



## THE INTERNATIONAL EIGHT METRE ASSOCIATION

February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2014

### **New built classic 8-Metres, The Sira Cup & Neptune Trophy**

Over the past 20 years most if not all good classic 8-Metres have been restored to racing condition, over 60 projects have been done and the demand for classics remains strong. This has lead to more than 12 new classic built Int. 8-Metres and from those projects the following guidelines have emerged.

- a) New Classic 8-Metres may be built to original 8-Metre designs preferably no later than 1950.
- b) These boats shall be built to meet the Lloyd's Scantling Rules as in force from 1924 to 1949. This ensures equal weight and weight distribution among all boats.
- c) IEMA makes available these scantling rules to anyone interested and has sent copies around the world free of charge.
- d) An IEMA TC member visits the known new build projects during construction and supports the yard with information on the Lloyd's subject.
- e) New constructed classic 8-Metres are welcomed to race with the other classic yachts for the same trophies on equal terms and rating.

Unfortunately the considerations that lead to this policy have not been published or administered in great detail. Here is the key reasoning behind the policy held;

- 1) We have been trying to grow the fleet of classic boats, by welcoming the construction of sister ships, replica's and original designs not previously built. This seemed the only positive way forward at times when we had few if any good old boats for sale.
- 2) More than a few 8-Metres have been boats restored with just the original lead keel left and everything else replaced. It seems the general consensus this is as far as we can go naming it a restoration rather than a replica.

Where does that leave those old boats where the lead keel was melted for the War effort? Where does that leave the boats which where restored replacing each and every part over a period of 15, 30 years or more? How does that compare with a



## THE INTERNATIONAL EIGHT METRE ASSOCIATION

new built to old plans or a full restoration at a yard during a time span of say 1½ years?

So looking at the 200 Eights owned by our members; what is the difference between a fully rebuilt old boats and a replica or sister ship? Neither has more than say 10% original material left. Who has the courage to write rules to cover that and who will be the judge? At what point do you say, sorry you can not replace that final rotten plank or frame because your "originality piece count" than derives at 9.9%.

- 3) Boats such as Aun and Severn are built to Lloyd's scantlings, weight and weight distribution is equal. Mahogany on oak frames with copper fastenings, no glued seams, laid cedar and teak decks, no plywood, no use of epoxy, you name it, built like they were in the thirties.

On the other hand, the vast majority of the classic fleet has some form of glass/epoxy sheeting, glued seams, plywood decks and reinforcements. I suspect that the vast majority of the classic fleet today does not meet Lloyd's scantling rules. Deck and hulls have been sanded down and so on. In that respect too, I find it difficult to argue that the new built classics have an advantage.

- 4) Birgit and Astra have been built with use of epoxy. Key here is Lloyd's and both these boats meet (in this case exceed) the rules of weight and weight distribution. These boats have been built with glued seams and teak over plywood decks. This is to make boats more practical and fit for the Scandinavian conditions. Because of their heavy decks, their weight distribution is actually worse when compared to boats with lightweight sprung laid decks. The use of epoxy here was also enabling the Russian yards to build sound and lasting boats rather than enhance performance.

- 5) When judging the often excellent performance of some of these new built classics we ought to look at who's on the crew too. A quick glimpse shows some of the world's best professional sailors including former and current members of for instance the America's Cup Team of France, Azurra, the Nippon Challenge and, most recently Brad Butterworth, Ed Baird and Simon Daubney joined in for the Hyeres Worlds.

I can see that it's hard for amateurs to stay ahead when faced with such phenomenal talent and experience. At the same time, isn't that what makes sailing such a great sport? How big are the odds for anyone of us to play tennis for a week with Roger Federer, race cars with Michael Schumacher or play



## THE INTERNATIONAL EIGHT METRE ASSOCIATION

golf with Tiger Woods? In our sport the world elite joins the amateurs for a week of sailing and fun and that to me is something pretty special too.

- 6) The latest argument heard to is that the new build classics devalue the old boats. I believe this concern is unfounded. To date not a single one of these new built classics has been offered for sale and the price for the top classic boats has climbed from \$ 25,000 - 50,000 back in 1995 to \$ 250,000 to more than \$ 500,000 for the ones sold in the past 3 years.
- 7) The donors of the trophies we race for with the classic boats have applauded the initiatives for these new built classic boats. Within IEMA we felt and feel this was great and exciting news for the class. One very important point is that our paperwork has not always been in order and it is clear that the rules and documentation need to be addressed to avoid further misunderstandings.

### **Finally;**

When the first new built classics where under construction, I often consulted Olin Stephens exchanging ideas and opinions, very much like I have written here. Few if any, had a deeper understanding of our rule and class history. Some 10 years ago his final conclusion on this matter was;

***"To keep the class racing as one, the policy towards new built classics ought to be permissive rather than restrictive".***

IEMA gratefully adopted his conclusion as the guiding principle to further promote the 8-Metre class and her regattas.

John Lammerts van Bueren  
President IEMA