLD CUP - MELBOURNE | 1999 | 173



Photo FINNish



204 | 2007 | BIG SATURDAY – FINN GOLD CUP – CASCAIS Mark Andrews (GBR 88), Chris Cook (CAN 41), Aaron O'Grady (IRL 10), Marin Misura (CRO 25), Peer Moberg (NOR 1) • Photos: Robert Deaves

Extracts...

Cam Lewis:

I sobered up about midnight and went to find out the results. Sure enough, these two had done me in. The race had been tossed. Well, I rose to the task, played mental warfare on JB (I'm not sure if he got involved in the protest) like he played on me. He would make sure I had to follow him from the beach to start area every day. I found him reading 'Inner Game of Tennis' at 1977 Laser worlds, so I bought a copy and read it. I had my boat all rigged and covered and ready by sunrise.

Iain Percy:

I was part of a really strong British team with Shirley Robertson in the Europe and my great friend, Ben Ainslie, taking on

Robert Schiedt and others in the Laser. There was, as always with our team, a real focused effort and a great team spirit. I had the massive benefit of having a great team of Finn sailors around me. First and foremost was my long-term coach and Finn legend, David Howlett, who was the father figure to a huge group of successful British Finn sailors over the last 15 years. I also had as training partners Charlie Cumbley and Chris Brittle, two hugely talented youngsters at the time, and most importantly Andrew Simpson, who many will know for his successes that followed in the class.

Peter Holmberg:

I arrived in Pusan a virtual unknown and hoped for a top ten result. In practice before the Games I had great speed against the favorites, so I started to feel

good about my chances. Then, while inspecting all my gear a few days before the Games started, I found a crack in the back of my mast at the deck ring. So I switched to the one back-up mast I had purchased a few months before, but my speed was not the same. So the big decision – to go with my damaged mast and risk failure or go with the back up. I decided to go with the cracked rig and take my chances. I wanted a medal.

Zach Railey:

The first day I ever sailed a Finn, we practised off Fort Lauderdale, Florida in the Atlantic Ocean in 20-25 knots and an 8 ft swell. I remember thinking to myself as I sailed out the pass, "This is either going to end really well or really badly." For the next three hours I had one of the best sailing experiences of my life.



Right: Jacques Rogge sailing his
Laurie Line Finn at Sydney in 1974.
Opposite page: Ben Ainslie of Great
Britain on his way to winning his second
Finn Olympic gold medal at the 2008
Olympic Games in Qinghai, China.
Photos: Jacques Rogge Archive, IOC, Carlo
Barnaghi/SEE-SEA

When I started sailing in the early 1970s, I had one dream: to sail a Finn at the Olympic Games.
Paul Elvén, arguably the best sailor of all time, was and still is my hero. During my Finn period from 1980 to 1985 I had the privilege to compete with legendary sailors and make great friends.
Champions like Paul Elvén, John Bernard, Jochen Schlemmer and Russell Coutts dominated other classes and the America's Cup.
There is a long list of reasons why Finn champions dominate in other boats.
They are athletic and extremely fit. We saw the revolution in the Finn class when Ian Percy and his fellow Finn sailors started to hike aggressively.

The Finn is a boat with minimal speed differences, thus putting the emphasis on tactical gains. There are limited mast and sail tuning possibilities. Much of the choice has to be made before the race begins. The steering skills and 'feel of the groove' are key.
The Finn class has a unique atmosphere of friendship and mutual respect. Gaining successfully in a strong breeze and a big swell with a low boom is both exhilarating and the ultimate test for the good sailor.
The tactics of the Finn class also in wave management by the International Finn Association. While adapting gradually and carefully the technology changes it started sailing on wooden hulls with carbon sail. The Finn never got into a really serious race and the boat is close to a one design while allowing for sailors of different sizes and weights to be successful. The hulls are strong and long-lasting.
The Olympic class must represent both genders and the weight and size distribution of modern youth. The boats should be as cheap and as universally widespread as possible.
The Finn class has achieved this over the last 60 years, and 60 years of unbroken Olympic presence will be celebrated at the London 2012 Games. But there is one reason to not let our sailors and the International Finn Association must continue to prepare the future of this unique boat.



Jacques Rogge

FOREWORD

FOREWORD BY JACQUES ROGGE | 5



PERFECT FINN SAILING CONDITIONS | 2009 | 215





Why do you sail that class of dinghy?



This question was posed to me a few weeks ago in the changing room of my sailing club, Chichester YC, by a fellow club member. He was referring to my recently acquired Finn.

After over 40 years of dinghy racing, having raced at international, national and club level, owned and raced in that time six or more Lasers, a 505, an Albacore, International 14, Solo and two obligatory Mirrors as a teenager, this year I purchased my first Finn.

In my early twenties I raced Lasers with sailors such as Rob McMillan and the sadly missed Glen Charles. It was Rob, who one day in the early '80s turned up at Chichester YC for some practise in his new Vanguard Finn. (Rob, I understand is still sailing Finns in Australia today).

It was a typical summer's day and it was blowing a good 18-20 knots southwesterly, and Rob offered me a go in his new Finn. At that time it left me with the impression that the Finn was too powerful, and at that time I was too much of a lightweight.

The years roll by, and sailing a Laser, I started to miss the challenge and the technicalities of dinghy sailing. The 505 ownership was superb at the time in the mid-80s, attending world qualifiers, and overseas world championship events. Also, sailing a Laser in club handicap racing in less than 8 knots is tough against what seems like swarms of Solos and their lightweight helms.

So it was time to consider the options, Laser number eight? Back to another Solo? Or maybe a Finn?

March 2009

The UK Finn website and the forum web page was the first place to review the current Finn market. For more help, a phone-call to another old Chichester harbour friend Rodney Cobb who runs Suntouched Sailboats. Rodney provided me with a good source of impartial advice on Finns and over the next few days and weeks recommended a number of boats to view. He also as a local office based at Hayling Island where he stocks specific Finn spares.

At this stage, I was considering a trip with the car to Holland to visit Hit Masts and purchase a second-hand Finn. (The UK market at the time was very thin on the ground with suitable boats for sale). The downside to this was that the pound versus the euro exchange rate which was not





looking good. The Hit Masts website has a number of quality Finns for sale with detailed descriptions and photos for the prospective Finn buyer.

April 2009

By this time, having seen in the UK a couple of older Finns, and again with advice from Rodney, I made a phone-call to the always helpful Adrian Brunton (another ex Albacore Chichester harbour sailor) of HAWK Marine Products.

It seemed like there was a possibility of a couple of boats being available at Bosham SC. (The home of an established Finn fleet in the harbour.) So, after a few quick phone-calls and emails, it was off to see an early 2003 Pata Finn that had just become available. With this prospective boat there was a choice of masts and sails and the deal was done. This was the one. (It was an ex Rodney Cobb boat, would you believe it!)

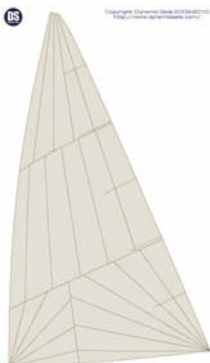
Back to the workshop with the boat as it needed a 'mild' refit. This involved new toe straps, control lines, blocks, minor gel coating repairs and removal and replacement of the anti-slip 'tread master' flooring. By late April I was on the water. I had set myself the goal of a season's club racing to adapt to the Finn.

I had opted for a slightly stiffer Pata Wing mast, as the majority of my sailing would be in flat water and the sheltered winds of Chichester Harbour. I had a couple of North sails with the boat, they were OK for practise and training, but it was evident they had seen better days, and I wanted a sail to exactly fit the Pata mast and to my specific requirements.

A 'Dynamic' Finn sail

I made contact with a local, independent sail maker (on recommendation from a leading local Solo sailor) called Dave Dobrejivic, who owns and runs Dynamic Sails at, Emsworth,

Hampshire. Dave was keen to work on and develop a new Finn sail with me, so we met up and after a couple of visits to the boat and his sail loft, Dave designed and built to a very high standard a Finn sail made from Dimension-Polyant ODL-04 Technora, a



2.8oz laminate; a very light and stable material, with low distortion.

The ODL-04 material makes a very smooth and adjustable sail. The sail design software used by Dave allows the individual mast bend characteristics of the Finn to be input. From the resulting proposed sail mould design, the sail shape can be viewed in plan, cross-section and 3D. At anytime, the design can be amended and re-worked as required before any plotting and cutting is carried out.

When I sailed against fellow harbour Finn sailors at the various local open meetings and regattas the sail has proved extremely fast in flat water and in light to 18-knot winds, for which it was specially designed. Upwind, with the correct mainsheet tension, the sail luff sets exactly to my mast, and provides the correct feedback. So far the choice of the ODL-04 material has proved to very durable. Dave has assured

performance, like the Albacore, is ideal for the harbour conditions.

With the Finn you can concentrate on the shifts and tactics of the race, whereas the Laser requires constant attention to the boat speed. The Finn has a much better overall balance than the Laser.

The Laser can also be sensitive to the helm's weight, and can at times punish the 85kg+ helm in light airs against other classes of singlehanders with their lighter helms.

The Finns very adjustable / efficient rig in comparison to the Laser, allows the helm to react quickly and efficiently to the harbour's typical changing conditions of both wind and tide / sea state.

Top tips

So, in summary, for prospective new owners of a Finn I can recommend:

- Use the web to review and source a second-hand Finn.

“After over 40 years of dinghy racing, at international, national and club level ... this year I purchased my first Finn.”

me he has 'backed up' the design! It also measures perfectly.

So, why do I now sail a Finn?

The Finn has many similarities to the Albacore, a 1954 dinghy design by Uffa Fox. The hull shapes are similar; both have a low aspect ratio sail plan, similar sail areas, hull lengths, beams and overall weights.

The current PY handicap of the two boats is also identical. Both boats are well suited to harbour sailing. The Finn can get further into to the shallows to combat the current and with it's centreboard drawing only approximately 800mm has the advantage compared to most modern dinghies, such as the RS500 and RS400 with their longer foils.

The Finn's low aspect sail layout is also well suited, and reacts better to the harbour's wind patterns and anomalies compared to some of the modern high aspect ratio rigs.

Comparing the Finn to the Laser, I have to 'tease' the Laser most of the time to keep its boat speed optimised in light to moderate winds. The Finn's excellent windward

- Contact established, experience and knowledgeable class specific companies such as Suntouched Sailboats and Hit Masts. Also review the Devoti and Pata websites for second-hand boats.
- Get yourself a good pair of hikers such as the Rooster Pro Hike Shorts, from Rooster Sailing. The Rooster Pro range of Hikers has removable pads (available in four different sizes) so that you can decide just where you would like the batten to sit.
- Allow within your budget to have a new sail built to your mast, helm weight, and your sailing conditions.
- Ensure the prospective boat has a reasonable carbon wing mast, either a Hit, Pata or Wilkie.
- As part of the refit allow within your budget for new toe straps such as the Finn Zhik, and a new set of hiking pussy pads.

Happy hiking!

Mark Harper GBR-617
Chichester YC



Warsash Finn open meeting



24-25 October 2009

On a very wet and blustery Saturday in late October, ten Olympic Finn class sailors gathered at Lobster Quay, Warsash for the end of season regatta. After a long and intense summer sailing programme some travelling sailors were put off by the appalling weather forecast of 30+ knots for the weekend. For those that made it Saturday morning was spent rigging and setting up boats in the rain for the predicted strong winds. Principal Race

Officer Jon Spencer called the sailors together at 11:00 for the event briefing only to postpone the start for an hour in the hope the weather would improve. An hour later as the Warsash Maritime Academy jetty disappeared from view, racing was abandoned for the day with winds gusting 15-17 knots above the average of 20 knots and with it a prediction for it to remain so until at least 17:00. However, almost as soon as the code flags N over A were raised the wind dropped, the rain stopped and the sky brightened. Well, what can you do? Retire to the bar then with the

thought of an extra hours sleep, as the clocks went back, before Sunday's 08:30 briefing. That evening the sailors retired to Rumours restaurant for an excellent end of year meal.

Sunday dawned a little less gusty, with only 10 knots between the mean and the big gusts but the difference was that the sun was out! After the early briefing the fleet of 14 headed off to Solent Breezes. Outstanding race management by PRO Jon Spencer and his team ensured four races were sailed in demanding conditions, starts were excellent with very little time wasted with flogging sails between races. Ex-Portsmouth





“10 Olympic Finn class sailors gathered at Lobster Quay, Warsash for the end of season regatta...”



Victory Class Champion John Tremlett found the conditions less demanding than some by winning all four races. Second overall was Warsash SC sailor Martin Hughes who beat Neil Robinson from Mengham Rythe SC into 3rd place. Many thanks to the safety boat crews who stood by in the expectation they would have lots to do dealing with numerous capsize, but 20+ knots of wind from the southwest and the associated Solent chop was not enough to cause these Finn sailors too much difficulty.

Martin Hughes GBR-567



Finn reports

Northern Area Report

Finn Training Day

The three West Riding SC Finns were fortunate enough to have Dave Mellor (ex-Finn Olympic squad sailor) come to our lake for a coaching session. This was open to all singlehanders and on the day we had the three Finns, two Solos, a Streaker and a Laser 8.1. Abi kindly drove the patrol boat whilst Dave directed the session. A sunny day with light winds gave us all a good opportunity to practise the routines that Dave set us in the club house before going on the water. We practiced starting, mark rounding, tactics and boat speed drills before adjourning for lunch, followed by another short lecture and then back on the water for a series of short races which, as you would expect by this time, were highly competitive. We finally finished around 3.30pm after a tiring day, both mentally and physically. We hope to get Dave back in 2010 to deliver part 2, which will again be open to all club members, not just singlehanders. Our thanks go to Dave for an excellent day.

“...don't borrow a 40-year-old soft Vanguard hull...”

Traveller's Tales

Finn GBR-16 in a borrowed boat enjoyed a 7th place in the Wadewitz Regatta at Fairhope YC, Alabama and even managed to beat Michael Mark in two races for the first time ever. Unfortunately, I then moved on to borrow a different boat at Southern YC, New Orleans for the US Nationals and came 31st. Here is a tip for avoiding this position, don't borrow a 40-year-old soft Vanguard hull, with no buoyancy in the front and a hornets' nest attached to the bottom of the mast – it really is not fast!

West Riding Sailing Club

Your faithful correspondent is bringing up the rear with three Finns turning out every weekend at Winterset Reservoir. Nick and Soeren are two extremely competitive sailors with a long distinguished pedigree; we are all raising our game with close competition. All three boats are booked in for the Masters in Croatia in May this year and hope to be seen on the traveller's circuit next year, as soon as the perma-frost has thawed, probably about June! Any Northern Finns who would like to join us for club racing or the Northern Area Championships would be made most welcome.

Mike Woodhead GBR-16

Scottish Finns

2010 Traveller Series

The first event of the season is over the weekend of 12th & 13th June and is being hosted by Royal West Of Scotland Amateur Boat Club (R.W.S.A.B.C.). The club is located in Greenock on the scenic Clyde estuary. The scenery in this area is outstanding and the water is ideal for water sports. The club is easily accessible by road and rail and is only 22 Miles from the centre of Glasgow. For more information, including accommodation, on the club please go to www.rwsabc.com – this is the first time the Scottish Finns have visited here.

The next event and also the Scottish Championships are on the 26th & 27th June at Largo Bay. Largo Bay Sailing Club is a dinghy racing club on the south coast of Fife less than an hour from Edinburgh and Perth. The bay is sheltered, little affected by the tides and is reckoned to be one of the best sailing areas in Scotland. More information about the club can be found at www.largobaysc.org.uk. This club has become one of our favourite clubs due to the excellently run racing and superb galley – also the local pub does a star turn on the Saturday night.

We are having a break in July from any Traveller events to allow for family holiday and the like. The series kicks back off with two events in August. The first event is on the 14th & 15th August at Helensburgh. Helensburgh Sailing Club is also situated on the Clyde estuary, this time on the North shore. The club house is brand new having been rebuilt with the help of Lottery funding, full details and lots of other club information can be found at www.helensburghsailingclub.co.uk

The second event in August and also the Finn Scottish Inlands are at Loch Venachar. Loch Venachar Sailing Club is situated in at the heart of the Trossachs in central Scotland, It is undoubtedly one of Scotland's finest sailing clubs and only an hour away from Edinburgh, and Glasgow – less from Perth. It also has a lovely new club. More details can be found at www.loch-venachar-sc.org.uk. Last year was our first time sailing at Loch Venachar and were so warmly welcomed and had such great racing that we have booked to go back again.

The last event of the season is on the 4th & 5th of September at Dalgety Bay Sailing Club. D.B.S.C. is situated on the north shore of the Firth of Forth approximately 3 miles East of the Forth Rail Bridge. The club lies in its own extensive coastal grounds complete with a high tide access harbour. The clubhouse itself has unrivalled views out over the river to Edinburgh and the Forth Bridges. More details can be found here www.dalgetybaysc.org. This is our biggest Finn club in Scotland with 3 boats regularly raced here. The Scottish Finn fleet would love to welcome any sailors from down south to our events, why not combine it with a few days visiting the Highlands and experience sailing amongst fantastic scenery.

Dave Harcourt GBR-673

Rolex Miami OCR



Ed Wright, winner
Miami OCR 2010

The 2010 Finn season got underway with the Rolex Miami OCR, the second event in the ISAF Sailing World Cup. With 37 sailors from 14 nations, this was always going to be a tough event with a line up including 11 of the top 20 world ranked sailors.

For many the man to beat was Zach Railey (USA), the 2008 Olympic silver medalist, who has been training hard over the winter, but the strong British team started with a win apiece between, Ed Wright (GBR, above), Mark Andrews (GBR) and Giles Scott (GBR). In fact race one turned into a Team GBR benefit with Wright winning the race from Scott and Andrew Mills (GBR).

After three days of challenging races in Biscayne Bay, Ed Wright was on top with two more race wins, while previous leader Giles Scott dropped to second after three third places. Zach Railey also dropped one to third.

Only Railey broke the British dominance in taking a winning gun. A win in race 5, added to a 4th and 5th left him in a comfortable third place, 8 points ahead of team mate Bryan Boyd (USA).

Racing continued the next day with a third for Ed Wright who extended his lead at the top, while Zach Railey had another consistent top five day to move within two points of second placed Giles Scott.

The second race of the day was won by Gasper Vincenc (SLO) with Jonathan Lobert (FRA) posting his best result of the series with

a second and Wright ending the day with a third, after Mills – who crossed the line third – was black flagged.

The final day of the qualification races brought a new face to the front of the fleet. Jonathan Lobert (FRA) won both races in the light to moderate winds to make a last minute challenge for a medal. However the top three positions remained the same with Ed Wright (GBR) leading into the medal race by a useful 14 point margin over team mate Scott who produced a 2-7 and Zach Railey (USA).

After his double race win, Lobert climbed from 10th to 6th. He said, "Today it was great sailing for I had two very good starts and my speed was very good so I could easily do what I liked."

On The final day, a fourth place in the medal race was easily enough for Ed Wright to win the Rolex Miami OCR for the second year running, by a clear margin of 20 points. The only person who could touch Wright was team mate Giles Scott and while Scott sailed a sound race, a seventh place was never going to be enough to take gold, though it did keep Gasper Vincenc (SLO) and Zach Railey at bay and secure the silver medal. Scott had not performed particularly well in critical medal races in the 2009 season, but perhaps now has gained enough confidence to handle the situation better.

Third place in the medal race went to rising French star Jonathan Lobert (FRA). Lobert, trains with fellow Frenchman Thomas

Le Breton (FRA), who only started in the Finn last year, and the two have shown a gradual progression through the ranks and can be justifiably content with their performance in Miami. If their current progress is anything to go by, it won't be long before they are challenging for podium places.

Top 10 after medal race

1	GBR-11	Edward Wright	1 2 [19] 1 4 1 1 3 5 2 8	28.00
2	GBR-41	Giles Scott	2 7 1 3 3 3 [8] 6 2 7 14	48.00
3	SLO-5	Gasper Vincenc	5 12 5 8 [19] 2 7 1 3 5 4	52.00
4	USA-4	Zach Railey	4 5 4 4 1 5 4 5 9 [36/DNS] 12	53.00
5	USA-14	Bryan Boyd	12 4 [18] 2 2 6 10 4 15 9 2	66.00
6	FRA-112	Jonathan Lobert	8 [25] 8 7 15 14 6 2 1 1 6	68.00
7	NOR-1	Peer Moberg	7 8 6 9 6 8 [13] 11 8 3 10	76.00
8	ESP-100	Rafael Trujillo	14 6 3 6 7 7 5 7 [18] 6 18	79.00
9	FRA-115	Thomas Le Breton	11 9 2 5 5 [20] 11 9 4 8 20	84.00
10	RUS-9	Skornyakov Eduard	6 3 [13] 12 13 4 9 10 11 4 16	88.00

Other British results

11	GBR-634	Andrew Mills
12	GBR-88	Mark Andrews

The 'Battle of the Classes' pursuit race 2010

The 'Battle of the Classes' Pursuit Race 2010 took place on the final Sunday, of the London International Boat Show at ExCel, Docklands. Organised and supported by British Sailing this unique showcase has become a highly popular and competitive fixture in the dinghy sailing winter calendar. Each year since the event's inception it has attracted many top sailors, national and world champions.

British Sailing is the body within the British Marine Federation dedicated to promoting sailing and instigated the race when the Boat Show moved to the ExCel Centre. Utilising the opportunity afforded by the historic Royal Victoria Dock right outside the exhibition centre, visitors to the boat show can enjoy an up-close grandstand view of the 51 dinghies and catamarans battling it out only yards away to claim the coveted title of the 'Battle of the Classes' champions. Spectators can follow the racing from the dockside or enjoy an amazing aerial view of the action from the footbridge that spans the dock whilst top commentator Richard Parslow explained the action unfolding on the water. Two boats from each class were invited to compete in a Pursuit race whereby the slowest boats start first and the rest of the fleet is started on a carefully timed handicap sequence, designed so that the winner is the boat that is ahead on the water after 106 minutes.

There is both an individual trophy and a team trophy for the best combined score as well as the first youth sailor. The Finn Class

has contested the event each year, often battling it out with the rival Phantom Class, whose 'generous' handicap has often seen them win! Last year Andy Couch in a Phantom won the individual trophy whilst Steve Cockerill and Ian Jones won the overall title for the Streaker class with Allen Burrell and Henry Bagnell 3rd and 4th overall for the Finn Class.

This year Burrell was out for revenge and kindly offered to fly the flag for the Finns again against the 50-odd other competitors, together with John Heyes making up the two boat Finn team. After the snow and freezing conditions all week, the final Sunday of the Boat Show dawned bright and warm, with a 6-8 knot southwesterly breeze blowing straight down the dock.

It was always going to be tough for the Finns, starting together with the two well sailed Albacores and just two minutes ahead of the Phantoms. The two Finns swapped places up the first beat, short tacking just feet away from the huge Sunseeker powerboats moored in the dock. Allen and John completed the first lap in 15th and 16th places respectively, with the Mirror, the slowest boat and therefore first to start still well in the lead.

For the first few laps Burrell was neck-and-neck with Neville Herbert in the Albacore who at times seemed to be match racing to get his team mate Will Gulliver up from 17th place behind the Finns. As the breeze dropped right down to 5 knots, Allen managed to hold clear air in the busy traffic downwind on the



windward / leeward course and wriggled ahead. John Heyes got caught at the leeward mark by faster boats coming up from astern and was forced wide of the mark, losing valuable time and distance in the process.

Burrell showed his usual form and somehow managed to find a clear path upwind in the congested waters of the dock – no mean feat with 51 other boats to avoid, and slowly pulled further ahead. By lap 5 he was up to 3rd, just behind Tom Gillard in a Streaker and multiple class champion Steve Cockerill in his new Rooster Graduate. Further down the fleet, another Finn sailor Adrian Brunton was fighting it out in the new Devoti D One with the rival RS100 of Nick Peters, but the light airs windward / leeward course was not a favourite with these asymmetric rigged boats.

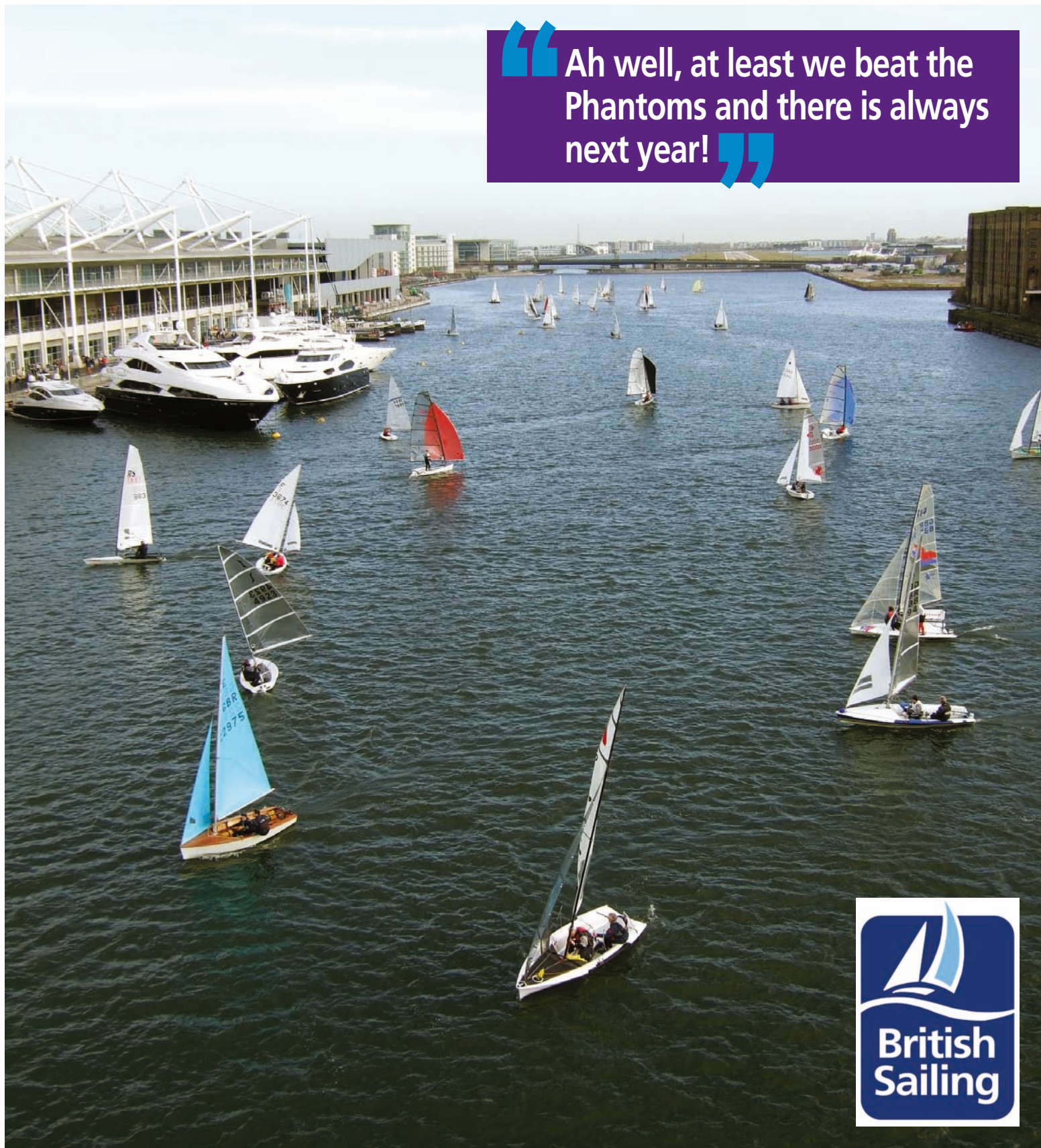
Burrell, sporting a borrowed mast and sail showed good upwind speed and was finally hot on the heels of Steve Cockerill who was out to promote his brand new Graduate design. However, a close call with a somewhat aggressive RS800 crew on the other leg of the course saw Allen take a penalty 720 turn that effectively ended his chances of overall glory but he still finished an impressive 3rd overall. John Heyes was unable to recover from a dose of the slows in the light patch, but rallied somewhat to at least pass one of the Phantoms to finish 15th. Overall the pair's combined scores made them the third fastest class overall, behind the Solos and then the Albacores. Ah well, at least we beat the Phantoms and there is always next year!

John Heyes GBR-61





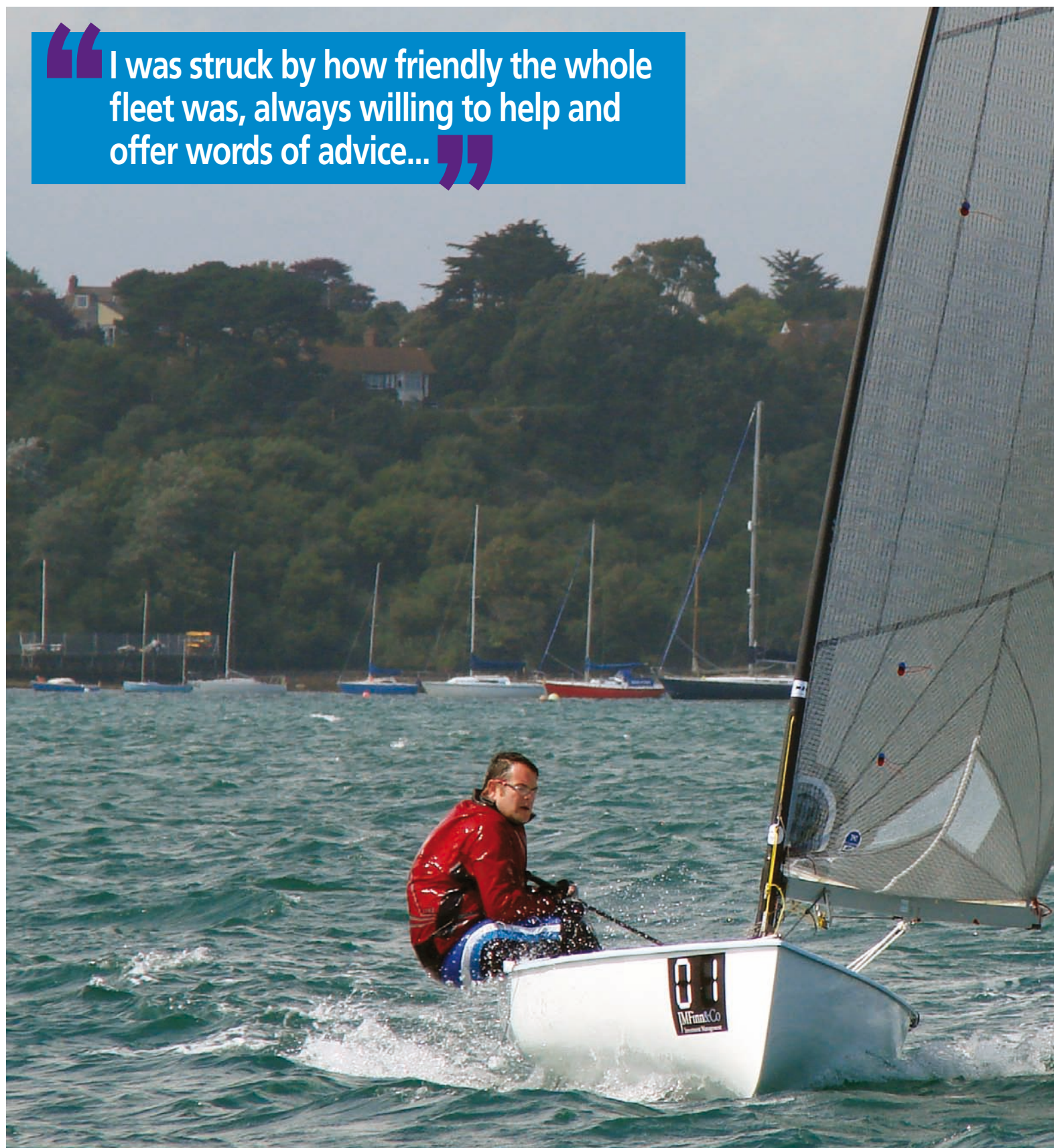
“ Ah well, at least we beat the
Phantoms and there is always
next year! ”





My first Finn experience

“I was struck by how friendly the whole fleet was, always willing to help and offer words of advice...”





I came to the Finn Nationals as a result of my employer's (J M Finn & Co Investment Management) sponsorship of the class and my desire to show some support for their investment. Having spent my youth as a Laser sailor and dreaming of being Ben Ainslie, the Finn does hold an obvious appeal. However, my last serious regatta had been in 1995 and I hadn't sailed regularly since, save for my annual sailing holiday and the London Stock Exchange regattas, sailing Mermaids at Seaview. I was therefore a bit apprehensive about sailing in a Finn for the first time and desperate not to embarrass myself or the firm.

I owe a great deal of thanks to John Heyes whose hard work got me to the Finn Nationals. He liaised with Rodney Cobb who very kindly lent me a new Devoti Finn for the event and one of my own sailing contacts arranged for 'Sid' David Howlett to provide a days training beforehand. Unfortunately on the day it was blowing Force 4-5 and it became more about how to survive in a Finn rather than how to achieve the most boatspeed. It served the purpose of teaching me the controls but also highlighted the lack of strength and fitness that I had to sail the boat hard for a concerted period of time.

Onto the event itself and Weymouth proved to be a fantastic venue – my first ever experience sailing in these waters. The testing conditions continued through the three days and proved tremendous fun. As always the starts were so important and simply being half a boat length down on the line, as I always seemed to be, meant that the first leg was always in dirty air. Over the course of the three days I generally found that my upwind speed was quite reasonable but downwind I lacked any kind of technique to hold onto my windward mark position. Time and again any good progress I may have made beating was more than lost in the following legs as the wind swung behind me downwind. This is definitely something that I need to learn if I am to make progress in this class. I did however complete each race and finished with at least six boats behind me overall – so not too bad for a beginner!

I was struck by how friendly the whole fleet was, always willing to help and offer words of advice and encouragement. The Finn was great fun to sail but definitely the most physically demanding dinghy that I have experienced. A great deal of thanks must go to John for his hard work in organising the boat and keeping me informed of where I needed to be and when, Adrian Brunton and Allen Burrell for their tag team efforts to get the boat down to Castle Cove for me, Rodney Cobb for making the boat available and to Sid for kindly giving a day up to give me a great but exhausting days coaching prior to the start of the Nationals.

I thoroughly enjoyed myself and fully intend to repeat my appearance this summer in North Wales. I also hope to get some proper practice in order that I might find myself a little higher up the fleet!

David Higham
JM Finn & Co Investment Management



A cautionary tale from a daft old bloke

A couple of years ago at the age of 65, fully retired but still sailing Merlin Rockets and Lasers, I came across some accounts of the growth of Finn Masters sailing.

I sailed Finns in the infamous BOFF 'Back of the Finn Fleet division' from 1970 to 1977 after a few years in OKs and I was instantly afflicted with nostalgia and the early onset of dementia, so started haunting the website sales forum for a bargain. Back around 1975 the first few Vanguard boats built with the new miracle epoxy were the bee's knees and I duly acquired a 1979 model in need of a little TLC but including an early carbon mast and an early Mylar sail – great stuff. Full of enthusiasm I postponed the rebuild, threw it together and rushed off to Mengham Rythe for the 2008 UK Masters Champs without even a trial sail.

Reality seeped in when I arrived. I always was a bit small for the Finn at around 70kg when I was 28, but pumping iron in a city gym at lunchtime together with a body building diet got me up near 90kg and a massive weight wet-jacket (now illegal) helped. Thirty-eight years had reduced my height by a couple of inches, my strength by about 50% and cut the weight back to 70kg. The opposition looked awfully young and big except for a few wiry guys about my age and the all boats had moved on drastically. I sort of knew that from Dinghy Shows, but somehow it didn't really sink in until push came to shove up the ramp over the Mengham sea wall.

Luckily the wind was light for two days and progress was made from dead last to one from last then three from last. Wonders never cease. Day three was a different kettle of fish. A brisk and building wind with a biggish sea in Hayling Bay failed to daunt 50 years experience of every sort of dinghy there is and, like riding a bicycle, a little technique started to come back. Lord knows what the results were but I managed to stay upright and beat a few. As the wind increased some were sloping off. It always amazes me that many dinghy sailors think and say that a Finn is a hard boat to sail. I cannot agree. It is a wonderful boat to sail. The hull is strong and so fair it just slips through the waves. The rig is infinitely adjustable and the modern version de-powers itself in gusts. The steering is so light I can only compare it with a Merlin. Of course the problem is not that it is difficult to sail, it is that it is near impossible to win without good fitness and high strength to weight ratio plus absolute dedication, because of all the great Finn sailors

in every sailing country in the world.

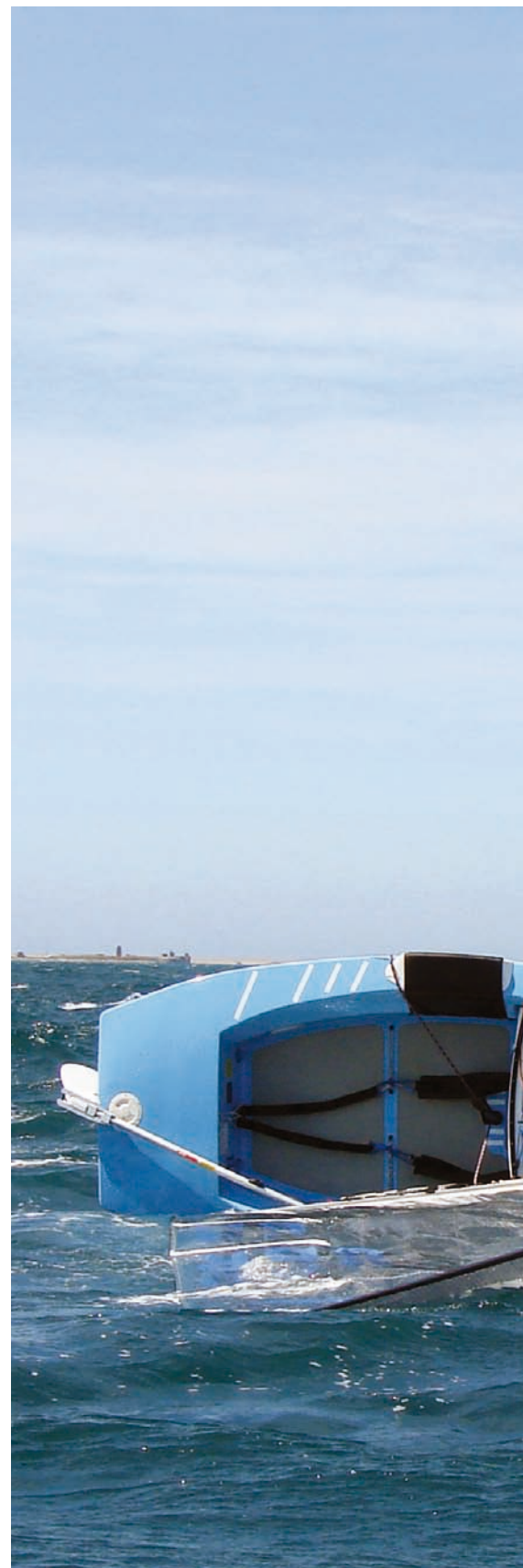
However, back to the plot. Waiting for the start of the last race the wind came up and up. A couple of boats went over and as I grinned at them and consumed the regulation banana the enormous gust hit me. I was too old and slow to stop the boom hitting the water and in we broached and quickly inverted. Shouldn't be a problem I thought, swimming round the transom, but that cavalier attitude to checking the boat came home to roost. One of the ancient buoyancy bags under the foredeck burst and the other tore its straps out. Down went the bow just before a RIB got to me, having assisted the earlier swimmers. It proved to be impossible to tow the boat against the southerly Force 4 gusting 5 and big waves driving onto the nearby Hayling Beach. The support boat got me as close to the shore as it could in safety and I swam and waded in just before the half sunk Finn hit the shingle. Miraculously the inhabitants of Hayling Island mostly understand boats and they sit on the beach on Sundays even in chilly winds. More than a dozen kind people ranging from little kids to grandmothers tailed onto my mainsheet arranged as a tug of war rope and we shot up the shingle on one gunwale with scarcely a scratch on the tough epoxy. Luckily the tide was ebbing. Of course the mast broke, but was repaired later and the sail was a write-off but I knew I needed a new one anyway. I hiked back to the club and being Hayling nobody even noticed the wetsuit in the shopping area. Later a goodly number of the competitors and Mengham members went back with me to carry my Finn a considerable distance to the road.

I tell this story for two reasons. One is to warn any likeminded people not to be as daft as me. It was incredibly stupid to go to sea in a totally untried old boat and I apologise unreservedly to all the good folk who rescued me from my inanity.

But the up side is that in 2009 I managed to complete the rebuild, get to Maubuisson, France for the Finn World Masters, met a lot of old and new friends and avoided coming last despite one black flag and missing the last race because of exhaustion. It was absolutely amazing to sail with all those fit and suntanned old guys and a few gals. 'Strewth, people used to stop sailing dinghies at 50 when I were a lad!'

The boat is, of course, called 'Poor Old Michael Finn Again Begin Again!'

Mike Fitzpatrick – K-20, K-360 (1970s) and now GBR-486





“I was too old and slow to stop the boom hitting the water and in we broached and quickly inverted...”



Finn programme 2010



January

- 5-7 Squad Camp, WPNSA
- 24-25 OCR, Miami

February

- 4-6 Squad Camp, WPNSA
- 24-26 Squad Camp, Palma

March

- 4-6 Squad Camp, WPNSA
- 6-7 Dinghy Show
- 17-19 Squad Camp, Palma
- 27 Northern Champs, West Riding SC
- 29-30 Princess Sofia, Palma ESP

April

- 10-11 J M Finn Ranker, WPNSA (Qualifier / Travellers)
- 17 Burghfield Open, Burghfield
- 23-30 Hyeres, France
- 24-25 Training, Warsash

May

- 1-2 Southern Champs, Mengham Rythe SC

- 7-15 FINN Europeans, Split CRO
- 8 Training, HISC
- 22-28 World Masters, Split CRO
- 22 Starcross Open, Starcross YC

June

- 12-13 TBYC Open, Thorpe Bay YC
- 12-13 RWSABC Scottish Traveller Series, Scotland
- 18-23 Kiel Week, Germany
- 26-27 Scottish Championships, Largo Bay

July

- 3-6 French Nationals, Sn La Ciotat
- 10-11 J M Finn Inlands, Grafham (Qualifier / Travellers)
- 21-22 Training for Nationals, Pwllheli
- 23-25 J M Finn Nationals, Pwllheli (Qualifier / Travellers)

August

- 9-10 Federation Week, Chichester Harbour
- 10-14 Sail for Gold, WPNSA
- 14-15 Scottish Travellers, Helensburgh
- 21-22 Scottish Travellers / Inlands, Loch Venacher
- 27-4 Sep FINN Gold Cup, San Francisco USA

September

- 4-5 Scottish Travellers, DBSC
- 10-12 UK Masters, Roadford
- 18 Training, WPNSA
- 18-19 J M Finn Rankers, WPNSA (Qualifier / Travellers)
- 25-26 Bosham Open, Bosham SC

October

- 9 Training, WPNSA
- 9-10 J M Finn Rankers, WPNSA (Qualifier / Travellers)
- 11-14 Squad Camp, WPNSA
- 23-24 Warsash End of Year Bash Open, Warsash SC

November

- 15-18 Squad Training, WPNSA

December

- 14-19 Sail Melbourne, Melbourne AUS
- 17-22 Christmas Squad Race, Palma ESP

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events at www.finnuk.org.uk

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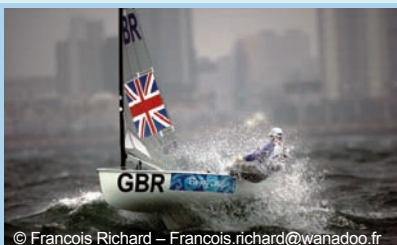
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