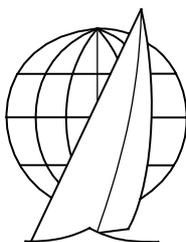


OFFSHORE RACING CONGRESS

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The Grand Prix Classes

The ORC recently unveiled its new project, the three **Grand Prix Level Classes**. A first draft of the details was circulated at the beginning of January and included a preliminary proposal for three "box rule" classes. Following market research, three bands were identified at 26', 33' and 42'. More than 40 design offices and technicians had been contacted for comment and more than 60% of them had replied. Discussions regarding cooperation with the RORC are taking place. A second draft has now been circulated. This includes consideration for meeting land transportation requirements for convenient travel to events and emphasis on cost control, especially for the smaller classes.

The ORC Project Coordinator, Paolo Massarini, believes that the final rule for the three classes will be confirmed before the end of May so that the project can be ready to go on the market.

A further update will be found in the next issue of Seahorse magazine (29th March)

Races in South America

The Circuito Atlantico Sur Rolex Cup was held January 15-22 with 69 yachts starting out on the 180 mi race from Buenos Aires to Punta del Este. The Circuito Atlantico offers a full week of challenging offshore and inshore races.

The IMS fleet was divided into IMS 500, IMS 600 and IMS 670 classes, as well as two fleets of ORC CLUB. Media favourite was the recently built Frers 60-footer Fortuna III from Argentina, crewed by the Argentinian Navy. Skipper, Cesar Recalde, had prestigious traditions to defend from earlier successes with Fortuna I and II.

After a full week of sailing, the crew of the Grand Soleil 42R Memo Memulini, with skipper Ricardo Fabini in charge, was the overall winner. Fortuna III set a new race speed record in the long distance race, ending in ninth place over the full regatta week.

In ORC CLUB the 20 year old Yunque won the overall first prize.

The two scoring systems, IMS and its simpler derivative ORC CLUB, both managed by ORC, made the races close, fair and exciting for the sailors with a mixed fleet of boats, where skills and experience paid off at the end.

The Rolex Buenos Aires – Rio de Janeiro Race has traditions from 1947 and covers 1200 mi.

Fortuna III made an excellent start on Saturday February 5th as the fleet set out upwind with gusts up to 22 knots. The race turned out to be the hardest for many years, with winds up to 40 knots for over 10 hours.

According to Fortuna III skipper, Cesar Recalde, the wind hardly dropped below 25 knots. He further commented that the boat is extremely fast, however the weather and wave pattern made extremely hard beating for everyone. "We went through each wave with a terrible bang; the mast was vibrating; the whole boat was vibrating". There was little rest for the 17 men on board, who spent most of the time on the rail, no one sleeping more than two hours at a time in the five available bunks. Fortunately, only four boats had to retire.

The final approach to Rio provided a stark contrast. Around 20 miles from the finish, Fortuna set her spinnaker for the first time in the race, however the wind then disappeared. After a few hours, conditions improved and Fortuna took line honours entering Rio at the crack of dawn Sunday morning 13th. However, on 17th February, it was clear that the 38 footer Nubium (skipper Esteban Kallay) had won the overall prize. Over the 1200 mi, Nubium beat Fortuna III by only two and a half hours in corrected time, a very close finish after eight days of sailing! A good example of handicap scoring!

There was also a very close battle in ORC CLUB, where Dennis Portieri and his Sensation Kodak scored first by only half an hour before Guillermo Stafforini's Izarra IV.

Fortuna III's predecessors Fortuna I and II also participated in the race, in ORC CLUB and Classic divisions.

High-resolution images, copyright free for editorial purposes, and further details on these races, are available at www.regattanews.com.

Chile and Ecuador

In Chile, the 2004 Regatta Season, which closes in May, has been very successful due to the high number of participants in all regattas. The IMS Class is divided into three categories, Classes A, B and ORC Club. The A Class is for the yachts with Dynamic Allowance greater than 0.3 and a Series of Age Date after 1990. In this class 10 yachts have been participating. Class B tends to be the most exciting in terms of numbers. It usually counts at least 35 yachts, divided in two groups according to GPH. The ORC Club Class is for cruising yachts, offering them the possibility to start their racing under ORC Club, with the option to move up to IMS later.

Next season's main event will be the Regatta Circuit Islands of Chile in January 2006. This is the most important event of the season and with preliminary projections 60 yachts participating.

The Ecuador IMS Fleet is not large in numbers, however they are already in preparations for the Regatta to Galapagos, which will be in October 2005. About 25 yachts are foreseen, including participants from Peru.

The ORC Measurement Conference in Delft

An ORC Measurement Conference was held at the Technical University in Delft 11-13th February. Over of 20 ORC Measurers and Rating Officers participated. The venue was the site of much of ORC's towing tank model testing which has backed up the IMS Velocity Predication Program (VPP). Topics covered included hull measurement as it relates to the hydro-dynamic resistance

modeling in the VPP, hull lines processing tools and in-house measuring of sails. A new laser hull scanner was also demonstrated. For further information see www.orc.org.

The CSYS seminar and ORC ITC March 2005 meeting

The Chesapeake Sailing Yacht Symposium took place on March 4th and 5th in Annapolis and was attended by more than 100 yacht designers and other yachting professionals from all over the world. Papers on full-size testing on sails, boats under development, tank testing and wind tunnel work were presented. Several of the papers used some IMS "technology", and references to its latest developments were included. The CSYS site is accessible at www.csysonline.com.

ORC ITC members met in Annapolis on March 6th and 7th. Topics covered included the, the new measurement of strut drives, research planning for 2005 and review of decisions taken at the annual meetings held in November.

New research was the main topic discussed, identifying 3 different lines of action:

- CFD validation
- Tank Testing
- Wind Tunnel testing

Projects on the above are already being undertaken by Committee members in order that research is completed well in advance of the meetings in November 2005.

Two Italian institutions have kindly offered to cooperate with the development of IMS, providing data as a first step to be followed by future servicing. Axel Mohnhaupt was designated as the coordinator of research projects this year.

The next ITC meeting has been scheduled for June 25-26 in Valencia (Spain).

A new ORC website

A new ORC website is under development and should be operational not later than 1st April. It will have a user-friendly structure, which will include a photo gallery, news letter registration and an increased number of newsflashes and useful links. It will also include an area, where event organizers are given the possibility, to register their own event/regatta into the event calendar.

Fleet statistics

The annual statistics from 2004 are being compiled. Preliminary figures show a total of 8600 – 3400 IMS and 5200 ORC CLUB. There is around an increase of 220 Italian certificates (around 15%) and significant increases in Croatia, USA and Germany. France has increased its ORC CLUB certificates by 25 %.

The German IMS Academy “Go for Speed seminars”

The Offshore Committee of The German Sailing Federation, chaired by Wolfgang Schaefer of the ORC Management Committee, is running IMS Academy seminars called “Go for Speed”. 182 sailors are participating. Two weekends have been dedicated in Kiel to provide both theoretical and practical knowledge in offshore racing and IMS regulations. The first weekend 19-20 March is dedicated to lectures on topics such as meteorology, sail trimming, tactics and measurement. Lecturers include, among others, Fietje Judel, Boris Hepp and Wolfgang Schaefer, well-known in ORC activities.

The practical weekends in Kiel and Travemunde will include drill in starting procedures, passing marks, spinnaker handling and sail trim.

Other ORC national authorities should be encouraged to organize such seminars!

For more information visit www.goforspeed.de

VELUM

The scoring software VELUM will soon offer a new user friendly version in Windows for ORC Race Committees. After presentation at the ORC meetings in Copenhagen Nov 2004, VelumNG development is now in "Beta-phase" and available for intensive testing for all interested. The release 1.0 is expected by the end of March.

It will be possible to download the software from www.velumNG.com. Without a licence-file, the download will run in Demo-Mode which is restricted only in the printout.

The new ORC home page will soon offer a form to order a licence-file at a special price for ORC.

Upcoming Races

The Brazilian Rio – Buzios Race will take place 19-21 March, followed by the Brazilian IMS Championship 25-27 March.

In Europe, racing is taking place in Croatia 10-13 March and in Alassio, Italy, on 18-20 March. This will be followed by the Malaga - Costa de Sol Race 14-17 April, when the Mille Vele Race will also take place in Genoa. In Germany the season will start with the MAIOR Regatta 29 April -1 May in Kiel.

IMS Ranking List

The Croatian Sailing Federation has created a ranking list for events over the last four years. This has proved very successful. Information may be found at www.scor.hr/vipims/ims1.htm.

ORC 2005 Rule Publications

Visitors to www.orc.org will find downloadable PDF editions of the 2005 rule publications available.

Charlie Poor

Charles Lane Poor, III passed away at age 85 last month after a prolonged illness.

Charlie had always been an avid sailor, but was known best by his many ORC friends and colleagues for his technical contributions toward the development of IMS, first as MHS in the United States. He was an aeronautical engineering graduate of Harvard University and served in a scientific capacity in the Navy and with the U.S. government, before turning his interests to the development of the IMS Velocity Prediction Program (VPP). He was instrumental in bringing MHS to international administration under the ORC and served many years on the ORC Research Committee and International Technical Committee (ITC), finally retiring in 1998 when the travel became too difficult for him. Charlie will be remembered not only for his deep technical knowledge and intellect, but for his good company at meetings as well.

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