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The Official Magazine of the International 5.5 Metre Class



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Aspire, the former World Championship winning *New Moon*, sailed by Mateusz Kusznierewicz, Przemyslaw Gacek and Simon Fry, won their first 5.5 Metre regatta together at the European Championship in August 2020 in Sanremo, Italy

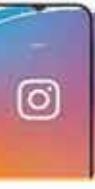
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# Foreword



## DEAR FELLOW 5.5 METRE ENTHUSIAST

**I** hope you enjoy this second edition of the annual 5.5 Metre Class magazine that Robert Deaves has put together. A special thank you not only to Robert, but also to the advertisers without whom this would not be possible. I do have some understanding of what it takes to put together a project like this and am very grateful to Robert for taking it on.

It has been a strange year, but we are now looking at some 'green shoots' of recovery from the world of COVID-19, and being spring in the northern hemisphere can get excited about warmer days and the return to sailing or even racing.

Here in the UK, Morty is building two new 5.5s. The first is utilising an existing deck, keel, mast etc from SUI 222 and the new hull is being built at David Heritage Racing Yachts in Cowes in cedar. David built a previous Ian Howlett designed 5.5 *Silver Fox*. This new boat has been designed by Steve Quigley, an Australian Naval Architect who has worked closely with Morty at his shipyard.

The second boat is a David Hollom design being built by Composite Craft in composite, again in Cowes, perfectly situated so he can keep an eye on both projects during the time we have spent in winter lockdown. This design has a full set of tooling so further boats can be produced should the concept prove to be successful (it is quite different – but I can confirm there are no foils). Should we be unable to travel this summer, we have the two new boats which he can race against GBR 40 here in the Solent. We are hopeful that this will generate more interest from potential owners in the UK, which like the America's Cup is where the 5.5 started.

Sadly, Jürg Menzi lost his boat in a shed fire this winter but I understand that he is having a new one built so that makes it three new boats this year for the Class.

We held a General Meeting at the end of March with the Country Presidents and came up with some good ideas for the future of the Class. Everyone agreed that this form of communication on line was successful and we should continue with it especially when we can't get together very often. A referendum document will be circulated for you to complete as we have plans to implement new owner and new boat fees, and raise the subscriptions to cover our costs. All necessary I am afraid, to keep the show on the road.

We also have plans to produce a five-year rolling Worlds and Europeans programme to take the Class to some new and exciting venues, which I hope will give you something to get excited about and plan for.

Robert has upgraded and developed a new website for the Class this winter which gives all the countries the ability to use this tool for their own Class updates and news. This will hopefully save some costs for the local fleets.

As I write this, we still have some uncertainty of our summer international programme but I hope that you can all enjoy as much local sailing as possible and be on stand by for when the borders open up allowing more travel. Our thoughts are particularly with the Australians who are not able to travel to Europe this year, but we have happy memories of the Worlds they hosted in January 2020 and wish them well.

In July I am coming to the end of my second year as President and am loving the Class and the potential we have. I am just looking forward to some more events and travel opportunities, as I imagine you are too.

**Louise Morton  
President**

# Aspire wins Europeans in sunny Sanremo



AFTER A LONG SUMMER OF WAITING FOR A REGATTA, 20 5.5 METRES GATHERED IN SANREMO FOR THE **EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP**. AT THEIR FIRST EVER 5.5 METRE REGATTA **ASPIRE** TOOK THE TITLE AFTER A TRICKY WEEK OF MAINLY LIGHT WINDS.

**T**he 2020 European Championship in Sanremo Italy from 25-29 August was the first major class event since the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic. It was also the first time many of the sailors had met since the World Championship in Pittwater in January. Though the initial entry was around 30, many were unable to travel and in the end the fleet numbered 20 boats.

The fleet included five of the crews who competed in Australia, and after a lot of investment in the class there were five brand new boats taking part. It was the first competition for four of them. The fleet was as deep as ever with a range of Classics and Evolutions also taking part.

#### EARLY LEAD FOR MOMO

The championship got underway on Tuesday after a four-hour delay waiting for wind, but with two great races late in the afternoon in 7-10 knots of warm breeze and flat water. **Aspire** (POL 17, Mateusz Kusznierewicz, Przemyslaw Gacek, Simon Fry) won their first race on their first day racing in class to lie second overnight with a 1,5, while **Momo** (SUI 229, Dieter Schön, Markus Wieser, Thomas Auracher) had the best of the day with a 3,1 to take the overall lead. Third was **Caracole** (SUI 214, Bernard Haissly, Berthoud Nicolas, Daniel Stampfli) with a 4,3.

**Aspire** were fast out of the blocks in Race 1, soon tacked and were gone. They had at least a 100-metre lead at the top, and though **Ali Baba** (BAH 23, Martin Manrique, Flavio Marazzi, William Alloway) reeled in some distance, they could not pass and ended up second. **Otto** (NOR 68, Bent Christian Wilhelmsen, Lasse Berthelsen, Luka Strahovnik) had a great first upwind to round third, but **Momo** sailed well to cross the finish in third.

**Momo** then gained a jump out of the start in Race 2, tacking quickly to the right while **New Moon II** (BAH 24, Mark Holowesko, Christoph Burger, Peter Vlasov) favoured the left.

**Momo** led round the top to lead all the way to the finish to take the win while **New Moon II** chased hard but could not quite catch up. Another new boat, **Marie-Françoise XXI** (SUI 232, Jürg Menzi, Jürgen Eiermann, Bo Selko) were in third for a long time, but **Caracole** came past on the final downwind.

**Peter Vlasov:** "It goes without saying that 2020 has been a very different and not at all an easy year so far. Since our return from the Worlds in beautiful Pittwater, Australia, none of us have been able to sail. A true disaster. It's good news and sad news. It is sad that so many of our international competitors from overseas or northern Europe simply could not find a sensible way to be here. They will be missed, that's for sure. But on a positive note, 25 per cent of fleet here will be brand new boats and I believe there are more to come. In this class there are always new people and new challenges."



**Mateusz Kusznierwicz:** "It was beautiful today in Sanremo. We had two great races and for me and my team, Przemyslaw and Simon, it was the first time ever that we sailed a 5.5 in a regatta. We planned to sail a bit this year but of course we couldn't. We started very nicely with winning the first race and actually I was overwhelmed, but also a little bit surprised, but it came with a great start and good tactics. We made a couple of mistakes but it was all good in the end. The level of the quality of the sailors here is very good. They have sailed these boats for many years and have a great feeling for changing settings when the wind changes and they also sail smart, so you can gain on the starts, but then the fleet is very competitive."



**Dieter Schön:** "For us it's our second regatta in the 5.5. We started last year in Thun. I think it was a good day for us. It was a nice breeze, not too strong, but we got in two really good races. We finished third and first, so perfect results. Sometimes we are still struggling and fighting with ourselves to get the boat going but overall for the first day it was a good result. A friend of mine convinced me to go into the 5.5 because he said it's the best three man keelboat for the way the boat sails, and that's true. It's a fun boat to sail and I think I will stay in the class."





## MOMO EXTENDS ON DAY 2

Sanremo turned everything on for Day 2 with 30 degrees and 10-14 knots for a glamour day on the water in these very glamorous boats. **Black & White** (SUI 219, Daniel Schenker, Mark Dangel, Anthony Shanks) led from start to finish in the first race while **Ali Baba** took the second race after a tight battle.

There is a law that says if you delay racing based on the forecast, nature will have the last laugh, so with racing delayed until 13.00, the wind arrived early. But by race time, it was a solid 10-12 knots and provided two perfect races just off the Sanremo shore.

**Black & White** were first into the left corner of the first beat

**Anthony Shanks, Black & White:** "The 5.5 Metre is one of my favourite boats, and one of the most fun keelboats there is. They are all so different but the racing is often really tight. The class means a lot to me and my family. My grandmother sailed one right back at the beginning. My dad, Peter Shanks, won the Europeans in 1988 in Hankø sailing with Jonathan Jansen and Christen Horn Johanessen. I later did the 1997 Europeans in France sailing with my father. They are amazing boats and that's why I keep coming back. Whatever else you sail, you'll never sail a machine like the 5.5 Metre. They are so responsive to the individual, which you don't get on bigger boats."



**Martin Manrique, Abi Baba:** "The owner, Craig Symonette, couldn't come here because of the situation with the virus, so he asked me if I could come instead of him. I work for him in The Bahamas. We are started a small sailing school and I came to Europe for a month or two. I was here and he couldn't come so I'm happy to come and learn how to sail this fantastic boat. I am enjoying the boat a lot. It is super fun to sail, but mainly I am enjoying sailing with these two guys [Marazzi and Alloway]. They are amazing and teaching me a lot. It's a big opportunity to learn to sail better. I think we were struggling on the other races downwind but the wind picked up and it was a bit easier for me. It's only my fourth day sailing the boat and I felt a bit more confident with the waves and the wind."



while several of the top teams were called back at the start. They rounded first, followed by **Forza Del Destino** (SUI 211, George Prapopoulos, Simon Pfandler, David Schneeberger) and **Ali Baba**, but were never headed, though when the wind died on the second downwind, it started to get really close.

They crossed the finish a few boatlengths ahead of **Momo**, which snatched second place from **New Moon II**.

The wind freshened for Race 4, with again a few boats called back. This time almost everyone went left with *Aspire* first at the top from *Black & White* and *Ali Baba*. The race at the front was very close with positions changing all the time. But the freshening wind benefitted *Ali Baba* who took a narrow win from *Aspire*, with *New Moon II* again in third.

After four races, there had been four winners with the points very tight. Overall, *Momo* led by three points from *Ali Baba* and *Aspire*.

#### NO WIND STOPS PLAY ON DAY 3

Lack of wind forced all racing on the third day of the 5.5 Metre Europeans in Sanremo, Italy to be abandoned. The sailors patiently waited all day in the searing heat, only to be sent home disappointed.

There were a lot of previous champions and Olympic sailors present in Sanremo. One of them was Lucien Cujean, from Geneva, Switzerland, sailing on board *Shaolin*, SUI 226. Having placed 13th in the 49er class at the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio, he has also qualified for Tokyo. With normal *Shaolin* helmsman Cyrus Golchan out of action, Cujean was asked to step in, even though he has never set foot on a 5.5 Metre before.

"I am really enjoying these few days with the 5.5 class. It's very rare to sail such a nice boat and such a technical boat, but I need more practice with the team. I have not sailed them before, so only three days now here in Sanremo, but since my childhood I was always looking at Star class or 5.5 Metre class racing on the lake, or outside Switzerland, but I always feel like it a great opportunity to be able to race on these boats. And I feel very lucky to be here."

On the fleet, "There is a lot of heritage in the class and some



very good guys in the fleet, past Olympians, world champions and I think it's a great opportunity to race against these teams. I am used sail on the 49er so it's a bit faster and a bit different racetrack. Also the GC32, on the foils. It's a new things for me but it's always good to go back to the basics and just play the shifts and play the fleet and try to beat all these guys."

"Steering the 5.5 is very nice feeling, very smooth, every details counts. In the modern class you have the trim tab. Yesterday we were very lucky to have nice easterly 12 knots with some waves, so it was technical downwind and you can pump on the waves, trying to reach 7 knots on the surf. It's a great feeling."



**Przemyslaw Gacek, Aspire:** "We had a great start in the first race. At each mark we gained more over the other boats, so that was quite surprising for us. In the second race there were lots of boats over the line, and on the restart we didn't do it very well, but also we wanted to be careful. We went round the top in second or third and we were really fighting a lot with Caracole, which was doing an amazing job. At the second rounding they were ahead, but then at the end we managed to overtake them and won by half a boatlength. So that was a great day for us. Great learning as well. We have a very long list of things we can improve. I love the boat. It doesn't matter if we are behind or ahead, it is great just to go head to head with the other boats and I was very excited today. I am looking forward to tomorrow and for further sailing."



**Bent Christian Wilhelmsen, Otto:** "We had two hard races. Tough with choppy waves, not our best conditions, but we made some good decisions and had some good starts, which helps and we got free air, and that helps a lot. You need space and we managed to keep away from all the boats with height and speed. But we were struggling. It's not an easy situation for the helmsman, with the waves and not so much wind and a shifty wind as well, but all in all I am happy with the day."





## ASPIRE MOVES AHEAD

*Aspire* took the overall lead on the fourth day after winning both races in a light and patchy breeze in the early evening. *Momo* dropped to second, five points back, while *New Moon II* moved up to third.

After a three-hour delay on shore, the fleet was sent out in a 6-8 knot westerly that promised more than it delivered, testing the crew's skills and patience. The first race got underway mid afternoon and the fleet didn't return to harbour until early evening, but added two more races to the board allowing that all important discard to come into play.

*Aspire* got the best out of the start of Race 5, tacked to the right and was gone, extending for a huge win in the tricky conditions. Next at the top was *Otto* (NOR 68, Bent Christian Wilhelmsen, Lasse Berthelsen, Luka Strahovnik) and *Caracole*. *Otto* hung onto second, though was later disqualified after a rare protest, leaving *New Moon II* in second with *Marie-Françoise XXI* third.

Race 6 got away under U flag after the first general recall of the week. It was a rather scrappy start for many, but *Caracole* was soon leading to the right and rounded ahead from *Marie-Françoise XXI* and *Aspire*. The downwinds were long and tortuous in the fading breeze, but *Caracole* hung on to the lead until the last 50 metres, when a left shift on the approach to the line allowed *Aspire* to roll them and take the slimmest of victories.

## ASPIRE SECURES TITLE ON WINDLESS FINAL DAY

Racing concluded on the Saturday with two races possible. However another windless day meant racing was abandoned early. So the results stood with *Aspire* winning the 2020 5.5 Metre European Championship. *Momo* was second with *New Moon II* in third.

The fleet was sent out early in what was predicted to be the only window of opportunity all day, but the light wind soon died to leave a glassy sea and the boats were towed back to the

marina to wait it out. It didn't look promising and at 12.30, AP over A was hoisted to end the championship.

While the top nine boats were Moderns, the top Evolution boat, in the fleet of six, was *Ali Baba* (GER 84, Wolf Eberhard Richter, Beata Kallkowski, Hans Wendlandt), which spent most of the week inside the top 10 and ahead of several other moderns.

*Ali Baba* was designed by Doug Peterson and built in 1994 by Melges Boatworks, and proved to be the most successful design of the 1990s. Seven sisterboats were built by Melges Boatwork to this design, including *Joker* (FRA 50, Jean-Baptiste Polaillon, Eric Polaillon, Pierre Gautier), which was also in



**Christoph Burger:** "The 5.5 Metre class is a great boat to sail because it can be trimmed very neutral for the helm, almost too neutral sometimes, which means that the feeling helming these boats is so superb you can adjust pretty much everything on the rig and sails to achieve that feeling for the helm and I guess that's one of the reasons why a lot of the 5.5 sailors love their boat, because it's just a fantastic feeling to helm it."

**Mateusz Kusznierewicz**, "I really enjoy sailing small keel boats such as Star, Etchells, Dragon and now the 5.5 Metre. I heard good things about the 5.5 Metre class, and the way everyone enjoys sailing those boats. We teamed up with my friend Przemyslaw Gacek and bought as co-owners, the 2018 World Champion boat **New Moon**.

Sanremo is a beautiful place to sail and we really enjoyed being here in the club and with the fleet of 5.5s. I must say that for the first regatta for us, we enjoyed it a lot, not just because of the winning, but also the atmosphere between the teams with some great sailors and also good mates."

"It was a tough week because we had very light winds, with maybe two races in a good breeze but we had to be patient, wait, but it was all good. It is a pity we didn't get to race on the last day today because we were ready to have good sailing, because we need that on our boat, but also the competition. This is why we are athletes, this is why we are sailing."

"But altogether we are very happy to be here and enjoy it in this special year, a very hard year for sailing, and it was great to have this European championship, one of the first regattas for the 5.5s. It's been a good week."

Apart from one day it has been a week of very hot, light wind racing. The new teams here have met the challenge of 5.5 Metre racing with huge enthusiasm, but have not had it all their own way. The learning curve is steep for such a technical boat, but that's part of the attraction."



Sanremo, though predates *Ali Baba* by one year. As *DoDoToo*, FIN 40, *Joker* was skippered by Henrik Dahlman, and won the 68th Scandinavian Gold Cup, in Hankø, Finland, in 1995. There was a lot of pedigree in the fleet.

The leading Classic boat was *Kukururu* (ITA 6, Giuseppe Matildi, Gianluca Marolli, Alessandro Marolli), also the oldest boat in the fleet. She was designed by the Swede, Arvid Laurin, and built by Cantieri navali Baglietto in Italy in 1953. A special mention must also go to *Korrigan* (FRA 19), built in 1961.

Gurvan Jaouen spent half the week racing singlehanded as he arrived without a crew after they had to quarantine.

Despite the COVID-19 restrictions the Yacht Club Sanremo put on a fabulous event, with great racing despite the, sometimes, tricky, conditions and a great hospitality ashore with after race refreshments in an open and spacious but sheltered setting.

While many classes have been unable to hold any championships this year, the 5.5 Metre sailors are feeling quite fortunate that they had managed to hold both a World and European championship in 2020, probably one of the very few classes that managed to do this. While there were many boats missing from Sanremo, there was huge enthusiasm to come and make it work. And it did.

The influx of new sailors and new boats is also very positive news for the class. With sailors such as Kusznierewicz and Schön joining the class, the profile of the class, and the level of the competition, can only increase further. The 5.5 Metre class is in a good place right now.



#### FINAL RESULTS • 2020 EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP - SANREMO

1	POL 17	<b>Aspire</b> (Mateusz Kusznierewicz, Przemyslaw Gacek, Simon Fry) - M	1	5	(7)	2	1	1	10
2	SUI 229	<b>Momo</b> (Dieter Schon, Markus Wieser, Thomas Auracher) - M	3	1	2	5	(7)	4	15
3	BAH 24	<b>New Moon II</b> (Mark Holowesko, Christoph Burger, Peter Vlasov) - M	7	2	3	3	2	(8)	17
4	BAH 23	<b>Ali Baba</b> (Martin Manrique, Flavio Marazzi, William Alloway) - M	2	6	5	1	6	(7)	20
5	SUI 214	<b>Caracole</b> (Bernard Haissly, Daniel Stampfli, Nicolas Berthoud) - M	4	3	(13)	7	5	2	21
6	SUI 232	<b>Marie Françoise XXI</b> (Jürg Menzi, Jürgen Eiermann, Bo Selko) - M	(9)	4	6	8	3	5	26
7	SUI 226	<b>Shaolin</b> (Lucien Cujean, Andreas Kindlimann, Hans Von Werdt) - M	5	(9)	4	9	4	6	28
8	SUI 219	<b>Black &amp; White</b> (Daniel Schenker, Mark Dangel, Anthony Shanks) - M	8	7	1	4	(10)	9	29
9	NOR 68	<b>Otto</b> (Bent Christian Wilhelmsen, Berthelsen Lasse, Luka Strahovnik) - M	6	8	9	6	(dsq)	3	32
10	GER 84	<b>Ali Baba</b> (Wolf Eberhard RichterBeata Kallkowski, Hans Wendlandt) - E	11	11	11	11	11	(16)	55
11	SUI 182	<b>Skylla IV</b> (Andre Bernheim, Urs Werner, Mark Buchecker) - M	13	(14)	12	13	8	10	56
12	SUI 211	<b>Forza del Destino</b> (George Papopoulos, Simon Pfandler, David Schneeberger) - M	10	10	8	(ocs)	9	ufd	59
13	FRA 51	<b>Enez C'las</b> (Yann Delabriere, Sylvie Delabriere, Nicolas Abiven) - M	12	13	10	12	14	(15)	61
14	GER 30	<b>Criollo</b> (Andreas Christiansen, Michael Kurtz, Moritz Christiansen) - E	14	(15)	14	10	13	11	62
15	ITA 57	<b>Whisper</b> (Richard Leupold, Paolo Giorgetti, Andrea Quaranta) - E	(16)	12	16	15	15	13	71
16	FRA 50	<b>Joker</b> (Jean- Baptiste Polaillon, Eric Polaillon, Gautier Pierre) - E	15	(18)	15	16	16	12	74
17	ITA 6	<b>Kukururu</b> (Giuseppe Matildi, Gianluca Marolli, Alessandro Marolli) - C	17	16	(18)	17	12	14	76
18	AUT 26	<b>Magellan</b> (Benjamin Von Stillfried, Christoph Donitz, Philip Farbowski) - E	18	20	19	14	18	(ufd)	89
19	FRA 19	<b>Korrigan</b> (Gurvan Jaouen, Pierrick Bourbin) - C	(20)	17	20	19	17	17	90
20	FRA 43	<b>Bagheera VIII</b> (Jean Bernard Datry, Philippe Guittoneau, Philippe Bedrignan) - E	(19)	19	17	18	19	18	91



**PRIZEGIVING NIGHT  
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# Fantastic spirit and a warm welcome

AFTER NEARLY 30 YEARS LIVING AND SAILING ON PITTWATER, JOHN BACON FINALLY TOOK UP THE CHALLENGE OF THE 5.5 METRE IN 2018. HE IS NOW WAITING PATIENTLY TO JOIN THE FLEET IN EUROPE IN HIS THIRD 5.5 METRE, **KU-RING-GAI 3.**

**A**t both the 2019 World Championship in Helsinki and the 2020 World Championship on home waters in Pittwater, John Bacon, along with crew James Mayjor and Terry Wetton dominated the Evolution fleets in both the pre-World Championship cups and the World Championship itself. The win in Helsinki set up an historic and poignant defence in Australia for the Frank Tolhurst trophy, a name synonymous with Australian 5.5 Metre sailing. It was a special moment for John and his crew to not only take the trophy home, but also to then defend it in style on home waters.

John Bacon grew up on and in the water. His father was a professional ocean going skipper and he lived in some out of the way places like the Solomon Islands. He did a fair bit of dinghy sailing early on but like a lot of kids, left the sport for education and career and was only re-united with sailing in the early 1990s when he moved to Pittwater.

"What an opportunity with one of the best waterways on your back door step."

Since then, "It's been a great journey through a variety of boats both inshore and offshore but things got a bit serious when we jumped into the MC38 right at the beginning of that project. John McConnagh invited me down to the factory to see the first boat and I'm like, wow!

We didn't know where the class was going but it's been an amazing eight years sailing with and against some of the best sailors in the world and getting some sneaky good results as well.

"However I was always thinking about getting into an international class to do some sailing in the US and Europe. I formed a Corinthian Melges 24 crew for a few years and we ended up winning the Corinthian world title in 2013. Then I spent a few years campaigning in the Melges 20 until the 5.5 Metre got me in.

"Along the way I did a couple of Laser Masters worlds, a bit of time in the Aero and a Class 40 project to do the 2018 Melbourne to Osaka 2 handed race. I just traded the



Aero for a Tiwal inflatable dinghy and sailed it for the first time over Easter. That was seriously great fun. I wouldn't mind having a go at foiling sailboarding as I love my powered Fliteboard. And I took delivery of a beautiful Swan 48 last year too. So you can see I've got it bad. But really the full focus now is on the MC38 and the 5.5 Metre.

"I'm really hooked on the 5.5 and we have lots left to do. I've got a bit of unfinished business with the Melbourne to Osaka Race as our 2019 campaign didn't end well. I'm also working with Farr Yachts in Australia on the development of the new X2 offshore racer. It's a new 30 foot short-handed 100 per cent racer. I ordered the first boat to help the team of mostly Aussies get this wonderful project off the ground. I've got a good feeling about the boat and look forward to seeing it this year. Watch that space."

#### INTO THE FIVES

The 5.5 Metre class at the Royal Prince Alfred Yacht Club grew almost out of nothing. His first experience of the class was helping to deliver *Baragoola* from Sydney Harbour to Pittwater.

"A couple of club members at RPAYC started to get re-interested in the class with a view to bidding for the worlds in 2020. I went out on the water to watch a day of the nationals in 2018 and was thinking that I'm missing out on something really good here. Then I helped Jason Antill deliver *Baragoola* to Pittwater on a very rough day to be offshore in an old 5.5 Metre in need of renovation. We made it...just. But a few minutes on the helm back inside Pittwater and I was well and truly bitten."

Then, "We did a load of homework on the class and I could see a great opportunity in the Evolution division. I didn't think we were ready to jump into the moderns so cold and also as there was a good fleet of Evos coming together in Australia it was a good goal to look forward to the Evolution trophy for 2020 at our club. Plus the trophy being in honour of Frank Tolhurst was a sentimental attraction. So we started looking for a good Evo boat.

"My great mate Terry Wetton is a master sleuth for boats and he went on the offensive with conversations and email trails combined with stats and histories of boat performance going all over the world. Finally we found what we were looking for: SUI 187. The original *Sting*, then called *Breisis*, under sail number GER 88. The boat was for sale and we asked our great mate Joost Houweling to drive from Amsterdam to Hamburg to check it out. We bought it on the spot and Joost took it straight back to his place."

Their first regatta was at Travemünde in June 2018.

"It was a bit of luck because I had just finished the Melges 20 worlds at Garda and the German/Dutch Open was at Travemunde the following week. Joost pleaded with me that he couldn't get the boat in racing condition in time but we went anyway. I coerced David 'Tower' Sampson to come with me from Garda and the three of us met up at Travemunde. Joost hadn't wanted to tell me that the boat had been anti fouled and most



of the rope systems and sails were pretty much original. But somehow we coaxed it around the Baltic and had a great week.

"Most importantly I was struck by the fantastic spirit and friendship in the class and the immediate warm welcome that we got from all of the crews. Despite the state of the old girl, we were in this for sure. I had a fantastic conversation with Christof Wilke and we discussed a new carbon rig. Christoph Burger was super keen to assist us seeing that the boat had originally belonged to his dad, and so I became fixated with a restoration. Maybe it was the German beers; or it could have been the red thing that had been painted on the boat at some stage of its chequered life."

The boat, now renamed *Ku-ring-Gai*, was the first Wilke-Schmidt boat ever built and has a lot of early Modern traits. It was only just an Evolution and just makes it inside the age limit.



**Top left:** Big waves in Pittwater 2020 • **Left:** Helsinki 2019

**Top:** First sail in the then *Breisis* with 'the red thing' in Travemünde • **Right:** Launching in Helsinki after the renovation



It does have a trim tab but, "...we found it was a great braking system so we don't use it...ever. However, the pedigree was everything in our decision along with the history."

#### RENOVATION

After Travemünde the boat was extensively renovated and re-equipped. This was largely carried out by Joost Houweling.

"The renovation started small and just got bigger. Joost and I discussed options and in the end we just stripped everything off and started again. Joost spent the whole winter on the job and then it went to Wilke in the spring for a new mast/boom and standing rigging. After being remeasured it went back to Amsterdam to get ready for the 2019 worlds in Helsinki.

"In the meantime I got the opportunity to buy an early Wilke modern boat in Australia, AUS 60, that needed some work done to get it in racing condition so this was the basis for forming our current crew of myself, Terry Wetton and James Mayjor. That boat was SUI 203. Originally an *Ali Baba*, after the worlds it was sold to Greece and is now GRE 5, named *Melx-3*. We started training on Pittwater with a view to doing the 2019 Nationals and then getting over to Helsinki for the Worlds. We won our first Australian nationals that year but we were the only modern boat in the fleet. However this gave us extremely good value time in a reasonably similar boat ahead of the Worlds."

#### KU-RING-GAI

"The most famous Australian 5.5 Metre that Bill Northam won the first Australian Sailing gold medal in was called *Barrenjoey*, which is the name of the iconic headland that protects our home waterway of Pittwater. The land around the same waterway is called Ku-Ring-Gai after the Kuringgai people who first inhabited the area. It seemed fitting to name the boat *Ku-Ring-Gai* on a lot of levels. So we arrived at Helsinki to see our fully renovated (now) AUS 62 standing in the boat park with a very proud Joost Houweling. He had done a great job."

**Above:** Renovation and transformation

**Right:** 2020 Worlds in Pittwater • **Lower right:** Proud moment - John, Terry and James presented with the Frank Tolhurst Trophy by Frank's son Mark Tolhurst and RPAYC Commodore Michael Lockley

"To cut a long story short we had a fantastic regatta and to our incredible surprise and delight we won the Frank Tolhurst Trophy and the Hankø Evolution Cup a full year ahead of schedule. Most importantly we enjoyed the fantastic camaraderie again but particularly in the Evolution fleet."

#### THE DEFENCE

"The decision to bring AUS 62 back to Australia to defend our two trophies was always going to be an easy one. All the hard work that Martin Cross had put into bringing the Worlds to our club was a major part of our decision to be in the class and the Evolution fleet was indeed growing at home with some fantastic sailors getting ready.

"Defending the trophy became our fixation all through the winter of 2019. We started a two-boat campaign as soon as our Evo arrived and offered our modern AUS 60 to a team of youth sailors at our club led by the talented brothers, Matt and Rob Crawford. They ended up with a fantastic result in the worlds coming eighth overall after teaming up with Matt Visser, a long term legend in both 5.5 and Finn classes.

"We defended our two trophies which was a great outcome. It was great racing with the other Evolutions particularly the threatening Andrew and Jamie MacPhail brothers in their recently imported Melges boat."

He says the main significance for him was that this success was completely unexpected.

"Then we won the 2020 Five Nations Cup, which was also unexpected, and were joined by our club mates Martin Cross and Damian Macey who won the Modern and Classic divisions of that as well."



### CLASS ACT

There are several aspects of the class he finds particularly attractive.

"I'm loving the whole idea of a development class inside a measurement rule. I love the different boats. I love the history. In One Design it's all about the people. In the 5.5 class it's very much about the boats."

In Australia, the worlds were a great driver to develop the fleet, but continuing that growth post-worlds is a perpetual problem.

"In reality it has worked at our club in particular. We just had an eight boat nationals, which is pretty good but there were no boats from other parts of the country, even from just down the road in Sydney Harbour, so we need to find a way to link up. We have a great team though and next month we are conducting a fully professional 5.5 training 'masterclass' clinic. We have Darren 'Twirler' Jones as coach and are grateful for the support of North Sails. We expect seven boats with their crews to participate in off and on water activities focused on bringing the skills of everyone up a level. That has to be good for the class."

But, "I think it is growing. It's important to keep the older boats interested and also get them to travel to great events. Great venues help with that. Particularly for us being so far away. If we are going to travel to the other side of the world it's more motivating if we are coming to sail at iconic places."

"It's great that the class is becoming more attractive to top level sailors, but like most classes you need to look after and keep the long-term supporters engaged."

"The class is a combination of protecting the older boats and keeping them relevant combined with the cutting edge of a development class. That's the way it's always been. For sure development will hit a wall for a while and then someone will get going pushing the limits again. Just looking at what Peter Morton is doing now, that's super great for the class to get new designers involved to see where we can take this."

### FUTURE PLANS

However, in the immediate future the front of the fleet with a Modern is now calling.

"In 2019 we decided that we should return to Europe in 2020 to campaign in a Modern and when the opportunity to buy SUI 228 from Jürg Menzi came up we jumped in quickly. Soon after the 2020 worlds everything changed in the world and we are currently grounded in Australia. Our borders are shut but we have been extremely lucky. We are hoping to recommence international sailing in 2022 and in that regard SUI 228 is now AUS 66 and renamed *Ku-Ring-Gai 3*."

"Terry, James and I are 100 per cent committed to at least the next five years of sailing in the great events that the class is to run. We are excited about going to Norway, Sardinia, Newport and even hope there will be the chance to sail in the beautiful waters of the Bahamas. We are missing our great new mates and we can't wait to see everyone as soon as possible."





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A dynamic photograph of a sailboat leaning into a turn during a race. The boat is dark-colored with white accents and a large sail. A person is visible at the helm. The background shows other boats and a bright sky.



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# Hoping for a better season in 2021



**L**ast year Italian activities were affected badly by the lockdown imposed on all of us.

The year started with the great effort made by Alfredo Delli, Claudio Mazzanti and Gianluca Marolli to participate with *Carabella* in the Worlds in Pittwater. They finished 17th overall and second in the Classic division. *Carabella* has since been sold to new owners in Estonia.

In the following months all our regattas were cancelled and we only managed to participate in the Europeans in Sanremo in August, where two Italian boats competed: *Kukururu* (with Giuseppe Matildi, Gianluca and Alessandro Marolli) and *Whisper* (skippered by Richard Leupold and crewed by Paolo Giorgetti and Andrea Quaranta).

At the end of September we organised a few weekend regattas in Cerro di Laveno with five boats: *Carabella*, *Kukururu*, *Violetta*, *Whisper* and *Twins X*.

It has been a difficult year to be forgotten. Let's do all that is possible to have a better season in 2021.

**FABRIZIO CAVAZZA** REPORTS ON THE ITALIAN FLEET AS MOST EVENTS WERE CANCELLED IN 2020.



In May and June there are two events planned at Circolo Velico Medio Verbano on Lake Maggiore, the largest Italian lake south of the Alps.

The club is situated in the middle of the Varesina shore of Lake Maggiore. The clubhouse was completely renovated in 2010. It is now inside the dock right above the small port of Cerro, with a magnificent view of the Borromean Gulf and right in front of the islands of Stresa and Verbania, where the north wind and the winter make their influence felt all year round.

From 22-23 May, the CVMV Cup will be sailed and then from 5-6 June, the club will host the Italian 5.5 Metre Championship.



# Towards a faster 5.5

WITH TWO NEWBUILDS UNDER WAY IN COWES, ON THE ISLE OF WIGHT, **DAVE HOLLOW** EXPLAINS THE DESIGN PROCESS AND HOW IT ALL CAME ABOUT. THE BOATS ARE EXPECTED TO BE READY TO LAUNCH BY LATE MAY 2021.

**I**n 2019, in time for the 2020 Worlds, I produced a prospectus for a proposed new 5.5 Metre. It contained a number of new avenues of possible progress in the design of 5.5 Metre boats and it was hoped that the Australian, David Hayter, who very successfully sails one of my International Fourteen dinghies, would perhaps be able to contact prospective owners during those Worlds in Australia. As it turned out Peter Morton otherwise known as Morty, a British owner new to the class and who was keen to have his own 5.5, decided to take matters further.

It all started in February of 2020 with a visit to Cowes to discuss the project with Steve Quigley an Australian naval architect and trusted advisor of Morty. During the design

study used in the prospectus I had produced a number of VPPs to test various areas within the allowed rule space and Steve seemed duly impressed that the VPP (velocity prediction program) that was closest to Morty's existing boat, agreed extremely well with the sailing numbers of that boat. A few weeks later Morty decided to push the go button on the

project with me designing the boat and with Steve running CFD (computational fluid dynamics) tests on each design. To add to the strength of the team Tom Schnackenberg of Australia II and New Zealand America's Cup fame, and a very close friend of Morty's, was recruited to oversee the performance predictions and David Lenz, Ruairidh Scott and Sam Haines looked after sail design. The boat was to be built by Gavin Tappenden of Composite Craft in Cowes with whom I have had a long-term relationship that spans a fair few successful boats. Andrew Palfrey, aka Dog, looked after the rig and general control systems on the boat.

## TESTING

My in house VPP, rather than using standard sail coefficients, derived either from wind tunnel tests or from full size tests using tank test data scaled to full size, to work out the sail forces, uses a very simple rig model based on well researched aerodynamic theory. Given the aspect ratio and a lift coefficient ( $C_l$ ) it works out the drag coefficient ( $C_d$ ) and from that information together with sail area, apparent windspeed and heel angle it works out all the rig forces. The program then works on the 'what if' system. It asks the question 'what if, in a particular true windspeed, the boat sailed a particular course to the true wind at a certain speed'. It then works out, from that given information, the apparent wind speed and angle and then from the rig model, assuming a given sail lift coefficient ( $C_l$ ), the sail forces, both heeling and driving force. It then calculates the yaw and heel angle required to resist that heeling force and then compares the aerodynamic forces at that heel angle with the hydrodynamic forces working on the hull at that speed and that heel and yaw angle.

Unless by some fluke chance they balance, which is highly unlikely, the program will alter the speed and try again until, by a process of iteration, it finds a boat speed at which all the forces balance to within a certain fine tolerance. At that point it





Above and below, the build process for the Dave Hollom design being built by Composite Craft in Cowes.

By late February the deck-cockpit-topsides lamination was complete and it was cooked very methodically in a purpose built oven structure.

After full cure and cooling, it was de-moulded without a hitch and looks impressive. The first of many holes were then drilled in it.

The hull lamination was then carried out before the two were brought together.



notes the VMG for that Cl, true windspeed and direction. Then, in a logical manner the VPP looks at all other possible true wind angles and Cls until it finds the best VMG solution (true wind angle and Cl) for that true windspeed. It then moves on to another true windspeed and so on until it has covered the whole desired spectrum. Tom took this system, of finding the aerodynamic forces, on board and linked it to the hydrodynamic data coming from Steve's CFD calculations to form our method of analysing various design candidates.

## TWO BOATS

We analysed boats to various parts of the rule before homing in on what we considered to be the sweet spot in the rule. We then tested various bow concepts before deciding the concept for the final boat. At this stage Steve decided he would also like to have a go at designing a 5.5 using his ideas so in the end we ended up with two boats which, according to the VPPs excelled in different conditions which made a choice between the two difficult and so Morty generously decided to build both.

Steve's boat is being built in western red cedar sheathed in glass by Heritage boats in Cowes and mine is, as already

mentioned, being built by Composite Craft in glass and foam sandwich. Both are progressing well as the photos indicate and both should be on the water in late spring, early summer. We will then find out how close our theoretical testing is to reality.

The famous American yacht designer Starling Burgess when asked what was the secret of designing fast boats replied, "Choosing fast owners". On that basis we should have two fast boats.



**Top left:** The Quigley-One2Three Naval Architects Design is being built by David Heritage Racing Yacht.

**Right:** The hull is cedar cored boat, while an existing deck is being modified to fit

**Left:** A new mast from HEOL Composites (France) is being trialled on GBR 40. After some static load tests at the Wight Shipyard in February, on the water trials were aided by load sensing equipment from Cyclops Marine.

Photos by Andrew Palfrey



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# Finding boats and promoting the class



**I**certainly didn't select the best year to start my presidency of the Swiss 5.5 Metre fleet. It was totally overshadowed by Corona, like everywhere else, too.

Our first topic during the year focused therefore on 'finding' more owners of 5.5 Metre boats that we believed to be still in Switzerland and floating. There was quite some improvement in this area, but still many owners of mainly Classic 5.5 Metres are unknown, unfortunately.

## HERBSTPREIS

Due to Corona, all our Swiss regattas had to be cancelled, except the 'Herbstpreis' (fall regatta) in Thun in October. The event in the TYC was really great, and I am sure that all 12 sailing teams (some had to cancel at short notice due to Corona) that took part can confirm this. Also some German boats participated, which we enjoyed and appreciated very much.

We sailed six races, often in very cold weather, with light to good winds. Jürg Menzi (below) won the series clearly. Unfortunately I have to report that his boat just burned down completely in winter storage. The good news is that he will get a new Wilke boat towards end of summer.

The evening event in Weyersbühl during the 'Herbstpreis' was extremely well attended, and we had a very nice, dignified evening together in a totally great place, just outside of Thun – that's how it should be, we will continue to cultivate this in the coming events.

The goal for the Swiss fleet is clearly defined: we want to create a more active fleet again, with at least 50 Swiss boats on the starting lines in 2021, so that we can once again sail Swiss championships, and have exciting regattas in beautiful areas and great shore activities too, with larger number of participations. Foreign boats are always very welcome, with their families.

**ANDRÉ BERNHEIM** REPORTS ON THE ONLY SWISS EVENT POSSIBLE IN 2020, ON THUNERSEE, AND INITIATIVES TO PROMOTE THE CLASS.



It became very clear during 2020: we need new 5.5 Metre sailors to join the fleet, besides trying to motivate existing ones to sail regattas with us. Some of our owners are getting to an age where they don't want to or cannot race any longer, which I am missing very much – I have sailed with many of them during the past 40 years I have been racing the 5.5 Metre and enjoyed their comradeship on the water and land a lot.

## INITIATIVES

One of the initiatives to gain new 5.5 Metre sailors is the planned regatta for other classes in May on the lake of Zurich, where we want to have three to five boats with one crew member on board, the other two good sailors to be recruited from nearby clubs. We want to prove to these sailors what we communicate on our website too under: WHY 5.5m: <https://www.5point5.ch/5m-ataktivitaet/>

My slogan: Never give up, just try harder. We have terrific boats, we just need to show this to the good sailors and we will be able to grow again.

In 2021, we do hope to be able to sail more regattas again and all foreign owners, sailors and boats are very welcome.





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# Worldwide boat count

COMPILED BY KASPAR STUBENRAUCH

**O**ver the last decade, the International 5.5 Metre Class has been following good Class development, for which the annual boat count has been used as a benchmark.

The overview informs us about the basic number of boats per country, its different categories of Modern, Evolution and Classic boats, new boats being built over the years and participation in World Championships. It also presents the minimum needs for holding the status of International Class with World Sailing, in Nations with 6+ boats and continents, which we perfectly fulfil. Additional features cover boatyards building 5.5s, the number of designs and information about boats for sale, in the different categories.

The number of countries with 5.5 Metres has gradually developed, with Canada, the USA, Poland and Estonia being the

most recent new countries on the list. But also active countries like Australia can show a very good development, recently. The count of boats also helps in revising promotional activities, when certain countries see a downturn in numbers.

The count has, together with the 5.5 Metre Inventory (5.5inventory.org) helped to get boats integrated, of which we had lost sight. It shows 438 boats worldwide today – out of over 700 built – and we are sure to find more, which can help for Class growth.

Still, the most important thing for the continuity of this construction class is the building of new boats. While for some time it had been believed, that improvements in design for better performance was showing only marginal steps forward, the most recent examples can prove, that this Class has the potential for a good future.

		International 5.5m Class – Boatcount 2021																							
Status		© K.Stubenrauch																							
28/03/21																									
Status		SUI	GER	ITA	FRA	AUS	FIN	AUT	USA	NOR	SWE	NED	CAN	BAH	GBR	EST	GRC	DEN	UKR	POL	AHO	RUS	LAT	Total	
Boats sailing		106	68	24	35	30	21	20	13	12	10	11	6	3	1	2	2	1	2	1	1	1	1	370	
New boats built		1																2						3	
Refit / On land		3	13	21	3	1	4	1	4	4	4	2	2				1	1						65	
Boats		110	81	45	38	31	25	21	17	16	14	13	8	3	3	3	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	438	
Classic		41	52	40	24	16	23	10	14	3	10	7	6			3	1	1	2					256	
Evolution		51	23	4	11	10	2	9	3	10	3	3	2						1					132	
Modern		18	6	1	3	5		2		3	1	3		3	3		1							50	
Boats		110	81	45	38	31	25	21	17	16	14	13	8	3	3	3	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	438	
Youngest boat		2021	2008	2007	1995	2016	1991	2001	1996	2020	2016	2003	1985	2019	2021	1968	2000	1989	1968	2015	1954	1962	1968		
Boats 4 Sail		12	7	6	6	3	9	4	1	4	6	5	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	66	
5.5m in Europe		377																							
5.5m in Oceania		31																							
5.5m in N.-Am.		30																							
Total boats		438																							
All boats s. 1949		726																							
5.5m in Europe		377																							
W.Ch.		2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022					
Min.		36	27	41	38	18	30	30	30	37	22	37	30	35	26	25	24	24							
25		1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003					
?		?	?	?	52	?	24	15	?	?	37	14	?	12	26	32	34	36	29	36					
Boats in %																									
Class.		58.4																							
Evol.		30.1																							
Mod.		11.4																							
Boats 4 Sail																									
Boats in %																									
Class.		36																							
Evol.		22																							
Mod.		8																							
Active																									
2010		39																							
2011		33																							
2012		34																							
2013		53																							
2014		56																							
2015		39																							
2016		43																							
2017		44																							
2018		44																							
2019		44																							
2020		48																							
2021		1																							
2022																									
Boatyards 1999-21																									
SUI		5																							
GBR		3																							
SWE		1																							
DEN		1																							
NED		1																							
Designs 1999-21																									
SUI		29																							
USA/GBR		2																							
GBR		2																							
USA		1																							
SWE		1																							
DEN		1																							
NED		1																							
Boats built 1977-2022																									
1977		5																							
1978		3																							
1979		6																							
1980		5																							
1981		7																							
1982		4																							
1983		6																							
1984		3																							

# Landmark book of 5.5 Metre class

**C**harles Nicholson and Malden Heckstall-Smith finished producing the 5.5 Metre class rating rule in 1948, 73 years ago and yet there has never been a book written to fully cover the international class history.

This is about to change as the Finnish-Norwegian team of Matti Muoniovaara and Mikkel Thommessen have started to write the first ever definitive book to cover whole story of the class from the very beginning through to the current day.

The 5.5 Metre class was born after World War II, designed as a cheaper option than the 6-metre for sailing in the Olympics, as well as a modern up-to-date keel boat. The story begins much earlier, in around 1900, when all principal rating rule formulas were developed.

The book we will tell how this small keelboat developed to one of the finest ever handcrafted wooden sail racing boats until the end of the 1960s. In 1970 the boat was modernised with a separate rudder to make it as modern as possible. Did you know that at the 1952 IYRU conference there was already a proposal to allow the separate rudder? Unfortunately however that proposal was rejected.

During the Olympic era the boat was the formula one class of sailing and many famous sailors sailed the 5.5 Metre. The book will tell the development of the finest wooden sailboats, the 1970s modern cold moulded hulls and finally GRP construction through the 1980s.

The book will include the story of the Scandinavian Gold Cup, which was first raced for by the 5.5 Metres in 1953, the Olympic yachting era from 1952-68 and all the World Championship sailed since 1961 to the present.

THE FIRST EVER COMPLETE AND DEFINITIVE HISTORY OF THE **5.5 METRE CLASS** IS BEING PRODUCED.



## THE AUTHORS

Mikkel Thommessen is a well known Norwegian writer mainly in the Norwegian Seilmagasinet. The latest book he has written is the *Seiling i Norge - Norges Seilforbund 50 år*. Mikkel owned and sailed the 5.5 Metre *Vinnia* from 1988 to 1995



Matti Muoniovaara has been in the class since 1988 and sails his second classic 5.5 Metre, *Scatoulitsa 4*, and is one of the most active sailors in the classics. He is also a longstanding member of the Technical Committee. In Finland he has written several articles about 5.5s in sailing magazines.



## PRODUCTION

Members and former sailors are being asked to please dig into their files to look for historical pictures, diagrams and plans, preferable high resolution. Anyone with photos or material that can be used should please contact Mikkel on [mikkel@seilmagasinet.no](mailto:mikkel@seilmagasinet.no).

The book will be a high quality, large format and is expected to be around 300 pages and will be published by Robert Deaves.

To make this huge project viable sponsors are being sought for contributions to cover the costs of production.

In return sponsors will have their name included in a Tabula Gratulatoria within the book and will receive a special edition.

Advance ordering for the first copies will be also available ahead of publication.

Further details on how to become a sponsor and support the ongoing work are published on the class website: [5.5class.org](http://5.5class.org).



# Growing numbers in Austria



**T**he intensive efforts to re-establish the 5.5 Metre racing class in Austria, and in my case especially on Lake Traunsee, are slowly paying off. In September 2019, for the first time after some years, a 5.5 Metre regatta could be held in the Altmünster sailing club. Seven participants took part in the 'Salzkammergut Prize', and visiting boats from Germany and Switzerland were also very welcome.

Actually, there are about 20 boats based in Austria; these are mainly Classic or Evolution boats.

After the cancellation of the Enoshima Prize, the UYCT may again organise the Enoshima Trophy and the Salzkammergut Prize (below right) in June 2021. We look forward to welcome participants from all parts of the world.

As on all Salzkammergut lakes, there is a lot of sailing on the Traunsee. During a period of good weather, the much vaunted phenomenon of the 'upper wind' (in German: Oberwind) and 'low wind' (in German: Niederwind) occurs. In the evening, when the landside is cooling down and the alps are still heated up, a southerly wind starts at around 10 p.m. and lasts until the next morning, between 9 a.m. and 10 a.m. ('upper wind'). This wind is named 'upper wind' because the 'upper wind' blows from the alps to the lake.

This is followed by a three-hour calm before the wind from the northeast blows back, so to speak, and lasts until 5 or 6 p.m. ('low wind'). About from midday the sun warms the landscape more than the mountains, which is why the low wind blows from the land to the mountains. This wind is named 'lower wind' because the wind blows from the low landscape to the lake Traunsee.

**DIRK HARMS** REPORTS ON THE GROWING FLEET IN AUSTRIA AND THE PLANS FOR THE YEAR.



The UYCT is located in Gmunden. The town of Gmunden was a trading centre for salt and can therefore look back on a long history. Gmunden is now also known for its ceramics.

## AUSTRIA

5.5 Metre racing in Austria has a long history, starting with 5.5 OE 1 *Lucky Chance*, the Hood designed dream of a young boatbuilder, who has in 2010 been reunited with his boat, for his 80th birthday. The boat now is sailing as GER 71 in Germany.

Austria has seen Olympic participation in 1960 with an A&R built boat (AUT 4) and is today active with Classic boats like AUT 9 being a keen Rolex Cup participant, in Evolution with AUT 16 being a frequent International regatta participant and in the Modern category with AUT 21 winning the Swiss 5.5 Metre Championship in 2010, on the Lake of Constance.

Quite a number of 5.5 Metres are located in Austria, some of them being used just for pleasure cruising, but several are returning to racing. The latest additions to the racing fleet are AUT 22, AUT 24 and AUT 25 on Traunsee and AUT 26 on Attersee, four Evolution boats and AUT 17, a Modern.





# An open mind and a lot of luck

OVER THE LAST 30 YEARS THE **WILKE** YARD, BY THE SHORES OF LAKE THUN IN SWITZERLAND, HAS UNDOUBTEDLY PRODUCED THE MOST SUCCESSFUL 5.5 METRES IN THE WORLD. THEY SHOW NO SIGN OF SLOWING UP WITH A NEW DESIGN HITTING THE WATER IN 2020.

**O**ver the past three decades, the name of Christof Wilke has become synonymous with the 5.5 Metre Class. He built his first 5.5 in 1993, and 28 years later has now built more than 35. At the top of the fleet, it is almost a one-design class with Wilke built boats having won every world championship since 1999, and in 2020 the yard launched its latest 5.5 Metre design.

His energy and enthusiasm for the boat is readily apparent and has driven growth in the class. His yard is located on the shores of Lake Thun, overlooked by the towering monsters Jungfrau and the Eiger, and the Thunersee Yachtclub further up

the lake now boasts one of the largest 5.5 Metre fleets in the world. He sums up his approach to the 5.5 Metre very succinctly. “I came into the class with no preconceptions and a fresh mind to try something different. I had an open mind and lots of luck.”

#### BOATYARD

Christof Wilke was born in 1960 and after high school he obtained his engineering degree in boat building and construction. In 1986, together with his wife Yvonne, he founded his own company on the banks of Lake Thun. The yard specialised in building extreme and fast yacht prototypes for the lakes, as well as providing maintenance and wintering services to hundreds of local boaters.

In 1993 Wilke moved his yard to the southern end of the Lake Thun at Leissingen, near Interlaken. The yard has capacity to store 150 boats of all sizes undercover and outside. Wintering services, painting



**Top:** Momo, SUI 229, at the Europeans in Sanremo

**Left:** New Moon II  
in Sanremo

The sharper chines are quite noticeable on the new boats

**Right:** Christof Wilke

**Top right:** Getting a 5.5 Metre ready for competition at the yard in Leissingen

and repair are available for all types of boats made of wood, fibreglass, composite and carbon fibre or aluminium. The yard has its own crane next to the water, and the perfectly isolated building, oven/cabins with temperature and negative pressure control secure the best polymerisation for carbon and glassfibres and resin. Epoxy and carbon are the preferred materials in the yard.

Located in the Bernese Oberland in the Swiss Alps, the Wilke boatyard is, in terms of production, the fourth largest yard in Switzerland. As well as the worldwide specialist for 5.5 Metres, the yard produces customised 'one-off' carbon yachts, Star boats, and the Wilke Finn and Wilke Finn carbon mast.

With the Finn wing carbon mast, Christof Wilke and his team became a major player in the global market. For more than 20 years the Wilke Finn mast has been the mast of choice for many Olympic and world champions. Production began in 2000 with immediate success and European championship gold and Olympic bronze. Since then they have become the most successful carbon Finn masts with four Olympic gold medals. The masts are in constant evolution and each year the yard uses more than one tonne of carbon fibre, delivering carbon masts to Finn sailors at all levels.

The yard also produced many Finns and Star boats, while the development of larger boats such as Wild Lady, a 49 feet racing yacht, remains a focus. Wilke 49, 'Wild Lady' with its impressive keel, has won long distances races on Lake Garda as well as on the Lake Constance. The Wilke 26 is another Wilke keel yacht produced in small numbers.

Quality and performance are the drivers for Christof Wilke,



using only the best materials, for high quality products. He leads the company of 10 to 15 people as Chief Developer, with a high motivation to quality and high tech.

New and future projects are never far away for Christof Wilke and his team. In 2020 he embarked on an ambitious new 6 Metre project, starting from nothing. To relax and 'think-tank' new ideas you can find him on his snowboard running very fast down the Jungfrau slopes. Speed is his driver and motivation.

#### FIRST FIVES

Christof first got involved in the 5.5 Metre class in 1993.

"I had possibility to sail one for the first time in Cannes at the Europeans in 1993 and it was my first contact with the class. It was so sexy, and I was keen to build one. We found someone from the lake here who was ready to build with me and we started a project for two boats."

These were SUI 187 and SUI 188.

"SUI 187 is the boat that John Bacon is now sailing – *Ku-ring-gai*. That was the first boat I built and he is supper happy with that."

*Ku-ring-gai* has won the Evolution trophies at the World Championship over the past two years.

"We were a little bit lucky with this because the first boat we built was quick and after two or three seasons they had good results and then more people starting asking for them."

Since his first 5.5 Metre, Christof has used the design services of Sébastien Schmidt, from Geneva.

"He helps to develop the hull, while I am doing technical stuff such as scantlings, laminating plans and cockpit design."

While the boats are designed on a computer, "It is not just about the computer programme, you need a guy with feeling. The programme can make a really smooth hull, but without feeling, like in waves, and with dynamics, the computer alone is not able to make the best design – it's just a tool."

"For the structural engineering for the 5.5 Metre like twist and suppleness, I work with design office specialised in this in France."

He is also undertaking a 6 Metre, creating a design and new moulds. For this project, Christof is working with the yacht designers at Judel-Vrolijk in Germany, famous for TP52, Maxi 72, and various Wallys.

"It is huge job to build a 6 Metre from scratch."

For any of these boats, "You can't do everything alone. It's impossible. The development is going higher and higher and the





The new plugs are prepared and finished before the two moulds are taken. Finally it is cleaned and polished ready for the first build.



space to win is getting smaller and smaller, so it's a lot of work and you need specialists."

#### SOMETHING DIFFERENT?

Though they had been tried before, Wilke was the first 5.5 Metre boatbuilder to develop trim tabs with winglets.

"They are limited by the rules, so we went to the maximum to try and get the best possible solution.

"We started with an open book thinking we can try anything.

"That was really the first trim tab keel that was actually starting to work. It was certainly not perfect, but it was the first. From that point we started to develop even better and better keels."

"We were new into the class with no hang ups about the old ways of doing things. So we had an open mind and took some risks and I think there was a lot of luck, but finally we got a boat that was really quick and fast in all conditions.

"That's the beginning of the journey that started a new generation in the class.

"We were not alone at that time because there was also the Melges Works factory. They built a lot of 5.5 Metres. They had two generations of boats, first the one with the special keel and then the second generation was a modern boat designed by Doug Petersen. It was a super good boat and they are still sailing today in the Evolution class. They went really well, so we had to fight.

"We had an idea to make a trim tab on the keel so we made a keel and the hull shape, and then cut a bit away. We started with what we felt was OK. But in light conditions and certain wave conditions it didn't work, so and then we started to think, so we had to build a different profile so that if the tab has a certain angle it makes a smooth profile with the keel.

"So it was a development step by step, trying to find a better angle between tab and the rudder. It was really new at the time.

"There was a lot of small stuff but if you find a hundred small



**Left:** Christof Wilke sailing with Jürg Menzi and Jürgen Eiermann on Lake Thun in October 2020

**Right:** Looking south from the Wilke Yard, Ali Baba and Aspire wait for wind



The build process for SUI 229 *Momo* - The two sides are vacuum infused before being joined together. Below: Checking the weight of bare hull.



issues, in the end they all add up. We were always improving everything slowly.

"Other builders copied, but not immediately. Melges didn't adapt. They stayed with old rudders and we were working on trim tabs, rudders, winglets on rudders, all kinds of stuff possible within the rules, and they just produced, produced, produced, but you can't stop developing as it is a construction class."

"But of course there are different commercial interests. They were interested in a large number of builds, if possible all the same, because it was easier. We are a bit more specialised for custom building."

The Wilke Yard in Switzerland has so far made about 35 5.5 Metres since production first started in 1993.

#### **NEW MOULD FOR 2020**

"The first boat we ever built was from a plug. And the second we cut at the transom and changed it. It was easy to change because it was wooden. Later we started to do the same with negative moulds like they did in the old days when they just cut the boat in half and made it wider or narrower. We did the same with our moulds for many years."

"We built about 20 boats out of the last mould but it had had too many modifications over the years, so we decided to make a new one. The old one was recut at least seven times."

"So we built a brand new mould in 2019. So far we have built four boats out of it. So far it has no modifications. It still looks nice."

The mould is split vertically rather than horizontally, with a join down the middle of the deck and along the keel.

"We can't mould the joins

properly the other way. This way, we can laminate the joints more properly. There are a lot of reinforcements on the side and on the bottom, and as we don't have any connections here, so we can laminate it properly inside.

"We laminate both sides and then screw them together. There is much more material on the bottom than the sides, so it's a good way to do the reinforcement and connection together. Then you put the cockpit in and it's ready. We make our Stars in the same way."

The plugs are made using a CNC cutter to ensure accuracy and symmetry. Wilke works with a partner in France for the keels and another in Germany for the moulds.

The new shape is very similar to the previous shape except it has straighter and smoother lines. However, "we wanted to increase the dynamical length of the boat. When the boat is heeling the waterline will be longer. That was the main goal."



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5.5

WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

1<sup>ST</sup> 2<sup>ND</sup> 3<sup>RD</sup>

—

Congratulations

Kristian Nergaard

EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP

1<sup>ST</sup> 2<sup>ND</sup> 3<sup>RD</sup>

—

Congratulations

Mateusz Kusznierewicz

SCANDINAVIAN GOLD CUP

1<sup>ST</sup> 2<sup>ND</sup> 3<sup>RD</sup>

—

Congratulations

Kristian Nergaard





Momo finally leaving the workshop, being weighed and then having the mast stepped.

"Under the water the shape is very similar but the chine is slightly sharper as the waterline is narrower. The actual volume is the same."

The new boats also have very small inverse sheer. "The idea of the positive bend, and there are a lot of boats with positive bend and it's a modern style, was to lift the middle part to have the mast slightly higher on the waterline."

The decks include foam for strength, while the hull and topsides are just glass. Each side is infused and then they are joined together by bolting around the join. Then the join itself is laminated and reinforced and further infused. Before the cockpit tub is fitted, the measurer goes in and measures all the reinforcements.

Accuracy is a trademark of the Wilke yard, with pride taken in the construction and finish in every boat and mast. The boats are built by vacuum infusion and it accurate to within two percent. "We can calculate it to 100 kg of resin – plus or minus 2 kg."

The boat is then weighed before the keel is moulded, and weighed again after the keel has been fitted. This is all carried out at the Wilke yard, including launching to check the waterline.

"The process is very complicated and time consuming. But the 5.5 Metre is a construction class so it is like this and you have to accept it."

## 5.5 DESIGN

"The 5.5 Metre rule allows quite a wide scope for development. For example, the weight range is from 1,750 kg up to a maximum of 2,050 kg.

"It is connected with sail area and waterline length and many other parameters, but we started making boats at 1,900 kg or a bit less and now we are up to 2,000 kg. We had one boat on maximum weight but it was no good. The magic weight for us is about 2,000 kg.

"We always try to have maximum sail area, and if you have light boats you have small sail area.

"We saw some development from other builders with very light boats which were good in light conditions, up to a maximum of 10 knots. But then game was over.

"We are going for all round boats that are fast in all conditions. We are maybe not super fast in the light or in super heavy but on average they are good. When sailors are going to events and studying the conditions they don't have to worry about the conditions. They are able to perform whatever weather arrives.

"Of course there is a relation between wetted surface and centre of gravity but to achieve centre point of side force it is important to know how the trim tab works, but it's the same for every boat. It's no secret that every racing boatbuilder tries to

group everything together to centre the weight and the same with sail area, trying to centre everything together.

"The objective is also to go for structural integrity along with suppleness in the right areas."

The hulls need, "Fore and aft stiffness so the boat can take the forestay tension, athwartships stiffness so that the boat doesn't buckle and then maximum twist longitudinally. And then suppleness in bow and stern sections to handle the waves downwind."

## THREE DECADES

Over the last 30 years, the Wilke yard has undoubtedly produced the most successful 5.5 Metres in the world, and they show no sign of slowing up.





# Boat improvements and fleet growth



**W**ith the emergence of COVID-19 the year 2020 was unlike any other – on and off the water. The Canada-US border closed to non-essential traffic in March 2020 and remained closed more than a year later forcing the cancellation of both 2020 North American 5.5 regattas.

However the North American group remains focused on boat improvements, growing the fleet and connecting those passionate about the 5.5s in preparation for future racing.

The passion is contagious.

Take Joe Strelow, owner of Pride USA 31. “I had wanted to learn more about sailing and Joe Lambert invited me to join him on his 5.5 [Aeolus II USA 102],” he said. “Of course, that meant helping him work on the boat (in my driveway by the way) to get it ready.”

He travelled with Lambert to races in Midland, Ontario for several years enjoying the camaraderie of the fleet and the interest and dedication to the rejuvenation of the boats.

It wasn’t just the racing that drew in Strelow. “I found myself very interested in the construction and rigging of these old wooden 5.5s and after sailing with him a few seasons I was hooked.”

For him preservation is an essential aspect of the North American fleet. “I think what we are doing to preserve these boats, while actually using them for what they were built for, is an important component of the sport. Some of these boats have a unique history, and Pride is certainly one of them.”

Pride came out of the Houston Texas boat yard of legendary skipper Ernie Fay in 1962. Victorious in many an epic race course battle Pride racking up a long list of championships and world cup record wins and was featured on the cover of Sports Illustrated in September 1963 alongside Flame, his brother Albert’s 5.5.



**JENNIFER HARKER** REPORTS FROM THE **USA AND CANADIAN** FLEETS ON A YEAR OF WORK TO BUILD THE FLEET IN **NORTH AMERICA**.



Following Fay’s death, Seabrook boatyard shipwright Len Kirkham bought Pride, moving her to Georgia where she raced under the name Woodstock. “He was quite fearless, favouring the port tack at the starting line,” Strelow reports. “Pride had a hole in the side to prove he liked to push the advantage whenever possible.”

Strelow has fearlessly put a few holes of his own in Pride, but these ones are drilled rather than rammed as he continues to improve his boat.

It’s all part of the adventure of purchasing and rejuvenating a 5.5. “I have to admit that the situation around buying it in Georgia and hauling it 600 miles with all the rigging in boxes, etc. sounded like a fun adventure as well,” Strelow said. “It was a chance for me to take what I had learned and apply it both the construction and rigging of the boat and how to get the most out of it.”

She first splashed into Georgian Bay in 2018. “The boat had been rigged quickly with the help of a lot of our friends, just days before the regatta. We were just trying to see what we had and what needed work at that time.” An intense winter of work

followed. "We returned in June of 2019 and we really saw that we could be fast. In September 2019 we took that same package with nearly no modifications and were able to finish third."

Understandably he was eagerly anticipating the racing season. "We came into 2020 very excited to race Pride again and felt we could be competitive with the modifications we had planned."

It wasn't just the competition Strelow missed with the cancelled regattas. "More important than the racing, what we missed in 2020 was seeing all our friends. Our 5.5 events bring together a very fun and interesting group of people. These regattas are my favourite weeks of the year as we all get together and have some light-hearted competition over a few days. We look forward to finally getting back together in person in 2021."

To help the fleet stay connected, Strelow organised a virtual Zoom gathering in April. It brought up an interesting point as Texas crew member Tal Hutcheson was verifying which time zone the meeting was scheduled in. "Honestly it is pretty cool that we have to ask what Time Zone... Shows how far we have spread out and the enthusiasm for the class."

#### IN OTHER FLEET NEWS

Bizarrely, the 1996 Doug Peterson designed boat William Turner was purchasing was destroyed by order of US Customs. Covid had caused import delays and when Turner checked in January his broker assured him the process was resuming. However a call to the logistics yard, which contracts with US Customs where they were holding Turner's boat after it arrived from Curacao, instead revealed the boat had been destroyed.

Turner visited the yard to get more details and was told, "For reasons unknown, the boat raised a red flag in Washington DC. On six separate occasions, uniformed federal agents from Washington DC flew down here to thoroughly examine the boat and trailer." Strange, as the boat has a documented ownership history with clear title and Turner had paid cash for everything. He continued, "The manager was ordered to destroy the boat by the lead federal agent. All boat, trailer, and equipment was to be cut into small pieces and photographed. Then placed in a dumpster and photographed again. No further reason or details were disclosed."

Turner said he was, "Completely blown away by the turn of events."

Calling the boat a rare deal, Turner said he is unlikely to pursue another boat and will probably sail one of Dan Rossi's 5.5s this summer.



Rossi has been busy with his family fleet of 5.5s. Along with some regular upkeep on Purple Haze USA 51, he has been hard at work on Jalapeña USA 96. Rossi reports he already laid out new plywood decks and placed an order to design and build new aluminium spars with more work to follow. Work is also progressing on his brother Don's 5.5 Cloud 9 USA 79. Dan is working to convince Don to bring Cloud 9 to this year's North American competitions.

In need of a major overhaul Jill CAN 3 has been sold to Woodwind Yachts near Peterborough Ontario. Dean Harker said, "Jill had become the spare boat at the previous two regattas. With little use and aging wood it was becoming too expensive and labour intensive to maintain her and Summer CAN 80." She is in good hands as Woodwind Yachts specializes in rebuilding classic wooden boats and years ago restored Summer School CAN 31.

Like Strelow, Harker was invited to sail on a 5.5 and that



quickly turned into ownership.

"Following my retirement from the Royal Canadian Navy I was looking to pick up sailing again," Harker said. "It had been one of my primary interests before joining where I had been an active participant in both the Laser and 420 Class dinghies having raced at the national and international level in both."

He was considering purchasing a cruising keelboat and racing at the club level at Midland Bay Sailing Club. "I met John Lister and substituted in Nantoria CAN 22 for his regular crew members when they were not available. I really liked the feel of the 5.5 and decided to purchase one when one became available."

He too enjoys the social side of sailing 5.5s.

"Although the on water is fun, I think I have come to enjoy the social activities that are scheduled in conjunction with the regatta almost as much. Since joining the 5.5 fleet the boat numbers have steadily increased, as have the number of participants. My wife and I have made several new friends from both sides of the border and now stay in touch with them outside of the sailing season."

#### SAILING SCHEDULE

Uncertainties remain but there are two races on the North American 2021 schedule, both in Midland, Ontario on Canada's Great Lakes.

The Spring Regatta is planned for June 24 to 27 and the Fall Regatta (which is actually a late summer regatta) is set for August 23 to 27.

Please note the changes to this regatta with racing to take place Monday through Friday. The weekend on each end makes travel easier for those coming from a distance and with five days available for racing there is some flexibility to maximize a better weather window for optimum conditions.

Remember, with plenty of things to do in the area families are always more than welcome in Midland. The social side of sailing is a large part of our regattas and the more the merrier.

**Left page:** Hard work pays off as Pride's performance earns a wave from Joe Strelow (centre) and crew Michael Bloor and Matt Thurley. Pride hits the water and is put through the paces of racing. She performs well in her first outing, earning a cautious smile from Joe Strelow.

**Top:** Pride now reflects her historic roots with a new spinnaker designed to be close to that featured on the September 1963 cover of Sports Illustrated. (Photos Jennifer Harker)

**Inset:** In a season with no North American racing the focus was on rejuvenation. Dan Rossi is completing work on several 5.5s including new decking for Jalapeña USA 96 (Photo: Rossi)

**CRIOLLO**





# Criollo

## Head-turner

**O**ne of the boats that was turning heads at the Europeans in Sanremo was the beautifully presented *Criollo* with her perfectly varnish topsides and immaculate teak decks. Sailed by Andreas Christiansen, Michael Kurtz and Moritz Christiansen, they placed second in the Evolution category, but would have won first prize in a beauty contest.

Designed by Warren Muir of Australia, and built in cold laminated wood by Hermann Egger of St. Aubin, Switzerland, in 1982, *Criollo* was one of three such built from an original design commissioned by JP Jenni. These were Z 132, Z 133 and Z 136. Z 136 was originally called *Alain V* and owned by Paul Ramelet, with Andreas Christiansen being their fourth owner. Owned by Andreas since 2007, the boat is absolute beauty following a major refit and remains a fast Evolution.

He first came across the boat in 2001.

"I was invited to helm this boat in 2001 and half an hour later we started the first race in Flensburg and at the first mark we were in first place ahead of Jochen Schümann, so I immediately got a very good feeling about this boat and was quite happy to have it."

"Then at the world championship we broke the backstay because the boat came from Lake Zurich and they were only fixed by rope and not for strong







winds. The good performance ended after two fifths, and in the end we placed 15th out of 40 boats.

"A couple of years later the owner had renovated the boat, put a carbon mast on it and new rudder, and it was for sale. Gunter Ahlers encouraged me to buy it. He is an expert in 5.5s and then he said I must buy it or the current owner will add an electric engine, so "you have to rescue it". That started in 2007 and since then we are racing this boat whenever we can, but time is limited and we cannot race like everyone else, but we have enjoyed it."

*Criollo* won the Evolution title at the worlds four times, in Torbole, Helsinki, Boltenhagen and Curacao.

His last big event was World Championship in Porto Santo Stefano in 2014, but he "normally competes in the Robbe & Berking Sterling Cup in Flensburg every year, where I was born, my home waters. But I also own a Dragon and a Nordic Folkboat, so I have too much choice.

"This boat was designed by Warren Muir and Ben Lexcen. It has a very sloped keel, and it is good in rough weather and waves and then it does very well. When we were in Curaçao, where there are always big waves and wind, we were always top five at the first mark, as long as we didn't get too much water in the boat."



# Crew dynamics and performance analysis

**JOHAN BARNE IS ONE OF THE MOST PROLIFIC WINNERS IN THE 5.5 METRE FLEET, BUT HIS BACKGROUND INCLUDES JUST ABOUT MAJOR EVENT IN THE SPORT. HERE, HE TALKS ABOUT HIS APPROACH TO SAILING, HIS THOUGHTS ON THE 5.5 METRE CLASS AND HIS EXTENSIVE WORK WITH PERFORMANCE ANALYSIS.**

**F**rom the Olympics to the America's Cup, From the Volvo Ocean Race to the World Match Racing Tour, from TP52s to ORC, and from Solings to Stars, 505s and of course the 5.5 Metre – Johan Barne has pretty much done it all. Commonly seen as the middleman on Kristian Nergaard's *Artemis XIV*, he has won six world championships and four Scandinavian Gold Cups in the 5.5 Metre class.

He works as both a professional sailor and IT consultant. After a long history of Olympic class sailing and sailing on the World Match Racing Tour and spending 10 years with teams involved in big projects such as The Volvo Ocean Race and the America's Cup, he now increasingly works with independent sailing teams at the highest level as well as supporting the

Swedish Olympic sailing team.

However a lifetime in professional sailing started simply as a summer activity. "I grew up sailing at our summer house. We had a 420 that we played around with and I also sailed Europe and Laser dinghies, although I did not do any serious racing until a lot later."

As he prepared for his first Volvo Ocean Race he realised sailing could become a career.

"When I started sailing Olympic classes I realised I could achieve and develop the skills to sail professionally, but it was not until I worked in my first Volvo Ocean Race project, ASSA ABLOY, I saw my potential role."

Johan has been involved in a huge number of campaigns and projects. He mentions a few standout sailing projects he has taken on.

"Three Olympic campaigns (1992, 1996 and 2000) in the Soling class; two America's Cup campaigns (2002/3 and 2007) with Victory Challenge; two Volvo Ocean Races doing performance analysis (2001/2 with ASSA ABLOY and 2011/12 with Team Telefonica); several years on the World Match Race Circuit; and several years on the 52superseries."

However he remembers winning the 1999 Soling Match Racing Worlds in Melbourne as the most special. "I sailed with a new crew after two Olympics with another crew. When we started two years earlier my helm had hardly done any match racing at all, so we had a two-year crash course in match racing. He soaked up everything I taught him like a sponge and added his own take. We had a great regatta and really savoured our victory."

"I think the Olympics is the most special event. Unfortunately, when the Soling left the Olympic programme there was not really a class for me. It is very easy for everyone to relate to the Olympic event and I have never been so at one with the boat as then. It also goes without saying that the competition is the very best."

Although he had his first taste of 5.5 Metre sailing in 1993, it



**Left:** Sailing with Kristian Nergaard and Trond Solli-Sæther in Helsinki in 2019 • **Below left:** enjoying the win after taking the world title in Helsinki  
**Right:** Soling training in Sydney just before the 2000 Olympics • **Lower right:** Johan and his mother on what he thinks is one of his first sails

wasn't until he teamed up with Kristian Nergaard in 2008 that it really started.

"I actually sailed the 1993 Worlds in Norway with a Norwegian boat for a mid-fleet finish. Then it took a long time until the 2008 Scandinavian Gold Cup in Nassau gave me an opportunity to sail again in the class. Since then I have sailed pretty much all major events with Kristian and mainly Trond [Solli Sæther]."

There have been many memorable moments during his time in the class but two stand out.

"Even though it was very nice to win the Worlds in Nynäshamn with only straight bullets, I think my first event was really special. I joined Kristian for the 2008 Gold Cup in The Bahamas. The setting outside Nassau was just great and I really enjoyed sailing with Kristian and being able to apply Soling skills in a different class."

"I especially like the dynamics with a three-person boat. It both enables and encourages teamwork and as well allowing you to take on big roles and responsibilities. Another thing is that people tend to sail the boat for many years so the friends you make will hang around for a long time. Last thing to mention is that the class goes to nice places for major regattas. It's a big bonus not looking too much where the local fleets are but rather concentrating on delivering a great experience for the participating crews."

## CREW DYNAMICS

Apart from the 1993 event, he has always sailed with Kristian.

"Most of the time we have sailed with Trond as a third crew but on a few occasions we have had a change in that position. I really enjoy sailing with Kristian but if I could not sail with him and had a chance to sail with another good crew, it would be a great experience. I am sure there are plenty of things to learn from other crews."

All the crew bring a lot of experience to the team, but the dynamic between them is a crucial part of that as well.

"First of all, we have sailed a lot in 5.5s and other similar boats. Even tough we do not sail 5.5 so much at other regattas, we do a lot of other racing. Kristian and Trond sail Melges24, Express and J70 at home and I have clocked up 100+ racing days per year for the last 30 odd years."

"When we meet and jump on the boat, we try to utilize every moment we have knowing that training time is sparse. It obviously helps a lot that we have done the whole thing in a similar manner for more than 10 years."

"Kristian has the best feel for the mode of the boat which helps him a lot in his helming. Does anyone have as much experience in a 5.5 as Kristian? He does all the major controls of the main himself; sheet, traveller, vang and backstay."

"I adjust the runners upwind and trim the spinnaker downwind."

"Trond (and Anders in last year's Worlds) trims the jib (also with input from the rest of us) and talks about other boats around us."

"We all know how to do the manoeuvres, so the thing we work on and try to develop is more timing of things. Crew work is something you want to spend a lot of time on initially and then it should just be in place onward."

Johan's main responsibility is calling the tactics.

"However, even when calling the shots I get a lot of input



from the others and we keep an ongoing communication loop on both tactics and trim. We talk a lot.

"Before the start we all talk about what the course looks like, what has happened in the previous races and what we expect in the race to come. We decide which part of the line to start but then Kristian executes on that plan. Once on the course it is mainly me that calls where we go."

"If we get into a tight position or something happens very quickly and we don't have time to discuss; Kristian just does what he thinks is best."

Kristian Nergaard is undoubtedly the most successful 5.5 Metre helm of all time.

He brings, "...experience, positive attitude, a drive to develop, and an appreciation of everyone's contribution. He is also very good at checking in with my thinking on tactics without seemingly disagreeing or questioning."

"Becoming fast is an ongoing process. A crew that strives for constant improvement is the number one ingredient. A fast 5.5 has both a good setup of the sail and rig as well as a crew constantly adjusting the sails. I feel that on *Artemis* we have plenty to learn on the first item and are very good on the second item."

Does he see many mistakes made by other teams?

"Well, it is hard to know exactly what's going on in the other boats but my guess is being content. There is so much to learn from just keeping your eyes open. Look at what the good boats do, talk and ask others how they do things. Never sit still and be content in the boat."

He feels the class has a lot that makes it attractive, both from a sailing point of view as well as in its organisation and events.

"There are a lot of potential 5.5 sailors out there. If the class can get them to have a go in a boat (preferably in a regatta) some of them will be hooked for sure. I think the 5.5 should protect what already is great with the class and should not try to



make the boat something it isn't. The boat has a great feel and encourages both tactics and trim.

"Making logistics around campaigning the boat easier is always appreciated so it is good when the schedule of a season's races is logical and makes it easy to go from one regatta to the other.

"The class is also on the right path in putting emphasis in communicating with the members, especially in social media.

"As I am sailing a modern boat, my points and views are primarily related to that part of the class."

In terms of venues, "The concept of going to nice places for the Worlds is a great asset. For sure it will attract new sailors. There are a lot of other regattas that can be easier in matters such as logistics etc the Worlds and Gold Cup are special and deserve special attention. I can see crews starting to sail the 5.5

by having a Worlds in a cool place in a few years time as the carrot. OK, we will do the more low key events leading up to the major championship and enjoy the road all the way. When we get to the end station we will fully enjoy what once was a distant aim, maybe bring the some family members and make it a thing to remember for a long time.

"Maybe it is because I am doing so much sailing altogether that I especially enjoy going to new places. Bahamas, Curaçao and Pittwater were all once-in-a-lifetime experiences. Going to light-air venues is not a risk worth taking unless it has consistent breezes, like for instance Miami or Palma."

Several high profile sailors have joined the class in the last year, and from Johan's perspective this is good thing.

"For sure it is better the more top-level sailors that gets into the class. We'd rather have a good fight against good sailors that we respect than cruising to an easy win (even though they hardly exist). The best way of getting them into the class is to give them a try in a good 5.5 (preferably in a regatta). If they are the kind of sailor that enjoys this kind of boat, they will love it. Also it is easier if the path to get a boat (new or used) is pretty straightforward."

With the class almost becoming a one-design fleet in the modern category he feels there is a tricky balance between development and sustainability.

"These are very tricky issues. Today the modern division is not too far away from a one-design class. The 5.5 is a really cool boat to sail and for me it would not be so unless it had developed through the years.

"At the same time it takes a lot of time and resources to develop new boats in the class. I am certain someone could



**Left:** Hard at work on the TP52 Platoon  
**Below left:** Trimming the spinnaker on Artemis XIV  
**Right:** One of his proudest achievements. Second place at 505 Worlds in Sweden in 2003  
**Below:** First time racing in the Caribbean, on the 107-footer WinWin at Saint-Barths Bucket (photo Jesús Renedo)

make a faster 5.5 design today and the longer time it takes until someone makes one, the bigger the jump forward will be and the more obsolete the other boats will be."

However, "If we want the boat to be attractive in 30 years time, the open rule concept would have to remain. If there was anything to gain from it, possibly the class could adapt the concept used at the America's Cup that few items not essential for the overall performance for the boat but potentially costly to develop could be one-design (as was the case for the AC class wing arms)."

## HIGH TECH

As well as being a professional sailor Johan works as an IT consultant with big projects such as The Volvo Ocean Race and the America's Cup as well as more and more independent sailing teams at the highest level. In the modern era these teams have become very technologically advanced and while working for them he has specialised in software development and performance analysis. The main focus has been to make advanced systems that are user-friendly and readily available.

The Extensive Performance Analysis Software Package he developed has been employed for projects including the TP52s Ran and Powerplay, the IRC72 Ran, the RC44 No Way Back, the Wally J-One and the Spanish Volvo Ocean Race project Team Telefonica.

"I always have had an interest in technology. The interest led to a Master's degree in engineering physics. I really enjoyed the challenge in one of the toughest educations and it fitted me well. At the same time it was actually a good combination with an Olympic campaign, as higher education is free in Sweden and if you're flexible (if you manage to pass some exams). When that degree was pocketed I continued to another one in economics. Having these two degrees led me into a 'normal' job at a consultancy firm."

However, the CEO of the consultancy firm was a great fan of sailing and the company also became a major sponsor of ASSA ABLOY in the Volvo Ocean Race in 2001.

"The sponsorship was doing technology services and I became a part of the team. Before long I became backup navigator on the sparring boat and responsible for performance analysis. That software package became my first edition for performance analysis and the concept remains pretty much the same all the way until now."

"When going around the world with the team, I got picked up by the America's Cup challenge, Victory Challenge, when we had our stopover in Auckland. There I became race navigator and got the same responsibility for performance analysis. Talk about having a jump-start at professional sailing and performance analysis."

"The fun detail in all this is that throughout my whole life, I actually had a 'normal' job at the consultancy firm for almost a year."

Working with the big boat campaigns, he says it makes sense to explore every avenue of improvement, which includes performance analysis.

"With America's Cup and TP52s, a lot of the preparation is just performance development where the analysis is the important last part of development cycle."

"However, at times it can become very hard to establish hard



facts when you are only doing windward/leeward sailing. The racing in events such as the Volvo Ocean Race is usually a lot more interesting from a performance analysis point of view."

"As the sailing conditions in that case includes so many more variables with all these possible wind angles and a wider wind speed range, the benefit of performance analysis is usually a lot bigger. The differences between the right and wrong sail can be measured in knots but still you need performance analysis to keep track of all these variables."

"A good example of useful performance analysis is establishing a crossover between two different downwind sails. On a typical day when I worked with Team Telefonica was getting out outside Lanzarote in the Canaries in the morning and then spending the whole day alternating between two downwind sails: a A1.5 and a A2. These two sails had an almost similar concept, and an almost similar usage, but a slightly different sweet spot. As the day goes on, all the sail configurations are documented, and once ashore at the end of the day, all the data is analysed and data from one sail is compared with the other. The only outcome of a whole day could be that A2 becomes a better sail than the A1.5 in wind speeds above 14 knots, but that is still worth the effort."

This kind of analysis is more suited to bigger boats, but performance analysis for smaller boats is still important.

"A lot of it is about comparisons. Comparing A vs B. It could be sails but it also could be trying one kind of helming the boat in one race and then try another way in the second race. This obviously goes hand in hand with other analysis and the crew's never ending strive for perfection."

"It is usually more common to do performance analysis in bigger boats for two reasons: Usually you have more people and resources available for analysis and development. Also the probability to measure things accurately (and with more variables) is bigger in bigger boats."

"It is usually just about knowing how to sail the boat in every possible situation."



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**Left:** Johan spent several seasons racing in the TP52 Super Series, including winning the 2009 Worlds and then the 2017 Worlds on board Platoon - Photo: Martinez Studio/TP52 Super Series

**Below:** The second day of the 2020 Scandinavian Gold Cup in Pittwater

## OLYMPIC TEAM

His extensive Olympic experience stands him in good stead as he still works occasionally for the Swedish Olympic team

"When I work with smaller boats (as when coaching in the Swedish Olympic Team), the analysis work I do is usually limited to looking at the GPS track of the sailing boat and comparing that to the wind measurements made on the coach boat. Sometimes it is also a matter of taking photos and taking measurements on these photos but usually it is not any more technical than that.

"I am still involved with the team but I do not have a regular coaching role. They use me as a special resource in meteo, tactics and strategy. That means that at times I jump in as replacement coach, also having clinics from time to time with different team members. I am also responsible with the weather boat systems for the coach boats and work closely with the team meteorologist doing weather analysis.

"As well as the expected work on weather conditions in Enoshima, I have already been monitoring and documenting the weather conditions in Marseille for some time for future analysis.

"For the next Olympic cycle I'd consider getting involved as a coach at a more regular level."

On his extensive plans for 2021, "I will be sailing Fast40, ClubSwan 50, a Swan 115 in the superyacht series. I was supposed to go to the Olympics in Enoshima doing technical support but with the possible restrictions that might not happen now but hopefully I will do some work with the Olympic team in the build-up to the games. Next winter I hope to continue a previous campaign in a Maxi 72 sailing in US and the Caribbean.

"Locally I will be sailing some Star boat racing as well and in my 505, mainly evening races. During the year I will also do performance analysis for several racing boats. I usually do performance analysis on the boats I sail on but also do it remotely for other boats, such as Wallys, Superyachts, TP52s and other boats.

"We also plan to sail the 5.5 Worlds in Norway and hopefully a practice regatta or two.

"Just as last year the calendar is pretty full but I expect some events to be cancelled early on until conditions permit a more normal racing calendar. In the meantime; I have been fortunate to work at

North Sails in Gothenburg. They are happy to have me and our deal is that I will stay and work there until racing commitments prevent me from working anymore."

## AMBITIONS

"I want to continue to develop as a sailor in the future as well. There are so many things to learn. That is why I for instance like sailing the 505 dinghy so much. I'd like to stay in the 5.5 Metre class as long as I can do so with a competitive crew. I expect Kristian to feel the same so hopefully we can continue for many more years even though we anticipate competition to only become tougher.

"I would also like to get involved with a big project again such as a Volvo Ocean Race team. It was a really great experience and I'd like to do it again.

"In terms of sailing at the highest level I realise that I at some time will spend more time in boats where experience is valued higher than physical ability. That means more superyacht sailing, less match racing and little foiling."





# Med focus for 2020... full of hope for 2021



**JEAN-BERNARD DATRY**, THE PRESIDENT OF THE FRENCH ASSOCIATION, EXPLAINS THE ACTIVITIES OF THE FRENCH FLEET DURING 2020 - MORE INFORMATION AT THEIR WEBSITE [HTTP://FRENCH55.UNBLOG.FR](http://FRENCH55.UNBLOG.FR).

**W**ith the Lorient Open Metric and the Atlantic Metric Challenge having been cancelled in 2020, the 5.5 French sailors turned to the Mediterranean sea, which has a later season. Fortunately, the European Championship in Sanremo and the Régates Royales in Cannes were maintained. Four 5.5s, two members from the Yacht Club de l'Odet, one from La Baule, and one from Fouesnant decided to race despite the current health crisis. Two of them went beforehand for a warm-up race at the Noirmoutier Classic, organised at the last minute, to play

in the currents of the Bourgneuf bay with the 5.5 Cybèle II, a 'mockup' of the 12 Metre France I.

#### EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP IN SANREMO

Four French boats made the trip: *Bagheera VIII* (FRA 43 - Evolution 85), *Joker* (FRA 50 - Evolution 93), *Enez C'Las* (FRA 51 - Modern) and *Korrigan* (FRA 19 - Classic)

Light winds and choppy water did not favour these boats over modern boats. In these difficult conditions, the best French was *Enez C'las* (FRA 51), helmed by Nicolas Abiven, of the APCC (winner in particular of the Transat Jacques Vabre, the Admiral's Cup, the Fastnet, the Tour de France of sailing, and the Mumm 36 world championship, multiple French Champion in Dragon) which took 13th place overall, crewed by Sylvie and Yann Delabrière.

A special mention must go to *Korrigan* (FRA 19 - Copponex plan, built in 1961): Gurvan Jaouen (YCO) spent half the week alone because he arrived without his crew from the French Navy, who withdrew due to quarantine.

Despite the health restrictions, the Yacht Club de Sanremo organised a fabulous event, an excellent competition in sometimes difficult weather conditions. Hospitality ashore was perfect with refreshments, white wine and pasta (of course) after each day of racing in an open and spacious but sheltered setting.



**Left:** Bagheera VIII et Korrigan in Sanremo (Robert Deaves) **Top:** Enez C'Las in Sanremo (Robert Deaves) • **Right:** Stormy weather in Cannes (Robin Christol) **Top right:** Joker in Cannes

## CANNES: A STORMY FRENCH OPEN

The proximity of the European Championship in Sanremo and the Régates Royales in Cannes attracted a large number of participants. Unfortunately, the decision to quarantine their nationals coming from France and in particular from the French Riviera made the Swiss and Germans disappear and reduce the fleet. From 17, we ended up at seven 5.5: a Norwegian, a Swedish, a German, an Austrian, three French to run this French Open, traditionally linked to the Régates Royales de Cannes.

Cannes was a classic 5.5 event in the 1990s and the class has been keen, since 2016, to maintain this regatta and organise our French Open there: the Mediterranean is easier to access for our Swiss, German and Italian friends, who guarantee a good participation regatta, and also tourists' visits for crews surrounded by its locality reputed for its Art, artists, museums and exhibitions.

Four days of racing were planned. On Tuesday, pouring rain and no wind. AP over H at 2 p.m. Fleet and crews take refuge in the bistrots of the old port and many find friends who sail in classic boats or on One Tonners.

On Wednesday, the clearer skies allowed three races to be started. The crews were ready to fight each other. So much so, that at the start of the first race, *Wasa* (SWE 65) closed the line to the committee. *Bagheera VIII* tried to start before the committee but *Joker* (FRA 50) hits him and sends him, in shock, to the quarter-deck of the committee boat. *Otto* (NOR 68), the modern of the year, won masterfully ahead of *Enez C'las* (FRA 51), modern of 1994, which produced its best performance. The second race was won by *Otto*, followed by *Wasa*.

During the third race, the wind picks up a little: *Magellan* (AUT 26) broke his foresail rail and *Bagheera VIII* (FRA 43) his foresail Cunningham. *Ali Baba* (GER 84) also returned to port after a collision with *Wasa* (SWE 65). *Otto* won again, followed by *Enez C'las*, *Wasa* and *Joker*.

The third day was stormy and the winds are turning. The race committee is at a loss. After two cancellations, the race was started in unstable conditions; a beautiful run, wind, and a first lap in nice conditions. But on the second run, at the upwind mark, the wind strengthens and turns, and the fleet sail upwind again. Two hurricanes pass in front of the Cap d'Antibes, and, at mid-race, the wind falls. The seven boats are very close, tacking sometimes downwind from the finish line, as the calm returned. The game is tight and *Ali Baba* steals third place from *Enez C'las*. *Magellan* gives up with a hardware problem.

The committee, scared stiff by these two hurricanes, cancelled the rest of the races for the day and sent the fleet back ashore.

On the fourth day, the sun came back with a good Mistral, between 30 and 45 knots. No regatta, but tourists' visits for the crews between Antibes and Saint Paul de Vence.

This last regatta in the Mediterranean was hotly contested. *Otto* won, completing his training for the next World



Championships. *Wasa*, who had not been seen since Bénodet 2017, took a good second place, consistent over all races. Nice performance from *Enez C'las* with two second places. The other Evolutions are, as for them, arranged by age, the boats of 93 being classified in front of the two older boats. At the initiative of the French class, a meal was organised after the awards ceremony at the clubhouse in Cannes, allowing us to talk with our friends, who had come from afar despite the health crisis.

Let us once again salute the Yacht Club de Cannes for maintaining the Régates Royales, flawless organisation and perfect craneage of our 5.5, Stars and Dragons.

## AND WHAT ARE WE DOING IN 2021 IN THE ATLANTIC?

The Metric Challenge concerns all metric sailboats (international rating) and in particular the 5.5 Metre, 6 Metre, 8 Metre and 12 Metre classes. In 2021 this will include a regatta circuit which will piggy back on events, gatherings and races which, given their specific criteria, welcome metric and monotype categories, as well as the classics. The Metric Challenge is to be integrated in regattas and activities of the clubs responsible for their organisation. These regattas (technical and coastal navigation) are to be included in the Metric Challenge. Awards lists will be established after the third and last event.

## AND FOR 2021 A CALENDAR FULL OF HOPE

Six beautiful regattas where we await our European friends

- May 29 to June 3- 1st French Open Metric  
Coupe Georges Le Botlanne 6MJI  
Coupe Karl de La Sablière 8MJI  
Christian Hauvette Trophy 5.5MJI (overall)  
and Pierre Penther Trophy (5.5 Classic).
- June 4 Coastal race regatta Port-Louis – Bénodet  
Start from Port Louis in the morning of June 4  
30 nautical miles (depending on weather conditions).
- June 18-20 La Belle Plaisance in Bénodet  
METRIC CHALLENGE STEP 1  
8M IC, 6mIC, 5.5mIC & Franck Guillet Trophy : 8 m IC
- July 10-13 La Trinité sur mer  
METRIC CHALLENGE STEP 2 & Franck Guillet Trophy  
8 m IC, 6 m IC, 5.5 IC: 4 days of races in Quiberon bay
- 1-3 August No Classic in Noirmoutier (Vendée)  
METRIC CHALLENGE STEP 3: 8 m IC, 6 m IC and 5.5
- 20-24 September - and, of course, the 5.5 French Open  
in Cannes, from 20 (craning) to the 24 September.





# Beautiful boats and classic regattas

**GURVAN JAOUEN** OWNS AND RACES TWO 5.5 METRES, AN EVOLUTION AND A CLASSIC, AND TELLS THE STORY OF HOW THEY CAME TO END UP IN BRITTANY AND RACE ALL OVER EUROPE.

**I** was born in Brest, in western Brittany in August, 15 1980. My family was a family of naval officers, and thus I heard a lot of sailing stories. We're a family of nine brothers, mostly raised by the sea in north-western Brittany. All our discussions were about boats and ships, as was our reading.

I wanted to sail before being a teenager, and chose the navy quite early. I studied mathematics in a Naval College by the seaside in Brest, and passed the exam for the Naval Academy in 2000. Otherwise I would have chosen the merchant navy. The most important thing was to sail, but the Navy also provided me training in other ways.

We brothers went sailing on wooden boats mainly, rowing, sculling, sailing among the rocks along the coast. Sadly our father's yacht sank in the 1987 gale, but we didn't need to go

far to learn. We were reading a lot, nautical magazines, arguing about drawings, characteristics, and building model yachts of increasing quality. In the family, among cousins, were also several Requin, nice wooden racing yachts formerly belonging to the Navy. I once believed that this would be my first yacht.

I split my career in the Navy between Naval Special Forces units and warships. After having been in command of a special naval unit for two years, I spent three years in Paris at the War College in the Special Operations Command. I now have the pleasure of being back at sea, as operations officer (i.e. No. 3) of a helicopter carrier 10,000 times bigger than a 5.5, with a deck double the height of our sail plan. But being back at sea, I'm currently nearly all time at sea for the last two years.

So from the seaside in north-western Brittany, and like in a story, I was born into sailing. I just hope my children and theirs cousins will develop the same sailing passion, as some of them were on a boat well before their first birthday.

## BEAUTIFUL BOATS

I have two 5.5s: *Korrigan*, FRA 19, a classic design by Copponex, launched in 1961, and *Auguste 1er*, FRA 47, the last French Evolution design by Berret-Racoupeau from 1992. Sooner or later, perhaps there will be also a modern.

I got them through good



**Top:** Korrigan in Sanremo  
**Left and right:** Auguste 1er in Cowes in 2018

chance: a Copponex design of that year is excellent to discover the 5.5 and a classic, beautifully built boat. *Auguste* is a surprise, even if she was not in the best condition when I found her. She was the exact Evolution to pair with my classic, same weight, same rig, offering the possibility to exchange sails between the two. *Auguste* is very strongly built, really designed for heavy breeze, she was very suited to the Caribbean and windy days in Brittany.

Both are typical of their age. *Korrigan* is a long elegant vintage classic smelling wood and varnish, *Auguste* is an efficient and strong evolution. Racing is easier on board *Auguste* with her rudder far astern, tacking faster, but *Korrigan* is more comfortable and her attached rudder provides the same excellent upwind lifting effect as a trim tab. You just shouldn't tack too much, because you need more time and boatlengths to regain your speed. Thus you'll need to find some gap to place yourself and trim her conveniently – and that's not so easy every time.

I used to recover some places on downwind leg with *Korrigan*, and to lose some upwind. On board *Auguste* I'm used to regain some places upwind after having been just passed on a long downwind leg.

Not the same way of racing, but the same pleasure.

I was fond of beautiful boats as a teenager, developing an interest in classic boats with a specific focus on the Metre classes. Spending some time in search of an affordable nice wooden racer, I met an old 5.5 Metre in a yard in 2004. She was maintained, but for sale and her owner was looking for a new keeper, not really for money. Thus, I got FRA 19, rechristened her *Korrigan* and started to experiment with this pleasure of sailing a 5.5.

After about a year of racing among various classic boats, often in front, I met the French 5.5 Metre fleet in Bénodet in 2005 and understood that I still had a lot to discover about 5.5s. I believed I was trimming mine not too badly, but obviously I could do better and that is what I'm still trying to do several years later. French 5.5 owners and crews have been incredibly welcoming in a way I had never encountered while racing other classes in France. With a real kind of family sailing spirit – coming from a big family I knew what it was.

One year after finding *Korrigan*, I was appointed to a ship based in Martinique. *Korrigan* stayed ashore in Brittany and I went in search of a nice yacht to sail in these nice waters, and found *Auguste 1er* in Guadeloupe (not in her best mood). I discovered she was an interesting design, having some data of her trials and her beginning in 1994 and 1995, and received some interesting advice from friends in the French class. Not only was she now the same colour as *Korrigan*, but she had also nearly exactly the same weight and the same rig dimensions. I bought her after a trial, brought her back from Guadeloupe with her trailer on board my naval ship, and sailed extensively for two years,

in Martinique and surroundings islands, racing a lot but with my local Caribbean rating getting more weighty race after race.

Coming back to Brittany in 2007, I brought her back as a trial companion for my classic. Both started to race together in 2008, after a refit for *Auguste*. I discovered a funny concept: it could be quite a pleasure to race my yacht, while looking at my other yacht racing. By the way, I already knew that, sooner or later, *Korrigan* will need a break in a yard and I'd need another 5.5 for a while. We were enough brothers to crew both 5.5s, and even more was possible: then my brother Tugdual also got a classic 5.5 in 2010, Favorita IV (FRA 54). It was an interesting and quick trip to buy her in Sweden, coming back to France directly to the race course.

Other than 5.5s I've sailed a wide variety of boats, from old gaffers of various sizes, to a three-masted brigantine. During my time in the naval Academy, I was racing mainly in Surprise, a 7.5m one-design, excellent and seaworthy all-rounder. Her mast was very thin and the best in the fleet still had runners, even looking already a little bit old-fashioned. I used to think about trimming, how to upgrade every detail. I sailed at the same time an old 14m Illingworth, powerful in the winter waves, and spent also some weekends sailing onboard Pen Duick, the 1898 classic gaffer, just before leaving for a year on board the cruiser Jeanne d'Arc. I also raced a while on a modern Open 7.5, crewed sometimes on a 60 ft trimaran in the Caribbean. When not helmsman, I race mainly as N°1 – bowman.

When I came back from my first deployment, I was hooked on the 5.5 and kept on trying new boats, but then always



**K**orrigan, FRA 19, is a truly classic 5.5 Metre, old in some aspects, but still a really good boat. She was well maintained when I bought her in 2004, her heavy frames just changed some years before. She had not been sailing for a while and needed some deck cleaning and some new paint, but she was soon in the water.

She's a really typical design from Copponex and was the last 5.5 ordered by Albert Cadot, the famous 5.5 sailor who ordered the first real 5.5 in 1950 just after the birth of the class. She was indeed the fourth, christened *Gilliat VII* and numbered F 19, following previous *Gilliat* F 1, F 8 and F15. F 1 and F 8 are still known and alive, but there's not much left of F 15, said to be of French design and build. *Gilliat VII* was ordered immediately after F 15 from Corsier-Port boatyard in 1960, on a design apparently enhanced from *Ballerina IV* (Z 37), the gold medalist of that year. But due to health problems, *Gilliat VII* was apparently not raced much. I'm still searching for her detailed history in the 1960s. She seemed to have a quiet life after that, and always looked after. I guess I am her fourth or perhaps her fifth owner.

Her construction is classical, with frames on mahogany and now a teak deck. Her original weight was 1960 kg, with 1250 kg of lead. She has never been really modified; even her mast is an old Proctor mast, heavy but strong and with a shape I like, but the only way to bend it is with the Cunningham. Surprisingly, she has spreaders orientated aft, pushing forward: that helps a little in controlling the mast. The mainsail hook is the classic one, simple and still working well.

Most part of the hardware is still original, such as the two side winches, but I removed the old sheets tracks on both sides in 2008: she already had a self-tacking jib. The shape of her cockpit is the same as 60 years ago, except the mainsail track now cuts it in two, which is very useful for hike when helming. Most of the modern hardware is fitted below deck, which helps her nice looks, I upgraded it step by step to have now a boat unusually rigged when compared to an Evolution or a Modern, but really practical and easy to trim.

Her boom is said to be unique, homemade in 2012. The previous one nearly broke and with new set of sails, I needed something solid, heavy enough but not too much. It now fits her well, but at her beginning of 2012 I started to race having not even the time to sand it to shape nor to varnish it, thus it looked like solid timber for a while.

*Korrigan* likes very light or medium to strong winds. She's not her best in 10 to 12 knots, she prefers around 15 and above. She runs very well downwind: her long stern overhang is really efficient to make her accelerate on waves, while her bow has just enough volume to prevent her ploughing into the water too much. When just sailing, she has proved very quick with wind abeam in Force 3 to 4. She's very comfortable at sea, with smooth movement and the wide opening below deck is a much-appreciated shelter for crew when racing in bad weather.

In the fall of 2008, she had her starboard side rebuilt after her grounding ashore on the rocks – excellent work done by Stagnol's boatyard in only three months. After that, I focused mainly on her rigging and adapted the trim to an efficient racing mode. I also caulked her whole deck in 2008, and after six years ashore. I had a lot of work to get her back afloat: sanded to bare wood, I glued all planks again and got her wet with some kind of steaming system. She spent one month in the water after the races in Sanremo and I just needed to remove extra glue and give her another new coat of paint for this year.



comparing them to the 5.5. I once helmed a J80 in a regatta, but was disappointed about her lack of ability upwind.

But I do like metre yachts. The 6m are in between the 8m and something that's now the 5.5: I fully agree with Nicholson's point of view, they're too heavy for their size. Nice to see, nice to draw, but they're not really sustaining the qualities of the 5.5s. By the way, I love the 8s and 8m racing. I used to say that's a convenient yacht for an admiral or an old captain – I need to forget the passing years.

#### REFERENCE

To keep the class alive and growing, we need to keep on developing and on strengthening our roots, and to let this be known. We do not have an easy course to sail, as we cannot develop in just one way like some new kind of racing boat, advertising on its modern aspect and looking like the most fun thing to sail for a few years. Our class needs more, as we should be some kind of



Left and top: Korrigan in Sanremo • Right: Auguste 1er in Cowes in 2018



reference, with a huge heritage and development to share.

The 5.5s are development boats, so while we need new boats, with new lines and ideas, welcoming new sailors of all ages, we also need to keep our existing boats, and not to forget about the classics and evolutions, which are still attractive to other sailors.

Currently, as a few new boats have been launched or soon will be, I'd suggest that we need a specific focus on the classic, as the trend or fashion of the 2000s seems to be slightly vanished. We need to keep all kinds of 5.5s together, not split them among several sub-classes. What has been done so far is good on this point, just allowing a rating of 5.52 and specific cups.

Moving around the world for regattas is one of the fantastic aspects of this class; the more we travel and display our boats, the more we'll be attractive to new sailors. But as for the boats, we need to keep our roots alive, to keep our nationals and local fleets alive. The combination of that is in the right choice of the venues. Welcoming World or European championships provides some extra thrust to local fleets, helps recruit new crew members, provides a targeted event to re-launch an old boat, etc. As an example, the class has to race a major event in north America, probably in Newport, soon to support the re-growth of the North American and Canadian fleet.

If we keep the fleet alive as it seems to be, if we are able to maintain a high standard of racing, it should remain attractive. The moderns are the most attractive from this perspective. A good way to get sailors interested in 5.5 is to participate as a fleet in the top local events. It was our intent to enter the Grand Prix of the French Naval Academy from 2009 to 2014; but the spirit of this event was not exactly what we were looking for. And it's not so easy to sit between the medium to big IRC racing and flashy painted new one-designs, with new classes backed by advertising yards, even if the boat itself is not very interesting.

This is also why we strongly supported a French Open in Cannes, so we are not just sailing by ourselves, but can display

also our class and yachts in an attractive event.

The wide range of boats is a big part of the core of our class. At the time I was a young classic fanatic, I loved to race against modern elite racers. It's not only the age of your boat that will determine your ranking, but the skills and the spirit of the crew. I believe it's really much more interesting to try to take some places in every race than to be only racing in front alone. Our last events displayed well that a world title is never easy to catch, and never easy to defend.

The racing level is very high: a big part of the interest of racing in this class comes from that. But we also have to be open





**Left:** Korrigan removed from the rocks in 2008 and being repaired in Stagnol's boatyard • **Right:** Auguste 1er in Cowes in 2018 • **Bottom:** Auguste 1er racing in 2011



to all newcomers, coming as new owners or crew members, at international venues and in our local fleets. The advertising job done in Germany by Kaspar and the German Class has proved very efficient.

#### A DEVELOPMENT CLASS

A development class absolutely needs the development of new boats. In France, there has been always a disagreement about which is the best racing system, handicap or one design real-time racing. Metre classes combine both aspects, different boats which you can upgrade, real-time racing with a true winner. The 5.5 Metre has the advantage of a more modern development, due to the cleverness of its formula.

In recent years our boats are said to be really close to a one design. Perhaps indeed they looked like, but they were not. As all Copponex designs of 1960s could look one design, being also close in overall appearance to some Ohlson's designs, from an outsider perspective, but they were not. As an example, *New Life* (FRA 9 – 1955 Camatte design) looks identical to *Korrigan* (FRA 19 – 1961 Copponex design) to an outsider, but their underwater lines are totally different.

It's quite normal to get some trends and fashions around some kind of designs in different periods, having a step-by-step development. New designs in recent years proved that there's room for new ideas, new development and aesthetics: *34ever* (NED 34), *Stradivarius* (FRA 52), *Addam4* (FIN 49), *Cinque-Cinque* (SUI 227), *Marie-Françoise XVIII* (SUI 222), *Wasa V* (SWE 66), *Blue Moon II* (BAH 24). Some have been more successful in racing than others, but the success came mainly from the combination of the right crew and the right yacht. Success needs also skills and time. This kind of consideration is exactly the same when talking about destroyers, frigates or aircraft carriers. Naval development happens through slow progress, several steps and only a very few breakthrough ideas.

#### FRENCH 5.5 SAILING

The regatta calendar is generally focused on Southern Brittany so far, with French metre yachts mainly sailing there, now gathering

under the flag of a common 'Atlantic metre challenge'.

We start around the end of May the until end of September, managing not to clash with local and national events. We used to race every two or three weeks: beginning of June in Port-Louis, end of June in Bénodet, mid of July in La Trinité, beginning of August in Noirmoutier and end of September, moving to Cannes. For a crew, that means around one full month racing a year if you can participate in all events, not including international ones.

The racing season is endorsed by the Atlantic Metre Challenge: its first event, in Port Louis (southern Brittany), is a gathering of all Metre yachts on the western side of France, 8s, 6s and 5.5s. The place is really nice; the organising authority is fully committed in an incredible way, for a full week of racing. As it's not easy to get the right balance between IRC and one-design, the Metre way seems to be an interesting one for the 5.5, as long as we are careful in not drifting towards a specious gathering of old-fashioned yachtsmen. But the variety of the 5.5s can provide a clear answer, with yachts from all ages racing together.

Starting with this one, the fleet moves to next events, towards Bénodet (well-known to the class, the yacht Club de l'Odet being indeed in a way the French fleet's club) and La Trinité. The Regates Royales in Cannes is the closing venue of our calendar: if COVID does not disturb everything at the last minute. An interesting fleet is not difficult to gather; the club is well-known at organising excellent racing and the after race parties are good as well.

#### MEMORIES

All regattas provided some great souvenirs, in local ones as well as international venues. It was in 2004 for the first ones, always beating all other wooden boats upwind in one tack; in 2005 winning a few against bigger classic yachts, and losing every race against the other French 5.5s in Bénodet. Caribbean races were funny, with the natural Caribbean fun, and also due to the bunch of young racers we were in the islands. We needed to travel a lot by





sea to move to different regattas, I've got some great memories of quiet mooring in totally remote places, or nice seaside hotels waiting for your late arrival at the mooring at sunset.

I will not forget my first visit to Cowes in 2007 for the Metre Regatta; sadly the 5.5 fleet was not really there, but I was coming back from Martinique, without a trailer at that time, not yet having a new home, and *Korrigan* had spent two years ashore. When she floated again, a brother and myself crossed the Channel in just seven hours from Cherbourg, sailing with old sails. With a nice south-westerly wind, with the cockpit closed to prevent filling from big waves, the trip was nice. The racing was altered by strong gales, but we'd like the place. My seventh brother was crewing in the middle; and remembers pumping all the time in a very wavy Solent and also of the warm welcome by the Squadron. We were rewarded by several pictures taken by Beken.

From 2008, I started to race my two 5.5 after a refit on *Auguste 1er* when she arrived in France, getting nice sails for both. The French fleet was also following a very nice trend: having our usual events along the southern coast of Brittany, from Bénodet to Noirmoutier, we were also able to race every weekend in the bay of Concarneau. This is when *Korrigan* broke a mooring and went ashore in a sudden south-east gale at the end of August. With the support and advice of 5.5 friends, she entered Hubert Stagnol's boatyard and the starboard side, heavily damaged, was immaculately rebuilt by the beginning of December 2008, just before being deployed for operations. For her return to life, I registered in my first World Championship in Hankø.

*Auguste* and *Korrigan* sailed and raced extensively together until the end of 2012 when *Auguste* decided to have its own rest, not liking a little storm in December that year that made her jib explode, the sheet cutting the foredeck in the middle.

That year 2012 we travelled abroad twice, for the Vintage Yachting Games, where an incredible fleet of classic 5.5 gathered (with my longest protest hearing ever), and to Boltenhagen where I felt once a possibility of grabbing the Classic Cup, pushing comrades to OCS – before being OCS myself when I shouldn't.

I was said – and perhaps looked like – to be always in a rush, running from naval duties to regattas, dealing with the two at the same time. Indeed, were we really in a rush when we boarded the ferry in Rostock to come to Helsinki in 2011, just 15 minutes before scheduled departure time, after driving non-stop from Lorient for 1700 km.

Despite rushing to regattas the few times when left free by the Navy – travelling an average of eight months a year – I met a girl

**A**uguste 1er, FRA 47, is at the transition of Evolution and Modern, typical of the beginning of 1990. She was built by Jean-Pierre Moinard in 1992; he wanted to launch this 5.5 as a new design handing over the old Requin he produced in an upgraded fibreglass version at that time. He also built a 9.5m one-design cruising yacht inspired by a 5.5 but much heavier, under the name of Lokki. He hoped for orders of sister ships to *Auguste*, but none came, probably due to the qualities of Melges series that followed soon after. She couldn't be missed, being bright red and displayed in all the boats fairs in 1992 and 1993. I remember well her advertising when I was a teenager.

Sailed and raced by her builder, she was well prepared, needing some adaptation at her beginning (the mast has been moved backward by few centimetres) but she gained good results in 1993 and 1994.

By 2000, she stopped sailing as Moinard's yard was in some trouble. She was then sold to Guadeloupe where she was painted navy blue and raced a few times but progressively less. I became her third owner in 2005.

*Auguste* has been carefully built and proved to be very strong, but her hardware lacked some care in detail and finish.

She was designed as a medium heavy boat at 1980 kg, with a round hull in order to minimise wetted surface. Her keel does not have any trim tab, but a strange 'elephant foot' shape, originally with very wide winglets. She carries the maximum possible lead – 1,400 kg – at the deepest point possible. Thus, her righting moment is really efficient; hiking is only really needed in much more wind than other 5.5s.

She's also really short, close to be one of the shortest 5.5s at just 8.90 m overall. Her bow and stern are quite full but short, especially the stern, in order to reduce pitch in a choppy sea. This works well, but her stern angle is higher than usual. Combined with her short stern length, this makes her 'sit astern' in waves, especially downwind and she surfs later than most of the 5.5s on the downwind. Her stern wave is then returning above the stern deck, bringing a little bit of water in through the runner and backstay openings.

But we can push her quite hard: on a trip from Bénodet to Brest in 2008, we smashed 18 knots under spinnaker in quite windy conditions, not having any trouble to stay in control.



**Left:** Korrigan and Auguste 1er together in 2009 • **Bottom:** Auguste 1er in 2018 • **Right:** Korrigan in Sanremo in 2020

not disliking sailing and even racing in my strange hatted crew. Perhaps because she was also a naval officer herself, she stood and became my best 'mid-woman'. We got engaged in 2012 and married in 2014. She has really good advice: my red spinnaker reminds me all the time it had to go back to the loft when I did not take her feelings into account enough, having also thrown overboard my bowman for the only time.

In 2013, racing the Europeans in Bénodet could have been a complete pleasure, welcoming the fleet home. The racing was excellent, but I wasn't able to be fully committed to only 5.5 racing. I missed nearly half of the races. I missed the races the following years as well, all calendars being too full at the same time. In 2014, at the end of the racing season, *Korrigan* was damaged alongside in port by a badly manoeuvred barge, hooking the backstay and runners: nothing dramatic, the mast bent and a few stern stiffeners to put back in place, but I was missing a lot of time – also dedicated to my newborn daughter.

I decided to put *Auguste* back to racing mode in 2016, aiming for the Worlds in Copenhagen. After some months of work, going back to bare fibreglass, with a crew of untrained brothers we discovered that she could perform well if well steered and crewed. Next year in Bénodet we tried to improve, but a really bad choice of jib on a really windy day was of a huge cost, with the addition of a bad collision on the port quarter just after an excellent start. Indeed, *Auguste* is a good Evolution 5.5; she just a needed a trained crew.

2018 brought us back to Cowes, with *Auguste* instead of *Korrigan* this time, with our best crew. This was a memorable event, where we missed the Evolution Cup by a forestay failure, on equal ranking. The first race of the Evolution Cup was an original and appreciated introduction to Solent racing: the first

race was cancelled when we were just rounding the upwind mark first in wavy and windy conditions, and when we restarted in the rain and flat waters we managed to win it by a big margin. But the first race is not the last one. The racing was fun, the fleet was nice, the squadron was welcoming, and so too the pubs.

The following year, the birth of my son cancelled all plans of a return to Helsinki, but provided her older sister enough time so sail *Auguste* in all weathers. And in 2020, after six years ashore, sheltered at home, it was really time for *Korrigan* to go back to sailing. She went then to be at the rendezvous in Sanremo, though not her crew at the really last minute.

### SANREMO

I really wanted to come to Sanremo, because year after year what is missed cannot be replayed. One cannot always wait for the best time. I really needed to have *Korrigan* back sailing – and racing after such a long time ashore. If it was not during this summer, it could be possibly delayed by a few years.

We need to have all kind off 5.5s in our venues, to keep the whole fleet alive. The Italian fleet is known for having some very nice classics, so it was a good opportunity.

After several changes, I had a crew, all from the Navy. But I arrived in Sanremo at the very last minute at the moment. I hoped to find some there, which partly occurred for the last races. Should have we met earlier, we would have been really better. I fact, the second choppy day showed clearly I needed a helmsman. In medium to light conditions, a classic 5.5 keeps her course when well-trimmed to prepare for and execute manoeuvres. One just needs to get some room and clear air. I had already raced single-handed from time to time, even getting some nice results but not at this level, and an evolution cockpit is more suitable for that.

### TURNING HEADS

The kind of boat the 5.5 is makes its development attractive, and the class has grown along with it. The boat is good seaworthy boat, easy to handle and easy to transport. The 5.5 is definitely a good size for a young naval officer leaving often at short notice.

They're easy to handle in regattas, just needing a crew of three, sporty enough for the young sailors we were ten years ago, easy to crane and transport once we had the right trailers and cars (I went to Norway in 2009 trailing *Korrigan* behind an inappropriate car – before moving to the bigger one). They are also very easy to sail singlehanded.

Its efficiency upwind is quite incredible, even racing against more modern and bigger yachts. Her downwind ability is in classical mode, but efficient too: it's funny to sail deep downwind in a straight line towards downwind mark in some Caribbean race, while some light surfing yachts sailed the width of the race course, going quick on the water but no-faster to the mark.

The 5.5 Metre is a kind of head-turning yacht, indeed with beautiful lines, either classic, evolution or modern.







# Home to world's oldest racing 5.5



In Finland we have had a permanent regatta programme for about 30 years. It starts in Helsinki in June and ends the last weekend of August. Only one newer regatta has been included to the programme and it is in Turku, 200 km west of Helsinki. But there is no problem because we have a second fleet there, two 5.5s. Both boats are from the period before Helsinki Olympics.

Actually we have an early 1950s renaissance in Finland. Because of the Olympics in 1952 many boats were built here. The total number was 13 and ten of them still exist (#1, #2, #4, #6, #8, #9, #10, #11, #12, #13). Four of them (#4, #6, #9, #12) are in perfect racing trim. Two of them, #1 & #10, are in refit. Important is that the oldest 5.5m in the world is still sailing and last autumn it came to Helsinki, maybe waiting for a renovation. So in future here will be one oldest 5.5s in the world racing, seven boats from before the Olympics in Helsinki.

From the present 1950s-boats racing three are measured and have valid certificates. *Vis-a-vis* has a certificate with original marks and weight and has the bonus rating 5.52, the others *Trial* and *Skylark* have a rating 5.50 because they have the 2% overweight (then the boat can not get the rating 5.52).

Boats from Turku, *Trial* and *Skylark* were active in the early season and *Trial* won all three regattas she sailed. The later season was dominated by *Scatoulitsa 4* in the last three regattas.

*Scatoulitsa* proposed to sail only with two man restricted COVID crews in but all others wanted to sail with three. Only *Scatoulitsa* sailed two-handed with very good results.

Worst regatta was the Champagne Regatta at HSS because there was no champagne.

Later in September *Vis-a-vis* and *Scatoulitsa* sailed two regattas in Helsinki with handicap with other classes.



THERE WAS PROBABLY MORE 5.5 METRE RACING IN FINLAND IN 2020 THAN ANY OTHER COUNTRY. **MATTI MUONIOVAARA** REPORTS.



## RESULTS SUMMARY

### 1 *Helsinki Regatta, HSS, Helsinki, 27-28.6*

1) Trial FIN-4, TPS, Ville Harkke (1-1-1-1-1) 5.0; 2) Skylark L-6, ASS, Filip Blomquist (2-2-2-2-2) 10.0; 3) Vis-a-vis FIN-9, SuPS, Ari Bungers (3-3-3-dnc-dnc-dnc) 15.0; 4) Pohjantähti FIN-12, HP, Juho Peltonen (4-4-4-3-3-3) 17.0; 5) Scatoulitsa 4 Z-69, M, Matti Muoniovaara (dnc-dnc-dnc-dnc-dnc) 24.0.

### 2 *Hanko Regatta, Hanko, 3-5.7*

1) Skylark L-6, ASS, Filip Blomquist (1-1-1-1-1) 4.0; 2) Vis-a-vis, FIN-9, SuPS, Ari Bungers (2-2-2-2-2) 8.0

### 3 *Airisto Classic, ASS, Turku, 25-26.7*

1) Trial FIN-4, TPS, Ville Harkke (1-2-1-1-1) 4.0; 2) Skylark L-6, ASS, Filip Blomquist (2-1-2-2-2) 7.0; 3) DB Kisen FIN-15, DBS, Sam Forsbom (3-3-3-3-3) 12.0.

### 4 *Champagne Regatta, HSS, Helsinki, 8-9.8*

1) Scatoulitsa 4 Z-69, M, Matti Muoniovaara (1-1-dns-1-1-1) 5.0; 2) Vis-a-vis FIN-9, SuPS, Ari Bungers (2-2-1-2-2-2) 9.0; 3) Remi FIN-41, HSK, Olli Kanerva (3-3-2-ret-3-3) 14.0; 4) Pohjantähti FIN-12, HP, Juho Peltonen (4-4-3-3-4-4) 18.0.

### 5 *Viaporin Tuoppi, SuPS, Helsinki, 15.8*

1) Scatoulitsa 4 Z-69, M, Matti Muoniovaara 14:19.48, 3:09.48 2) Vis-a-Vis FIN-9, SuPS Ari Bungers 14.32.45, 3:22.45; 3) Pohjantähti FIN-12, HP, Juho Peltonen 14.42.32, 3:32.32; 4) Remi FIN-41, HSK, Olli Kanerva 15:03.19, 3:53.19.

### 6 *Kruunuvuoren selän Regatta, Helsinki BS, 29-30.8*

1) Scatoulitsa 4 Z-69, M, Matti Muoniovaara (1-1-1-1) 3.0; 2) Vis-a-vis L-9, SuPS, Ari Bungers (2-2-2-2) 6.0; 3) Remi FIN-41 Olli Kanerva (3-dns-dnc-dnc) 11.0.



# Sailing where possible – and a bit of racing



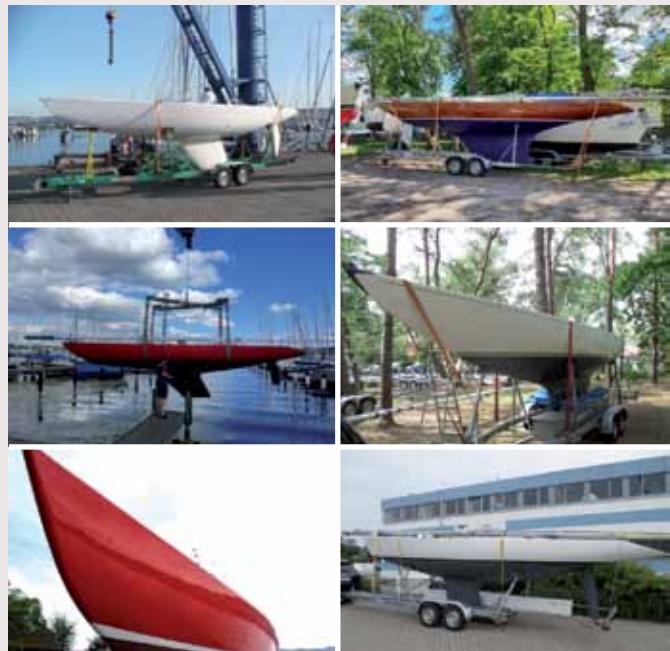
**G**iven the actual circumstances, quite a bit of the racing planned for 2020 had to be cancelled. However 5.5m Metre sailors in Germany gathered for sailing, where possible, whether for improving equipment on board, trying new sails or introducing new boats which had been added to the local fleet.

With the arrival of GER 110 (ex NOR 51), GER 111 (ex FIN 46), GER 112 (ex NED 28), GER 113 (ex SUI 73) and GER 115 (ex NED 15) mainly the waters of Kiel and Berlin were made subject to testing events. To these, also sailors new to the Class were invited. Our regional 5.5m specialists are arranging “TEST it NOW” events, in order to grow interest in the boats. The most recent boat arrivals in Germany have been SUI 148, to become GER 114 and SUI 79, to become GER 117. GER 40 (AUT sail# tbd) and GER 89 (now AUT 22) were sold to Austria and will help growing the racing fleet there.

In August then the first and only regatta of the year took place. Norddeutscher Regatta Verein in Hamburg arranged the Sünnschien Preis for the 5.5 Metres on the Alster Lake. Bright sunshine and good wind provided a nice environment, right in the middle of Hamburg. The daughter of Rudolf ‘Rudi’ Harmstorf (Olympic Sailor with G 17 in Acapulco), presented the perpetual trophies, which Rudi had donated, to the winners. In September it was just cruising for most of us.

The main event in the Germany racing calendar for 2021 will be the German Open at the end of August, at Verein Seglerhaus

**KASPAR STUBENRAUCH** PROVIDES AN UPDATE ON THE LATEST DEVELOPMENTS IN GERMANY.



**Left:** Ali Baba in Thun • **Above:** New arrivals in Germany: GER 110-115 • **Top:** GER 69 Arunga VIII being sailed as GER 69 in Pittwater in 2020



am Wannsee (VSaW), in Berlin. VSaW will be hosting the regatta from the 27-29 of August, Race Courses will be laid out on Wannsee and Havel.

Boats returning from the Worlds in Norway can ask for intermediate storage. Drop off the boat and return end of August, for the races.

The regatta will be count for the ‘5-Nations-Cup’. Registration is already open online on manage2sail.

The VSaW Clubhouse is one of the most impressive Yacht Club clubhouses in Germany. The restaurant is very much recommended.



# Festival of Fives on Pittwater



**F**ollowing on from a successful 5.5 Metre World Championships in January 2020, the Class had a resurgence of interest at the Royal Prince Alfred Yacht Club, culminating in a very competitive 'Festival Of The Fives Week' which included the Australian Championships, the Pittwater Gold Cup and Ladies Helm Race, held between the 28th of February and the 7th of March 2021.

The Australian Championships were conducted over three days, in conditions ranging from light to moderate breeze, on the beautiful Pittwater waterway. The Championships brought together boats of the Modern, Evolution and Classic eras, with the Evolutions being the majority Class (7 boats), two Classics and one Modern.

Day One saw the Championships start in light conditions. Race One saw the start of what was going to become a close contest between *Ku-Ring-Gai* (John Bacon) winning from *Black Magic* (Jamie McPhail) and *Alpha Crucis* (Martin Cross). Race Two saw *Black Magic* come back with a win from *Alpha Crucis* and *Ku-Ring-Gai* with the Classic *Kings Cross* (John Sheehan) a close fourth. Race Three and *Alpha Crucis* got the win from *Baragoola* (Jason Antill) and *Ku-Ring-Gai* with *Black Magic* taking fourth one second behind *Ku-Ring-Gai*.

On Day Two the conditions started light and freshened throughout the afternoon. In Race Four *Ku-Ring-Gai* got the gun from *Black Magic* and *Marotte* (Andrew Cutler) closely followed by *Alpha Crucis* and *Kings Cross*. Race Five and firming favourite *Ku-Ring-Gai* led the fleet home from *Black Magic* and *Rhapsody* (Chris Hancock) then *Alpha Crucis* and *Kings Cross*.

In Race Six saw the breeze settled in at 12-15 knots and, once again, *Ku-Ring-Gai* shone from *Skagerak* (Bob Stoddard) and *Black Magic*.

Day Three brought a fresh 15-18 knot south easterly. Race Seven was *Ku-Ring-Gai*'s from *Alpha Crucis* and *Black Magic*, closely followed by *Rhapsody* and *Baragoola*. Race Eight and

**DAMIAN MACEY**, PRESIDENT OF THE AUSTRALIAN INTERNATIONAL 5.5M YACHT ASSOCIATION REPORTS ON THE SUCCESSFUL 2021 FESTIVAL OF FIVES.

once again *Ku-Ring-Gai* got the result from *Alpha Crucis* and *Rhapsody*, then *Skagerak* and *Black Magic*.

Race Nine and it was all done bar the shouting for *Ku-Ring-Gai* from *Skagerak*, *Rhapsody* and *Alpha Crucis*.

The 2021 Australian Championships Results were: 1 *Ku-Ring-Gai* (AUS 62 John Bacon); *Black Magic* (Jamie McPhail); 3 *Alpha Crucis* (AUS 61 Martin Cross); Evolutions: 1 *Ku-Ring-Gai* (John Bacon); Classics: 1 *Kings Cross* (John Sheehan)

The Pittwater Gold Cup was held in light conditions with a tight tussle between eventual winner *Rhapsody* (Chris Hancock) holding out *Baragoola* (Jason Antill) and *Alpha Crucis* (Martin Cross).

The 'Ladies Helm', held in a dying twilight breeze, with the lead changing times was eventually claimed, for the second year in a row, by *Baragoola* (Felicity Douglas) from *Alpha Crucis* (Anna Cross), *Skagerak* (Lauren Crossman) third and *Ku-Ring-Gai* (Lyndall Bacon) in fourth.

Plans are afoot to hold NSW State Championships in September/October 2021, with several boats looking forward to an end to travel restrictions and hopefully an Aussie assault on Europe, New York and the Bahamas in 2022.

**Top:** Marotte and Baragoola • **Right:** Black Magic  
**Right page, L-R from top:** Marotte, Rhapsody, Alpha Crucis and Ku-Ring-Gai, Start, Baragoola  
Photos by Warwick Crossman, dinghyfeverphotographghy.com





# 2021 Racing Calendar

THE INTERNATIONAL 5.5 METRE CALENDAR IS DIVIDED INTO CATEGORY A AND B EVENTS. CATEGORY A EVENTS ARE THE PRINCIPLE INTERNATIONAL EVENTS ATTRACTING THE MOST COMPETITORS AND FROM WHICH THE 5 NATIONS CUP EVENTS ARE SELECTED. FOR LATEST UPDATES AND LINKS PLEASE SEE: [HTTPS://5.5CLASS.ORG/REGATTAS/CALENDAR](https://5.5CLASS.ORG/REGATTAS/CALENDAR)

## 2021 CHAMPIONSHIPS

6-8 August	<i>Scandinavian Gold Cup, Hankø, NOR</i>
10-14 August	<i>World Championship, Hankø, NOR</i>
<i>[POSTPONED TO 2022]</i>	

## CATEGORY A EVENTS

28 Feb-2 March	Australian Nationals, Newport, AUS
22-24 April	<i>Alpen Cup, Torbole, ITA (5 Nations Cup)</i>
<i>[POSTPONED TO OCTOBER]</i>	
3-4 June	Swiss Open, Spiez, SUI (5 Nations Cup)
5-6 June	Eco-Challenge, Thuner See, Spiez, SUI
19-20 June	<i>Salzammergutpreis</i> , AUT (5 Nations Cup)
24-27 June	North American Spring Regatta, MBSC, Midland, Lake Huron, Ontario, CAN
1-3 July	Hankø Race Week, Hankø, NOR (5 Nations Cup)
27-29 August	German Open, Berlin, GER (5 Nations Cup)
20-24 September	Regates Royales/French Open, Cannes, FRA
1-3 October	Herbstpreis, Thun, SUI
21-23 October	Alpen Cup, Torbole, ITA (5 Nations Cup)

29 May - 3 June	1st French Open Metric, FRA
4-6 June	Tutzinger Halbe, Starnberger See, GER
5-6 June	Italian 5.5 Championship, Cerro di Laveno, Lago Maggiore CVMV, ITA
5-6 June	<i>Bronia Preis</i> , Alster, Hamburg (NRV), GER
18-20 June	18-19-20 Challenge Cetrique - Etape 1, FRA
18-20 June	Enoshima Trophy, UYCT, Gmunden, Traunsee, AUT
3-4 July	Helsinki Regatta, FIN
9-11 July	Airisto Classic Turku, FIN
10-13 July	Challenge Netrique - Etape 2, FRA
10-11 July	<i>Berliner Bär</i> , Wannsee & Havel, VSaW, GER
30 July -1 August	Challenge Metrique - Etape 3, FRA
7-8 August	Champagne Regatta Helsinki, FIN
14 August	Viaporin Tuoppi Helsinki, FIN
23-27 August	North American Fall Regatta, MBSC, Midland, Lake Huron, Ontario, CAN
16-17 October	<i>Sünnschien Preis</i> , Alster, Hamburg, GER

## CATEGORY B EVENTS

5-7 March	5.5mR Ski-Yachting, St. Johann (Pongau), AUT [CANCELLED]
2-3 April	Osterregatta, Thun, SUI, [CANCELLED]
1-2 May	<i>Frühjahrsregatta</i> , Lake Thun, Thun, SUI
10 -16 May	La Semaine du Golfe du Morbihan, FRA
12-15 May	Grand Prix Quillard, Douarnenez, FRA
113-16 May,	TEST IT NOW!, Testsailing & Regatta-Training, Kiel Firth, Strande (Dt. 5.5m KV)
22-23 May	CVMV Cup, Cerro di Laveno, Lago Maggiore, CVMV, ITA





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