

OUT TO

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WORLD CHAMPS

Ireland's David Lovegrove in Simba II and fellow countryman John Godkin in Snowball thrashed their way to the weather mark just ahead of the main pack. At the lee mark for the first time, Godkin, then in the lead, took time off to bathe and put himself out of the running for a gun.

Caig, Warfvinge and Pelerin gave Lovegrove a rough time up the following beat and it was Caig who had smashed his way into the lead at the weather mark for the second time. For the remainder of the race the lead was closely contested and it was Caig who took the winning gun about 30 seconds ahead of Pelerin. The Warfvings finished third for Sweden.

On the Thursday the wind and sea had increased a little more and Caig started with an almost impossible to beat hat trick of winning guns.

The fleet was away at the second attempt with Peter Bateman finding an enormous gap in the crush at the mark boat end of the start line. He pedalled furiously up the course on a long port tack which successfully crossed off everyone and, after a couple of hitches, tore in to round the weather mark with the rest of the pack well astern. Following in Bateman's fading wake came Caig, Warfvinge, Nilsson (Sweden) and Blades (England). Bateman continued to thrash round the course in impressive style and took the winning gun four minutes in front of Nilsson and Agardh (Sweden) with their countrymen, the Warfvinge brothers, finishing third.

Yet more wind and a wicked sea on the Friday forced the race officer to cancel what should have been the last race in the series and so the championship had to be determined by the best three results out of four races. The racing was cancelled just after mid-day and competitors began dismantling their boats ready for the road home or, in the case of some of the British competitors, ready for the dash to catch the midnight ferry on Saturday from Belfast to Ardrossan to be in time for the National Championships at Helensburgh.

On Thursday evening Fireball International held a council meeting at Ballyseede Castle Hotel outside Tralee which was supported by representatives of each of the 16 countries attending the championships. Everyone agreed that there is no lack of enthusiasm on the part of national authorities but that there was considerable room for improvement in communications between the various national associations and the collating body, Fireball International.

Recently things had improved greatly and everyone was keen that the Fireball Class should have a communications system which is second to none.

The cancellation of Friday's race was doubly disappointing because not only was Friday 21 August the day on which Fireball was officially granted international status in Group A by the IYRU, but Nigel Hacking, the secretary general of the Union, visited the championship to see some racing as well as making the official announcement of the granting of international status at the championship banquet which was held in the Mount Brandon Hotel.

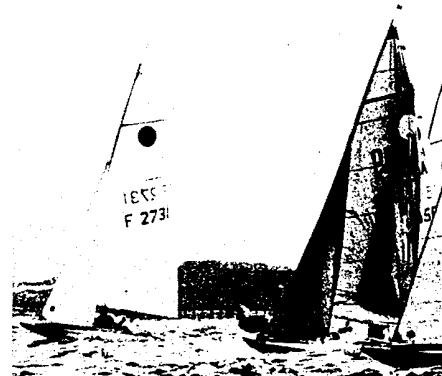
I would like to exercise a little licence here and thank most sincerely the small, dedicated band of Fireball enthusiasts led by Bill Kempner, Frank Berry and Steven Schrier who are largely responsible for producing the propellant which has lifted Fireball into international orbit. These characters are only the tip of the iceberg and there are many others who have as much right to take a bow.

It is a real pleasure to record the phenomenal smoothness with which the meeting ran. Tralee Sailing Club had never handled an international meeting before and I am sure that they would be the first to admit that they were a little green when they put the event in their calendar.

When the fleet arrived in Fenit, however, it was clear to everyone that if things did not go right, then no blame could be attached to the host club. Their officers and members both before and during the championship put everything they had into the organisation with the result that there was not a single hitch either afloat or ashore. Race committee and competitors alike were unanimous in their praise of the warmth of their welcome and the speed with which requests both large and small were fulfilled.

Special thanks are due to Paddy O'Sullivan who lightly oiled the already smooth works. Thanks, too, to Maud Ross who saw to it that printed results and placings were in each competitor's hands almost before they were out of their wet suits.

At the start of the third race are (from left): Pelerin/Pelerin, F (2731); Alsop/Alsop, UK (5010); Caig/Davies, UK (1570); Nilsson/Agardh, S (4894); Lovett/Wanenmacher, US (3000); and Braindet/Braindet, F (3472). Picture - John Fitzpatrick.



BOAT DEVELOPMENT

IT WAS interesting to browse round the park to see how various crews were developing the boat within the rules which closely control the hull shape but allow more freedom in the rigs and choice and placing of fittings.

Because of the wet and blustery conditions under which the boats were weighed, it was inevitable that the weighing exercise at Fenit was open to some error. What was of particular interest, however, was the overall picture on which there is not very much to choose between the amateur-built all wood, the professional-built all wood, the composite and the all glass boats.

The professionally built all wood boats averaged out the lightest with a weight of 190lb, (96.2 kilos) while the all glass boats averaged 196lb, (98.9 kilos). Two boats (all wood, professionally built) were right down to weight and might have been a shade under had they been weighed in really dry condition. It must be remembered, however, that the IYRU at present requires the boats to be fitted with about 6lb (2.7 kilos) of positive foam buoyancy and this will open the weight gap.

The boats are being sailed ever harder and it would be very short-sighted to expect them to have only a short racing life. It is possible to build down to the present minimum of 175lb (79.4 kilos) in timber by careful selection of timber and by whittling at the recommended scantlings, but a boat built straight from the plans and using the official cutting list gives a boat which averages about 185lb (84 kilos). To get a boat right down to minimum weight, an owner has to build a special. At present it seems unlikely that any builder in all-glassfibre can turn out a stiff, lasting boat at 175lb (79.4 kilos) although I have heard of two builders who claim to have achieved this. (If they really are right down to weight, then they can hardly have seen enough service to determine their wearing capabilities). Soon boats in all glassfibre will have to be fitted with 6lb or so of positive foam buoyancy material and it is almost certain that the possibility of getting an all-plastic boat down to weight with this addition is particularly remote.

Already the Canadian Yachting Association is demanding grp

1970 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS - FULL RESULTS

- 1, Caig/Davies, UK; 2, Warfvinge/Warfvinge, S; 3, Bateman/Houghton, UK; 4, Pelerin/Pelerin, F; 5, Sandy/Sandy, UK; 6, Nilsson/Agardh, S; 7, Blaydes/Wall, UK; 8, Perkins/Wild, UK; 9, Clayden/Copsey, UK; 10, Braindet/Braindet, F; 11, Bagley/Fletcher, UK; and Bruen/Gibson, Ir; 13, Alsop/Alsop, UK; 14, O'Neill/Wilkinson, Ir; 15, Hunt/Hunt, UK; 16, Bailey/Brown, UK; 17, Godkin/Godkin, Ir; 18, Page/Powles, UK; 19, Pattison/Clifton, UK; 20, Dickson/Walsh, Ir, and Newman/Jonson, UK; 22, Grimm/Drubay, F; 23, Conn/Henry, Ir; 24, Blackman/Stacey, UK, and Lovegrove/Beddy, Ir; 26, Erich/Fleming, G; 27, Spears/Treadwell; 28, Rondeau/Albert, F; 29, Lecrit/Lecrit, F; 30, Lovett/Wanenmacher, US; 31, Moulart/Hubert, B; 32, Vick/Catlett, KA; 33, Allen, Ir; 34, Marsh/Ananin, KK, and Turner/Barry, UK; 36, Nichol/Tuppen, KA; 37, Eberhard/Bryon, US; 38, Ossart/Balland, MA, and Thorogood/Wilcock, UK; 40, Preuss/Preuss, Z; 41, VanVoorst/Van Foorst, H; 42, Tesneir/Bailard, F; 43, Zeilah/Heneine, Le; 44, Debbas/Helou, Le; 45, Galton/Chillingworth, KC; 46, Cameron/Cameron, UK; 47, Laux/Laux, G.