

## **IGC Steward Report**

### **31<sup>st</sup>. FAI World Gliding Championships**

**Szeged Hungary 24<sup>th</sup> July to 7<sup>th</sup> August**

**Contest Director: Andras Gyongyosi**

#### **Competition overview.**

The competition organisation was under resourced and poorly prepared; it was evident that the Aero Club of Hungary had not respected their obligation to ensure that the competition organisers met their responsibilities in providing suitable infrastructure and facilities. The local organising club did not use the funding provided by the competition entry fees and tow charges to provide suitable infrastructure or personnel.

We recommend that the FAI write officially to the Hungarian Aero Club to make a formal complaint that the competition was not sufficiently resourced and did not achieve the basic level expected for a WGC organisation.

This is no reflection on the small team of dedicated organisers who worked extremely hard with poor infrastructure and facilities and co-operated well with the FAI officials.

The competition was unlucky to suffer poor weather conditions with low cloud bases and weak conditions on most flying days.

#### **Pre Competition**

In 2009 there was a Women's World Championships held at the same site and attended by the Chief Steward. At the closing of this competition the CS met with the then designated competition director for 2010 and the local organiser committee representative. At this meeting a number of issues were identified as requiring improvement and attention prior to the 2010 contest, assurances were given that these issues would be attended to. The same issues were raised again six months before the competition and assurances were once again given that the issues would be corrected. It is very disappointing that virtually none of these assurances were fulfilled. It is evident from this experience that greater sanction is required to ensure organisers reach minimum performance standards, comply with the bid conditions and fulfil promises.

#### **Practice period**

The practice period was not taken seriously enough by the organisers or pilots which resulted in many problems on day 1 of the competition. (One pilot receiving a warning on day 1 admitted he had not been to a single briefing in the practice period). During the practice period the information stream was chaotic, with the briefing, website and printed information media's being used at random. Important (flight and technical) information didn't reach pilots and the TC's.

The importance of the official practice period should be reinforced requiring competitors to attend and organisers to follow all the competition procedures.

#### **ORGANISATION**

The organisation was not fully prepared and lacked sufficient helpers at all levels. The core organisers were very capable and they worked very hard to compensate for the lack of facilities but lacked proper procedures and administrative support.

#### **Quantity of officials**

Most of the organising team performed more than one function, the consequent overlapping of tasks and shortage of time available was a constant cause of mistakes entering the information at briefings and information to pilots.

#### **Experience of officials.**

The Director, scorer and task setter were experienced at a local level but did not appreciate the difference in standards and procedures expected in the organisation of a three class WGC. They responded positively to advice and input from the stewards.

#### **Suitability of meetings and briefings**

During the practice period the briefings were almost impossible to understand due to poor acoustics and a

poor PA system, this was significantly improved during the first few competition days. The main briefings were much improved after several competition days and subsequently they were conducted in a professional and suitable manner.

The team captains meetings held each day on a relaxed and informal basis 30 minutes before briefing were extremely useful and devoted to a discussion on problems and important issues.

### **Suitability of weather information**

Weather information was provided by a professional meteorologist, the initial presenter had to be changed due to poor English and the second presenter was quite satisfactory. The information given at the briefing and on paper distributed to the pilots was adequate.

### **Suitability of facilities**

The info office was located in the briefing hanger and functioned satisfactorily. The competition scoring and directors offices were cramped and lacked sufficient space for them to perform their functions efficiently.

The campground was crowded and suffered constant power failures due to the large number of air-conditioning units in operation. The sanitary facilities were barely adequate and insufficient attention was paid to their cleanliness and hygiene.

Catering was well organised in the aero club restaurant next to the briefing hangar and reasonable quality food was available at reasonable prices, however the facilities were wholly inadequate for the number of persons at the event.

A Wifi network covered most of the airfield and the Internet connection worked well most of the time.

The airfield surface was very poor in some areas resulting in many complaints from the pilots and some minor damage to landing gear doors etc.

### **Information dissemination (Announcements, schedules and decisions)**

Once the competition had started all the official information and results were displayed on the official notice board located in the briefing hangar and signed by the director. Printed information was distributed to the team captains and to the FAI officials in mail boxes. The results were also displayed on internet and on screens located in the bar. Due to a lack of administrative support several mistakes were made in the distribution of information which required corrective action. There was no effective means of communicating with the team captains or pilots until the organisation started to use the tower radio for official announcements

### **Retrieval**

There were many out landings most of which were uneventful. There were considerable problems crossing the border into Serbia resulting in long delays and difficulties finding pilots. After a large number of 15m class gliders landed in Serbia the following day was cancelled for that class due to late arrivals back at Szeged. Two pilots did not arrive back until after briefing the next day.

### **Launch control**

In general the launching was handled efficiently and with few problems. There was a tendency for the launching to commence before the announced time resulting in complaints from the pilots at the front of the grid.

### **Finish procedures**

During finishing on the first competition day in the 15m and 18m classes, there were a number of incidents which indicated that the procedure needed to be improved. A finish ring and new landing procedure was introduced which was found to be very satisfactory for the rest of the competition..(see section on Annex A recommendations).

### **Opening and closing ceremonies including presentation of Jury and Stewards**

The opening ceremony was well organised with a march through the town of Szeged to the town hall. The speeches were rather long due to translation into English. There was a fly past of two Hungarian air force jets and the FAI flag was raised during the ceremony and the FAI anthem played, the contest was opened by the Jury president Prof, Peter Ryder.

The Jury and the Stewards were presented during one of the briefings.

### **The prize giving ceremony**

This was held in the main briefing hanger. It was well organised and efficient culminating in the lowering of the FAI flag and Anthem being played.

### **Steward and Jury facilities**

The organisers provided the chief steward with a car for use of the stewards and jury. The accommodation reserved for the Stewards and Jury was unsatisfactory requiring the Jury President and Chief Steward to find alternative accommodation. The office provided for use by the officials was satisfactory.

### **Other social events**

There was very nice Hungarian evening with good food at no cost, the music was cancelled and the money saved was added to the truck driver fund. The German team organised a free food and beer evening sponsored by Mercedes Benz.

The International evening was a great success and most countries contributed to make the event very enjoyable.

The last night party was a very sociable event. The organisers sold tickets at 14e for the food at the party despite the bid document stating the farewell party was included in the entry fee. This caused many complaints to the organisers from pilots and TC's. However they did provide a welcome aperitif and made some beer available free of charge.

### **Total number of scheduled days and number of contest days**

The total number of scheduled day was.

15m Class      7 days

18m Class      7 days

Open Class     8 days

### **Media liaison and internet coverage**

There was no dedicated person or facilities to assist the press. Several camera teams from different nations arrived toward the end of the competition. They were mostly guided by team captains and as far as we are aware there were no complaints about their activities.

There was no media board at the event and no evidence of local coverage.

### **Public and Internet display of real-time aircraft positions and information**

The organisers used Yellow Brick tracking, they placed trackers in about 5 of the top gliders in each class although some of the pilots refused to carry the trackers. Due to the low number of trackers per class and the low speeds in the poor soaring conditions the tracker system was not very effective and lacked an audio channel for commentary. Regular internet and power cuts caused many delays in the tracker system.

### **Task setting and operations**

The procedures and strategy for task setting were not of a standard required for WGC events. Tasks were required to be changed on several occasions and were often over optimistic. There was little creativity in the setting of fallback tasks resulting in fewer options during the decision period prior to launching.

### **Scoring system (use and application)**

The scoring system worked satisfactorily once the problems in file handling were resolved. The scorer was also involved in the task setting process, there was only one computer covering both areas and no network in place for file sharing. This resulted in delays to correct scoring status being achieved in a timely manner.

### **Protest handling and registration**

There was no procedure for handling or filing of enquiries or complaints, a procedure was put in place and the relevant documentation was organised by the stewards.

There were no protests during the competition.

## **RULES**

### **Adequacy of Local Procedures**

The local procedures were amended several times prior to the contest and the final version was issued during the practice period. Several additions needed to be made during the both practice and competition periods, these were distributed to teams and covered in detail at briefing.

The changes included.

- Release from tow procedures.
- Landing procedures
- Strong wind landing procedures
- Finish procedures.
- Engine run procedures
- Control point radius
- Scoring enquiry procedure.

### **Possible improvements of Rules and/or Local Procedures**

#### **IGC File upload**

Organisers are increasingly making use of web based file upload systems. This is a positive improvement to the procedures but presents problems at the beginning of a contest if the FR information is not accurate.

The system only works well once all file names are recognised and associated with a pilot. To improve the situation we suggest amendments to Annex A as follows.

#### **Flight recorder details**

All Flight recorders nominated should contain the correct pilot and glider information where the FR features allow this. This is to reduce the problem of having lots of flights from "Buzz Light Year"

#### **Scrutineering**

During the scrutineering process one flight file should be submitted from both nominated FR's. This is probably the best way to ensure the scorers have FR files to prime the system

#### **Changing of flight recorders.**

Any change to a pilot's nominated recorder should be registered and accompanied by an IGC file from the new recorder.

#### **Primary and secondary FR.**

The requirement to always hand in the primary FR could be deleted and replaced with "a file from either nominated recorder". There seems to be no logical reason why we should have a primary and secondary as this creates more work for the scorers.

#### **Finish procedure.**

We suggest that the finish procedure in Annex A should be amended to make the use of a finish ring a default for all contests unless it can be proved unsatisfactory for a specific location.

The finish ring should have large enough diameter to make the crossing line as flat as possible (min 3km)

The line should be a minimum of 1km from the airfield threshold.

Procedures should be included to avoid deliberate outlanding and low high speed line crossings where obstacle exist.

1. The LP's could contain a rule requiring a continuously descending flight path during the final glide.
2. There could be a compulsory minimum altitude marked on the task sheet for crossing the finish ring which allows a direct landing on a glide slope appropriate to the class and taking into consideration the wind strength.  
e:g Standard 1:30/35. 18m 1:40/45 Open 1:50.
3. There could be a 5 minute penalty for crossing the line but not landing on the airfield.

In post contest discussion option number one was considered the most appropriate for most circumstances.

### **Practice Period**

The importance of the official practice period should be reinforced in Annex A requiring competitors to attend and organisers to follow all the competition procedures.

### **Annex A procedure for duplicate contest numbers**

There should be an Annex A regulation regarding action in the event of duplicate contest numbers. We suggest the first number registered should be given priority any subsequent conflicting competition numbers must be changed prior to the contest.

### **Engine run procedure could be modified.**

With a large number of gliders in a World Contest the engine run procedure creates an unnecessary hazard. We suggest the procedure could be modified according to the procedure in annex 1 to this report.

### **Control points.**

The rules for racing task TP sectors should be relaxed if applied to control points to allow more separation of classes.

### **Release areas.**

Annex A states that separate release areas should be used for each class. During this competition a single release area was used and this procedure worked extremely well allowing for launching of two classes simultaneously. We recommend that Annex A should not require separate release areas but require the procedures to be included in the local procedures as each airfield has differing criteria.

## **SAFETY**

### **General safety of the event**

The event was conducted in a safe manner with procedures being modified to improve safety whenever they were identified..

A pilots safety committee was elected at the beginning of the competition but did not meet during the event.

A Pilot comments Box and was introduced and pilots were encouraged to post any comments in the box either signed or anonymous. This was a very successful initiative and resulted in many comments from pilots providing feedback to the stewards.

Safety briefings were made during briefing by the Chief Steward when it was considered appropriate to do so.

### **Occurrence of incidents and/or accidents.**

On the first competition day in the 18m and 15m classes there was an accident involving an 15m class glider VW and a lorry passing the airfield on a main road. The glider was very low on the last stages of his final glide but would almost certainly have passed over the boundary fence. He did not see a truck driving on the road and left his pull up over the fence too late and with very little energy, the resulting impact with the truck caused injury to the driver. The glider then hit the boundary fence going backwards and the pilot was unhurt. The accident is subject to an investigation by the Hungarian officials and a full report will be issued in due course.

### **Availability of medical personnel**

There were no medical personnel on the airfield and response was required form the local emergency services based in Szeged.

### **Use of safety officers**

A safety officer was appointed by the organisers who also took the role of co-ordinator in the event of an accident. The organisers produced a document for the team captains outlining action to be taken in the

event of an accident. Unfortunately at the time of the accident on day one in the 15m class the safety officer was not available.

### **Launch safety**

The launching was conducted safely once initial small procedures were improved, the organisers held a tug pilot briefing each day which improved the towing procedures and discipline of the tow pilots. The organisers co-operated with the stewards on the spacing and timing of each class launch.

### **Pilot skills relating to safety**

A briefing by the CS was held on the last practice day for all pilots flying in a WGC for the first time.

Due to the large number of competitors it was very difficult to communicate with individual pilots except in case of a complaint or observed incident. There were many reports of gliders flying too close to each other and use was made of flight traces to discuss the situation with the pilots. It was evident that there was considerable difference in the skill and experience levels of pilots.

### **Stewards.**

The current system of Stewards has been in place for many years and reflects their role in competitions from some years ago. The many changes in competition procedures during recent years has also changed the demands on the stewards and changes in their role. The use of IGC files to analyse flights for both potential and reported hazards is an increasing part of the stewards work.

We suggest that for future WGC one of the stewards should be a specialist in the analysis of flight data and the preparation of 3D and flight analysis videos. This person would work under the direction of the chief steward and support him and the organisers with the analysis of flight data and the preparation of safety video clips for the contest briefing and general distribution.

The situation regarding FAI officials liabilities needs to be clarified by FAI and we should ensure that proper liability insurance is in place to protect them against legal action.

All FAI officials should have travel and sickness insurance, it may be possible for FAI to have a policy that covers all officials otherwise we should pay for suitable individual insurance.

## **Annex 1**

### **Modified Engine-Run Procedure for Motor Gliders**

Annex A, section 5.4.d, *Control Procedures*, and the Local Procedures dated 21<sup>st</sup> July 2010 section G – *Competition Procedures* require “On motor gliders having an MoP capable of being started in flight (including sustainer MoP) the engine must be started and run for a maximum of two minutes either before the launch, or within 5 minutes after release if the motor glider is launched by aerotow.”

This procedure needs to be followed **ONLY** on the first competition day, **PROVIDED THAT**:

- 1) Flight recorder logs from both the primary and back-up flight recorders are submitted on the first competition day showing a positive record of the engine run, and
- 2) Flight recorder logs on each subsequent competition day must show evidence that the engine noise sensor is enabled.

The pilot also has the option to run the engine on each competition day according to normal Annex A, section 5.4.d procedures.

