



**ISORA – Irish Sea Offshore Racing Association**



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# **Introduction to ISORA**

**Irish Sea Offshore Racing Association**

**Chairman – Peter Ryan**

**IRC Congress**

**6<sup>th</sup> October 2018**

# What is ISORA?



ISORA (Irish Sea Offshore Racing Association) is a not for profit members organisation responsible for offshore racing in the Irish Sea.

The Association is run by volunteers for the benefit of competitors by working in partnership with boat owners, crew, yacht and sailing clubs, other associations and the governing bodies for boating in Ireland, Wales and the UK.

Our mission is to promote the sport of offshore racing in the Irish Sea.



# Introduction - Peter Ryan



- Chairman of ISORA.
- Sailing in ISORA for nearly 40 years. Took part in five Round Ireland races and four Dun Laoghaire to Dingle Races. Two Middle Sea Races and one Fastnet Race
- Past Commodore of the National YC and a member of Royal Dee Yacht Club and RORC.
- On the executive committee of ICRA, The Volvo Dun Laoghaire Regatta and The Dun Laoghaire to Dingle Race.
- The purpose of my talk today is to describe ISORA, its origins , its “hay Day”, its decline and its revival, and most importantly, its future.





# History of ISORA:

- ISORA in some form was involved with Offshore Racing in the Irish Sea for over 80 years.
- Origin after WWII.
- First formed as the "Merseyside and North Wales Joint Offshore Co-ordinating Committee.
- 1962 name changed to the North West Offshore Association
- 1971 name again changed to "Irish Sea Offshore Racing Association" – I.S.O.R.A.
- ISORA was the "only game in town". ISORA Week - major keelboat racing
- In 2007 plans to dissolve ISORA.
- In 2008 National Yacht Club undertook to run ISORA for a 3 year trial period. The rest is history.....

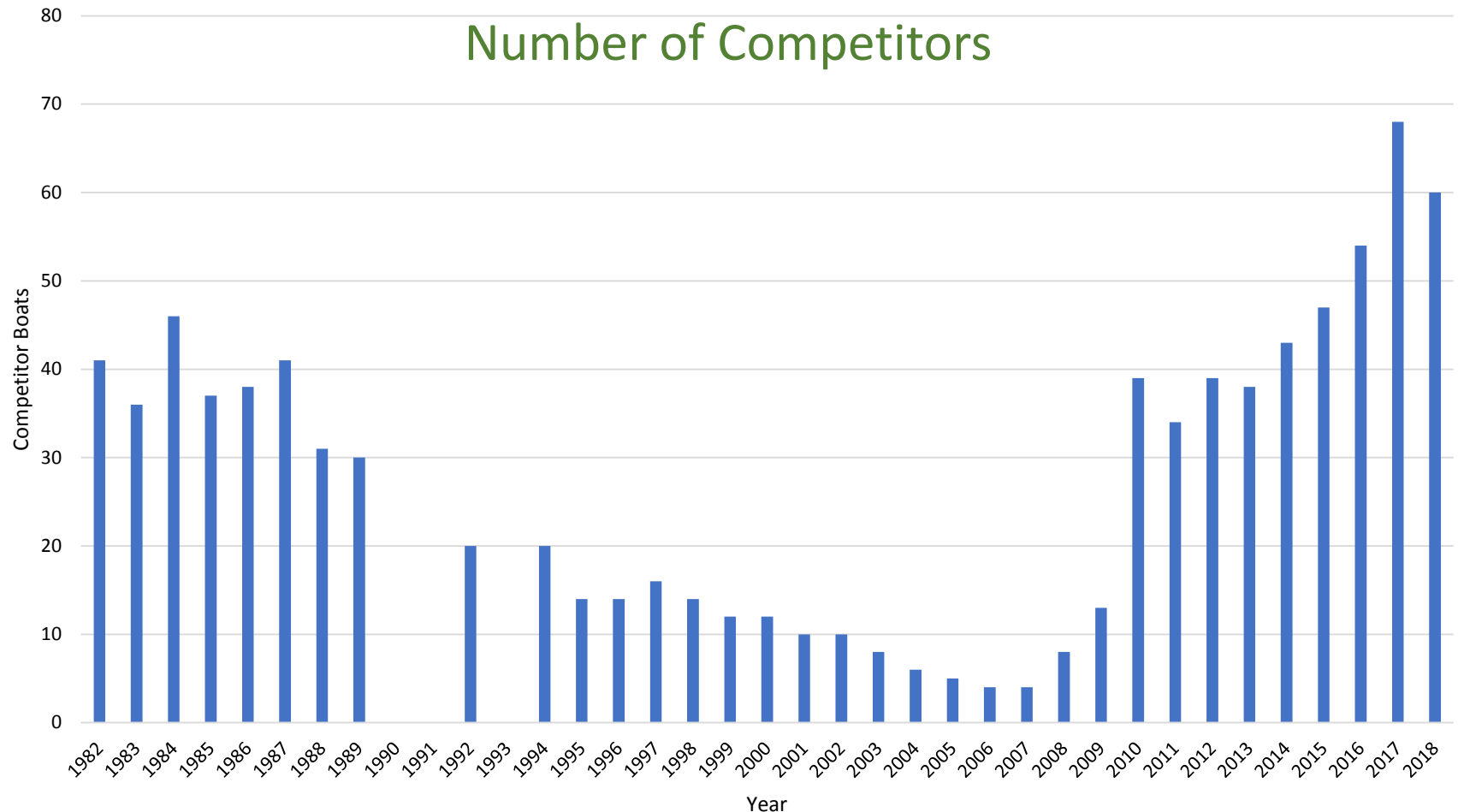


# The Decline & Rise of ISORA

## 1980 – 2018



Number of Competitors



# Why was ISORA worth saving?



- Unique goodwill and support from all Clubs involved
- Huge trophy cabinet
- Big boats disenchanted with inshore racing
- The “success” of the White Sail Classes
- Increased number of capable non-racing boats sitting on marinas
- The “Spirit of ISORA”



# How did ISORA tackle the decline?



- Combine ISORA fleet with the existing RAYC /Lee Overlay fleet – Critical Fleet Size.
- Canvass support from NYC and associated clubs to enter boats
- Link up with Royal Dee and Liverpool YC for the Lyver & Midnight Race, with WSC for the Round Ireland Race and NYC for the Dingle Race.
- Nurture boat owners and crew who showed any signs of interest – regular emails and texts.
- Careful selection of attractive Day Race courses & traditional Offshore races.





# How did ISORA tackle the decline?



- Facilitate crew transfers etc – trying to eliminate possible reasons why not to race!!
- Use of IRC, IRC non spinnaker and 2-handed rating instead of “White Sail” Rating.
- Promote a strong social side of the racing – informal parties before and or after races.
- Generous trophies and prizes – little or no overheads.
- Embraced Modern Technologies and Communications
- Great Black Tie Annual Dinner Dance.



# The Clubs in UK.



We acknowledged the importance of engaging with all Clubs in the Catchment Area - on both sides of the Irish Sea

- Holyhead Sailing Club
- Pwllheli Sailing Club
- The Royal Dee Yacht Club
- Liverpool Yacht Club
- Douglas Yacht Club
- Conwy Yacht Club



# On the Irish side:

- National Yacht Club,
- Royal Alfred Yacht Club
- Royal St. George Yacht Club
- Royal Irish Yacht Club,
- Dun Laoghaire Motor Yacht Club
- Poolbeg Yacht & Boat Club,
- Howth Yacht Club
- Wicklow Sailing Club.
- Arklow Sailing Club

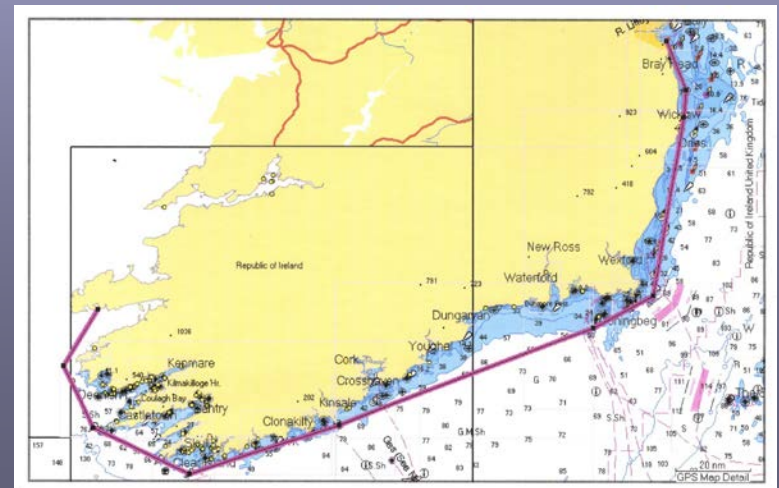
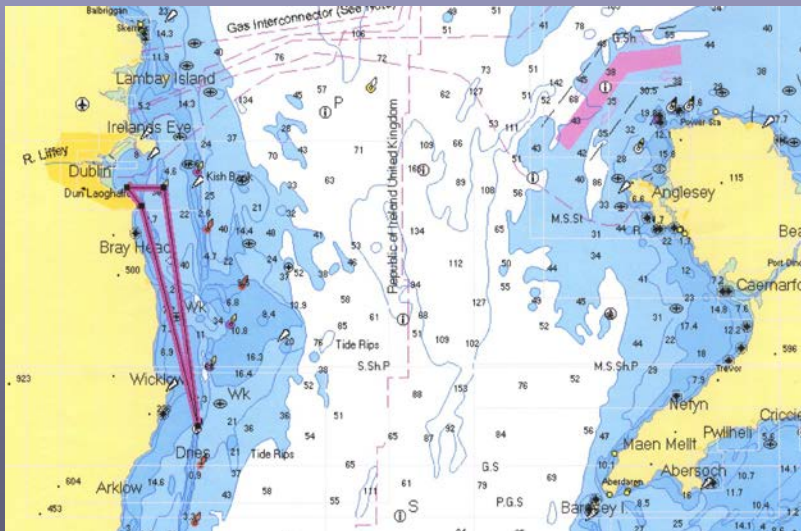
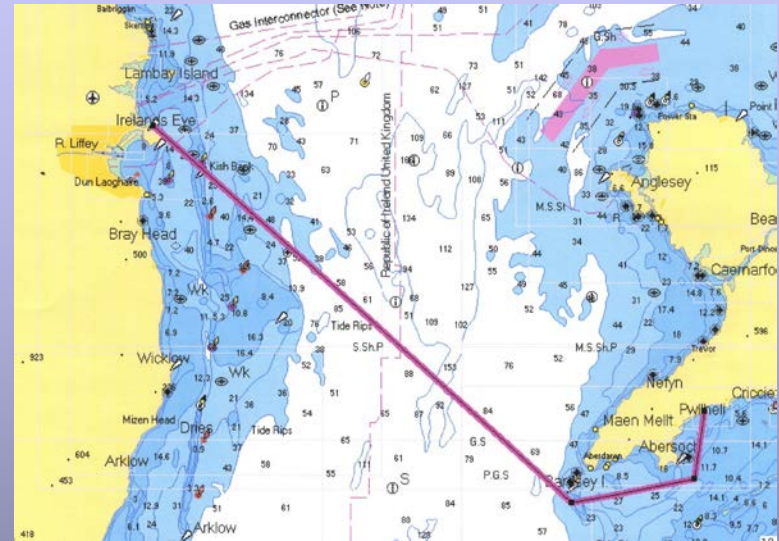
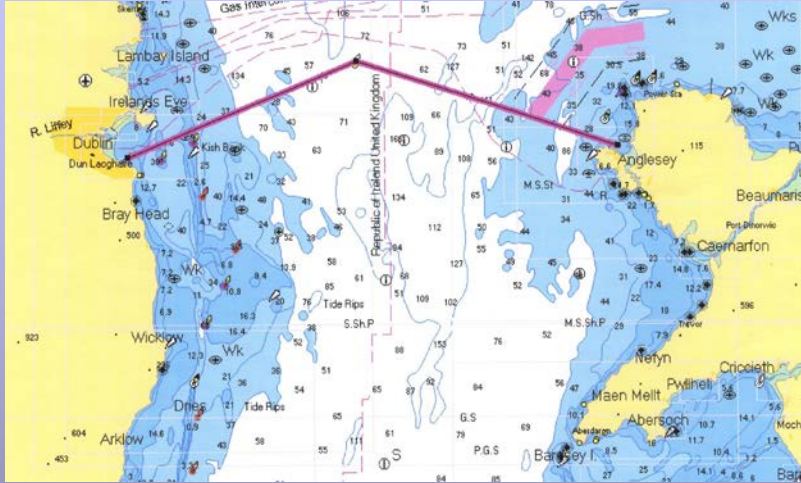




# Typical Race Program 2018

7 Offshore Races + 8 Inshore Day / Night Races

Overall Series & 2 Coastal Series – best 5 results to count





# Recent ISORA Champions: Wolf Head Trophy

- 2015 – “Ruth” – Liam & Ben Shanahan.
- 2016 – “Sgrech” – Stephen Tudor
- 2017 – “Mojito” – Pete Dunlop Vicky Cox
- 2018 – “Mojito”





# The “ISORA Dinner” - Legendary



# ISORA Racing:



- Very competitive BUT very fair
- Emphasis on Safety
- Arranged AIS base stations to cover Irish Sea – safer deliveries
- Crew sharing
- Boats facilitate each other for deliveries etc.
- Expertise of the senior skippers shared with new offshore skippers
- Multiple Results Published after Racing





# ISORA Racing 2018:



- The 2018 ISORA series started in April and racing concluded on Saturday 8th September.
- There have been 15 races with 60 competing boats from 14 Clubs.
- The fleet has visited seven ports including Dún Laoghaire, Pwllheli, Wicklow, Liverpool, Douglas, Howth, and Greystones. We are extremely grateful for the work and input of all Club representatives who have made our visits possible.

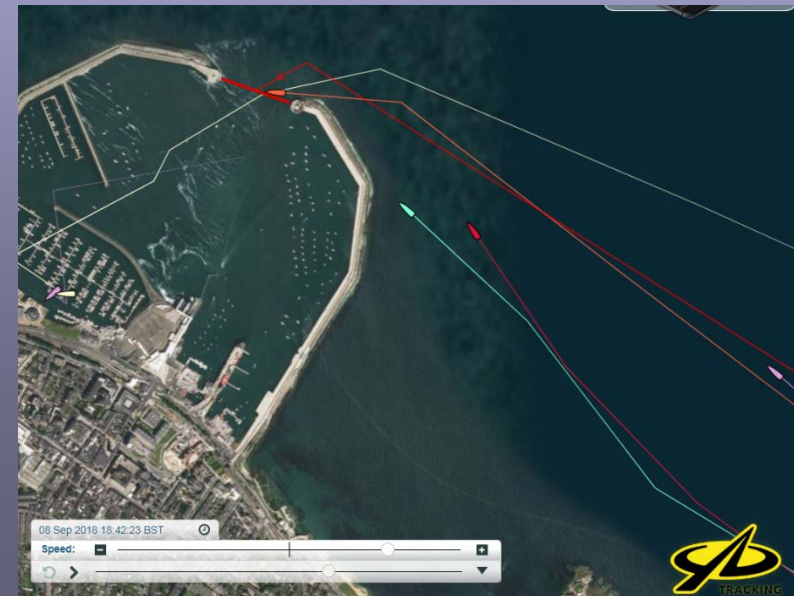
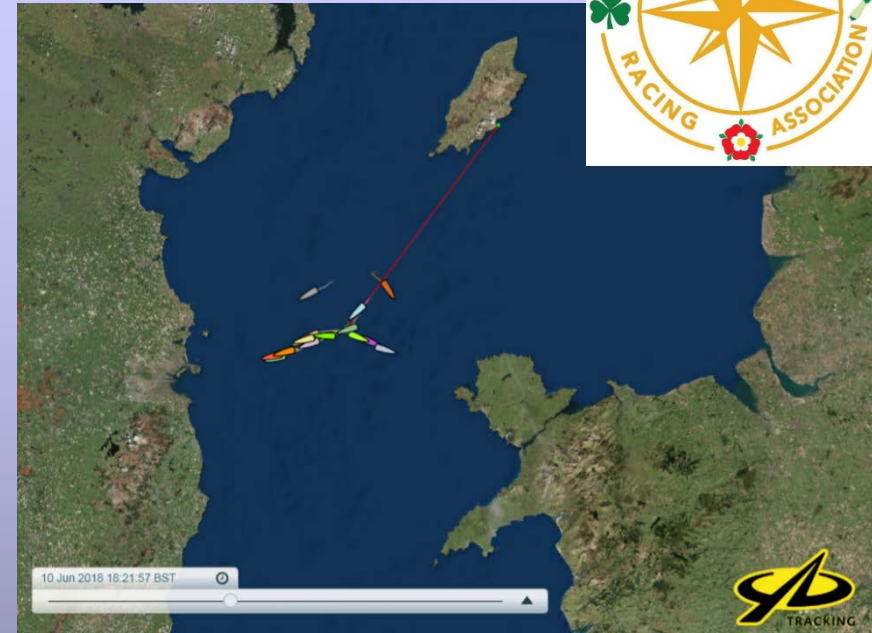




# At the cutting edge of technology:



- All races are tracked using YB Trackers giving great visibility for ISORA
- Virtual marks are used when traditional mark positions are not appropriate
- All races are finished using YB intercept times.
- Immediate results on YB app and web site .
- Allows use of remote starting gate – Start at Kish Light to IOM.
- Allows finish gates – mid Irish Sea.
- Used YB trackers for RDYC championships in VDLR



# ISORA and IRC



- All races scored using IRC
- And dual scored using ECHO (adapted for ISORA)
- The fleet is diverse in size and boat age - from J125 to Sigma 33
- All boats are competing to win their Class or Division
- Races in Two Coastal Series - Irish and Welsh
- Overall win – is available to all competitors
- ISORA uses High Points Scoring System with weighting for difficulty and fleet size.
- A Recent survey of competitors confirmed that the scoring system is popular



# Where to now?

- Continue to attract boats to racing who have not traditionally been involved in racing either inshore or offshore. Make it easy to enter.
- Continue to canvass for the inclusion of Offshore Racing in all major regattas
- Promote the RDYC Irish Sea Offshore Championship leading to possibly a UK & Ireland Offshore Championship?
- Organise More Dinners!!

Thank you





**For further information:**

ISORA Website: [www.isora.org](http://www.isora.org)

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