

# 505 Europeans 1969

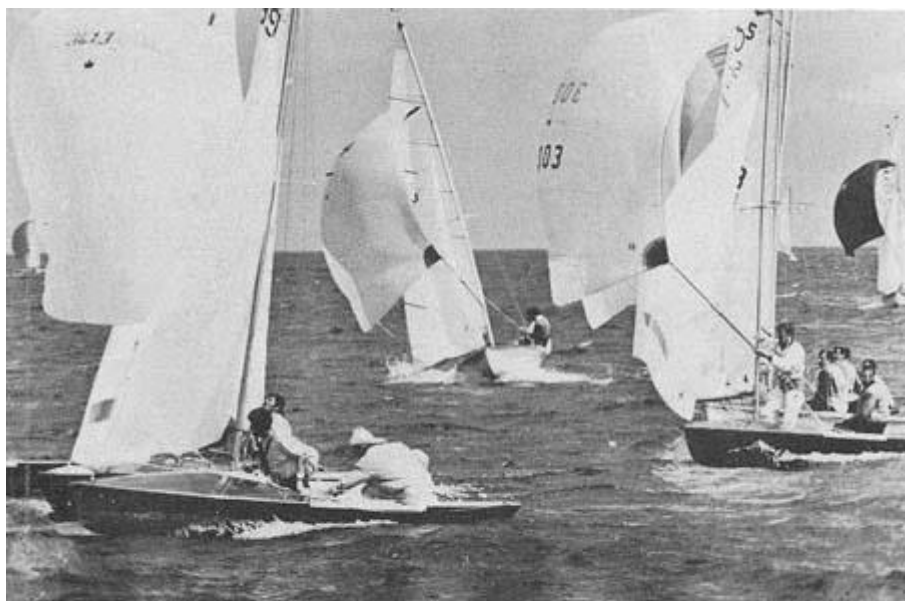
## Variable conditions but consistent performances.

Mike Fitzpatrick report from Dun Laoghaire

Dun Laoghaire, the mail boat terminal and yachting harbour in Dublin Bay, was the venue for the 505 European championship from August 15th to 23rd. Once again Britain's Derek Farrant was a convincing winner, this time with his new man Mike Fountain on the wire.

The third week of August was characterised by fast moving fronts bringing boisterous but changeable winds and everything from bright sun to torrential rain. Farrant stamped his authority on the fleet in all conditions, although he was pushed hard in the heavier going by the eventual runner-up Jan Eppers, the Danish champion, and the Bath brothers, for some time top dogs in Sweden.

The field was a representative and star studded one with the cream of Europe supplemented by entries from as far afield as Hong Kong and the Argentine. Unfortunately the international team racing scheduled for the Wednesday was blown off and is now to be sailed in Paris in October but the day to day races' showed a tendency for different nations to prosper in certain conditions.

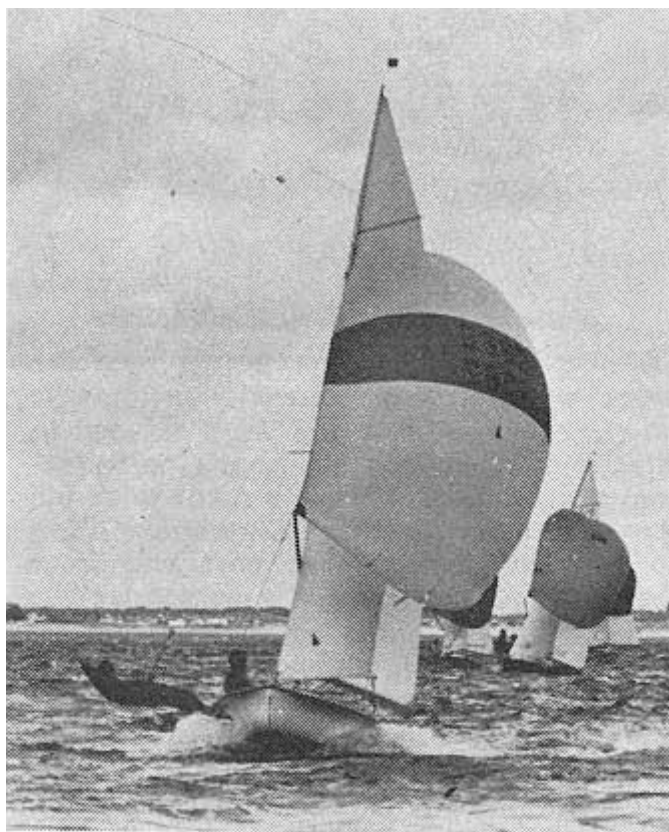


A gaggle at the leeward mark on Tuesday. Natty headgear in the foreground is worn by Pierre Monkwik of Switzerland, unaccustomed to dressing for foul weather. He coped well to finish 34th overall — photo John Fitzpatrick.

The championship was off to an inauspicious start in a fluky Force 1-2 breeze. After an hour's postponement to allow the wind to settle in the SE the 65 entries embarked on an uptide beat with Farrant in 'Miss VII' quickly leading the shoreward contingent and crossing back to the middle in time to cover any lifts. At the first mark it was Farrant well clear of the Argentinian Hector Domato in a borrowed boat, using his own sails, and Hugh Bourn of Britain. Throughout the race the wind increased and Farrant looked more and more assured of success. Demato hung on grimly despite Farrant's cautious covering and a battle royal was fought for third by three Hastings crews. Gordon Wilson in 'Frère's Bear' looked to have third in his pocket

when only yards from the line he performed an aquatic evolution, letting through Paul and Victor Deschamps (GB) in 'Phantom' and Bourn. Eppers in 'Moustache' was sixth.

If Sunday's wind was fluky, Monday's was impossible. After ten postponements, three relaid courses and a general recall a slow start was made in a light south-easterly. Farrant and several French boats led the port wing out to sea, Paul Nevard (GB) in 'Ducky Too' went well inshore out of the tide with, a local and British following. Many were confounded when a Force 3 sprang up from nowhere bringing both wings in on close reaches while the cautious middlemen were caught flatfooted. Pierre Poullain's 'Viking' was first round with a 200 yard lead from Nevard and Farrant.



Maestro Derek Farrant with Mike Fountain  
in 'Miss VII' — photo John Fitzpatrick.

The fleet was slow to fly spinnakers until Nevard, having perfected his close reaching drill in FDs, hoisted. The effect was dramatic - 'Ducky Too' left 'Miss.VII' and screamed off in pursuit of Poullain. The Frenshman could not match Nevard's spinnaker skill on the second reach, dropping and rehoisting his spinnaker in an agony of indecision before Nevard went through to windward. Nevard lost on the beat, however, and first Poullain then Farrant got past. On the shuttle Nevard again gave a paralysing spinnaker performance and at the last mark it was any one of four to win, Jan Eppers having come up on the heat in the strengthening wind. Poullain had the advantage of a short lead and 'chose to cover Eppers and Farrant but this led them all through the dirty wind of the running fleet and let Nevard pull well up. Poullain crossed Nevard just in time to cover him while Eppers and Farrant tacked early for the finish in the hope of pinching home on a lift. Poullain took the gun from Nevard, Farrant, Eppers, N.Loday and P.Chaigne of France in 'Dead or Alive' and C. and P.Bath of Sweden in 'Kalabalik'.

Although reasonable at launching time the wind came up to a squally Force 5 during the third race on Tuesday, conditions which really suited the Scandinavians. At the first mark, however,

it was Poullain once again. British hopes were lessened by Farrant's seventh but he scooted downwind with superb spinnaker work and pulled through to second. As these two battled for the lead Eppers once more showed his windward ability in a blow and went away on his own while Roumaillac of France slipped into second.

The wind increased and many of the tailenders swam down the shuttle as the leaders beat the other way. Roumaillac fell back a little in the gusts while the other heavy weather experts, the Bath brothers of Sweden stormed up to third from a poor position after an early morning dip. Eppers took the gun from Farrant. Poullain was fourth, Roumaillac and C.Brodard in 'Djinn' fifth and Loday sixth.

Wednesday's sailing was blown off but at last a fairly settled Force 4 wind was blowing on Thursday morning. The committee made their only miscalculation of the week and laid a short line, but a fair one. With a strong tide setting the fleet up towards the first mark and no room for premature starters to free off down the line, the result was four general recalls. At last they were away and Farrant powered away from the committee boat end into a lead which he held to the first mark. Hugh Bourn almost flew along the reaches under spinnaker to race from fourth to first at the leeward mark. A wind shift biased the beat badly and allowed little place changing and Farrant had to bide his time. He tried every tactic on the run but could not get past and Bourn started the final beat with a narrow lead. A knot in the knitting slowed him momentarily and Farrant sailed through to another first and a firm overall lead. Harold Cudmore and C.Bruen in 'Overdrawn' (Ireland) were third, J.Danielou and J.Gillet (France) in 'Gentil Petit Virus d'amour' were fourth, the Pajot brothers (France) fifth in 'Leopard' and Poullain sixth.

As it turned out the fifth race on Friday was to be the last race of the series as the bad weather deteriorated further by Saturday. A furious sea boiled outside the harbour and a good Force 5 blew, with an occasional line squall. The fleet was away first time and the Bath brothers went straight to the front, chased by Eppers, never to be headed. Farrant tried a port hitch for clear air and put himself the wrong side of the only major shift of the day to round the mark in the late teens. He did well to pull up to twelfth at the finish but with Bath and Eppers at the front his overall lead was threatened. Cudmore had also been coming up in the rough going and at one point almost caught Eppers at the lee mark by astute tacking downwind. However, he came in a shade too fine and flipped as he dropped his spinnaker. The Bath brothers held their lead from Eppers. P.Sadoc and A.Deviter (France) in 'Gibbies' were third, Cudmore fourth, the Pajot brothers fifth and Paul and Victor Deschamps sixth. Although he dropped in this race Farrant still retained his overall lead.

### **The results were**

- 1st 'Miss VII' (Derek Farrant and Mike Fountain, GB) 11 points.
- 2nd 'Moustache' (Jan Eppers and Per Gotfredsen. Denmark) 20,4
- 3rd 'Kalabalik' (Christer and Pelle Bath, Sweden) 30,4
- 4th 'Overdrawn' (Harold Cudmore and Chris Bruen, Ireland) 41,7
- 5th 'Phantom' (Paul and Victor Deschamps, GB) 43,1
- 6th 'Samuel Esquire' (Hugh Bourn and Mike Bryant, GB) 44,0
- 7th 'Leopard' (Yves and Marc Pajot. France) 49,0
- 8th 'Djinn' (Jean Roumaillac and Christian Brodard, France) 53,0
- 9th 'Viking' (Pierre Poullain and Daniel Nottet, France) 61,7

Farrant's win was a popular one and there is no doubt that he is as fast or faster than ever with Mike Fountain in place of brother Robin. The winning boat is one of the new wooden Parkers which have had mixed fortunes this year. In the hands of Mike Arnold another won the light weather British championship but this week was their first serious test in dusty conditions. Farrant showed a marked superiority to windward in a sea and held his own downwind. He is not convinced that the extra stiffness of the wooden hull outweighs the superior finish of a glass hull and says that his next boat will probably be a glass hull with wood tanks, the same combination used by, Christer and Pelle Bath. All the front runners were British Parker boats.

In contrast there was a variety of sails at the top, most helmsmen favouring their own national top sailmakers. Technical talking point of the week, was the introduction of spinnaker chutes, a move overwhelmingly voted in at the AGM on the Wednesday evening. There were reservations about the need to move the jib tack further back - to a proposed new maximum of 4 cm - many feeling this will inhibit windward performance. Several boats with the officially allowed experimental chutes had, however, performed well in the week and in the past season of trials and presumably the problems can be ironed out by a slight change of jib cut and boat tune.

The National and Royal St. George Yacht Clubs are to be congratulated on their handling of this, their first major international event. The lines were true and the courses good, despite the elements, and information and public commentary was constantly available from the splendidly equipped mobile office of the sponsors, Player-Wills.

*From a 1969 issue of [Yachts & Yachting](#) (page 512-513)*