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## The Dragons are Under Starters Orders at the 75<sup>th</sup> Edinburgh Cup and UK Dragon Grand Prix 2023 sponsored by Clear Solutions International Ltd

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



*L-R - Yanmar's Jasuhiro Yaji, 75th Edinburgh Cup Regatta Chair Gavia Wilkinson-Cox, James Mansell, MD of Clear Solutions International Ltd, and Graham Bailey, representing The Royal Yacht Britannia Trust.*

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- **Registration complete and teams ready to race for the 75th Edinburgh Cup and UK Dragon Grand Prix sponsored by Clear Solutions International Ltd.**
  - **Sailors and guests enjoy champagne and canapes at the Yanmar sponsored Opening Ceremony, where historic and current Edinburgh Cup champions mingle and compare notes.**
  - **41 teams from 12 nations and 4 continents will be under starters order for the opening races on Tuesday 15 August.**
  - **Racing to take place in the Central Solent with eight races scheduled over four days.**

**14 August 2023 – Cowes, UK** - A delightful Opening Ceremony and Cocktail Party sponsored by Yanmar at the Royal Yacht Squadron Pavilion marked the official start of the 75<sup>th</sup> Edinburgh Cup and UK Dragon Grand Prix sponsored by Clear Solutions International Ltd. The sailors and their guests enjoyed

champagne and canapes as Regatta Chair Gavia Wilkinson-Cox welcomed the competitors and thanked everyone involved in making the regatta possible and the many sponsors for their generous support.

Special guests in attendance included Ireland's Tony O'Gorman, winner of four Edinburgh Cup's between 1978 and 1984, and Martin Parry, who won the Edinburgh Cup in 1963 and came fourth in the Dragon Class at the Tokyo Olympics in 1964. Defending 2022 Edinburgh Cup Champion Andy Beadsworth, who will be racing with his Turkish Provezza Dragon team of Simon Fry and Enes Çaylak, was particularly delighted to meet Martin Parry, with the pair being the most recent and the longest standing Edinburgh Cup winners present. Andy summed up the appeal of the Dragon Class beautifully saying, "I love the camaraderie, sportsmanship and above all the excellent level of competition from many already accomplished sailors around the globe - it's the best one design racing in the World. It's been an honour to meet Martin this evening and compare notes about our experiences in this extraordinary class and competition."



*L-R - 75th Edinburgh Cup Regatta Chair Gavia Wilkinson-Cox, 1963 Edinburgh Cup winner Martin Parry and reigning Edinburgh Cup Champion Andy Beadsworth. All images (c) Rick and James Tomlinson.*

41 teams from 12 nations and 4 continents will race for the honour of having their name engraved on the historic Edinburgh Cup, which has been awarded to the winner of the Dragon Open British Championship since it was presented by the Duke of Edinburgh in 1949. With the event also incorporating the UK Dragon Grand Prix, one of just four European Grand Prix Circuit events in 2023, it has attracted an exceptionally high calibre entry.

Ireland's Martin Byrne, owner/helm of Jaguar Sailing Team and winner of the 2011 Edinburgh Cup is looking forward to the competition. "It's the 75th Anniversary this year but the Edinburgh Cup is an event we would not want to miss at any time. Clearly, the competition is at its highest in this Anniversary year and that will be our biggest challenge. We enjoy the welcome we receive each year when we travel over from Ireland to compete. The Edinburgh Cup has always been a must-do event for us, but Irish Dragons have a long and successful history in this competition, and we are proud and privileged to continue this tradition."

Fresh from victory in the Dragon Class at Cowes Week 2023 comes 1999 Edinburgh Cup winner Martin Payne who has been impressed with the organisation so far. "We have all the ingredients for a fantastic event. Huge thanks to Gavia Wilkinson-Cox for the exceptional organisation, to the measurement team led by our IDA measurer Bence Toronyi, and to all the Cowes Yacht Haven Staff for helping launch the boats. The registration at the RYS has been a delight and we all look forward to a great 75<sup>th</sup> Edinburgh Cup."



Racing in his first Edinburgh Cup will be Australia's match racing legend Peter Gilmour, at the helm of the Yanmar Racing Team's Y-RED with crew Jasuhiro Yaji and Sam Gilmour. "The 75th Edinburgh Cup is going to be a tremendous event. It's exciting for the Yanmar Racing team to be a part of it and for the Yanmar Group to be a supporting sponsor. The amazing prestige and heritage of the Edinburgh Cup goes hand in hand with Yanmar's long history. There is a tremendous field of sailors, and it will be interesting once again to take on the tricky and challenging conditions of the Solent. A big thanks from Yaji san, Sam and myself for letting us be a part of it."

Very much looking forward to the competition is Graham Bailey, current Turkish Open Dragon Champion, Bronze Medallist at the 2023 Dragon Worlds and three-time Edinburgh Cup winning helm, who will race the 75-year young Bluebottle with Julia Bailey, Will Heritage and Mark Lees. "It's wonderful to be here for the double celebration of Bluebottle and the Edinburgh Cup's 75<sup>th</sup> birthdays. There are some strong teams entered and we'll put our best foot forward, but one thing we are certain of is that we are going to have fun!"



Also racing will be British Olympic Bronze Medallist Lawrie Smith, top French sailor Gery Trentesaux, Danish double Olympic Gold Medallist and five time Edinburgh Cup Champion Poul Richard Hoj-Jensen, Australian World Match Racing Champion Torvar Mirsky, TP52 and MOD70 veteran Peter Cunningham from the Caymen Islands, top Hong Kong Dragon sailor Marc Castagnet, and a host of other top names from across the UK and Europe.

Speaking on behalf of the Royal Yacht Squadron, Rear Commodore Yachting Bruce Huber said, "We are delighted to be hosting the 75th Edinburgh Cup and UK Dragon Grand Prix Regatta and to welcome such a strong international field. This highly competitive trophy is a wonderful legacy of the late Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, and his enduring spirit, and this regatta will include his indomitable yacht Bluebottle, an historic competitor since 1949. We look forward to a great week, on and off the water."

Racing will take place from Tuesday 15 to Friday 19 August with up to eight races scheduled over the four days with a first warning signal at 10:55 daily. Racing will take place on windward leeward courses in the central Solent under the supervision of the Royal Yacht Squadron's Race Officer Rob Brown, himself a past Edinburgh Cup winner.

The forecast for the opening day is promising plenty of sunshine with a light 3 to 8 knot westerly breeze in the morning, which is expected to back to south-westerly and build to 10 to 15 knots with gusts into the low twenties during the afternoon. With Wednesday's forecast threatening very light winds, the Race Committee has announced that it intends to run three races on the opening day.

You will be able to follow the latest news from the regatta at the [Event Website](#) and the British Dragon Association's [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) accounts.



Further information about the 75th Edinburgh Cup and UK Dragon Grand Prix is available from:

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## About The International Dragon

The Dragon was designed by Johan Anker in 1929 as an entry for a competition run by the Royal Yacht Club of Gothenburg, to find a small keel-boat that could be used for simple weekend cruising among the islands and fjords of the Scandinavian seaboard. The original design had two berths and was ideally suited for cruising in his home waters of Norway. The boat quickly attracted owners and within ten years it had spread all over Europe.

The Dragon's long keel and elegant metre-boat lines remain unchanged, but today Dragons are constructed using the latest technology to make the boat durable and easy to maintain. GRP is the most popular material, but both new and old wooden boats regularly win major competitions while looking as beautiful as any craft afloat. Exotic materials are banned throughout the boat, and strict rules are applied to all areas of construction to avoid sacrificing value for a fractional increase in speed.

The key to the Dragon's enduring appeal lies in the careful development of its rig. Its well balanced sail plan makes boat handling easy for lightweights, while a controlled process of development has produced one of the most flexible and controllable rigs of any racing boat.

In 1949 The Edinburgh Cup was gifted to the British Dragon Association (BDA) by the Duke of Edinburgh (Prince Philip) after the members of the Island Sailing Club presented the then Princess Elizabeth and Prince Philip with a Dragon named Bluebottle on the occasion of their marriage in 1948. This impressive silver trophy has been awarded annually to the winner of the British Open Dragon Championship ever since.

The first staging of the Edinburgh Cup was in Cowes in 1949 and it was won by Franklin Ratsey Woodroffe in Blue Skies (K214). Prince Philip was a keen Dragon sailor and his intention in presenting the trophy was to use it to popularise the Dragon class around the country with the deed of gift stating that the venue should vary each year. As a result, the regatta has been hosted by clubs from all four nations of the British Isles.

2023 marks 75 years of Edinburgh Cup history when the competition will return once again to Cowes, where the BDA and the Royal Yacht Squadron are planning a spectacular celebration regatta from 14 to 19 August. Further adding to the prestige of the event, the International Dragon Association (IDA) has

announced that the Edinburgh Cup will be one of only four International Grand Prix regattas in 2023 – the IDA's premier international series.

For further information about the International Dragon visit [www.intdragon.net](http://www.intdragon.net)