



## International Gliding Commission 2011

### President's Report

As we go into the new decade there are new faces responsible for the governance of the FAI. Stephane Desprez, the Secretary General, has gathered an expanded team around him at the headquarters in Lausanne and we can look forward to enhanced assistance from them to help us look after gliding internationally.

John Grubbström, from Sweden, is the new FAI President and Otto Lagarhus (Norway) and Beat Neuenschwander (Switzerland) are new Executive Board members. President Grubbström will be speaking to us at the Plenary meeting and also be our guest at the IGC dinner.

Last year I spent some time talking about volunteers. This year the focus for our plenary meeting is on safety – for a very simple reason.

In 2009 we had serious accidents at our sanctioned competitions and I regret that this trend continued in 2010. We have had two pilot fatalities, one at the SGP Final in Chile and one at the WGC in Slovakia. Both accidents appeared to involve loss of control resulting in the gliders spinning into the ground with tragic consequences. The resulting situations were managed extremely well by the organisers with the involvement of local authorities, IGC people at the event and the guidance provided by the “*FAI Casualty Guidelines*”.

In addition to the fatalities, we had two serious accidents. One was at the WGC in Slovakia with a mid-air between two gliders during the competition. Both pilots were able to land their gliders safely and were uninjured. One pilot was subsequently disqualified for 3 days from the championship.

The second accident occurred at the WGC in Hungary where a glider on approach to landing collided with a truck passing along the road adjacent to the end of the runway. The glider pilot was uninjured despite the glider being destroyed in the subsequent uncontrollable landing, but regrettably the truck driver suffered severe facial injuries when the wing tip struck him. I understand that surgeons have been able to restore sight in one of his eyes. This accident is being investigated by the Hungarian Police.

Add to this the fact that multiple protests were made in Slovakia about “*dangerous flying*”, all of which were dismissed by the Jury, and you can understand why the Bureau is not happy with the behaviours being apparently displayed by some of our pilots. Safety messages were delivered loud and clear at both these World Championships but they seem to have fallen on deaf ears for a few pilots. A long, hard look will now be taken at the way we manage our World Championships and the latitude that we allow pilots for flying misdemeanours.

This matter will be the subject of debate at the Steward training session and proposals from that discussion will be brought forward to the plenum for consideration. We have increased the time allocated to the Steward training session this year to give these learned people time to work through various ideas that have been raised.

The time also seems right to now put in place safety requirements, mandated by the IGC, to mitigate injuries in the event of an accident. This will be a subject of discussion at this meeting and I anticipate us being able to implement proposals that have, up to now, only been talked about.

The other threats that the sport faces – airspace, airworthiness, medicals, transponders, ADS-B, increasing costs etc, form part of the interesting and frustrating battle that is on-going primarily at the national level. In Europe the gliding community is extremely well served by the members of the European Gliding Union who battle endlessly, or so it seems, to convince the Regulators at EASA to provide reasonable and appropriate regulations.

### **Pilot Rankings**

The top three pilots on the IGC Ranking List (at time of writing of this report) are:



**1<sup>st</sup>**

Michael Sommer (GER)



**2<sup>nd</sup>**

Sebastian Kawa (POL)



**3<sup>rd</sup>**

Zbigniew Nieradka (POL)

### **IGC Sanctioned Championships**

It gives me great pleasure to congratulate the winners of the 2010 Championships and the IGC-OLC World League. Again, despite the challenges presented by the world financial situation, we achieved our championship calendar for the year due to the combined efforts of dedicated organisers and volunteer IGC officials.

#### *31<sup>st</sup> FAI World Gliding Championships – Standard, Club and World Classes*

The 31<sup>st</sup> FAI WGC for the Standard, Club and World Classes was held in July in Prievidza, Slovakia. 106 competitors representing 27 NACs participated. 12 competition days were achieved for each class.

The World Champions are:



#### **Standard Class**

Sebastian Kawa (POL)



#### **Club Class**

Arndt Hovestadt (GER)



#### **World Class**

Laurent Couture (FRA)

#### *31<sup>st</sup> FAI World Gliding Championships – Open, 18M and 15M Classes*

The 31<sup>st</sup> FAI WGC for the Open, 18M and 15M classes was held in August in Szeged, Hungary. 142 competitors representing 32 NACs participated. The weather was inclement

and only seven competition days were achieved for the 18M and 15M classes and eight days for the Open Class.

The World Champions are:



**Open Class**  
Michael Sommer (GER)



**18M Class**  
Zbigniew Nieradka (POL)



**15M Class**  
Stefano Ghiorzo (ITA)

### *The OLC 2010*

After five years the activity level for the OLC seems to have stabilised at around a total 2160 km per participant with the average flight being 280 km. Total activity for the OLC for 2010 saw 12,881 participants flying 100,296 flights and achieving a total distance of over just over 28 million kilometers (the same as 2009).

The 2010 season of the IGC-OLC World League saw activity levels sustained with entries from 1068 Clubs and gliding organisations (2009 - 1067; 2008 - 1050). The top three placed clubs for 2010 were:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Albuquerque Soaring (retaining their 1<sup>st</sup> place from 2009)
- 2<sup>nd</sup> SFZ Konigsdorf
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Tucson Soaring Club (retaining their 3<sup>rd</sup> place from 2009)

The application and enthusiasm shown by the pilots at Albuquerque Soaring and the Tucson Soaring Club is to be complimented.

### **World Records**

IGC made a submission to CASI (the FAI Air Sport General Commission) in 2010 regarding the treatment of world records claimed in multi-seat gliders. The result of the CASI decision means that world records for multi-seat gliders no longer have to first be accepted as a national record. This decision comes into effect from the 1<sup>st</sup> of October 2011.

Activity levels on the record front seem to have reduced in the past year. One record claim was ratified:

Sub-class	Type of Record	Performance	Date	Claimant
World Class - Feminine	Distance using up to 3 turn points	450.2 km	19 Jul	Facon (FRA)

And six claims for 2010 have been received by the FAI Headquarters:

Sub-class	Type of Record	Performance	Date	Claimant
Open	Distance over a triangular course	1600.2 km	8 Dec	Ohlmann (GER)

Open	Free triangle distance	1608.2 km	8 Dec	Ohlmann (GER)
Open	Speed over a triangular course of 1500 km	122.75 km	8 Dec	Ohlmann (GER)
15 Meter - Feminine	Free distance using 3 turn points	1051.4 km	25 Dec	Schödel (GER)
Open	Distance over a triangular course	1621 km	25 Dec	Ohlmann (GER)
Open	Free triangle distance	1650 km	25 Dec	Ohlmann (GER)

### **Public Presentation of Gliding**

In 2009 I talked about the live streaming of the GP racing at Turin and Santiago. Our new FAI President has publically stated that he wants to see live streaming, easy-to-understand and immediate scoring being priorities for the FAI to enable us to present our sports to the public. This move forward will, I am sure, be of great benefit to our GP project.

### **SGP+**

At the 2009 Plenary you heard about the plan to create an “SGP+ circuit” combining the excitement of GP glider racing with a strong environmental message. A considerable amount of work has gone into progressing this opportunity. I especially want to thank Stephane Desprez for working so hard on our behalf to negotiate a contract to enable this concept to develop. I also want to thank Brian Spreckley for his dedication to the job of being the IGC negotiator on this project. I will speak more about this at the plenary meeting.

### **FAI General Conference 2010**

The FAI General Conference 2010 was held in Dublin, Ireland, in October. A full agenda included an Air Sports Commission President’s meeting. The two days of conference were generally very dry and involved working through details rather than allowing the delegates to debate philosophies about the future of the FAI. One presentation broke this pattern – being a discussion on the future of AVGAS as a fuel for GA aircraft. Interestingly, more GA aircraft operate in the USA and more AVGAS is used in the USA than in all the countries of Europe combined.

An updated FAI strategy was presented by the Secretary General and was well received by the conference delegates. This updated strategy is now the focus of work for the new FAI Executive Board for the next five years. Stephane was adamant that we need to focus on consistent and visible branding for all our sports to ensure that the FAI is visible and properly recognised. We all have a responsibility in this area to ensure that our IGC sanctioned events are properly branded – and this includes means websites, documents, letters, emails to outside organisations, banners, flags and so on. The FAI logo should be openly and clearly visible anytime we have an FAI\_IGC sanctioned event at any level.

Following the recommendations arising from a report commissioned by the FAI Executive Board in 2009 the accounts of FAI have been consolidated so that the income and expenditures from the Commissions are integrated into the main body of the accounts. You may have seen or heard of concerns being raised that the ASC funds would be used to offset FAI expenses. The “change” in the accounting procedures is actually required to align the FAI with the requirements of the FAI Statutes. The future use and distribution of monies

(both excess income and budget debt financing) will be considered in 2011 by a Working Group set up by the General Conference. This WG is comprised of two representatives from the NACs, two from the ASCs and two from the Executive Board. The WG is charged with determining how the FAI accounts, income and expenditures are managed in the future.

The World Air Games for 2011 have been cancelled and the FAI Headquarters is now focusing on bids for the World Air Games for 2013.

Eric Mozer attended the Conference as the acting IGC President and continues to serve the FAI on the Statutes Working Group.

### **Bureau Meetings**

A mid-year Bureau meeting was held in Dublin in October, 2010, in conjunction with the FAI General Conference. This meeting saw a significant amount of time spent on discussions about management of our WGC events and safety at WGC competitions.

### **Looking Ahead to 2011**

2011 promises to be an interesting year. The new management team on the FAI are keen to progress a number of ideas that have not been able to gain traction in the past few years and I look forward to us being able to work closely with the Secretary General and the headquarters staff to develop the sport of gliding further.

In addition to my responsibilities as IGC President and an FAI board member, I now have responsibility for a number of FAI portfolios including: Strategic Planning; Branding; Positioning; Relationship with ASCs; Sports Development; New Technologies; On-line Contests and Safety.

This means that I will need to rely on Bureau members to look after day-to-day IGC activities perhaps more so than they have done in the past. I know that they will rise to this challenge.

Peter Platzer is standing down from the Bureau this year and I would like to thank Peter for his valuable contributions to the Bureau over the past three years.

Finally, my specific thanks to Eric Mozer and to Peter Eriksen for their support to me during the past year.



*President, IGC*