

Subject:	WEB AND MEDIA LIAISON REPORT FOR 2012	Annex No. -	7
Author:	Susan Dixon, IPC Webmaster and Media Liaison Officer	Agenda ref. -	7.2
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2012 Report from the IPC Webmaster and Media Liaison Officer

My work this year has been dominated, as one would expect, by the Mondial, Dubai 2012. This does not in any way detract from the World Cup and European Championships in Prostejov - I attended both events to bring live results and reporting from them, assisted both times by friend and colleague, Fay Kimble: in Prostejov because I had been selected to judge and in Dubai because of the size of the whole event.

In addition to these I have, during the year, worked on uploading documents that fall within my remit, including Newsletters, Technical Notices, promoting events outside of the FAI calendar and any other requests I receive from bureau members. Following the guidelines of Niels-Christian Levin Hansen I have been able to implement Ranking lists for each parachuting discipline which have been actively publicised.

Throughout the year I have worked with the FAI office, in particular Faustine Carrera (Communications officer) who has been an excellent colleague and more recently the newly appointed IT Manager, Visa-Matti Leinikki. It was most rewarding to report on Felix Baumgartner's world records within minutes of his touchdown - and getting the FAI to post it on their front page the following morning!

The response from the FAI for changes I wished to make with regard to the Mondial had been slow in being implemented. I started early in the year requesting that the different World Championships be properly listed on the FAI Events Calendar, with each WPC and related events listed in a correctly defined and understandable fashion. In addition, that a new Front Page be designed for IPC, just for the Mondial, during the actual event.

The database alterations were completed on the 22nd November and the Front Page, two days before we left for Dubai. Neither I feel were satisfactory, and for me characterised the lack of importance placed by the FAI on the actual Web Site, IPC Pages and the Mondial itself - even though it was the most prestigious and largest single air sport event of recent times. It also left me with a large amount of work to be done at the commencement of the competitions, as I could not do the page links until I had this document in place.

It was frustrating and a little disheartening to find that the majority of delegations and competitors at both events failed to realise that www.fai.org/parachuting is the "official" web site for all FC Events and that the organiser's web site in Dubai did not have a link to our website (Prostejov did), and many individual delegation web sites did not either.

During the year I worked on a series of articles about the Mondial, all of which were published as press release news stories to the aviation press and all NAC's by the FAI. When I was told they would be issuing press releases, I naively thought that was also to the main international press - only to learn just before the Mondial that it was only to the aviation media. An opportunity missed I believe to promote such a huge event worldwide.

I continue to have problems with documents I have put up on site disappearing and to date I have not found out why. For example, under the "Documents" menu tag, the latest version of the Sporting Code, Section 5 and the Competition Rules can be found. However, following a request, I also put a link there to the Sporting Code General Section to save judges and others who need to consult all documentation relating to competitions from further searches on the whole site. That link was/has been removed. I posted the judges lists for the Mondial under the same menu tag several times, only to find, when asked "where they were" that they too had disappeared. These specific aspects apart, it would appear that navigation and/or location of articles within the website continues to be a source of frustration for new and returning visitors alike.

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During the Mondial, a whole section of the *Daily News Report* I was running as a continuous document disappeared and the IT Office of the FAI are unable to give me a reason as to how or why this occurred. They were, thankfully, able to recover it for me from the daily backup.

Having worked with this new site now for almost two years I do not believe it serves the needs of IPC nor the skydiving community. It is too prescriptive in its layout, style, use of pictures, inability to accept html coding from other web sites - for dynamic results posting for example - and does little to allow us to promote and show our sport to its full potential.

I have already received offers from members of our community to assist with its design and I believe we do have the expertise within our ranks to create something fit for our purpose.

With any project it is import to clearly specify the ultimate objective. The IPC Website should be :

1. An information source for “outsiders” seeking to learn more about the sport, how it functions, what it has and is achieving, its history and future aims.
2. Information and facts for the skydiving community of the world
3. A resource for those who are heavily involved in the organisation and management of our sport.
4. An ability to link to all judging and scoring systems used at FCE’s to publicly relay results as they “happen” as is already happening on the DZ.

It is frustrating to know that the results are posted on Facebook and similar social networking sites (by competitors) and sent round the world, before we have them available for viewing.

I’m sure once we start to plan our site, this list will grow!

I think we should have a clause in the Organisers’ Agreement recognising the authority of the IPC website (whether we stay where we are or create our own). Similarly, the provision of a secure and reliable internet connection (outside of that available to all on the DZ) and a working environment that is not a public space, should also be an integral part of the Agreement. I also believe that any provider of the Judges Results and Scoring system **must** have a direct link into our site as the event is happening. If the results appear on the DZ they are in the public domain - always, of course, with the proviso that they are “Unofficial”, until confirmed by the Chief Judge (in effect until 2 hours after publication - to allow for a protest).

The support we had this year from InTime at the Mondial and OmniSkore in Prostejov was amazing, working ahead of time with us to ensure we could prepare the results pages in the lead up to the competitions, the results were synced to their main remote servers. In Prostejov Fay worked closely with Ted Wagner during the competition. In Dubai, the results displayed on the *DZ screens* came directly from the Judges’ ‘pads’, however the *web results* only appeared if they were synced to the remote server, i.e. uploaded by the Event Judges. We have discussed this with InTime and the Judges Committee and would like to propose that this becomes an automatic action at a FCE.

Weckbecker was less co-operative to our needs prior to the Mondial – probably because he is used to providing the results to third parties in a Rich Text Format sent by email at the end of the day. Competitors had to rely on printed results being posted, unless they were lucky enough to know Weckbecker’s website, where the results were posted. With the help of his IT technician we were able to have copies of his files uploaded to our server, but he had a heavy workload and on occasions “forgot” to put up the files for us, on others did not let us know he had - all of which led to delays in the results appearing on the website.

For all the complaints, I am very happy to carry on with the work on the site - and appreciate the kind comments I receive, which lets me know that someone out there is putting up with all its faults and using the site to keep up-to-date with IPC.

Susan Dixon and Fay Kimble 24 November and 14 December 2012