

What a worlds...

This month some 170 teams from 18 countries will converge on Kiel for this year's edition of the ORC World Championship. Even accounting for a little attrition among a crowd this large, the turnout will still set a new record, probably around 150 boats. This is the fourth year in a row that entries to this annual event, the official ISAF Offshore World Championship, have surpassed 100.

Some may look at this as a validation of popularity for the ORC rating system, but in all honesty it is more about event organisation and the ability of the organisers at Kiel YC working with ORC to create an event of unique appeal to a broad range of keen sailors in the offshore genre. It is more a validation of the ORC's venerable Green Book of championship event standards and its relevance to creating an event that can balance competitiveness with practical appeal than it is about the rating system itself.

But it's not easy: in the four years that ORC and its event organisers have had to contend with 100+ entry fleets, there have been race and event management issues. But each year gets better, and at Kiel, with its long history of organisation of Kiel Week – Europe's largest regatta – there is a perfect nexus of race management talent, plus the planning skills and facilities to accommodate large fleets. The competitors know this already, which shows in the high turnout.

The role of the ORC Green Book is to help event organisers have answers ready to all the questions so that competitors feel comfortable knowing what they are committing to for their week of sailing. Kiel YC organisers have done this extremely well, offering logistical features that help teams who have brought their boats in from as far as the Med and beyond – this is not the car-top dinghy scene, these are big boats that need real big boat support.

For example, Kiel has provided for longterm storage discounts between Kiel Week in June and the Worlds in August; that is why the previous event is so chock full of entries... It is more than the ORC German Championship but rather will act as a 'pre-Worlds' test event. Trailers and support vehicles have a place on site, as do all boats moored in two specified areas in Schilksee Harbour, the large enclosed marina that was the site of the 1972 Olympics,

and which has enough size, depth and flexibility to accommodate everything from GP26s to deep-draught TP52s.

Organisers have also – two months out – provided complete information on those small but important details that can eat up preparation time at an event. These include clothing orders, catering orders and delivery, sail repair options, chandlery and spare part supplies, weather forecast sources, paper and electronic chart sources, medical and first aid services, even local sources of sunglasses (fingers crossed we'll need these in Kiel).

In short, almost every detail has been thought through and provided for. And for the first time an integrated online regatta management system – Manage2Sail – is being used to compile and organise all entry information, including crew lists, scratch sheets, ratings and other data on the entered teams. This online event presence has also helped attract entries, who see not only all the features of the event, but the organised way that it is presented, and they too then want to come to the party.

With three divisions competing for three trophies, the Worlds is really three separate events. Class 1 will be worthy of attention, with past champions like Alberto Rossi on his TP52 *Enfant Terrible* trying to repeat the win he earned in 2012 in Helsinki on his modified Farr 40; meanwhile, the new Carkeek 47 *Platoon*, with the well-decorated Markus Weiser in charge, will give a hint at how the latest-generation HPR-style boat does in the ORCi fleet. Another new design comes from Judel-Vrolijk, Anne Grete Eidsvåg's new HH42 *Ra Glede* from Norway.

Class 2 has even more competition, with probably the greatest diversity in designs between smaller fast designs like Farr 30s to larger, usually well-sailed cruiser-racers like the XP44s. Maurizio Cossutti's newly designed and built Next 37 *Audi Quattro* (see next issue) will be one to watch in this category.

And Class 3 will be the largest class, nearly half the fleet, who will initially be sub-divided into two groups to make things more manageable. Having so many contenders will make for extremely close racing in this class.

Good luck to all...

Dobbs Davis



Although she is not light in terms of an HPR design, Maurizio Cossutti's latest ORC design, the Next 37, has quite a bit of TP52 flavour to her and is definitely an attempt to lean a little harder on the fast button and a little less hard on rating. She will be on the line in Kiel