

Royal Cruising Club/Yachting Monthly dinghy design competition

About the competition

The competition aims to encourage innovation in the design of the humble yet essential tender that can play such an important part in the enjoyment of a cruise under sail being used as a taxi, for exploration of the locality and as a training boat for children. The competition is very similar to that organised by the Royal Cruising Club 100 years ago - and you can see some of the designs submitted then if you follow the links. There is, of course, no single dinghy that will be right for every circumstance - the needs of a couple cruising in a Folkboat in the Solent are different to those of a family cruising the Channel, to Brittany and Ireland in a 35-footer and these are different again from a larger heavily crewed boat exploring high latitudes.

The judges will be looking for imaginative solutions that address the problems that we all face with existing tender designs. Problems such as a wet bottom from the inflatable that is also near impossible to row in a cross-wind, problems such as where to stow a rigid dinghy or how to minimise the height of a nested dinghy, problems such as how to provide reasonable leg-room and carrying capacity whilst still allowing the dinghy to be stowed on board and the problem of addressing these issues whilst still producing a dinghy that is attractive and a pleasure to handle afloat.

Our hope is that designers can make use of modern materials and demonstrate that they have not lost the ability to innovate that our Victorian predecessors demonstrated, for example with the Burton folding boat (with its integral buoyancy between two oil-cloth skins) nor the eye for a pretty design demonstrated by Arthur Briscoe, the designer of the winning entry in the RCC competition in 1912. Above all the judges will be looking for designs that not only meet the need of the brief that the designer describes, but also provide a practical tender that will appeal to a range of cruising yachtsmen, will be built (preferably in volume) and that will increase the enjoyment of exploring an anchorage and its surrounds.

What are the judges looking for?

As outlined above there will be a range of possible solutions and the judges do not want to constrain interesting and novel solutions by narrowing the criteria. Inflatables, solid, folding or collapsible tenders that may be based on traditional stem dinghies, dories, pram dinghies, canoes or punts and that may be propelled by oar, paddle, sail and outboard are all options that might be submitted (as are novel proposals and combinations of these approaches).

Designers are asked to describe (in less than 500 words and in English please) the brief from a notional or real client - describing the cruising boat, the nature of the cruises to be undertaken and any constraints or features that the client may be looking for. In assessing the entries the judges will want to gauge how well the design meets that brief - but they will also be looking for a tender that will meet the needs of a wider group of cruising folk. Because of this we would suggest that the brief assumes a maximum size of cruising boat at around 50 feet overall.

Designers should provide sufficient detail so that the judges can evaluate the design and so that the tender can be built by an experienced builder familiar with the chosen materials. You should not be

concerned about the quality of the drawings or photos nor of the written material - provided your intention as the designer is clear and the qualities of the design can be assessed. Whilst many will wish to submit a drawing showing the elevation, body sections and plan view, submitting a model with sketches, notes and photographs is also acceptable for those that find drawing difficult.

You should also aim to highlight features of the dinghy that match it to the design brief - whether this is done by notes on the drawings or in a separate description of the design (which again should not exceed 500 words). In doing this you might care to consider such questions as:

- *Carrying power (to suit the intended use) and suitability for towing short distances*
- *Whether the dinghy will be a pleasure to use and handle*
- *How the tender will be stowed for cruising and how it will be lifted aboard*
- *How robust it is and how heavy it will be to manoeuvre ashore on a beach or slipway*
- *Details of sail area and spars, length of oars or paddles, size of outboard as appropriate*

Entering the competition

Entries are welcomed from amateur designers, professionals and from dinghy manufacturers. Intellectual property associated with the design remains with the designer - but the designs may be described or published in Yachting Monthly, in the Royal Cruising Club Journal and in other publications so if there are particular ideas that are novel you may wish to take steps to protect them.

Entries should be submitted before close of business on Monday 1st October 2012. As much material as possible should be sent by email to Dinghydesign@ipcmedia.com but written material can also be sent to RCC/Yachting Monthly dinghy design competition, 9th Floor, The Blue Fin Building, 110 Southwark Street, London, SE1 0SU. Those who wish to submit a model should email Dinghydesign@ipcmedia.com so arrangements can be made for this.

The judges will wish to examine the details of the designs before they meet so please could you submit as much material as is practical using widely available file formats such as pdf, jpg and jpeg for drawings or photographs, doc, docx or .odt for text and .xls, xlsx or .ods for spreadsheet tables. Whilst the judges will examine carefully any models or drawings sent as hard copy when they meet and if you are using any CAD system they will also be pleased to look at submissions made in DXF or DWG format, the process is easier if judges can prepare using the material that you have submitted via email. Thank you for your help with this.

Please label all material with the name of the design and the designer and include a contact name, email address and phone number with your submission.

Whilst the decision over what to submit is left to the designers you might like to consider some of the following aspects:

- A brief outlining the cruising vessel, the crew and the voyaging to be undertaken as well as how the dinghy will be used and by whom
- The rationale for the design and the thought process that led to the specific solution
- The features of the design that suit it to its purpose including how it is expected to handle and how it will be stowed at sea, how it will be propelled

- The nature of the construction highlighting any particular features or providing sketches of any novel arrangement
- A table of key dimensions including LOA, Beam, estimated weight of the hull and the number of people that the dinghy is designed to carry. If the dinghy collapses or nests for stowage the approximate size of the stowed package(s). You may also wish also to add dimensions of spars, oars or paddles etc. and to provide some details of scantlings, or other dimensions that will assist the boat-builder
- A drawing or drawings showing the elevation, body sections and plan view
- photographs of another dinghy that show any special feature or the detail of the proposed construction or photographs of a model of the design
- a sketch showing the positions of the oarsman (or person paddling) and passenger(s) to demonstrate both the distribution of weight and that the dinghy will be comfortable to use
- a sail plan with centreboard/leeboard/rudder and (if the arrangement is unusual) how an outboard might be attached

The judges

The judges for the competition will be:

- Chris Beeson - Technical editor of Yachting Monthly and author of survival at sea and contributor to a number of the 'questions of seamanship' is familiar with a wide range of cruising boats
- Tom Cunliffe - also a regular yachting monthly contributor, author and journalist, presenting a number of television programmes about boats and the sea has cruised widely and is a member of the Royal Cruising Club.
- Stuart Ingram - a world-girdling member of the Royal Cruising Club who has made contributions to the RCC journal describing various legs of this and other voyages. He and his wife have more recently chosen to cruise the length of the river Thames in an inflatable canoe.
- Nigel Irens - designer of all types of vessel from high tech racing craft through to traditional craft - though often including modern technology to provide elegant and timeless classic looking vessels that perform well with modest running costs.
- Iain Oughtred - Many of Iain's designs for small craft have been built by both amateur and professional builders with his meticulous drawings illustrating how this is done. The designs also exploit modern techniques but resemble traditional Scandinavian and Scottish craft and are well known for their attractive shape and handling characteristics.

The decision of the judges will be final.