

Spanish lessons...

As our *Seahorse* Spanish correspondent Carlos Pich noted in the last issue, the 2015 ORC Worlds brought to Barcelona the highest level of competition seen in Spain since the country was a hotbed of sponsored IMS programmes over a decade ago. It was clear that the top few teams in each of the three classes took this event 'quite' seriously, armed as they were with high-level talent, plentiful new sails and many days of pre-regatta training.

This was seen strongest in Class A, where the eventual winner was a multiple world champion who mostly sails his Farr 40 on the US circuit, but routinely brings out his 2008 TP52 for ORC events. Alberto Rossi on *Enfant Terrible* won in 2011 in Croatia, 2012 in Helsinki and last year in Kiel, but had a difficult time winning his fourth title at this event against arch-rival Marco Serafini on his newer TP52 *Xio*; only a single point decided gold from silver.

Around the buoys Rossi was strong, having his skills honed in the Farr 40s, while Serafini's team put their speed to work in the two coastal races.

'This has been the toughest worlds we have raced in this class,' said Rossi. With *Xio* rating faster than *ET*, and tactician Vasco Vascotto calling the shots in what became his 25th world title he added, 'Our goal was to stay as close as possible to *Xio* and wait... sometimes it's good to come through from the back!'

So the TPs finished 1-2 in Class A, but third was a production design, the Swan 45 *Rats on Fire*, two points ahead of Jean Jacques Chabard's GP42 *Team Vision*. This French team were sailing their first ever ORC event and it took a while for them to digest the multiple

rating schemes inherent in the ORC system.

Classes B and C were dominated by pro-sailed production racers-cruisers, confirming that the software not the hardware still has a big influence on success. The top all-amateur team in Class A was fairly deep at ninth place, and in Class B in 10th, but a little closer to the top in Class C... in fourth.

Another success was the size and diversity of participants. Unlike a decade ago when these were mostly Med-based events with predominantly Italian and Spanish entries, the number of entries at 98 this year was double that seen in those days, as was the number of nations represented (22).

It is an interesting observation by Pich that the ORC system was 'coming of age', in having some sticky measurement allegations thrown around in Barcelona – some infractions duly resulting in prescribed penalties, with no action necessary in others. This is indeed a sign of a rather complex rule being pushed to its limits, with stricter measurement controls brought in this year to protect the integrity of the event – and its champions.

On the topic of class management, the debut of ORC's CDL concept for class splits also had some success, dampening down some of the advantages the fastest upwind boat has on inshore courses. For example, Class B winner Pedro Campos had to forego his usual dominance of the class split formed at 600 sec/mi GPH, where his Synergia 40 *Movistar* usually shines, and chose instead to charter the 2015 ORC European Champion *Natalia*, a Club Swan 42, since under CDL *Movistar* is too fast to squeeze into the top of Class C. Two weeks later at Copa del Rey, where CDL splits were not used, Campos went back to his Synergia 40 and led a pack of three sisterships at the top of ORC Class 2...

Class populations aside, it could be argued that Barcelona helped show that use of CDL did allow smaller boats with higher performances to have a chance in the crowds: the new Italia 9.98 *Low Noise II* at 34ft (see pg42) remained fast enough that it could stay in the top 5-10 places on the water among its bigger rivals.

Matteo Polli did make some interesting analyses in his design of *Low Noise II* in the wake of improvements made to ORC treatment of Residuary Resistance.

Polli devised a parametric study to investigate the beam to draft ratio in upright and heeled conditions, and the ratio between displacement and sail area.

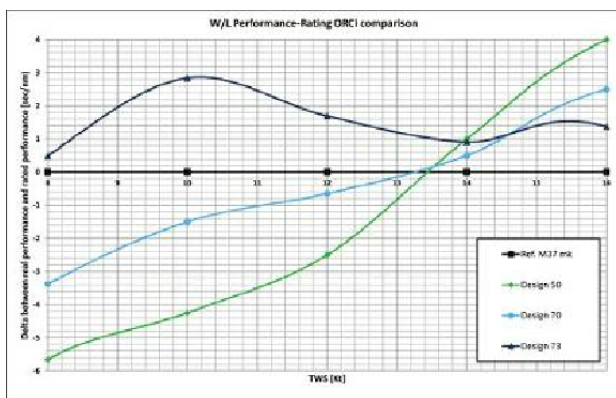
Three design families were developed with equal sail plans, stabilities and appendage geometries, but differing in the hull shapes and displacements, with the results summarised in the graph on this page (*left*).

Polli comments on ORC's influence on design: 'Designing for handicap racing is always complex, but real performance is paramount in a small-sized yacht for a shot at clear air.'

'Groove' is also important to Polli: he said that in *Low Noise II* he 'wanted to design a boat that was easy to sail, because a boat that spends more time sailing close to its maximum potential will have an advantage that is not rated by any system.'

Meanwhile, since finishing with his AC work at BAR, Jason Ker has resurfaced to give some thought to improvements to the ORC VPP's aero model. He feels the crossover rating optimisations between IRC and ORC mean the VPP now needs more work, because there's still too much typeforming to allow a boat optimised for one rule to be fully competitive in the other. Maybe one day we can have these differences minimised to the point that a well-designed boat can be competitive anywhere. Nice idea...

Doobs Davis



Top: another world title for Vasco Vascotto as Alberto Rossi's TP52 *Enfant Terrible* clocks up its own fourth title in five years. **Matteo Polli** trialled three design families for *Low Noise II* (above) using the M37 as the benchmark. The choice was a derivative of design 73 and the result was a world championship in Class C