

# **INTERNATIONAL GP14 CLASS ASSOCIATION**

## **DRAFT Minutes of the 72nd Annual general Meeting**

**Monday 14th August 2022 at Skerries Sailing Club.**

(Held as a blended meeting using Zoom.)

### 1. Persons present.

Attendees by Zoom:- David Cook, David Bower, Charlie Cotter, Oliver Shaw, Frank Whitley, Rob Bailey, Chris Beddow, Gill Beddow, Chris Hearn, Graham Knox, Stewart Elder, Paul Simes, Sarah Roberts.

Attendees in Person:-

### 2. Apologies for absence.

Ruan O'Tiernaigh

### 3. President's welcome.

When I assumed this role in the summer of 2019 none of us could have foreseen how our lives would be affected so dramatically in so many ways within a year. Covid 19 has changed the world and how we live in it. Some people will have lost jobs, some will have been working from home as best they can, and some such as health care workers will never have had to work as hard as in the last two years (and counting).

I had expected to be writing this report after attending three Irish Championships, three British National Championships and two World Championships. Instead the total stands at two Irish, one British and two days of this World Championship. It seems that Covid has had a negative impact on most two person dinghy Classes (and bigger boats) with only single handed sailing prospering. One exception is the GP14 Class in Ireland, where the prospect of this World Championship, which we are now sailing, has bolstered fleets substantially.

These difficulties have not been exclusive to these Islands. I am sorry to report the formal winding up of our Australian Association, although people there will continue to sail their elderly GP14s. On the brighter side, South Africa has resumed having National Championships. Sri Lanka has its current political problems, and shipping second hand boats to North America has also proved challenging. You will probably know by now that, in conjunction with the Class in Sri Lanka, we have taken the decision to defer the Sri Lanka worlds to 2026 to allow things to settle, and to make the costs in attending this super venue easier to estimate. Our International branches and other overseas sailors are extremely important to the Association and we must take every step possible to nurture them.

But it is wonderful to be here in Skerries, with so many old friends and some new ones taking part in our 2022 World Championships. We all must thank Skerries S.C. for sticking with us through two cancelled years and for the huge effort of David Cooke, Colman Grimes and their team in organising such a complex event in such conditions.

Without volunteers we would never have events, big or small, and also coaches, measurers, and others who also make a big contribution to our Class. For those who

take the time to do these tasks, or to put something back into the Class, there is the reward of a job well done, the thanks of all of us, and the fellowship that goes with that.

There is one group of people who I have to pay tribute to on your behalf as well as my own. Over the past few years the Finance and General Committee has met by Zoom every month and in many ways has had to act as an executive committee on account of the fast changing circumstances in which we found ourselves working. There are three highly influential ladies on the "F&G". Vanessa Devereux is our Championship organiser and puts a huge amount of time and effort into the Class. Additionally she has also organised three RYA Dinghy Show stands (one virtual, one just before Covid the other earlier this year), all of which have conveyed the GP14 message most effectively.

Gill Beddow is now organising training at various levels in GP14s. Aided by Colman in Ireland the training the GP14 Class now offers is close to the level available in some youth Classes but aimed at a much more varied range of age and experience. Two years ago, Charlie Cotter took on the job of Hon Treasurer and has been an invaluable committee member. Thanks, in part, to zoom our finances remain reasonably healthy. Job pressures mean Charlie is standing down as our treasurer but will I hope remain on Committee to see through a number of interesting ideas. My Vice Presidents have been an invaluable source of advice and support and I'm delighted that Charles Saunders, who midlands sailors know as a highly effective organiser, has agreed to stand as President. Dave Bower has resurrected his connection with the Class and is growing into the role of Hon Secretary. Finally Steve Parry is a master of all trades. He has had many jobs on this Committee but has been invaluable in the last year when we moved to guard the intellectual property invested in two sets of hull and deck moulds, which the Class has purchased from Steve Parker. Steve represents the Technical Committee on our group and has overseen much of the activity involved in getting our new models into production. Many other people play a role in the Association. The General Committee members who are not members of the Finance and General committee nevertheless play an active role. Area reps, Class Captains in our Clubs all make an invaluable contribution. Big thanks to Chris Hearne, who has been our webmaster for many years, and has finally found a replacement (welcome Adeel) allowing him to retire. The members of our Technical Committee and Chief Measurer, Jon Close, are active in reviewing our plans and rules, and have been crucial in managing the handling of the two sets of moulds that are now Class property. Our Trustees continue to oversee the financial stability of the Class.

I must mention one area which does seem to be a growth area - cruising! Maybe it is an outcome of Covid 19 but our cruising weeks have never been more popular. Thanks to Oliver Shaw and Frank Whitley for promoting this aspect of GP14 sailing so successfully.

We continue to face new challenges. We do not even know what some of them will be but I'm confident your new Committee will manage them in the best possible way. Finally I must pay tribute to my long time friends in Skerries S.C. who have stood by the Class over the past two years and have given us this memorable Championship. Most of all I thank my wife Ann (and crew for 25 of my GP14 years) for coping with many zoom meetings, phone calls, emailing and particularly her proof reading of many many "Presidents Bit's".

We have a wonderful Class. Long may it prosper.

Curly Morris

#### 4. Approval of the Minutes of the 71st Annual General Meeting.

Proposed: Ann Penny. Seconded: Michael Collender. Accepted unanimously by the meeting.

#### 5. The Hon. Secretary's Report.

And so comes the end of my first year as Honorary Secretary to the GP14 members Association.

Joining The Committee half way through the worst pandemic this century has been a learning experience, the joys of having meetings on Zoom being one of them. I have been quietly impressed how well these have worked, especially the times when our overseas members have been able to give a direct input. The savings on travel and living expenses have also helped out in the treasury department.

We are now looking forward to getting everything back to normal, whatever normal will be in the future, and The Association has responded exceptionally well to the changes in our sport.

Not surprisingly, the single handed classes seem to have benefited well to the changes, the chances of picking up something nasty from your crew or helm having been close to eliminated in these classes, but we are not far behind.

Our first major achievement was the Dinghy Show at Farnborough. I spent a happy Sunday there going around the show with my wife and we were really impressed by how much the GP14 stand stood out amongst the crowd. The 3 boats on the stand representing everything good about the class, especially the wooden boat that most visitors had to touch, just like a piece of beautifully made furniture. Huge thanks have to go to Vanessa and the other members who staffed the stand. It showed that all is well in the GP14 fleet, even before the season had properly started.

The other thing that I noticed especially was the amount of training that Gill Beddow has organised so far this season. The comments at the meetings that this has raised are always really positive and have attracted members from as far as South Africa.

Below is a report from Gill about her achievements this year.

2022 has been the first full year of Training since 2019 and it has been very successful. Improver level training at Club venues at their request has proved popular. Coaching days have taken place pre the Inland Championship at Bala, at Llandudno pre the National Championship and for the first time 2 weekends of Training at Weymouth in April pre the years Open events and a later weekend at the beginning of July. These were hosted by the Andrew Simpson Centre at Portland and an invited Guest Coach. All have proved very popular and in total 32 boats took part at these venues and that figure would have been 38 if Covid hadn't stopped sailors from taking part at the last minute. It is anticipated that the E Howard Davies Youth week postponed from this year will take place at Plas Menai Outdoor Centre in early April 2023. All of this would not happen without the support of many top GP14 sailors who act as Coaches, giving confidence, encouragement and enjoyment to our participants. The GP14 Class members are indebted to them for giving up their time and sharing their expertise.

Another voice that has been to the forefront this year has been Vanessa Devereux. She has been tirelessly working in the background organising the championships for us to enjoy. There are still a few to go but the turnouts, although not back to our hoped for standards, have been impressive and have shown that the GP14 fleet is still high up amongst the its competitors for giving first class events to its members.

One event that has taken a lot of committee time is the next World Championship. The event in Sri Lanka had already been delayed due to the Covid crisis. Now, once more, it has to be delayed again, to 2026. The problem is not to do with the organising of the event (I went there with the Enterprises almost 20 years ago and the organisation and the manner with which we were looked after was second to none) but the way that we could get our fleets to the venue. World shipping is still in chaos from the Covid crisis and the Ukraine war, with no sight yet of an end to either. This means that we are not able to organise suitable transport for crews or boats during these times and the current costs also mean that these will be out of the reach of most of our fleet for some years to come. Hopefully, the extra 2 years delay will give time for these things to sort themselves out and we will be able to look forward to a happier time in 4 years, riding the waves and basking in the sunshine on the beautiful island of Sri Lanka.

Other members of the committee have, as always, put their heads above the parapet during these trying times.

Curly's quiet reassuring manner has been a help to many over these last turbulent years, and I wish the extra time that he will gain from his retirement as President will be put to use in his GP for many years to come. We all owe him a big thank you for his efforts over the last 3 years.

Charlie Cotter's time as Hon Treasurer has been very difficult because of the disruptions of the Covid crisis to her profession as a teacher. She will step down this year as Hon. Treasurer, but has agreed to stay on the committee to help us all out with her measured tone and calm reassurance.

David Rowlands has remained the ever calm personality that I remember from many years ago, his calm incisive mind easily sorting out problems that we thought were insurmountable.

Finally, we have to thank Steve Parry for his work on our new grp. hull moulds, he has been tireless in getting these into place for production in spite of the huge difficulties that he has faced.

Also on a personal note, he has always been the 'go to' person for me and the difficulties I have faced as a new Hon Secretary.

David Bower

Oliver Shaw gave a brief supplementary report on the activities of the cruising section and drew the meeting's attention to the success of our advanced cruiser training programme and the active support that it has now gained from the RYA.

Acceptance of the report:

Proposed: Vanessa Devereux

Seconded: David Cooke

Agreed unanimously by the meeting.

6. The Treasurer's Report and consideration of the Annual Accounts.

A copy of the Treasurer's report and the audited accounts are attached to these minutes. Charlie Cotter drew our attention to the healthier than expected state of our finances for the financial year 2020/21, which had ended with a small deficit of £156 rather than the much larger sum that had been allowed in the budget. Charlie explained that this was in part due to the fact that the EHD Week expenditure had slipped forward into the current financial year but notwithstanding this, a substantial saving in our routine running costs had also been achieved by using Zoom to replace face-to-face meetings of General Committee.

The treasurer was asked whether Zoom would replace all face-to-face meetings of General Committee. Charlie explained that the F&G Committee's view was that the October meeting should be returned to the traditional arrangement, but all others should be held on Zoom. The AGM attendees welcomed this decision.

It was suggested that with the current increase in interest rates, we might now be able to obtain a better rate of return on our reserves. On behalf of our Trustees, Graham Knox told the meeting that they would be seeking to achieve this during the autumn.

Acceptance of the report:

Proposed: Steve Parry

Seconded: Charles Saunders

Approved unanimously.

Charlie Cotter expressed her thanks to Paul Bowmer for his assistance during her period in office, she also thanked all members of General Committee for their support. Curly Morris thanked Charlie on behalf of the membership for all her hard work.

#### 7. The President's future considerations.

Curly Morris gave a brief overview of the state of the class, reflecting upon the impact of the covid pandemic on double handed sailing and the resilience of the GP14 to those trends, as witnessed by the size and breadth of the entry for our 2022 World Championship and our growing stature in World Sailing. Curly told the meeting of his sadness at having to postpone our proposed World Championship fixture in Sri Lanka until 2026, explaining that in current political and economic circumstances there had been no other sensible course of action. Curly expressed his confidence in Pwllheli SC's ability to deliver a first-class World Championship in 2024. Curly thanked the outgoing members of General Committee for their support during his period in office and welcomed the new nominees.

#### 8. Membership fees for the coming year 2023.

General Committee proposed the following membership fees:

- Full £36 (increased from £33)
- Group to be based on the above increase.
- Associate to remain unchanged at £25
- Overseas £12 (increased from £10)
- Temporary (single event) membership £18 (increased from £12)
- Youth membership to remain unchanged at £16

The current policy of offering a discount to those paying by direct debit will be continued.

There was a short discussion regarding the proposed level of increase, several members expressed the view that they were too modest. The proposed changes were put to the meeting and accepted unanimously.

A draft proposal by General Committee that crews should be full or associate members of the Association in order to be eligible to participate in national and world championships was discussed. The concept was firmly supported in principle. Oliver Shaw made it clear that this rule change would not affect cruising events held in conjunction with national and world racing championships. It was agreed that General Committee should consider the matter further and bring a firm proposal to the 2023 AGM.

#### 9. Appointment of auditors.

To retain the services of Sergeants of Prescott as the Association auditors.

Proposed: Charlie Cotter  
Seconded: James Ward  
Agreed unanimously.

#### 10. Election of Officers.

President	Charles Saunders Proposed by:- Curly Morris, seconded by David Bower Unanimously supported by the meeting
Hon. Secretary	David Bower Proposed by:- Charles Saunders, Seconded by Curly Morris Unanimously supported by the meeting
Hon. Treasurer	Rob Bailey Proposed by Charlotte Cotter Seconded by Stephen Parry Unanimously supported by the meeting

#### 12. Election of the directly elected members of General Committee.

Charlotte Cotter  
Frank Whitley  
Gill Beddow  
Steven Parry  
Vanessa Devereux

All were elected unanimously by the meeting.

Oliver Shaw expressed the wish to continue to serve on General Committee. This was welcomed and it was agreed that the committee should be asked to co-opt Oliver to enhance further the representation of the non-racing fleet.

#### 13. Date and place of next meeting: Monday 7<sup>th</sup> August 2023 at Looe SC.

14. Curly Morris closed the formal proceedings and opened the post-AGM forum.

Topics discussed:

#### Membership

The concept and implications of crew membership were explored further. It was suggested that if this rule is introduced, consideration should be given to changing the requirement for the helm to be a full member of the Association i.e. if the crew holds full membership, might it not be acceptable for the helm to hold only associate membership?

Should we abolish single-event membership and simply require one member of the boat crew to be a full member at all events, and at world and national events, the other to be at least an associate member?

Should we offer a discounted entry fee to Association members hosting an event in their home club?

Rob Bailey expressed the view that our entry fees already represent excellent value for money and that discounts of this type by the Association were perhaps not necessary.

#### Cruising

Steve White has been successful in persuading the RYA to establish a working group to help the RYA to understand the needs and interests of those participating in dinghy cruising. Steve is now a member of that group. Steve's efforts were congratulated.

#### Web site

Curly reported that a successor to Chris Hearn has come forward. Subject to finalising the appointment, the new webmaster will be co-opted onto General Committee. Curly expressed our enormous thanks to Chris for all he has done and for holding the fort until his replacement was found.

#### South African branch

Matthew de Villiers brought greeting from South Africa, telling us that the class was very active in his home area. Matthew thanked Skerries SC for hosting an excellent event and said that he looked forward to a time when South Africa could return the compliment.

#### RYA Regional Committee on sustainability

Keith Budden (Trimply SC) has been appointed to this committee. Keith would welcome GP14 sailors' opinions and views on sustainability in the dinghy world and the efforts of the RYA in tackling the issues.

The closer involvement of the Association in the RYA, as witnessed by both Keith Budden and Steve White, was welcomed. The Association is affiliated with the RYA, and it was felt that we ought to do as much as we can to exploit that connection.

#### The Association's purchase of the ex SP Boats moulds

Ian Dobson asked for more explanation as to why the Association had decided to make the purchase. David Rowlands outlined the background and explained the reasoning behind the decision taken by General Committee.

#### Close of the meeting

Charles Saunders closed the meeting and expressed the members' thanks to Curly Morris for all that he had done during his term of office. Curly had made it very clear that he did not want the Association to award him any form of past-president's regalia, as had been the tradition to date. Charles told Curly that this was being respected but a special thank-you was nevertheless planned for the Friday prize giving ceremony.