

**Report to ISMA
by the
International Six-Metre Classics Committee
August 1998-July 2002**

In 1998, the European Classic Championships were held at Cowes, England, under the flag of The Royal Yacht Squadron. At the AGM, which followed, the Classics were recognised as requiring special coordination and a Classics Committee of the International Six-Metre Association was formed. The members elected were Eero Lehtinen (Finland), Marina Perrot-Carpeneda –Secretary (Italy) and Tom Richardson (UK), with Tim Street (UK) as Chairman. As it was agreed that all the “classic” owners present felt that the Bahamas were unsuitable for old Classic sixes, it was proposed to hold a separate Classic World Championship in Hanko, Finland in 2000, on a once only separate basis.

The Committee therefore set out to track down and invite all the classic six metres in the World. In the event, the committee were able to locate the following boats: Argentina 1, Australia 2, Belgium 2, Brazil 2, Denmark 6, Spain 6, Finland 27, France 25, the UK 11, Italy 9, Holland 4, Norway 6, Sweden 12 and Switzerland 24 (+ 2 British boats). Subsequently contact was made with North American fleets, through Scott Rohrer and Matt Cockburn, both based in Seattle on the West Coast and 12 Canadian and 35 American boats were reported, giving a grand total of around 185 boats in the world, either in racing condition or undergoing major rebuilds or refits. Subsequent research has increased this figure to around 272 boats in racing order or undergoing rebuilds out of a known World-wide total of 357 registered boats.

As a result, in the main through the work of the Classics Committee and Eero Lehtinen in particular, Finland received 52 enquiries and 35 classic entries for their Worlds, of which 32 actually competed, together with 15 moderns. Sadly, there were no British entries.

At the same time, work commenced in tracking down all the other six-metres in the world and approaches were made by the committee to other countries. As a result, detailed lists were provided by Tim Street of some 210 British six-metres, registered since 1907 and a deeply researched list of all the French boats, was prepared by Phillippe Burban, showing all known names and numbers, together with the boat's present positions.

Meanwhile the book *Sexornas Jakt*, by Ingvard Liewendahl, Harald “Affe” Alftan and Pekka Barck, which had received input from members of the Classics Committee, was published in Finland, showing not only all the Finnish six-metres but, also, a full list of all Scandanavian boats. These three lists became the basis for much future research.

However, at the World Championships at Hanko, the founding committee was dissolved and a new Committee, under the chairmanship of Hans J. Oen, owner of Elizabeth X, was elected.

No reports by this committee have been seen.

Meanwhile, further work continued through the good offices of the original committee. As a result, full lists of six-metres were researched and circulated to known owners in the following relevant countries:- Spain, Belgium, Holland, Norway, and Brazil, showing those boats known to be still in existence and in sailing condition. Much encouragement was also given to many owners and potential owners, to restore their boats and return them to racing.

At the AGM held in St. Tropez, during the European Championships in June 2000, a new committee was elected. Current members are Pasi Kaarto (Finland), Peter Konig (Germany), Hans J. Oen (USA) and Jorgen Jensen (Denmark), together with Tim Street (UK) as Chairman. In addition Matt Cockburn (USA) was co-opted, as no reports had been received or contact made with the elected USA member and Edmond Capart (Monaco) was also co-opted, to represent the North Mediterranean coast.

Since then a lot of further work has been done in locating and recording six-metres around the world. In particular, Andrew McMeekin, Secretary of the ECU, has prepared a very full list of some 1750 registered six-metres. This list inevitably contains a considerable amount of duplication, since many boats changed names, numbers and countries, sometimes frequently. Steady cross checking and subsequent research, by the current Classics Committee, has reduced the numbers of known registered boats to around 1490, although this does not, as yet, include all North American registered boats.

At the St. Tropez AGM, much discussion centred around the possibility of building replicas of Classics. Since there are known to be many un-rescued six-metres in existence around the world, in general the Classic fleet was totally opposed to the concept, although it was accepted that there was nothing against replicas racing as moderns initially. An acceptable rule was, therefore, reluctantly, agreed and incorporated into the minutes of the meeting.

Subsequently there has been much increased enthusiasm for the classics around the world. Research by Peter Konig has produced a fairly full list of all registered German sixes, of which some 48 are known to be sailing under the auspices of the Freundeskreis Klassische Yachten. Matt Cockburn has produced a provisional list of all USA and Canadian Sixes, Tim Street has researched and produced a definitive list of Australian sixes and Luigi Lang of AIVE has done considerable research into Italian sixes, as a spin off of his Twelve-Metre work and has prepared a list of those Italian sixes known to be for sale.

In addition, Torben Schmidt Graef, of the Prada America's Cup Team and his brother have both restored sixes in Brazil and a further two pre-1914 sixes have been located, racing with the classic fleets in New Zealand.

In September 2001, the Yacht Club de Monaco called the first meeting of the World Council of Classic Yacht Associations, at which Peter Konig and Tim Street represented classic six-metres, together with Iain McAllister representing the International Classic Yacht Association and the 1925 Fife six-metre "Sunshine".

The aim of the meeting was to get everyone interested in the preservation and racing of classic yachts together. The ISAF are particularly concerned as the EU in Brussels have brought out certain safety rules which, in effect, render illegal most classic yachts, in particular, SIXES! The meeting was opened by Olin Stephens himself and chaired by the Chairman of ISAF, Paul Henderson of Canada, himself the former owner of several classic sixes.

Enthusiasm has intensified this winter and between February and this July, within Europe, some nine new potential owners are known to be looking for boats, several of whom attended the Coupe de Mediterranee 2002, at the Yacht Club de Saint Tropez, in May, for further consultation and discussions. Edmond Capart, of Monaco, has nearly completed the restoration of MON 49 Mirage, with a new wooden mast. In the UK, Maida and Nancy have recently changed hands and are to be restored to racing trim. Jan Nygaard of Norway has purchased Miranda II from Italy. She is to be restored fully and renumbered NOR 86. Brian Pope in England has bought Joanna (ex Avalun VIII) for restoration and, within Europe at least four other boats are known to be under negotiation.

From known contacts, it is thus anticipated that there may be around twenty classics at St. Tropez next year, many of them new restorations. Meanwhile discussions, lead by Edmond Capart, are being held with CIM and the Yacht Club de Monaco, with a view to enabling sixes to take part in the full Prada series. Edmond Capart, together with Tim Street, is also holding discussions with the appropriate Yacht Clubs, to put together a series of six-metre regattas, along the Mediterranean coast between St. Tropez and Imperia, starting with St. Tropez in May. Agreements, in principle, have already been reached with the Yacht Club de St. Tropez, Cannes and Monaco.

Tim Street,
Chairman, ISMA Classics Committee.
2nd July 2002.