

## **RS700 CHAIRMAN'S DIT – 2018**

Welcome to 2018! For those of you that haven't yet ventured out of your igloos, I can assure you that the 2018 season is underway and there is some great racing to be had! As I'm having a 'snow day' at home to keep me safe from the menacing 2 cm of snow on the ground, I thought I'd take the opportunity to reflect on what has been a very successful 2017 and give you a preview of what we have planned for the 2018 Season.

### **2017 Racing Highlights**

The 2017 season was kicked off in great style with 'Snetfest', where the Snettisham Beach lads hosting a fantastic event over the first May Bank Holiday weekend. The 4 home boats were joined by 11 travellers to the Norfolk coast to enjoy a vibrant mix of sailing conditions and social shenanigans! The event set the perfect tone for the year and it was a great opportunity for the newer members to the class to pick up tips and tricks from the old guard.

The Magic Marine Circuit continued throughout the year with strong support at Hayling Island, Stokes Bay and Brightlingsea, whilst the final event at Queen Mary had to be deferred due to a lack of water! After a hard fought and hugely enjoyable series, the overall winner was Robbie Bell, who showed some great speed throughout the series (when he had a vertical mast. ;)

The 2017 European Championship was held at Lake Lipno in the Czech Republic and was the largest turnout in the class' history. This event saw the extremes of the wind range from nothing to 50+ kts (in the storm); one unfortunate RS700 sailor was 'taken out' in the boat park by a flying RS Aero! The Championship produced some very competitive racing, but a very professional display from Milan Hajek throughout the week saw him crowned the new European and Czech Champion.

The UK National Championship was held at Stokes Bay Sailing Club and was viewed by many as one of the best events in recent history due to champagne conditions everyday and hospitality of such a great club (but I would say that!). The 29 competitors battled out some very close racing with individual race wins going to 6 different sailors. In the end, the quality and consistency of Jerry Wales shone through and he deservedly retained his title as the UK National Champion.

### **2018 Season**

The 2018 season launched with the deferred 2017 End Of Season / Inland Championship at Queen Mary Sailing Club. Despite the forecast of strong winds and freezing temperatures, 10 RS700 sailors signed up for this multi-RS-fleet event. Whilst the 'relatively steady' strong wind provided some entertaining sailing over the weekend, there was an attritional feel to the results as various sailors succumbed to the wind strength, cold and breakages! The second day also featured the 'inaugural and final' RS700 pursuit race with the other classes in an entertaining tour of Queen Mary reservoir! Despite our reservations over this pursuit race, I think we all secretly enjoyed it! In the end, the overall win went to a fat boy on a wire who capsized less than everyone else!

We now have a new sponsor - **ROOSTER!** The 2018 'Rooster' Series commences on 5 May with 'SnetFest 2' at Snettisham Beach, and goes on to tour Parkstone, Lymington, Weymouth and Queen Mary. No matter what you're level experience, I'd encourage all RS700 sailors to come along to these friendly and fun weekends. These are a great place to meet like-minded sailors and learn some tips and tricks to get you around the course faster and dryer. The RS700 will also be making the well trodden pilgrimage to Carnac in Brittany for a Eurocup event 26-29 May 18. For those who have not sailed at Canac, it offers some fantastic sailing in the sun; washed down with plenty of bierre and laughter with your sailing buddies and family. This is as much a sailing holiday as a competition! Registration is open with plenty of UK sailors already signed up; this promises to be a very well attended and competitive event once the continental based sailors entries are included.

To mark the 25th Anniversary of RS, the 'RS Games' is being hosted at the Weymouth and Portland National Sailing Academy. The RS classes will descend on the venue over a 3 week period for a massive

festival of sailing in a fantastic location. As part of this event, the RS700s will hold their combined UK and European Championship between 16-19 Aug 18. This is the first time that the European Championship has been held in the UK, and with strong support from the continental Europe based sailors anticipated - this promises to be one of our strongest turn-outs ever. Entry is now open, so I'd encourage you to enter early to ensure you get your £50 entry discount and hopefully encourage more to follow!

Looking beyond this year's events get a marker in your calendar for Lake Garda 22-26 July **2019!!** Start dropping it into conversation with your other halves now!

### **Boat Developments**

In order to improve the boat's resilience, sailability and keep it feeling modern; a number of minor changes have been made recently by the Builder and Class Association:

- **Daggerboard.** The vote to allow the adoption of the RS Aero daggerboard has been approved and all new RS700s will still be supplied with this style of daggerboard. When current stocks of the old RS700 board have been exhausted they will no longer be available. Old and new style boards are class legal.
- **Rudder Stock.** The use of the new style one piece rudder stock with carbon tiller is now standard issue with the new boats and is class legal.
- **Hull Structure.** A new hull mould has now been produced. The internal structure of the new boats has been modified to increase the strength of the more fragile areas of the hull. It also features modifications such as an inspection hatch and a non-raking daggerboard slot.
- **Gooseneck.** In recognition that that the original goosenecks could fail, a new stronger gooseneck can be purchased from RS.
- **Spreader Brackets.** A set of nylon inserts can be bought from RS that go inside the spreader brackets to prevent the bolt holes wearing through.

As a reminder, from last season:

- **Kicking Strap.** The purchase on this can now be increased from 16:1 to 24:1. This is to make it easier to apply; not to let you pull more on - so use with caution!
- **Rig Tensioner.** The purchase on the rig tensioner can now be increased from 6:1 up to a maximum of 12:1 (although most now use 8:1 or 10:1). This is to prevent you having to stand on your boat to apply the required tension!

### **Rigging and Bimbling**

Whilst there has always been some minor variation in the way that some boats are rigged and bimbled, it has been brought to the attention of the Class Association that some of these modifications are potentially outside of the Class Rules. The feedback from the 2017 Sailor Survey suggests that there is some tolerance for minor modifications and bimbles, however we must be cognisant that we are in principle a 'one design class'. In order to manage this, I am liaising with the Builder to get and publish a definitive baseline rigging guide that illustrates the position and layout of blocks and ropes etc. Once we have established this we can make provision within the Class Rules to make allowable variations from these. I would like to try to get this all completed with any potential deviations proposed at the AGM and voted in by the end of the year. In the interim, the committee will discuss this issue with sailors at this year's events and advise if any rigging or bimbles are thought to be stretching the Class Rules too far. If you are concerned that your set up could be illegal, please feel free to contact me.

**Finally....**

Many thanks for your continuing support and if I didn't manage to see you at the Dinghy Show last weekend, I look forward to seeing you on the water... somewhere to leeward ;o)

Yours aye,

**Richard Wadsworth**

UK RS700 Class Association Chairman