

2013 President's Report

2013 IOD AGM President's Report

First some thank yous:

To the Fisher's Island Fleet and community for putting together this great event and catapulting the class in to the twenty-first century. I am sorry to be missing the connections, the conversations and the gin, but thanks to the twitter feed (@IntlOneDesign, #IODWorlds), the pictures and the live racing coverage on Kattack the broader World Class can stay on top of the action while feigning productivity at work.

I am well aware that it takes a village to put on one of these events and I can only image that is at least doubly true when there is but one store, one bar and no roads in and out of the venue (as is the case on Fishers Island). It is fantastic that the hosts have focused on making the racing outstanding, but all of the other logistics are no small feat of accomplishment and for that we are all in your debt. Thank you to the owners, the hosts, the tinkerers, the tweeters, the sailmakers, the lunch-makers and all the others that have allowed us to intrude on them and who are sharing a little bit of the Fishers Island Magic this week.

To the Nantucket Fleet for their continued generosity in lending and transporting their boats.

To the World Class Executive and all of our advisors especially Charlie Van Voorhis and Jennifer Miller for stepping in to run the AGM in my absence. This year we were short on monthly conference calls, but long on special projects and I am grateful for everyone who spent a few minutes, a few hours or a few days of their time to help the WCA on its mission. Charlie spearheaded a committee focused on defining an IOD so that they might be identified with measurement tools and built a template for use in measurement activities so that we can rationalize tolerances and make sure that we don't rewrite the new rules such that they exclude any current IODs (Charlie to make a presentation on this at the AGM). Kin Yellott, our WCA Treasurer with help from David Schoeder and Tom Price worked his way into the hearts and minds of the decision makers at ISAF and has sown the seeds for the reversal of the recent regulation changes and the continued recognition of the IOD class and in particular our World Championships. This is currently in ISAF's hands and we hope for some new information towards the end of the year. Peter McCausland for graciously offering to help guide any interested fleets or other groups interested in building a syndicate model. Peter helped construct the Nantucket IOD Fleet (corporation).

To all the fleet captains and treasurers for getting their dues and their fleet reports submitted ahead of the Worlds/Annual General Meeting (AGM) so that we can focus Worlds on building the connections, the competition and depleting the gin...and focus the AGM on more productive activities.

The team responsible for the 75th Anniversary Book -- in particular Herb Motley, Bob Duffy, Sandro Vitelli, Dana Jenkins and all of the project benefactors. We have sold about 1000 books and it has

become a great marketing and publicity tool for the class. Gary Jobson, Jerome Pels (ISAF CEO), Prince Philip (UK), and the King of Norway have all appreciated the copies that have been provided to them and we are now actively pursuing retail outlets and donations to libraries.

Second, here are some things that are on my mind:

Europe: I am seeking suggestions on how to get more engagement from our friends in Europe in our activities as a class and how we can do more to help the European fleets. I am looking forward to the Worlds in Norway next year and am encouraged by the fleet reports from Norway and Sweden which speak to a developing third Norwegian fleet in Fredrikstad and 2 new boats in production in Sweden. Of concern is that there is no European representation at the Worlds this year and 3 of the 6 boats in the St. Mawes fleet are currently for sale. By contrast, we have received interest from a gentleman in Suffolk who has enquired about whether there is interest in having another European fiberglass builder in the UK.

Although the world is generally shrinking thanks to technology and social networking we are struggling to stay abreast, much less be responsive to IOD affairs in Europe. I would be delighted to receive suggestions on how to improve the situation – of course, once we vet the opportunity in Suffolk, we will engage Lars in Sweden and Johnny in St. Mawes, but aside from the bi-annual North Sea Cup, is there anything else that we could/should be doing to inspire more community in Europe?

Classic Yachts are hot. Close competition is hot. Traveling to exotic destinations to go yacht racing is hot, yet the IOD class continues to cool. We need more sailors and I am very supportive of efforts to get more young people involved, but we also need more buyers and that is becoming increasingly more difficult in the face of a shrinking middle class. How do we draw more attention to our “all this and varnish too”? Perhaps we could get more involvement in charity events – Ben Ainslie and Francesco Bruni were practicing in SF last week in IODs in preparation for the Gold Cup – their interest had been inspired in tribute to their friend Andrew Simpson and they are participating this year to raise money for his charity. The celebrity Pro-Am in Nantucket is always an outrageous success and people will run, walk, paddleboard and climb mountains for charity, why not sail a classic one design?

There is a strong undercurrent of resentment around the America’s Cup moving away from monohulls, but at the same time the closeness of the competition makes it the most interesting sailing to ever make it into the public domain – is there a way that we can capitalize on that?

The website and building digital community. Should I replace the news section of the website with a twitter feed? Would it help to get you share your pictures and videos and short stories about all things IOD? I struggle to get news to put up on the website and as much as I would like it to be an elegant representation of our class, it is usually out-of-date and is much more of a reference site than a community. I desperately need a social media advisor and someone to consolidate all of our disparate digital outlets. Perhaps we should buy facebook ads and target anyone that meets a certain profile?

Lastly, our mission and inspiration for your cocktail hours, launch conversations and AGM discussion

One Design-ness: While no one wants the WCA to become measurement despots, we all must concede that the fact that we sail boats that are all extensibly the same is a great deal of the appeal and the allure of the IOD class. Now that our boats aren't all coming out of the same shed in Norway and construction and reconstruction efforts are becoming more decentralized, we are finding our current class rules aren't up to the challenge of upholding the mantle of one design-ness. Please listen to Charlie's presentation on the goals, progress and next priorities for this endeavor. He has assembled a working group from fleets around the World and drafted a new set of measurement rules with the goal to ratify them at the 2014 AGM in Norway.

Fleet Development: Great stuff (video here) out of Northeast Harbor, a critical mass of 30-something interest in LIS, close competition in FIS. Please spend some time sharing your fleet's challenges and victories so that we can grow and then take your findings back to your home fleet. I would be grateful for anything that can be shared and circulated, but I will be quite happy with productive conversations.

I regret not being able to solicit thoughts and feedback in person, but welcome your correspondence and hope to see you all soon.

Warmly,

Danielle Lawson