

VODA (Vega One Design Association)

Meeting at Copenhagen/Denmark, November 24th 2011

(Venue: Strandpark restaurant Kastrup)

Proceedings

Delegates present:

Jørgen Johanssen	Vice chairman	Dansk Vega Klub (Denmark)
Leif Plaetner	Secretary	Dansk Vega Klub (Denmark)
Herman Honshorst	Treasurer	Ver. Kring van VEGA-Zeilers (The Netherlands)
Mike Freeman	Chairman	Vega Association of Great Britain
Steve Birch	Treasurer	Vega Association of Great Britain
Ted Uren	Technical	Vega Association of Great Britain
Dieter Främbs	Technical	Deutsche Vega- Klassenvereinigung e.V.
Bo Mejner	Representative	Vegaklubben (Sweden)
Lars Emell	Representative	Vegaklubben (Sweden)
Tom Rasmussen	Chairman	Den Norske Vegaklubben (Norway)
Frank Gallardo	Representative	The American Vega Association
Walther Nerving	Voda president /	Dansk Vega Klub (Denmark)
Rob Kloosterman	Voda secretary/treasurer/	Ver. Kring van VEGA-Zeilers/NL

Purpose of the meeting:

Re-positioning of Voda in view of a sustainable future for Vega's and its international owner organisations.

Background information:

During the 'seventies Voda was formed by the international Vega-owner organisations. Ever since it functioned as an informal umbrella, merely to formulate and maintain racing classrules. Coöperation in other fields like technical, promotion, market development and event-organizing played only a minor role on the background.

Slowly however, member's interest in classrule racing faded away to such extent it hardly exists today. On the other hand, the aging Vega yachts require intensified technical knowhow and promotional support. International coördination could be instrumental to achieve this.

Hence our reflection on Voda's future.

Present situation

The number of Voda associated members (some 1000 yachts) is steady in Germany, the Netherlands and Great Britain but decreasing strongly in Scandinavia and Northern America. Selling prices are highest in Germany, low in the Netherlands and very low in Scandinavia/NA. (€ 15.000 - € 1000) These marketprices prevent many owners to invest in their yachts which consequently fade away or are demolished.

Present Vega associations activities

Germany: Younger families duly purchase Vega's. Events are being held but almost no regatta's. Emphasis on technical maintenance. A Vega logo was developed to brand the yacht.

U/K: The large coastline makes it difficult to organize events. No races. Informal events are popular. Emphasis on technical maintenance. The organisation purchased tools for member's use like sawingmachine, polisher, trailer, etc.

The Netherlands: Events combined with friendly racing, large club information/technical database on website. Technical assistance (in practice) at low level. Workshops.

Norway: Almost no interest in events left. Number of members decreased.

Sweden: Number of events and members decreasing. No racing interest. Mostly Gothenburg/Stockholm area.

Denmark: Number of events decreasing.

North America: Some events. Cruising only. Low number of members.

General: All organisations issue regular clubbulletins, paper or digital.

Conclusions **(turn the tide)**

Without timely action taken, down-spiralling will be irreversible. All delegates agreed a sustainable future should be ensured for Vega and its local organisations. It was proposed Voda should be instrumental to facilitate the organisations.

Although almost no racing is practiced, delegates agreed to maintain Voda classrules as they are. Emphasis, however, should be put on the international coöperation on tools such as technical knowledge, promotion, market (buyer) development and a youth policy. Both ship's certification and classical status will form an integral part. (Both Ted Uren and Steve Birch prepared excellent presentations on certification/technical)

Ensuring effective progress, once yearly a meeting should take place with a core group of members from all Voda associated organisations. This meeting will report on achievements and discuss further actions. Enabling the above mentioned ambitions, financial contribution to Voda should be increased.

Action taken

It was agreed, as a start, to install Voda "Technical" and "Promotion" working-groups. Minimal one member per organisation.

"Technical" will be kicked off by Dieter Främbs (GER), Steve Birch (UK) and Ted Uren (UK)

"Promotion" will be taken care of by Lars Emell (SWE) and Rob Kloosterman (NL).

Volunteers will have to be found from each country to complete these working-groups. The Voda board will coördinate where needed.

Start off: Technical: certification; Promotion: state of the art website, Vega nr 1 promotion.

Delegates have been requested to put forward our proposals to their respective boards.

During the IFR 2012 at Hundested working groups will present results sofar.

No decision was made yet on the legal status of Voda. Not being a legal body, operation is impractical. Probably formalization steps have to be taken in the near future.

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