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# **Jury report**

## **10<sup>th</sup> European Paragliding Championship**

Niška Banja, Serbia

30<sup>th</sup> June – 12<sup>th</sup> July 2008

**1. Championship title :** 10<sup>th</sup> FAI European Paragliding Championship

**2. Organiser/Staff/Stewards**

a. **Organiser :** Albatros Paragliding Club

b. **Staff :**

General Organization	Ivan Djordjevic <sup>(a)</sup>
Meet Director	Srdjan Srdanovic <sup>(b)</sup>
Deputy M. Director	Xavier Murillo
Safety Director	Milance Djuric <sup>(c)</sup>
Health C. Director	Dr. Miroljub Tosic
Reception Board	Mila Nikolic, Vladimir Vidanovic
Retrieval	Ivica Ristic
Take Off Marshal	Neboja Stevanovic
Scoring	Georgi Jordanov
Goal Marshal	Vladimir Vidanovic <sup>(d)</sup>
Weather Forecast	Ivan Djordjevic
Crew Coordinator	Bobi Boncic
HQ Coordinator	Mila Nikolic
Press and P.R.	Srdjan Srdanovic
Rescue Coordinator	Vladimir Vidanovic
(a) Replaced by:	Milance Djuric
(b) Replaced by:	Ivan Djordjevic
(c) Replaced by:	Aleksandar Djordjevic
(d) Replaced by	Srdjan Stanojevic

c. **Stewards:** Leonard Grigorescu (Romania)

**3. Location :** Niška Banja – Niš –Serbia

**4. Dates :** 29<sup>th</sup> June – 12<sup>th</sup> July 2008

**5. Number of flyable days:** 7

**6. Validated days:** 5

**7. Remarks on weather**

During the championship the wind was mostly from NW, strong and often unsuitable for safe flying. Two cold fronts and the risk of overdevelopment compromised the safety of some tasks, and 6 of them had to be either stopped or cancelled. On flyable days thermal activity was generally good for a soaring competition. Through the tasks different wind speeds and conditions could be met by pilots.

**8. Number of competitors:** 146

## 9. Winners

### Individual Men

Gold:	Greg. Blondeau	(FRA)	4069 points
Silver:	Andy Aebi	(CHE)	4040 points
Bronze:	Jeremie Lager	(FRA)	3995 points

### Individual Women

Gold:	Ewa Wisnierska	(DEU)	3603 points
Silver:	Anja Kroll	(CHE)	3153 points
Bronze:	Elisa Houdry	(FRA)	2902 points

### Team results

Gold:	FRANCE	11094 points
Silver:	SWITZERLAND	11032 points
Bronze:	ITALY	10593 points

## 10. Safety

### a. Details of significant accidents

In task 2

Pilot 115, after his wing collapsed had to pull the reserve, he was able to land safely, got no injuries and was able to proceed next day with the competition; 1 Pilot landed to assist him and another one descended 1000 m, both were awarded according to the rules.

1 Korean Pilot landed in a tree, had no injury and was helped by locals.

Pilot n° 29 landed in a very difficult place, and found himself on the edge of a cliff. In all these cases rescue and retrieval took a very long time, – pilots came back late in the night and one of them at 5 o'clock in the morning.

In task 3

Pilot n° 9 had a collapse just after take off, landed with some violence in the trees, injured the left shoulder and damaged the glider. The rescue this time was fast and efficient. The pilot withdrew from the competition and was replaced by the reserve. A small mid air collision happened after take off but both pilots were able to proceed.

In Task 4

Pilot n° 133 some time shortly after take off had a collapsed wing while flying low but was able to pull the reserve, landed with some minor back injuries but decided to withdraw from the competition. Pilot n° 127 injured his knee ligaments at the attempt to take off and had to withdraw from the competition.

Other several incidents occurred, mostly due to bad terrain conditions on south take off.

In Task 5

Pilot n° 111 injured her knee ligaments while attempting to take off and was assisted by a medic on site; she was not able to proceed in the competition. Another Pilot n° 38, along the course, landed on trees but reported safely.

In Task 7

Pilot n°141 deployed the reserve but was able to land safely.

**b. Other comments on safety**

The mandatory safety meeting started with the 2nd Doctor of the competition, Dr. Ivan, who was able in a brief but fairly good presentation to explain the principals of assisting an injured pilot.

Although the Safety Director was the one named in the Local Regulations he did not speak English clearly enough and was not able to conduct by himself the mandatory safety meeting which was kept mainly by Xavier Murillo, followed by Mr Goran Dimiskovski, also a pilot that knows very well the area, who explained the possible dangers to be expected. Also the English of the Meet Director was far from good.

The meteorologist appointed in the Local Regulations was not able to speak English and had to be translated in the meteo briefings. The weather reports were, from our point of view, sometimes not detailed enough and provided little help to the competitors. In fact the interpretation of the charts was mostly done by the Team Leaders.

A helicopter based in NIS Airport was standing by for any emergency as the Jury President had the opportunity to confirm by speaking with the Crew, however it was not equipped with a winch and would have to land somewhere near before rescue could be done.

**11. Special events enhancing the competition**

The opening ceremony was in its essence well conducted and took place at the main square in Niska Banja, with enough space for all the competitors, staff and public (a little bit later and it would be held in total darkness because the lights were not turned on). A small parade was organized through the main street. Some authorities including the NAC President were present but not the Mayor of Niska Banja. The FAI anthem was played and the flag was displayed. The Jury President had a speech and officially opened the competition. Unfortunately no welcome dinner or even small food and beverage was provided to the pilots and officials and the party with a local band at the terrace in the HQ was not announced and for this reason had little participation from the competitors. On the cancelled days nothing was ever organized or provided for the pilots and officials to the nearest places of interest or cultural events.

During the competition there was only one dinner and party very well organized and highly appreciated by all. Also several dancing parties were provided with the local band at the HQ, one of them with free drinks.

**12. Things to learn/improve**

- a. There was a task set in the official training day and the scoring program was tested. However there was only one computer and the download was very slow. In the next day this problem was solved with adding one more computer and an experienced scorer. Other problem with the training day was that actually only three pilots were finally scored for the task – if the training day is supposed to be a test before the main competition, than we should find a way to make a real training task.
- b. The report back and coordination of retrieval was being done just by one person, due to the lack of staff, creating enormous problems; one of the Jury members (Peter Brandlehner) requested permission to volunteer to help in the afternoons and things

were much more efficient after. The Jury had also to help the organizers at the registration process in order to avoid more chaos.

- c. The steward gave a significant contribution not only at the registration setting all the details, but through all the period advising on the management of the competition. This was a never ending job and in further competitions involving so many pilots, we strongly recommend the presence of 2 stewards.
- d. The staff – meteorologist, take-off marshal and especially Meet Director and Safety Director should not be changed. They also have to be fluent in English or at least to be able to express themselves clearly in briefings and radio communication.
- e. Due to an error at the registration there was a problem with the numbers assigned to the pilots that were different from the wing numbers. That caused enormous distress and confusion to Team Leaders and Pilots. Also the stickers provided by the organizers were not suitable for the wings and kept peeling off and the ID cards with vital information for the pilots were not all ready until the end of the first week.
- f. The facilities at the HQ, were suitable and proper to accommodate all sectors of the organization including registration, scoring and Team Leader briefings. It was also a good idea to provide all pilots and Team leaders with SIM cards from a national phone company. Wireless internet connection was available and running well most of the time, also 3 computers were available for use. The only thing that seemed to be insufficient were office equipment and material (eg. no fast copy machine).

*During the first half of the competition major problems were still not solved, and other were raising:*

- g. The emergency frequency was not responding when pilots and team leaders were in certain areas, the emergency number was found disconnected or not available, transport to the take-off took too long and retrieval was a chaos and totally ineffective, mostly because the were very few means of transport and lack of coordination, also the Safety Director sometimes could not be reached neither by radio nor phone, and a properly equipped rescue team was not present at the take-off, although we were told by the Organizers they could be sent at any needed moment .
- h. Despite any good will from the Organizers due to the lack of staff and means, and because they were reluctant, delaying or unable to solve the arising problems, the situation was becoming intolerable and not acceptable, especially regarding the safety of pilots; on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July the officials gave the organizers a list of non negotiable requirements to be fulfilled by the organizers in order to proceed with the competition, addressing all safety aspects and general issues to be improved.

Later, in the very same day after a meeting between CIVL officials and the Serbian NAC Secretary Mr Zeljko Ovuka, due to the recent events, the general bad feeling and reputation of the organization, affecting not only on the competition, but also on the NAC and the CIVL, another meeting was arranged with the organizers, in order to provide the necessary solutions.

In less than 12 hours the NAC Secretary was able to provide most if not all of the requirements, in order to proceed with the competition. Nevertheless, because of political and financial problems between the two sides, the Jury President and the Steward had to provide several other meetings including the Serbian NAC President, acting as mediators, until the sides were finally able to reach an agreement and we were satisfied with the outcome.

- i. We discovered an inadequacy in the Section 7 B, 5.2.5 that may lead to miss interpretation and needs to be clarified: According to the actual text, it is possible to presume that in case of an injured pilot the reserve one will only be able to score for the team from the next task on; however what if the pilot was injured during the attempt to take off after the window was open but did not fly at all, can then at that moment be replaced by the reserve in the very same task? In such situation the reserve pilot automatically takes place or is it necessary for the Team Leader to notify the Meet Director? If so, by what via must be made? (oral or in writing) and what is the time limit for the request?

Also, the reserve pilot has to be nominated in the beginning along with the 3 pilots scoring for the team. If this pilot gets injured or ill and one of the 3 also becomes incapacitated, what options does the team have to replace him? The Jury requests that this point should be revised and clarified at the next plenary meeting.

- j. The penalty system needs to be revised. As it is now a pilot who is caught cloud flying or fails to report back should receive 0 for the task. But if the task is cancelled than it's not possible to penalise them according to the rules, as the task will not be scored.
- k. Also in Section 7 B 2.24.3, ORDERED LAUNCH, it needs to be specified if this rule is also applied to the top 15 male and 5 female in case of a second re-launch. It was also suggested that order should be according to the competition rankings only after reaching 1500 points (so after two good tasks or more if they are weak), as results of just one task could be very random.
- l. The rule in the Local Regulations about awarding a pilot assisting a pilot in danger turned out to be difficult to apply, as all calculations had to be done manually. Also the rule does not take into account all possible aspects to award a pilot.
- m. During this championship, several attempts or proposals were made to change rules as stated in Section 7. They were refused by the Jury President.
- n. We regret that some of the priority recommendations made by the stewards in the Pre-European were not followed, especially concerning clearing the southern take-off of bigger rocks and bushes; this was a serious problem causing a lot of distress and considerable injuries to the pilots, arousing a lot of complaints. Toilets were available, but only on the northern take-off and too far from the launch site.
- o. The FAI licenses from Norway and Croatia do not comply as specified in Gen. Sec. 8.1.7, and their NACs or Federations, should be notified in order to correct them.

### **13. Summary of Jury actions including protests and decisions (add copies of the protest forms and decisions)**

There was one protest from the Swedish Team concerning the validation of task 2 and another one from FYROM (Macedonia) regarding the scoring of the reserve pilot from Czech Republic.

The jury dealt with the protests without delay and decided not to uphold any of them (see annexes containing protests and Jury decisions).

### **14. General comments**

Although most of the problems were addressed in the 2nd week, we can not say this was a successful competition, and for the future CIVL must have the means to confirm that the organizers are really capable of fulfilling the stewards' recommendations made in

the pre-competition; furthermore, we can no longer afford to compromise the safety of the competitors and the sites and organizations MUST be able to provide the highest standards required for a FAI Cat 1 competition, specially involving such large number of participants.

Jury interaction with the organizers and Meet Director was generally good, we believe they meant well trying to organize this event by themselves but it was obvious they were unable to accomplish it by several reasons given above.

The prize giving and closing ceremony were generally well conducted and appreciated by the few pilots who hadn't gone home. The Jury President made the closing speech, FAI anthem was played and flag displayed.

We also want to leave a word of appreciation to the Serbian NAC President and Secretary for all their help during this championship.

Last but not the least, our grateful appreciation to the Team Leaders, for the excellent cooperation given throughout this event and relationship with the CIVL officials.

**15. Declaration that the Championship has been conducted in accordance with the rules and that all protests have been dealt with**

The Jury declares that this Championship has been conducted in accordance with the rules and that all protests have been dealt with.

12<sup>th</sup> July 2008



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Vitor J.R.Pinto (Portugal)  
Jury President



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Karolina Kociecka (Poland)  
Jury Member



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Peter Brandlehner (Austria)  
Jury Member