

CIVL SANCTIONED MEET JURY REPORT

1. **Championship title:** 16th FAI European Hang Gliding Championship
2. **Organiser/Staff/Stewards:**
 - Organiser:** Austrian Aeroclub
 - Organising club:** Oberdrautaler Flugsportclub
 - Meet Director:** Wolfgang Sattlegger
 - Safety Director:** Hansjörg Mitteregger
 - Meteorologist:** Robert Haspel, Austro Control
 - FAI Steward:** Flip Koetsier (NLD)
3. **Location:** Greifenburg - Berg, Austria
4. **Dates:** 7th to 21st June 2008
5. **Number of flyable days & number of validated days:** there were 6 flyable days and 3 days where the task was validated. These statistics do not include days where pilots were able to fly locally but conditions were clearly not safe for task setting; the jury felt that tasks should have been set on 2 further days.
6. **Remarks on weather:** the championship suffered disappointing weather with several days of low cloud, rain and occasional thunderstorms in the area. The weather forecasting by Robert Haspel, both in detail and presentation, was among the best the CIVL officials at this championship have experienced.
7. **Number of competitors:** 98 from 21 nations.
8. **Winners, team and individual:**

Individual	-	Gold: Elio Cataldi (Italy) Silver: Thomas Weissenberger (Austria) Bronze: Michael Friesenbichler (Austria)
Women	-	Gold: Corrina Schwiegershausen (Germany) Silver: Natalia Petrova (Russia) Bronze: Christine Aichner (Germany)
Team	-	Gold: Austria Silver: Italy Bronze: Germany
9. **Safety**
 - a. **Significant accidents:** on 15th June, during the second task of the championship Swiss pilot Richard Meier's glider tumbled and broke when he was flying relatively close to the terrain. He was unable to deploy his reserve parachute with sufficient altitude and died from injuries suffered in his impact with the ground.

b. Other comments on safety:

i. Prior to the start of the championship the Jury President asked that the planned goal field in Greifenburg not be used as it was considered unsuitable for a racing finish due to power cables and other obstructions around the perimeter; this was changed to a better field to the south of the river.

ii. On the first task there was a safety issue with pilots going into cloud before the start - a not uncommon problem. Although there are rules to identify and penalise competitors who do fly in cloud this usually fails with the need to identify the offender. This is particularly difficult before the start where the sky is very busy and pilots must already divide their attention between avoiding collisions and monitoring their location and time in respect to the start line. After a series of team leader and pilot meetings an additional safety rule was introduced setting altitude limits at the start line and specifying penalties for infringement. This addition is permitted in Section 7A, 2.5.5 as it was considered to be necessary for safety reasons and approved by a majority of the team leaders (16 - 2 with 3 absent), the CIVL Steward and by the Jury President.

iii. The Safety Director was cautious about weather conditions in this Alpine region as the possibility of the premature stopping of a task is always preferable to a decision that is made too late.

10. Summary of incidents, Jury actions, interventions or interaction with Steward, Organiser etc.

a. There were two occasions where competition days were cancelled early despite there being no safety reasons for this action. The reasons given were that a task would not have been a satisfactory one in the prevailing conditions, however on both occasions conditions suitable for a competition task developed later with sufficient time to run a task. After the second occasion the Competition Director was reminded of his obligation under the Sporting Code to set a task as long as conditions were safe for flying. He was also reminded of some of the options within the authorised scoring system.

b. The CIVL officials at this championship, assisted by Thomas Pelecci, carried out the measuring of sprog angles mandated by the 2008 Plenary. This received complete cooperation from the pilots and provided stimulus for a great deal of discussion on the subject of pitch stability. Three well-attended discussion sessions were organised as data became available from the measurements taken at this championship; the first two were led by CIVL official Dennis Pagen and Moyes designer and pilot Gerolf Heinrichs. At the end of the championship DHV President Charley Jost and the DHV technical officer also gave a presentation and chaired a lengthy discussion on the subject.

11. Brief description of protests and decisions: there were none.

12. General comments on championship: This was a well organised and well staffed championship in all respects.

13. Things to learn/improve:

a. The rule about maximum altitude at the start line that was introduced in this championship addressed issues of both safety and fairness but does have some problems with implementation. However it was popular with many pilots and it is recommended that CIVL continue to consider ways to implement this fairly in future.

b. On the second task, the physical goal line was not placed at the GPS coordinates provided to the pilots. The field at the GPS point was in high crop, so the visible line could not be placed there, but had to be laid down elsewhere, the difference being about 400 meters. A Sporting Code rule was introduced this year requiring competition organisers to physically check out goals prior to each championship and this rule was clearly not followed here.

c. The failure to set a task on 2 flyable days indicates a problem that can arise when a Competition Director relies too heavily upon a Task Advisory Committee. TACs are invariably made up of pilots with considerable competition experience but strong views about what constitutes a satisfactory competition task. Our Sporting Code puts an obligation on Competition Directors to set a task on flyable days and all competing pilots have a right to as many opportunities to contest a championship as the weather conditions permit in safety. There are sufficient options within our tasking software and instrumentation to ensure that fair tasks can be set in a variety of conditions and days should only be declared "untaskable" because the conditions are unsafe rather than because there is a higher risk of pilots not completing a high quality task.

d. There is a requirement in the Sporting Code for pilots to attend a safety briefing before being allowed to compete in a championship. As no roll call or signing in system was used for this it was impossible to be certain that all pilots had attended. This should be managed better at future championships.

14. Recommendations for changes to the Sporting Code: It has been noted that in more than one recent championship a pilot who is leading the rankings has remained on the TAC until the close of the competition. CIVL should consider whether this is appropriate. The jury wish to emphasise that this recommendation should not be taken to imply criticism of any individual.

15. Special events enhancing the competition:

a. The Opening Ceremony was a nice event for all. The national teams were introduced to the local population, welcome speeches made and some traditional entertainment for the area provided. A meal and welcome drinks were also provided for the pilots, competition staff, special guests and FAI officials.

b. During the first week the teams were also provided with meal and drink tickets for a family event in the village of Berg. Entertainment was provided by a live band and some of the outdoor activities, including grass skiing, provided a lot of fun for the pilots.

c. The closing ceremony was well organised and traditional in nature with speeches, entertainment with a local flavour and the presentation of medals and trophies while free drinks and a snack meal were provided for all the participants, competition staff, special guests and FAI officials.

16. Jury Declaration: We declare that the Championship has been conducted in accordance with the rules, except where stated above, and that there are no outstanding protests.

5 July 2008

John Aldridge (UK) – Jury President

Dennis Pagen (USA) – Jury Member

Rodrigo Maldonado (GUA) – Jury Member