

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting 2020

Via Zoom meeting on Saturday 28th November 2020

Meeting commenced at 17:10

Attendees: John Heyes, Martin Hughes, Ray New, Andrew Wylam, James Downer, Allen Burrell, Richard Phillips, Russ Ward, Chris Barbary, Kerion Holt, Roman Khodykin, Simon Percival, Steve Sampson, Rodney Cobb.

1. **Apologies:** Fergus Allen, Howard Sellars
2. **Minutes of the 2019 AGM Vote 1**
The minutes posted on the BFA forum on 20 July 2019 were accepted as a true account of the meeting - the minutes were proposed by, John Heyes and seconded by Ray New, unanimously accepted through the online vote.
3. **Matters Arising**
 - a. There were no matters arising
4. **Committee Reports**
 - **Chairman's report – John Heyes**
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, 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 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-19 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 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 became 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 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 year's 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 simplify the process for all.
Good sailing and stay safe!

- **Secretary's Report – Martin Hughes**

I have little to say regarding the 2020 sailing season. It is now behind us and proved to be a very unfulfilling year for Finn sailing.

The BFA committee have been actively looking to amend the BFA constitution to update it and align it with the modern expectations of British sport. To that end a draft has been prepared but given the importance of the document we would like to give members more time to debate and comment on the revisions. The constitution will be presented to the membership at the 2021 AGM as the current constitution requires a 'majority vote' in favour of change.

Looking forward to 2021, I can report we have a full calendar of events in the UK, and COVID-19 willing we have clubs who are eager to be hosts to a Finn event. A draft calendar is on the BFA website and will be finally confirmed before the end of the year.

To start the year, we have four events that make up the Spring Series with events in Warsash, Christchurch, Itchenor and Bough Beech. Assuming all four events are sailed the best three events will be counted for the new Richard Creagh-Osborne trophy. These are all one-day events with 4-6 races each day, just to get us all back into racing order.

Nine Finn events then combine to form the Travelers Trophy, assuming all events are sailed then three discards can identify a Travelers Trophy champion. Championship events include the Southern Championships (Lymington), Masters Championships (Mengeham Rythe), National Championships (Torbay), Northern Championships (West Riding) and Inland Championships (Draycott Water). Also, open meetings at Bosham, Mengeham Rythe, Solway, Christchurch and Warsash.

To encourage more sailors to enter and participate in the Travellers Trophy and the National Championships, a new prize in each event for the Club Team that gains the fewest points across the Travellers Trophy and separately the National Championships. To be eligible a club must count points from each of the following groups of sailors: -

Open (including all sailors under 39yrs), Master, Grand Master, Great Grand Master, Legend (including all sailors over the age of 69yrs).

If a club does not have a sailor in one or more of these categories the club shall score points equal to the number of participants in that group, plus 1. To qualify for a Club Team, sailors must be a member of that club, and must enter the series as a representative of that club. Changes of club are not acceptable mid series. The club with the lowest overall scores, for the top placed sailor in each of the categories, at the end of the series, will be declared the winning club. Sailors do not need to be named or identified at the start of the event all members of a club are entered and eligible for their scores to count for this trophy.

I would encourage you to persuade and cajole non-Finn sailors to enter any BFA events to constitute a club team. All sailors entering an event for the first time can do so as Associate members but must become full members to participate in further events. I am looking forward to seeing you all again at the events in 2021.

- **Membership Secretary's Report – Richard Phillips**

Membership Numbers: Despite the situation regarding Olympic status and the COVID-19 Pandemic which has disrupted lives, work, leisure, and sporting activities, BFA members have remained loyal to the Class and renewed their Membership for 2020. We currently have 119 Full, 5 Under 23, 13 Associate and 4 honorary. With 9 new members joining since the last AGM. We hope that there is more opportunity to train and race in 2021

Membership: All Finn owners are encouraged to join/re-join BFA and commence/renew their BFA Membership. The BFA Membership records are maintained on BFA Web Collect. Each member has their own "My BFA" Account and is responsible for maintaining their personal and contact information up to date. Please let the Membership Secretary know if you change your email account so that your account can be updated, and you can access it via your new email address.

Reminders: Membership Form - please review and update for any changes to ensure you receive email communications and Fanfare.

Classic Finn owners - Associate Membership is only £10 per annum. • Encourage friends/sailors to Try a Finn and enter a BFA Open Meeting as an Associate Member • Finn Training - BFA is in contact with top quality Finn coaches - ask for details.

Annual Subscription: The Annual Subscription is due for payment on 1 January and rights and benefits may be withdrawn if fees are not paid before 1 April. Full Members £50; U23 Members £27.50; Associate Member £10.

Personal sail numbers: The right to use a Personal Sail Numbers (PSNs) may be ordered by Full or U23 members (but not Associate members) and paid for online via member's "My BFA" account. PSNs are subject to terms and conditions as set out on the order form: -

- Only PSN holders or the owners of original K registered boats may race with a sail number between 0 and 100.
- Other Finn owners are requested to respect the rights of those who have paid to use such numbers. PSN Fees for 4 years Nos 0 to 20 - £99; Nos 21 to 100 - £75. Reminders.
- The right to use a PSN lasts for 4 years from the end of the month of purchase, or if renewing, the date on which the PSN expired. PSN holders must renew their BFA Membership by 1 March.
- PSNs may not be transferred by the owner on the sale of a boat or sails.
- Income received from the sale of PSNs is reserved for the development of young Finn sailors. Requests Please pay your Annual Membership Fee promptly.
- If you have sold your Finn, you may switch to Associate Membership on renewal. Please inform the Membership Secretary if you do not wish to renew your Membership or your Personal Sail Number.

The future: The COVID-19 Pandemic and the growing awareness of the environment and Climate change has transformed the way the community views water based activities, appreciates the local environs and the freedom that sailing and other water based activities have to offer. Travelling, particularly overseas has become problematic. Sailing Clubs are diversifying. They are likely to become more family orientated with a greater focus on serving the local community. BFA may need to modify its offering to better serve the needs of Club sailors and support local enthusiasts to build local fleets.

THANK YOU

Now that it is time to hand over to a new Membership Secretary, I thank all Finn sailors for their support of BFA in so many varied ways. It has been fascinating hearing about the history of individual Finn sailors, what brought them to Finn sailing, what they love about the Finn and the wonderful support given by so many so freely and the great love of the Finn and the history of Finn sailing around the world. Best wishes for the future. I hope to see you on the water in 2021.

• **Classic Finn Report – Peter Vinton**

Unfortunately, there has been no racing for Classic Finns this year as all the BFA Classics Travellers events and the CVRDA events had to be cancelled due to Covid-19. However, I continue to receive inquiries about Classic Finn restoration, rigging and sailing from the UK and around the world. In Britain two early Finns which had long been thought lost recently turned up, K17 and K19, both of which are now with new owners and being restored.

It was agreed at the recent BFA committee meeting that personal sail numbers of re-discovered Classic boats could be retained by the purchaser, unless the corresponding Classic Finn was likely to be raced at the same BFA events. We have also now added a dedicated section on the website for Classic Finns and this will gradually be populated with more articles and support for those sailing or restoring Classic Finns. There is also a Classic Finn section on the Forum, for Classic boat owners and restorers to ask questions and share their experiences with the rest of the Classic fleet.

The programme of events for Classic Finns, in the Classic Travellers Trophy, looks exciting for 2021 with 5 events combining BFA and CVRDA events. See you out there.

• **Boat registrations report – Rory Barnes**

The latest issued number is GBR 795. Since the last AGM, 3 new Devoti's have been registered.

5. **Financial Report and accounts for 2019 Vote 2 – Ray New**

The income and expenditure account showed a surplus of £273 for the year, with receipts of £23,576 and expenses of £23,303. The U23 programme had receipts of £6,625 and expenses of £10,712. With sponsorship support from GAC Pindar the cost to BFA of the programme remained approx £2,000 pa. However. the World

Sailing decision to drop the Finn from the Olympics means there will no longer be a National Team for the Finn and this programme has been discontinued. Subscription income was £6,334, down from £6,587 in 2018. Personal sail number income was £2,169, up from £1,809 in 2018. GAC Pindar sponsorship was £3,000. The national championships in Brixham, with 46 entries, had a surplus of £713 7. The IFA contribution was £2,725 with an additional expenditure of £441 for the postage and distribution of FinnFare. There is no proposal to increase membership fees, however, the insurance premiums of around £575 continue to be significant.

During the last year, the committee purchased new prizes for the Travellers Trophy and Spring series costing £1688, however, it is expected these trophies will last a good few years.

The accounts were voted for online and unanimously accepted.

6. PR and Communications – John Heyes

As a Class association we continue to investigate new methods of communicating with members, but also to develop the existing systems. The website has been overhauled and continues to be one of the main sources of information in conjunction with Facebook. To open editing rites to Facebook and encourage more reporting from Clubs key members can input information directly to the site. If you have any Finn related newsworthy event at your club, please help promote the class with an item on the Facebook page.

7. Election of Officers Vote 3A

- To simplify the voting procedure, the items to be voted on were grouped together the positions were voted for en-bloc. There were no contested appointments.
 - Chairman - John Heyes
 - Secretary – Martin Hughes
 - Treasurer – Ray New
 - Registrations Secretary – Rory Barnes
 - Classic Finn Representative – Peter Vinton
 - Vote 3B
 - Membership Secretary: Richard Phillips has stood down and does not offer himself for re-election. Chris Barbary offers himself for election.

Voting was carried out online with the above officers all elected unanimously.

8. Events Scheduled for 2021 – 2022

A draft calendar for 2021 has been published on the BFA Website. It is only draft as there are a few more events still to be confirmed. A modified and hopefully final version will be published at the end of December.

9. Any other business

- Roman Kodykin asked if there was any more news on the Finn holding its place for the 2024 Olympics in Paris.
- He also enquired if there was anymore news from the IFA and IOC about Olympic selection events in 2021 for the Games in Tokyo.
- He also thanked the BFA Committee for their hard work in managing the association through the lockdown and throughout the year.
- Following communications with the Chairman of the French Finn Association that the French National Championships will be held in Quiberon from 29 June to 4 July allowing sailors to sail in both the French and the UK Championships and resurrecting the Jean Jacques Trophy.
- Ray New informed members that preparations were all moving ahead at a good pace and the World Finn Masters in Medemblik were likely to go ahead in May 2021.

10. Date and time of next meeting

The next meeting will be held at the National Championships in Torbay YC on Saturday 10 July 2021.

11. Meeting closed at 17:39