

The X One Design Class Association
Marketing Committee

Minutes of the Meeting held on 9th December 2009

Present:	Ted Roose William Norris Mark Hall MOS FitzGerald John Miller Nick Dorley-Brown Barney Sandeman Neil Payne	Chairman, Itchenor XOD Class Captain Former XOD Class Captain Hamble Lymington Yarmouth Parkstone Cowes
In attendance:	Pam Priscott	Marketing Committee Secretary

1. Apologies for absence

Paul Fisher (Webmaster) and Mark Jardine (Media Representative).

2. Minutes of the meeting on 29th September 2009

The minutes of the last meeting were approved by the meeting and signed by the Chairman.

3. Opening Remarks

The Chairman welcomed Pam to her first meeting of the Committee. He reported that he had thanked Tina Scott at the Class AGM for her work assisting the Marcom. Mark Jardine has asked to stand down from the Committee due to his commitments in other areas. He has offered further assistance and expertise should this be necessary. The Chairman said he would prioritise items on the Agenda depending on how the meeting progressed.

4. Budget for 2010

The Class Captain confirmed that £2,700 was available for the Marketing budget for next year, an additional £800 should be forthcoming from four sailmakers for advertising on the website. Marcom Sec to liaise with Class Sec on the progress of collecting these amounts. **Action: Marcom Sec**
The Chairman reported that there has been an anonymous donation to Class funds of £2000 on the strict understanding that this is to be used for Marketing purposes. He was asked by the Committee to thank the donor. **Action: Chairman**

Following the success of the Webmaster in charging fees for appearance on the Class website, the Class Captain asked if other suppliers would be prepared to take space in the handbook or website next year.

It was agreed that there were opportunities to attract more funds and that there should be some co-ordination between those approaching suppliers to avoid confusion and duplication of effort.

Action: Chairman

5. Review of Strategy Document dated October 22nd 2007

The Chairman stated that the purpose of including this item was to review whether the strategy, first drawn up in 2007, was in need of modification and to consider whether implementation to date and planned for the future fulfilled the strategy.

It was agreed that the class statistics should be brought up to date and circulated to all officers of the Class to ensure there was consistency in our future utterances. **Action: Chairman**

It was agreed that the survey of inactive boats should be updated to include participation in racing in 2009. As before, the information from Divisional Captains will be the basis for recording future intentions of owners and as before the Class Historian will be asked to verify records where required. Subject to the latest findings the Class Captain may be called upon to encourage reluctant owners to 'sail or sell'.

The new analysis was requested in time for the next meeting of Marcom, which is to be in early Feb 2010.

Action: Nick Dorley-Brown and Class Sec

The meeting agreed that there was a need for owners to give an early indication of their intentions about participating in the Centenary Regatta. This will enable the Class to gauge likely levels well in advance and take whatever steps may appear appropriate to ensure a successful event. A number of ideas were tabled for incentivising participation should that be necessary. **Action: Chairman**

The role of the Marketing Committee was discussed in relation to the period following the Centenary. It was noted that the Way Ahead Committee would be focussing on that and that two members of the Marketing Committee are members, so that a marketing contribution would be made. It was agreed that the priority for the Marketing Committee for the time being should be activities up to and including the Centenary.

It was agreed that attendance by the Class at one of the Boat Shows should not now be a priority for the marketing programme.

It was suggested that a priority should be to promote the idea of purchasing a new XOD. It was felt that the existence of new boats at the time of the Centenary would send out a very positive message about the health of the Class. It was noted that an article about Lallows' offer to build was featured in XOD News.

In order to incentivise a new purchaser, the Class Captain was asked to consider whether the sail number 200 might be offered out of order to the next person to build an X. **Action: Class Captain**

The consistency between the sponsorship programme planned for the Centenary and the marketing objectives for the Class was discussed.

Specifically it was questioned whether the Class should have a sponsored spinnaker with a sponsors logo. It was pointed out that this would only be sold to a sponsor if they also contributed to the costs of event management and publicity for the Class, therefore directly benefitting the Class.

5. Arrangements for Media and VIP Reception

Neil Payne reported that in making early enquiries about a venue for the Media and VIP reception he had discovered that facilities for an evening gathering at the Squadron were already fully booked for 2011. However he had discovered that there was a slot available for the Thursday morning, which would coincide with the early start planned for the X fleet that day.

Although opinion was divided, the majority view was that a morning reception would not attract enough Media and VIP attendance as many would be occupied on the water. (A subsequent enquiry of a PR Consultant has confirmed that it would not be good timing). Also members of the Class who would be expected to host such an event would themselves want to be on the water at that time.

However, it was agreed that it would be a very good opportunity to entertain friends and families of the X Class. Currently there is no such activity included in the provisional centenary programme drawn up by the Centenary Committee.

(The idea has subsequently been referred to the Centenary Committee to consider the benefits of such an occasion and how it might be funded).

Neil was requested to proceed with enquiries for an evening reception for Media and VIP guests at the various locations that had been suggested by Stuart Quarrie.

Action: Neil Payne

6. XOD News

The Chairman reported that this is almost ready to go to the printers. The delay has been caused by difficulty raising advertising. He had thought 4 full pages had been sold but ended up with just half a page. This has subsequently been increased to 5 half pages, giving a shortfall of £544 of income over costs. Neil Payne said that Ratsey & Laphorn were keen to have involvement and he would contact Andy Cassell. Marcom looked through the draft copy brought by the Chairman who said that 10,000 copies would be printed. He asked that members of the committee assist by using their influence to persuade clubs to distribute via club mailings. A formal request detailing steps to be taken and information required would be emailed to members in the New Year. It is intended that XOD News will also be available as a PDF suitable for appearance on websites.

7. Memorabilia for Centenary

Nick Dorley-Brown felt it would be a lost opportunity if we did not produce memorabilia to celebrate the Centenary. The Chairman said there are always problems over buying, cash flow, sourcing, and keeping stock. Nick Dorley-Brown said the task should be given to someone who specialises. He will make enquiries of people who might perform such a role. The Chairman reiterated that whoever takes this on needs to take on the risk and do the handling and income for the Class should be a very secondary consideration.

Action: Nick Dorley-Brown

There was discussion about books. Richard Field is producing his own history of each boat and the Class Captain and David Da Cunha will be producing a book about the activities in the Centenary Year from around the Divisions, Cowes Week, other special events. It will cost in the region of £20-£50.

MOS Fitzgerald asked what would be done about the handbook in the Centenary and he was asked to come up with ideas particularly for the cover

Action: MOS Fitzgerald

8. Class Clothing

John Miller said he had been disappointed with the uptake of the new clothing. However he was pleased to see how many of the new Class ties were on show at the AGM. An e mail had been circulated to encourage purchasing for Christmas. More flyers were required pre-season and pre-Cowes and John Miller asked that all Divisional Class Captains should circulate e mails.

It had been intended to distribute Battle Flags to all participants in Cowes Week 2009, paying for them out of the entry fee. This idea was dropped because of the large rise in entry fees.

It was felt that this is a good way to gain publicity for the Class and that the idea should be re-instated for 2010.

Action: John Miller

15. Under 25

Neil Payne had been disappointed by the uptake. The criteria have been changed and now just the helmsman needs to be under 25. It was desirable that each division should sponsor an entry and find a boat. It was suggested that divisions could have a selection process, inviting young members of their clubs to come and race X boats with the opportunity to win a prize of free entry and moorings at Cowes Week. An older owner may be happy to go out with a younger helm on board.

An issue last year had been the lack of time for Divisions to build such arrangements into their programmes, which should be taken into account for 2010.

Action: Neil Payne

9. Progress on Distribution of Sponsorship Proposal

Neil Payne asked at what point should we stop looking for a major sponsor and concentrate on smaller sponsors. The Chairman was hopeful that a major sponsor might still be found but that at the start of the next sailing season, smaller sponsorships should be considered. Neil Payne said if there are small sponsors then appropriate packages should be developed.

John Miller asked for an electronic version of the Sponsorship Proposal to be sent to him.

Action: Marcom Sec

MOS Fitzgerald wondered if all companies starting with an X had been explored. The Chairman had looked at companies that have a Centenary in the same year. Barney Sandeman said that Pantaenius have sponsored classic yacht regattas and have just restored a classic yacht. MOS Fitzgerald thought Waitrose could be approached, very strong in the South of England, strong on quality, and they do a lot for their employees. Perhaps their Employee of the year could be invited to race at Cowes. Whisky companies were mentioned and John Miller via a contact will try to put the proposal in front of the Sultan of Brunei.

10. Fund Raising Events by Divisions

Could the divisions be encouraged to run fundraising events to help fund the Centenary? John Miller thought that would be asking for big money. The Chairman said if each division could raise £1000 that would help enormously, but this would need to be done this coming year. MOS Fitzgerald thought that it would be more favourably received if it targeted a specific item rather than general funds e.g. the bringing of X1 to Cowes. It was felt that a levy on subscriptions would not be a good idea.

10. Commercial Mailing and Privacy Policy

The subject was raised to see if there are any problems with this. None were reported. It is important to stress to members that the distribution is done by the Class Association and that contact details are not passed to suppliers.

7. Publicity opportunities for 2010

In preparing XOD News a number of articles had been written which could be used for press releases. These include The Numbers Are Up, Lallow building new boats, Renovations.

Key dates for 2010 were listed on the back of the XOD News and it was agreed to add in the Westmacott regatta in Portsmouth.

The quest for sponsors could be communicated to members via the website and via mailings from Divisional Captains.

Date of next Marketing Committee meeting: TBA for February 2010

Signed _____

Date _____