



VINTAGE YACHTING GAMES

Since I started sailing FD's on and off I thought Worlds, Europeans, Eurocup and local events I never heard about the Vintage. I met Rudy den Outer, Chairman of the Vintage Yachting Games Organization for the first time in 2011 during the Guelcher memorial. We talked a little and he told me that in 2012 the Vintage would be sailed at Lake Como.

Who doesn't know Dervio and Lake Como! It is one of the venues you always want to spend some time during the season. So my question became how to get there. I found out pretty soon that it would be mission impossible. You have to qualify to attend. The NED-18 crew is not (yet) that good. So I then found out that sailing the Vintage was only for the best FD-sailors in each country.

It also became clear to me in the last couple of weeks that in the FD boat-park a lot of FD-sailors didn't know the purpose of the Vintage as well. So that's why I met with Rudy to gain more information about this IFDCO event.

How, why and when did it start ...

It started as a brain-wave in 2006 while following from my Soling the Dragon Dutch Championship. It irritated me that wonderful former Olympic Classes, like FD, Tempest, Soling and Dragon were discontinued for the Olympics, and no substitute event was offered by ISAF.

So the idea was. Why not doing it ourselves! In the Olympic period most of the classes were nagging about the fact that they did not have influence on the format of the Olympics and on the selection of the teams. This idea could give the classes the opportunity to do it better.



What's the purpose of the event ...

To realize this event a foundation was created with the presidents of the participated classes in a supervisory board. This construction is to guarantee that the ownership remains with the classes and that the classes will be committed. So the Vintage Yachting Games is an IFDCO event like the World Championship is.

The mission of the foundation is:

- To realize every four years an Olympic type of sailing event for the selected teams of a class

- Also the foundation offers a place where the organizations of the former Olympic classes can seek cooperation between them on possibilities like: Combined International and National events, logistics, sharing cost, combined politics and so on, and so on

- And finally the Vintage Yachting Games Organization has the task to document the heritage of the former Olympic classes. The results of this can be looked at Wikipedia. This is an ongoing task since the former Olympic classes are still developing

Who can compete ...

Like the Olympics ... everyone but you have to work for it!

The Vintage Yachting Games aims for a starting line of 20 or more boats per class. To realize this, an intelligent guess is made at the beginning of the four year period on how many countries are represented in the class. This gives a number of how many boats per country will be allowed per class. At this moment it is set to 2 for the FD. The National class organizations have the duty to select their representation.



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Also like in the Olympics the teams are not only sailing for their own glory but to represent their country! Besides the boats per country some wildcards are given.

It's only the second Vintage Yachting Games is the format 'water'-proof ...

Also the Olympics evolved in their format. From a complex system of gentlemen sailing in the early days to a sailor oriented sport in the 2nd half of the 20th century to maybe an audience spectacle in the future. For the Vintage we aim to be a sailing SPORT oriented event where the level of competition between the countries will be as high as possible. The event will be evolving over the years driven by the class organizations (sailors). One of the possible developments for the wider spread classes like FD, Soling and Dragon it might be a possibility to go to one boat per country. With the right support and focus this will give teams a real long term target to work for. But most important the classes must actively give input to these developments

Countries who are interested to host the event have to place a bid. How does that work and work out for them ...



Direct after a Vintage Yachting Games countries are teased (via the classes) to bid for the Vintage over 8 years. For 2016 this was done early 2009. Than later (late 2010) a formal request for proposals is issued by the Vintage Yachting Games Organization to the countries and class organizations. After the proposals are in, the supervisory board selects the next Vintage country. The date is announced during the Vintage and thus available for the International calendars four years in advance. The voting process for 2016 is in process at this moment. Although not all votes are in yet the probability for Weymouth is very high. Furthermore a letter of intent for 2020 from Douanenez (FRA) is already arrived.

So it looks like we have the interest of major organizers and continuity on that front is guaranteed

Is the Vintage interesting for the classes and sailors ...

From my point of view it is! For the classes it gives exposure to the International sailing world. Do not forget that the former Olympic classes still form the largest cross-section within the International

classes and a representation in many countries in all continents. These classes are far from death! And as stated above cooperation between the classes can work beneficial for them especially in cutting cost and improving quality at this time.

For the sailors, most events aim for large fleets and good/many social events. The Vintage aims for a large number of countries per class and although there will be good social events the sailing will be paramount. It will give once every four years the best sailors per country the opportunity to battle it out for GOLD. Besides that it will give teams an alternative for an Olympic campaign in a wider range of classes than the Olympics.



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What should classes do together more than just the sailing the Vintage Yachting Games ...

As we discussed earlier classes can organize events together. E.g. this year the Soling and FD have both their World championships in the US. Only at different times and different locations! When the calendars are more synchronized in the future the logistics could be easier. Put one Soling in a container together with four FD's and everybody is happy. E.g. I can imagine me combined Worlds in 2016 for FD, Tempest and Soling at Weymouth just before the Vintage.

Also International politics can be discussed among the classes to strengthen their position at ISAF or at National level.

What kind of competition is the Vintage ...

The Vintage is an Olympic type of event. Where the

best teams, per class, per country will represent not only themselves, but also their country.

During a Vintage the quality of sailing and race management will be the most important factors.

What about sponsorship ...

Sponsorship will be more difficult to obtain at this moment. In my opinion combined high quality events will lower the risk for the sponsor as well as it will increase the exposure

A staggering 275% more competitors this year how did this happen ...

We have tried to communicate the event as much as possible to the classes and the sailors. At this moment there are entries from almost 20 countries and from Australia, Africa, North and South America and Europe.

Do you see further growth ...

Absolutely! In quality and quantity. In 2008 we had the Europe, O-Jolle, FD, Soling and Dragon involved. For 2012 the 12' Dinghy, Tempest and 5.5 Metre will participate as well. For 2016 the Yngling will join and probably the class(es) discontinued after this Olympics. Also since the purpose of the event will be more and more communicated the level of competition will rise.

Where and when will the next VYG be ...

Officially this will be announced at Lake Como, but there are clear pointers in this interview

Famous last words ...

Do not wait to step into the Vintage Yachting Games. The FD is a class who always embraced new ideas and developments. And that's why they are still going strong!