

Development programme expands



SIX countries have started new Optimist fleets or have greatly upgraded them with IODA help in recent months.

- **Nicaragua** and **St. Vincent** have introduced Optimists for the first time,
- **Sri Lanka** and **Kenya** have developed fleets of modern GRP boats, and
- **Uganda** and **Samoa** have increased their fleets by over 50%.

And an two-month instructor training programme has provided a major boost for the new fleets in the southern Caribbean.

New builders in Australia, India and Ireland

After a long period in which no new countries acquired their own Optimist builder **THREE** builders have gained approval of their prototypes in recent weeks.

Australia: Kulmar Boat Building Pty. Ltd.

India: Praga Marine Pvt. Ltd.

Ireland: David Harte

There are now Optimist builders in twenty five countries worldwide to meet the demand for the average 3,300 new boats bought annually.

Nicaragua - starting from nothing

Which comes first: boats or training?

The idea of introducing Optimists to this central American state came jointly from **Juan Maegli**, who introduced Optimists to neighbouring **Guatemala**, and **Eric Poncon**, an enthusiastic Frenchman now resident in Nicaragua.

With a local producer of marine ply as a sponsor Eric chose the wood/epoxy Optimist as the most economical way to start. Spars, sails and fittings were more of a problem so IODA did a deal: if Eric could get ten hulls built, IODA would sponsor all the rest.

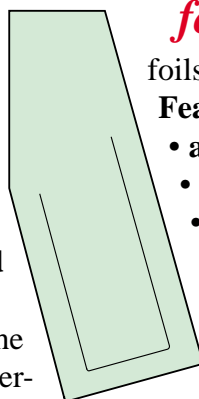
The next need was to train local instructors so IODA agreed to fund an extended visit by Argentinian coach

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One-design foils planned

As forecast last year (online at [www.optiworld.org/optiworld 50.pdf](http://www.optiworld.org/optiworld50.pdf)) and discussed at the Technical Workshop in Corpus Christi, the IODA Technical Committee has published proposals for tightening the one-design specification of the Optimist daggerboard and rudder.

The objective is, as with the standardisation of the hull in 1995, to eliminate highly priced “wonder-



for 2004/2005

foils” and promote low-cost racing.

Features proposed include:

- a single rudder shape
 - tight specification of GRP laminate layup
 - wooden option confined to commercially available plywood
 - thicker longer daggerboard
 - ban on carbon-fibre tillers & extensions
- Proposals are still very much subject to

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IODA Development & Training

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Gonzalo "Bocha" Pollitzer. The following extracts from his report paint a fascinating picture:

"During the first 3 days we received the container with the rigs and fittings together with lifejackets, and a bunch of other sailing stuff. We had to put the fittings to the 10 plywoods, clean and arrange the place we were given next to the lake.

The sailing itself was organized like this. In the mornings we had from Managua kids from the German, American, French and other schools. The afternoon was 12 kids from Granada. We even had to teach them how to swim before we could take them sailing. I feel both activities were wonderful. It is really nice to teach young kids how to sail only for fun and not being afraid of the water, and giving them a chance to practice such a nice sport. Actually it was my very best experience as an Optimist coach. These 12 kids were afraid to get into the water when we met them, and after two weeks they were all sailing alone in the Optis."

Plans for 2003 are to build another twelve boats and establish similar projects in El Salvador and Costa Rica.

Sri Lanka

The story from Sri Lanka is almost as dramatic.

There the motivating force is **Lalin Jirasinha**, treasurer of the Yachting Association who represented his country at the 2000 Olympics. Over a year ago he wrote:

"Our main constraint is the lack of equipment. 5 training boats were built many years ago and are the only available boats that can be used for training. We would be thankful if you could help."

Discussions with T.P. Low, president of the Singapore S.F., led to Sailboats Enterprise agreeing to supply five



refurbished Optimists. IODA gave a 20% subsidy under its "6 for 5" scheme.

Success breeds success and, almost as soon as these new boats were in use Lalin managed to get funding for a further eleven brand-new boats. Again IODA gave a 20% subsidy, this time in terms of funding seventeen new sails from North Sails Sri Lanka so that, in Lalin's words, "all are alike". And by passing older sails down the fleet he can upgrade "the training Boats which has sails with holes and sticking plaster!!"

So now Lalin has a three-level training programme and is looking for help to train instructors

Two months in the Caribbean

Optimist sailing in the Caribbean has been progressing well since boosted by the 1999 Worlds in Martinique, with new fleets in Barbados, Grenada, St. Lucia and, this year, Bequia/St. Vincent. Several of them have been helped by 20% grants towards



purchases of boats and equipment.

This year IODA sponsored a two-month extended instructor training programme in the South Caribbean with short courses in each country, including Trinidad, culminating in a mini-regatta in Grenada.

As well as coaching instructor skills, coach Fernando Alegre ("Happy") from Peru reviewed the structure in each island group to ensure the best use of facilities and equipment. IODA paid travel and fees, with accommodation being sponsored locally.



A mini-regatta was held in Grenada on 25/26 January. Two sailors were invited from each of the other islands to give "Happy" the chance to give his coaching apprentices valuable experience in observing and fine tuning proper Optimist sailing and racing skills. Then fourteen of the group attended the Schoelcher regatta in Martinique to test their new skills against the much more experienced sailors of the French Antilles.

East Africa upgrades

The IODA African Championship, now in its third year and attended by eight countries in 2002 has proved a major incentive for African sailing.

Last July Kenya participated for the first time, liked what they saw and decided to upgrade their fleet of older wooden boats with ten new GRP Optimists. On the understanding that the programme would be open to the children of non-sailors, IODA sponsored a further two

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Foils - continued from page 1

modification: they will be debated at the Annual Meeting at the Worlds and then submitted to the ISAF for approval in November. If approved they will become official rules from 1 March 2004 but foils to the older specification may still be first measured before 1 March 2005.

The proposed specification of the laminate for GRP foils will be as follows:

Mould side gelcoat
200 Woven cloth
200 Woven cloth
800 mat
Foam core 13/60
800 mat
200 Woven cloth
200 Woven cloth
Mould side gelcoat

and the materials specification:

Woven cloth 200: Cloth of woven or otherwise biaxial applied skeins of continuous E glass fibres
Mat 800: Chopped strand mat of E glass fibres, 800 gr/M ² (+/- 10%)
Foam core 13/60: Durable, non absorbent closed cell PVC foam. 13mm* (+/- 10%), 60 Kg/M ³ (+/- 10%)

* Note that 12mm nominal specification is permitted since it falls within the 10% tolerance.

Wood will only be permitted on GRP foils for the stop battens.

The specification for wooden foils will be that only a maximum of three layers of commercially available plywood will be permitted. Manufacturers will, on request, have to supply a sample and specification sheet of the plywood used.

Why change?

Class Rule 1.1 of the Optimist Class remains as stated thirty years ago: “To provide racing for young people at low cost”.

The difference between “standard” and “high performance” foils adds around 10% to the total cost of a racing Optimist. And the most expensive foils found on the internet (“hand built to perfection”) are an incredible 35% of the price of such an Optimist.

Those prices are in the country of manufacture. If “the best” foils have to be imported because the specification is too complex for local manufacture, this can add 50% or more to the price in taxes and distribution costs.

Grandfathering

It may be that the new foils will not be as stiff as the best foils presently in use (which may or may not be

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Naaix

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those currently sold in some markets for over US\$750!).

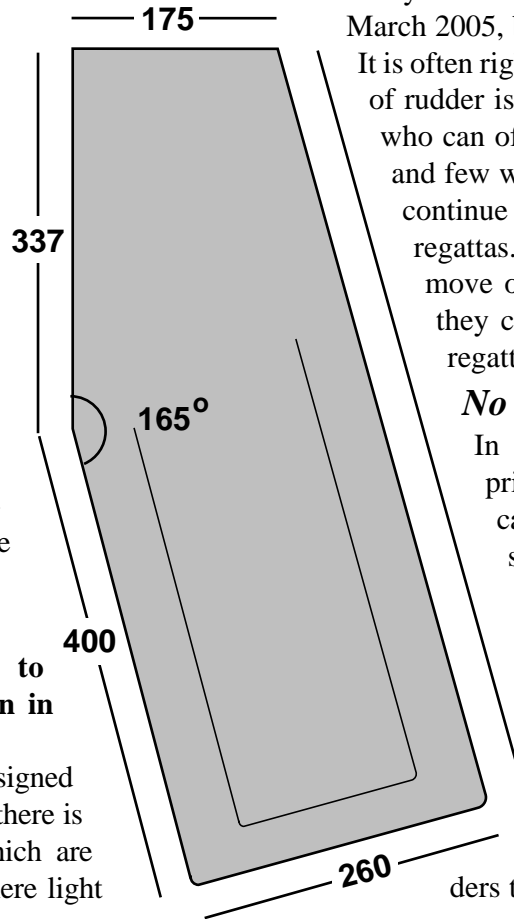
To encourage the introduction of the new foils it is therefore proposed to increase the maximum thickness by 1mm to 15mm, and to increase the maximum length of the daggerboard by 13mm to 1080mm. It is also proposed that foils used at the Worlds from 2006 and IODA continental championships from 2007 will have to conform to the new Rules. It is possible (though not part of the proposals) that charter foils from a single manufacturer may become mandatory at these events.

The Rudder

“Sculling”, use of the rudder to increase speed, is a major concern in most centreboard boats.

In the Optimist some rudders are designed to make this as easy as possible, and there is evidence that it is these rudders which are chosen by top sailors for regattas where light winds are expected.

IODA is therefore proposing to introduce a rel-



atively vertical rudder which will, again from 1 March 2005, be the only permitted shape.

It is often rightly argued that the present design of rudder is very reassuring to novice sailors who can of “scull” their way out of trouble, and few will be too worried if such rudders continue to be used at club-level novice regattas. But serious sailors will want to move over to the new shape as soon as they can in order to practice for major regattas.

No more broken fishing rods!

In yet another action against over-priced gear it is also proposed to ban carbon-fibre tillers and tiller extensions. Rumour has it that these are sometimes made from broken fishing rods and cost next to nothing but one would never guess it from the prices charged! In future both tiller and tiller extension will be made of aluminium tube, except that for wooden rudders they may be made of wood.

Remember: “racing for young people at low cost.”

Nautivela

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Fewer Sailors at Europeans from 2004?

The IODA Executive is recommending a reduction in the size of teams permitted at the IODA European Championship from 2004.

The reason is that the Regatta Committee believes that it is not possible to provide "the highest quality racing" - the stated objective of all IODA Continental Championships - with fleets of the size they have reached in recent years.

Eighty sailors on a start-line is regarded as an absolute maximum, in line with the criteria used for Olympic qualifying regattas. And three successive starts are the maximum that can be achieved: the possibility of major wind-shifts and the problems of general recalls make four starts impractical.

So total numbers must be limited to 240 sailors. Yet the record is 292 and IODA continues to expand.

Traditionally at the Europeans a minimum of three places per nation are reserved for sailors "of the opposite gender", and historically girls make up 34-38% of the fleet. Since they are racing for a separate prize it is desirable that they have a separate start.

So the ideal limit seems to be 160 boys and 80 girls.

Objections

At the 1998 AGM when this subject was last debated, some delegates pointed out that other Optimist events did have more sailors on the start line. But sailors at the

Europeans are a select group and unlike other events there are very few inexperienced skippers who are not actually on the start line.

Two separate race courses were also suggested and this was achieved in 2000. But:

- not all venues have enough suitable water
- not all venues can supply two properly equipped top-level race management teams, and costs are increased
- more support/rescue boats and coaches are required to cover the two courses
- the international jury has to be split between the courses. Additional judges would also increase costs.

A "closed" Europeans?

Some delegates argued for non-European sailors to be excluded. However it has always been IODA policy that continental championships should be open to all member countries (when the supply of charter boats permits) and it would be regrettable if other continents closed their championships.

Perhaps more importantly the Europeans is the great goal for those non-Europeans, especially female sailors, who do not qualify for the Worlds.

The proposal of the IODA Executive is to limit entry per

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Olimpic

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member country to:

European Members:

Seven sailors, max. 4 of the same gender.

Non-European Members:

Four sailors, max. 3 of the same gender.

For background information the entry last year in Portugal was:

	European	Non-European
Boys	132	41
Girls	71	20

But the number of European sailors of both genders is normally higher when the event is in the middle of Europe, the highest entries having been 193 boys (Slovenia 1997) and 111 girls (Italy 2000).

IODA Oceanian Championship

Samoa, October 7-14

52 sailors from 9 countries

As usual this biennial championship, in the absence of the New Zealand first team, was a battle between Tahiti and New Caledonia. But the Cook Islands are rapidly improving. First time participants were Papua New Guinea.

Results:

Open

1. Teiki Hacheche Tahiti
2. Corentin Guegan France*
3. Gael Blanquart France*
4. Ewen Morin Tahiti
5. Sebastian Lescadieu France*
6. Malo Leseigneur France*
7. Vaimiti Rigal Tahiti
8. Scott Davies New Zealand
9. Jan Sijp Cook Islands
10. Michael Langley New Zealand

Girls

1. Vaimiti Rigal Tahiti
2. Sally Whitmore Australia
3. Sophie Merkens Cook Islands

* New Caledonia



*Teiki Hacheche
Oceanian
Champion and
12th at the
2002 Worlds*

Tebsail

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Regatta Results

Dubai International



Rebecka with Saeed Hareb
“All these sailors will now go back to their respective countries and spread the word of peace.”

European Opti Team Cup

Berlin 26-27 November

16 teams from 13 countries

- | | |
|-----------|----------------|
| 1. Poland | 4. Russia |
| 2. Italy | 5. Denmark |
| 3. Sweden | 6. Netherlands |

Euromed Malta

Malta, December 19-21

- | | |
|------------------------|--------|
| 1. Matthew Fleri Soler | Malta |
| 2. Benjamin Borg | Malta |
| 3. Lisa Ericson | Sweden |

Orange Bowl International

Miami, December 27-30

184 sailors from 3 countries

- | | |
|--------------------|-------------|
| 1. Jesse Kirkland | Bermuda |
| 2. Kyle Rogachenko | USA |
| 3. Carlos Teixidor | Puerto Rico |

ASEAN Optimist C'ship

Singapore, Dec. 29 - Jan. 5

52 sailors from 7 countries

- | | |
|----------------|-----------|
| 1. Alvin Yeow | Malaysia |
| 2. Sarah Tan | Singapore |
| 3. Scott Glenn | Singapore |

Australian Open Nationals

Adelaide, January 3-11

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------|
| 1. James Murdoch | G. Britain |
| 2. Malo Leseigneur | France* |
| 3. Pierre Lallemand | France* |
| 4. Tom Brewer | Australia** |
- * New Caledonia
** New South Wales

Dubai International

Dubai, January 21-24

- | | |
|--------------------|-------------|
| 1. Rebecka Harding | Sweden |
| 2. Lorenzo Carloia | Italy |
| 3. Astrid Zweistra | Netherlands |

Juniors

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------|
| 1. Abdulhakim Bin Dasmal | UAE |
| 2. Fredric Jacobs | DIMC |
| 3. Zeyad El Bokl | Egypt |

Team:

- | | | |
|----------------|----------|----------|
| 1. Netherlands | 2. Malta | 3. Egypt |
|----------------|----------|----------|

Semaine de Schoelcher

Martinique, Feb 25 - Mar 3

78 sailors from 15 countries

- | | |
|------------------------|--------|
| 1. Nathalie Zimmermann | Peru |
| 2. Tania Zimmermann | Peru |
| 3. Sofian Bouvet | Switz. |

Winner

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Giulietti

Click for link to website

Nordest

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Secretary to start building?

Rumour has it that Robert is to start building a wooden Optimist.

This is based on the fact that he and Helen Mary became proud grandparents in October.

The IODA Technical Committee's expert opinion is that if he starts to build now the boat might be ready in time!

Australia - Nationals in Adelaide

For the first time ever the Australian Optimist Nationals were held in the east of the country.

Shortage of charter boats (Kulmar Boatbuilding had not yet started production) limited the entry to 25 boats but the fleet included sailors from four Australian states as well as visitors from four overseas countries.

Optimists in the Galapagos

Salinas Yacht Club, Ecuador is forming an 'Escuelita' on Santa Cruz Island in the Galapagos National Park..

'Escuelita' (little school) is their word for a special project to run introductory courses for children of non-sailors. The first such project in the seaport of Manta, 95km from Salinas, has been a great success with 22 sailors from the programme participating in the Nationals.

Just watch out for the turtles!

The Optimist World

Bahamas - a family tradition?

"We have missed a complete generation of developing sailors at our sailing club." is the frank admission of Francisco de Cardenas. But the Royal Nassau S.C. has now acquired eleven Optimists to remedy the situation.

And one of the new owners is the grandson and great-grandson of the team which won the Star Class silver medal in the 1948 Olympics. Maybe a tradition can be re-built

Georgia to enter the Europeans

No, Florida can't enter a separate team! The Georgia which has joined IODA and will participate in the 2003 European Championship is the former USSR republic on the Black Sea .

40% increase in Angola

With an improved political situation Angola is expanding its Optimist fleet rapidly. With 55 boats already sailing in three centres, a further 22 boats have been delivered in recent months. The African state participated in the Worlds as long ago as 1981 and there are hopes that they will be able to travel again soon.

McLaughlin

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Luis Miguel's travels

One of the lesser known aspects of IODA's work is the inspection of builders, usually undertaken by Luis Miguel Horta I.M.

Luis is employed by IODA on a part-time basis and spends up to 100 days a year:

- checking prototypes and production at new builders
- checking prototypes from new moulds at existing builders
- conducting scheduled inspections of all builders.

In the fifteen months to March 2003 he visited almost half of all Optimist builders in the world, from Russia to New Zealand, as well as attending three IODA championships.

His mission is simple: to ensure that the Optimist you buy is identical to every other Optimist in the world.

How many member countries?

Optiworld is often asked how many countries are members of IODA. Unfortunately the answer depends less on the new fleets than on collecting subscriptions, as any country which has not paid for around eighteen months automatically ceases to be a member.

One which has recently 're-joined' IODA by negotiating payment of its outstanding subscriptions is Yugoslavia (Serbia & Montenegro).

So theoretically IODA now has 98 members but it would have 108 if everyone paid!

NOTICES

Propulsion in heavier winds

A suggestion that the Sailing Instructions at IODA World and continental championships should suspend RRS42 when wind strength exceeds 12 knots has been postponed. The subject will be discussed at the Regatta Workshop at the Worlds in Gran Canaria.

Unofficial support boats

Race Committees and Juries at this year's IODA World and continental championships will be asked to take firm action against any boats within the prohibited areas which are not specifically permitted.

Plaques not valid

The following plaque numbers are *not valid*.

114523 - 114542 and 114768 - 114780

Anyone finding hulls, probably in South America, with these numbers is asked to contact the IODA secretariat.

Improved Accommodation for Asians

Following concerns expressed at the accommodation proposed for the IODA Asian Championship in Mumbai, Rabi Ahuja has negotiated rooms at a 5-star hotel one km. from the shore venue *at no extra cost*. Details and revised Notice of Race are linked from www.optiworld.org/ioda-03calendar.html

Lange

Toni Tio

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Optiparts

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Optimist Calendar 2003 - something for everyone!

This year Optiworld has decided not to produce a printed calendar. Our web page:

www.optiworld.org/ioda-03calendar.html with over 20,000 visitors a year has made it almost redundant. Instead we will look at some events of the (northern) spring and summer.

Is travel necessary?

If you are a keen Optimist sailor and your parents can afford a foreign holiday for you this year, then you will probably want it to be a regatta abroad. But it is not true that you cannot succeed without frequent visits to big regattas. Among the most successful teams today are the Croatians and Spaniards who rarely, and the Chinese who never, go abroad more than once a year.

and qualification isn't!

If you qualify for the Worlds, Europeans or North Americans, where you go may be decided for you. But if you don't or your parents are generous enough to fund more than one event, there are dozens of other regattas to choose from.

Easter:

The best 15 Americans from each country, north and south, have the chance to participate in the IODA South American Championship. But if they don't qualify there is a great regatta in **Mar del Plata** Argentina just one week later. Or why not come on over to Europe? East-West travel is often cheaper than North-South. The best northwest European sailors usually go to **Braassemmeer** for which you have to qualify, and the keenest may stay on in Holland for the **United 4**. But the giant 600+ Easter Meeting in **Garda** does not require selection and, despite rumours, the winner of Garda often beats the winner of Braassem later in the season. A good alternative, with lower living costs, is **Portoroz**.

May/June:

If you can escape school this is a period of great regional regattas. Balkan sailors have the **Port Bourgas** Regatta or the **Tomis Trophy**, and there are the **Opti-spring** and the Dutch and Belgian Open Nationals at the other end of Europe.

More relaxed (and more attractive to parents - Venice in Maytime!) is the **Trofeo Rizzotti** team-racing.

For Asian sailors the two regattas in Singapore give chance to see why they sail so fast, and for the Caribbean the

Scotiabank in St. Thomas is a Mecca.

So you didn't qualify?

OK, so in July the top 13 per nation are off at the Europeans or the Worlds. But there are plenty of alternatives. **Flanders Youth Week** is timed to coincide with the former, the **German Open Nationals** with the latter.

August is the season of national championships - and your chance to beat the 'rock-stars' back from the big events! Good timing means that you could make a great holiday out of the British plus the Irish Nationals or the Hungarian plus Czech, with time to drive between them.

Team Racing to finish the season?

The two great events are the **GrandOptical** for the European club champions and the **Opti Team Cup** in Berlin which allows national teams. Again if you don't qualify how about the Polish event? After all their national team won Berlin last year.

North Sails

Click for link to website

International 470

Click for link to website

International Laser 4.7

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IODA Development & Training

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boats. Word spread quickly and neighbouring Uganda applied to upgrade its ten-boat fleet with a further six boats, one sponsored by IODA. Both countries will also be assisted to attend the 3rd. IODA African Championship.



Samoa

Following the successful IODA Oceanian Championship IODA donated two of the charter boats as part of a major upgrade to the local fleet. Other countries in the region which have benefited from grants include Cook Islands and Papua New Guinea.

Grants Available for 2003

IODA has doubled the number of member countries over the last twelve years and is committed to bringing the benefits of sailing to young people worldwide.

It offers limited financial aid to "newer" countries in three areas.

- **Free boats - the "6 for 5" scheme**
Countries seeking to start or enlarge Optimist fleets can apply for one free boat for every five bought. The boats may be bought from any approved builder, must be owned by an association, club or other "not-for-profit" organisation, and must be available to the children of non-sailors. Alternatives such as free sails will be considered.
- **Coach-Training Courses**
For newer Optimist sailing countries and regions IODA subsidises the travel and fees of expert instructors to train local coaches.
- **Regional regatta grants**
To encourage participation in regional regattas IODA offers free entry and/or travel for certain countries to send sailors to continental and regional regattas for the first time.

Poland shows the way on sponsorship

Piotr Winkowski, president of the Polish Optimist Association reports what is probably the best sponsorship achieved by a national Class.

The manufacturers of Nivea, following a trial run in 2002, will be sponsoring 300 Optimists for school use, the top-20 national squad and a ten regattas, both school and top level.

As IODA itself found with the famous Nesquik sponsorship which funded the development of the "IOD95" one-design hull, commercial sponsors are less interest-

ed in funding the elite than in really mass coverage. It is also essential for them to have an ongoing relationship with the same Class representatives and to know that projects have the backing of the National Sailing Association.

Sport in the former Comecon suffered badly when state sponsorship virtually disappeared and Piotr and his team are to be congratulated on their success in finding new funding.

