

TEMPEST: 50th anniversary

By Jean-Marie THIERRY, secretary of International Tempest Association
(special thanks to the late John Fletcher – collection of Yachts&Yachting and to Anna Templeton-Cotill – Yearbooks etc)

The Tempest is a one design keelboat designed by Ian Proctor in 1965. It became famous very quickly as it won the selection trials for the new Olympic Keelboat that would replace the Star in 1972 & 1976. About 1200 units were built and more than 300 are still actively sailing all over the world: USA (Long Beach), Australia, & Europe (Austria, Germany, Switzerland, UK, the Netherlands & France).

1. The Tempest legend: Medemblick trials May 1965

In November 1961 the IYRU's "Class Policy and Organization Committee" announced that there was "an immediate need for a new modern concept two man racing keelboat with spinnaker". In 1963 IYRU released its design parameters and Ian Proctor designed the Tempest between December 1964 and February 1965. Richardsons started building the (wooden) hull in March 1965 even before the design of the boat's fittings was completed. The boat was ready by April, undergoing testing and competitive trials in a Flying Dutchman fleet. It was sailed by John Oakeley & Cliff Norbury at Medemblick 16-19th May 1965. To cut a long story short, 'Tempest' K1 won all races but one (lost her rudder!). In the ninth and last race, two sandbags of 20 kgs were added to stop arguments about weight, and she won again. This was the start of a legend... (Recently we have learnt, K1 was wrecked when it broke loose from a mooring in West Wales in the mid 70's, but it had been presumed scrapped for some time due to the glues used to build it – comments of Allen Brothers, and Ian Proctor).



Proctor's "Tempest" sailed by John Oakeley and Cliff Norbury made in a terrific performance both up-wind and down, come light airs or fresh winds.

2. The Class starts to spread

The first plastic prototype K2 "Tempestuous" was built a few months after K1 "Tempest", and more than sixty builders applied for licenses (Schock & Plastrend in the USA, O-Day in Canada, Cima & Bianchi-Cecchi in Italy, Lanaverre in France, Dubdam in Holland, Mader in Germany, etc.). The class was granted an *international status* by IYRU in November 1965 and Beecher Moore, Director of Jack Holt Limited (fittings & sails supplier) then asked Ian Proctor to "produce the Class Constitution" to maintain **a real one –design series**. By 1967, the International Tempest Association was established with Beecher as chairman and Cliff Norbury as secretary. ITA is still alive and the author had the pleasure to correspond a few years ago with the former secretary Anna Templeton-Cotill: she is a wonderful person who gave so much to the class, and is the living memory of the Tempest. Dave Mc Comb (1948-2014) was a key chairman (8 years), and he wrote the famous book "the Sandbag" with all details on how to sail a Tempest, and fine tune the boat.

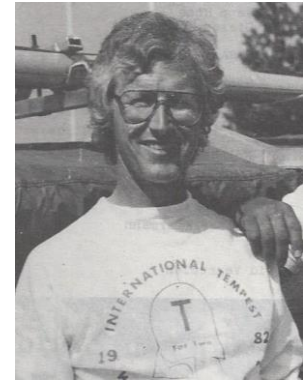
It must be said that ITA is a democratic Association. Key decisions are made by International Ballot – the vote, or number of votes, each national association may cast, is related to the number of registered boats in their country.

The 1967 ITA Year book (first edition) provides an impressive list of almost 200 boats. In 1972 (first olympics), the development of the Tempest class had reached 700 units (see table below).

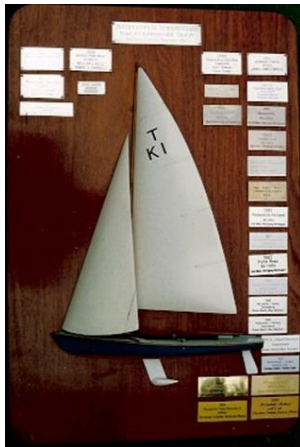
Country	1967	1972	Country	1967	1972	Country	1967	1972
Australia	3	11	Holland	2	12	Finland	0	2
Austria	1	3	Hong Kong	0	4	Norway	0	1
Britain	33	81	Italy	16	95	Thailand		1
Barbados	1	1	Poland	0	2	Greece	0	1
Canada	5	21	Papua	0	1	USSR	0	1
Denmark	1	4	Puerto Rico	0	1	Virgin Islands	0	2
Ireland	0	2	Sweden	5	11			
France	1	7	Switzerland	4	36			
Germany	5	84	USA	118	322	TOTAL	195	706

3 The World Championships

The first worlds were held in Weymouth in 1967 with 16 boats. 2 British teams, C.Norbury & C.Turner and R.White & A.Garren tied for 1st. The second worlds in Grosse Pointe, Michigan, saw the victory of a US team, but C.Norbury & C.Turner won outright in 1969 - Riva Del Garda, Italy. A young (East) German sailor, Rölf Bähr (photo), started to show up in 7th place. He would later win 5 worlds titles and is still racing at the age of 70, even if he was topped by K. Rosch (6 world titles) and by C. "Kicker" Schäfer (10), putting Germany on top of the Tempest worlds winner list. Quiberon, France welcomed 45 boats in 1970 and each of the five races (out of six) was won by a different country: USA, Holland, Poland, France & USSR; the Linville brothers from USA won the last one and the title. In 1971, Marstrand (NL) welcomed 61 teams.



It would take a long time to list all the fantastic venues & stories of the different years. La Rochelle in 2005 was sailed in strong winds. In 2006, Martinique welcomed more than 35 boats for extraordinary races, all won by Philippe Boite & Régis Viateur. Amazing participation was achieved in Switzerland in Spiez 2009, with 64 boats.



Many prizes were created for these occasions, starting with the world championship trophy presented by Ian Proctor (photo), the Detroit trophy (winner of race 1) & Weymouth trophy, (race 4) in 1967 followed by many others along the years and venues: Quiberon bowl & Ido Marang 1970 (race 2 & 3), Copa Citta di Napoli in 1973 (best placed in race 1 2 & 3), Marstrand (race 5), etc. Other prizes were created for ladies, couples, families, boats (the "sandbag" is awarded to the best placed boat over 25 years of age). The "Falconer prize" is awarded to people who have made a special contribution to the class.

In 2014, the ITA board decided to simplify and reallocate some of them (24 trophies instead of 29), in order to reduce the duration of the final ceremony (now 14 prizes, the others being distributed after each racing day). After 48 years, only 3 prizes have been lost or damaged, which highlights the behavior of Tempest sailors and the "family" mood that reigns in the class.

Here are a few examples of the prizes, engraved with many names over the years:



the detroit trophy



the quiberon bowl

An interesting prize is the "Double dutch sprint trophy", presented by brothers ... They were very fast and very often leading at the first mark, but not always first to the finishing line. Hence their idea to present a prize to the leading team at the first mark!



4 The Olympics



Although it had been designed for this purpose, Tempest still had to be selected as Olympic class. The ITA Committee made a huge effort towards persuading the IYRU, and the International Tempest became the 6th Olympic class, with Dragons, Solings & Stars in 1972, in Germany. 21 boats raced at Kiel, with fierce competition between the USSR & Great Britain, who were leading the series until the sixth race. Valentin Mankin & Vitali Dyrdyra from USSR won with SR1 (which is still sailing in Latvia today, after a complete reconstruction). The French team (helmed by Marcel Troupel former world champion in the 505 class in Kiel 1968) won the first race but finished 9th ...

In 1976 (where no Stars appeared, replaced by Tornado catamaran), 16 boats competed in Kingston, Ontario, and the Swedish team (John Albrechtson & Ingvar Hanson) won the gold medal, followed by USSR (Mankin again) and USA (a certain Dennis Conner that would later become famous in the America's cup). In 1980, the Star was back and "kicked out" the Tempest. And the gold medal was won ... by Mankin! He was later coach of the Italian sailing team and died in 2014.

5 There is a life after the Olympics.

For sure, the Tempest suffered from the "Star revenge" at the Olympics which caused some sailors left the class. In 1981, the worlds scheduled in the USA were canceled due to the lack of participants. Still, in 1995, the boat list reached 1100 units (+ 55 % with respect to 1967) with the largest fleets in the USA & Germany. Today, what can be said about the Tempest? Fleets are still alive and active in Austria, Germany, Switzerland, USA (Longbeach), UK & France. For sure, sailors are getting older but "still going strong". Just compare the two photos below if you need to be convinced.



1966 Ian & Keith Proctor in Cowes



2010 the author in Martinique (Photo Noelle Jean-Charles)

6 Conclusion: five reasons to join us.

Tempest is an extraordinary boat... Imagine a Flying Dutchman with a bulb, and a trapeze. She is so quick downwind, with the large spinnaker (27 m²) more stable than the first one (21 m²). During the world championship in Weymouth in 2008, the tracking system used during the event, allowed boat speeds above 16 knots to be measured.

1. A class with good relationship between sailors, « like a family »
2. Boats in good condition and affordable (+/- 15k€ for a 10 years old boat ready to compete, with trailer)
3. You can sail locally with a fleet, at a national level on several occasions & internationally in Europe for the time being (Antigua considered for a future venue of the Worlds)
4. Men & women can sail together, and even become world champion (Como Lake 2014),
5. You can sail as long as your body allows you. We have sailors in their eighties and still sharp.

So join us (www.tempestclass.com email: ita-secr@sfr.fr)