



Chairman's report, 28th November 2020

This is the first time the BFA AGM has not been able to be held at the National Championship, and excitingly the first time it has been held virtually, so I hope everyone that wished to attend is with us online today.

Following on from last year's AGM in Brixham, we have held several conversations with the IFA and will continue to push them to improve their governance and lobby more actively for a return of the Finn to the Olympic slate. We are also suggesting a new pro-sailor circuit, along the lines of the Star Sailors League, in order to retain the top sailors in the class.

At the time of writing we are in the middle of the World Sailing annual conference, and awaiting the final result of the presidential election. Sadly, Gerardo Seeliger did not make it to the final vote, so we will have to await the outcome and see if it brings a review of the Olympic events for Paris 2024, which in a post Covid world may bring renewed calls to reduce costs by retaining the existing classes.

Meanwhile, our UK circuit of events was just kicking off with the new Spring Traveller Series of early season one day events, when the the lockdown struck. A big thank you to Christchurch SC who put on a great day of short, sharp racing back in March, which turned out to be the only survivor of the series as sailing become locked down until August. It was no coincidence that it was also Christchurch SC that took the lead in getting racing going again, with a well organised and safely distanced Masters Championship in September, followed by Warsash SC who ran an excellent open event in October.

A thank you also to Howard Sellers who has provided an impressive

wooden plinth for the new Richard Creagh-Osborne silver trophy and has also been busy building some intricate half model trophies for us.

Despite the lockdown, the UK class has continued to attract both new and returning members to the fleet. Some were no-doubt attracted by the option to return to sailing safely in a single hander and it is even more pleasing to see a few U23's returning - despite the Finn's loss of Olympic status. It was also pleasing to see how the Finn fleet has responded to the challenges of socially distanced sailing, with neighbouring club fleets joining up for impromptu racing and lone sailors being invited to join in.

On the international scene, it was good to see Giles Scott return to the podium at the only major international event of the year - the European Championships in Gdynia, Poland. His training partner Henry Wetherell also excelled, with an 11th place, despite the extremely shifty conditions. Giles is now in Auckland on America's Cup duties until the New Year, (and hopefully beyond into the finals) whilst Henry heads out to training with the international group in Lanzarote in January.

We are hugely grateful to GAC Pindar who were due to complete their six year sponsorship programme with us at the nationals in Hayling Island this summer. We thank them for their generous support of the U23 programme over that time, and provision of the popular competitor shirts for the Nationals.

I would like to thank all the Committee for the huge amount of work they put in behind the scenes to maintain our class at the forefront of UK sailing – particularly Martin Hughes for all the hard work in organising our events and then for even more efforts to cancel them! Thanks also to Richard Phillips who stands down this year for all his hard work as Membership Secretary and for help with results. We have next years Nationals already confirmed for the Royal Torbay YC on the 9-11th July

For 2021 we will continue to update our CMS system to communicate with members more efficiently and refine the subscriptions collection process to a direct debit scheme, rather than requesting members to re-order their subscription each year. There will still be an opportunity to review your

subs renewal before the direct debit is taken, but it should simply be the process for all.

Good sailing and stay safe!

John Heyes
28/10/2020.