

## European Vice-chairman's Report

*Laszlo Matyas*

The 2011 sailing year has been quite a mixed one for the Class in Europe. On the positive side we must say that all of our regatta, that is, the European Championships, the Europa Cup and Master series were run successfully (see separate the report and analysis on the Europa Cup series). The European region also ran a well attended and well received clinic in conjunction with SailCoach, as a pilot project, right before the L4.7 European Championships in Workum.

On the other hand, we were facing during the year quite a few challenges and difficulties. For most of this year the Office was under-staffed, no full-time secretary was available for the European region, so the Office was running late for many tasks, and missing several (mostly internal) deadlines. This resulted in some tensions between the Office and the European Executive, and also, more importantly, between ILCA and some of our external partners. After a proper job search, involving the Chairman and the Vice-chairman, finally Emily Argall has been hired over the summer, and took on the task of European Secretary, with a proper job description. Parallel to this, Zac Hillier went on from full-time to work only part-time with us (as he announced that he would leave the ILCA office in the near future). This means, that the Office currently is still understaffed relative to the required workload. (This, however, had a positive side as well: we made some savings in our budget.)

Moreover, the well known legal dispute between LPE and several partners had a considerable negative impact on our budget (see Appendix 1 for details). As a result, at this stage, it is unclear when the European region will be in a position to make any further appointments at the ILCA office.

Now turning towards our future, let me summarize here the five most important tasks ahead of us in 2012, as far as I can see them.

- Help and promote with active participation and intermediation that LPE and its partners get to an agreement on the disputed matters. This is of paramount importance for both the Class and the European region.
- Actively look for sponsorship opportunities for the Class and the European region in order to (1) reduce our financial dependence from LPE and, also, (2) to be

able to start new projects and endeavours (like, for example, expanding the clinic pilot project, etc.). The work on this has already started, an appropriate reference file/dossier has been prepared for this purpose. *[Comment: Currently one of our proposals is under consideration by a potential major international sponsor.]*

- Improve the efficiency of the Office, making as smoothly as possible the transition to the new European Executive Secretary (job search, appointment, but also financing, etc.). For details please see Appendix 2. *[Comment: While the Office is understaffed, it is hard to avoid a much deeper than usual (and desirable) involvement of the Executive(s) with the daily operations of the Office. On average –off season– I spent about 10-12 hours weekly dealing with different ILCA-Europe related matters. During the season this can be much more]*
- Be on the ground. At least one member of the European Executive should be present on the most important European events, including the Europa Cup and Master series, in order to get first hand knowledge of the events, but also to help the smooth run of these regatta. *[Comment: I attended many Championships and Europa Cup regatta this year (as well) and I can say that both the organizers and the participants did appreciate the presence of somebody from the Executive. Sometimes I could even be useful.]*
- Improve our PR work and the awareness about the class. This should include more (on site) reports on the ILCA web-site about our own events and, more reports sent to sailing sites and magazines, first of all, to the ISAF web-site. *[Comment: I posted a large number of daily reports on the ILCA web-page, from all the events that I attended (also a few on the ISAF web-page). Perhaps the other members of the Executive could also do likewise in the future.]*

I would kindly ask the participants to the EAGM 2011 to elect European Executives who have time, knowledge, willingness and ability to deal with the above mentioned tasks and challenges.

## **Appendix 1**

### **Summary of the Financial Relationship Between Laser Performance Europe & ILCA**

This is a short overview of the standard yearly financial transactions between Laser Performance Europe and ILCA.

#### **Plaque Fee**

Out of the current plaque fee 9 GBP goes to ISAF (Based on the average selling price. All classes pay 1.5% on the cost of the boat.). 8.00 GBP goes to the European Region as contribution for the European Secretary (called: "European Secretary Practice"). The rest goes to ILCA, constituting an important income in ILCA's overall budget.

#### **European District Fee**

For over 20 years the Districts of the European Region have been receiving 10 GBP per boat sold by Laser Performance Europe to the Laser dealer of the corresponding European District.

The money collected goes on an account, which each European District has at ILCA. Most of them use the money to partially finance the international membership fee.

#### **Situation in 2011**

Due to the dispute on legal rights and related matters between Laser Performance Europe and Global Sailing, LPE refused to provide ILCA with the European sales figures. (In fact LPE has not bought any plaques in 2011 so far. My own "speculation" is that they might have (a) bought the ISAF plaques through LPE US subsidiary and/or (b) overstocked plaques the previous years, etc. We have no way to know.). Therefore, neither the "European Secretary Practice", nor the "ILCA contribution" or the District

October 28, 2011

fees were paid by LPE to ILCA so far, creating a substantial deficit in the budget and cash flow of both ILCA and the European Region.

None of the above transfers, to my best knowledge, have been backed by formal agreements, rather they were maintained by informal memoranda and “legalised” by the long practice, which in British law usually have the force of a formal contract.

This is, as far as I understand, where we stand at this moment.