



23th FAI WORLD RALLYE FLYING CHAMPIONSHIP

**Mâcon - France
July 30th -August 5th 2023**

**Competition Director's Report
Philippe MULLER**



For the second year in a row, the FFA, « Fédération Française Aéronautique », always chaired by Mr Jean-Luc Charron organised a World Championship. After Albi en 2022 with precision flying, it was now time for Rally Flying with the 23th WRFC.

PREPARATION

So we, hosted this Championship at Mâcon Airfield in France 30th July to 5th August 2023. Before the competition time, we had an official training week. So all the organisation staff was at the airfield on July 24th.

The choice of the airfield was made 2 years before after a call for applications between Vichy and Mâcon. A set of specifications had been drawn up and Mâcon fulfilled the requirements perfectly.

Since January, we have had a monthly preparatory meeting in Mâcon.

We received 45 crews participating in this competition :12 national teams as competitors coming from Austria, China, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Italy, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal (FAI crew), South Africa, Slovak Republic, Spain and 2 countries more with observer judges from Chile and Switzerland.

All informations and documents was posted as you go from the beginning of the year 2023 on the official website. The preliminary entries gave up to 55 inscriptions. Internal discussion about the use of an openstreet map or the french Michelin roadmap (scale 1/200000) resulted finally in the use and publication of the Michelin map in June on the website.

TRAINING WEEK

Crews, team-managers, judges and other officials were accommodated in two hotels, Mercure and Ibis with different levels of comfort chosen at registration. The hotels was on opposite sides from the airfield with a car journey time of 10 to 15 minutes.

During the official training week, the weather was variable but all crews had enough time to train in sufficient conditions for fly navigations and landings. The airfield was reported as a temporary regulated area from the beginning of the training until the end of the competition. Four training navigations was ready with the help of Solange and were issued from the last 2 years national championships prepared by Philippe Odeon. Meals could be taken on the airfield restaurant and all the rooms dedicated to the championship were available during this preparatory week. These training days required rigorous organization in order to avoid conflicts during the navigation flights and planning landing sessions. A few calls from local residents forced us to review the air circuit. Some crews entered controlled areas of Lyon without contact. This required briefings with the team managers.

We had prepared several options for the aircraft parking in case the grass parking lot was made impassable by possible bad weather.

For fuel, it was planned to ask the crews to pay their bill for the training week and then the week of competition. This eliminated the use of petrol tickets and made the refuelling procedure easier.

A mechanics workshop was on the airfield and will prove useful during training and competition.

Overall this week of training was very intense for the organization team.



OFFICIAL COMPETITION TIME

On Saturday, as we had announced, we have brought forward the opening ceremony to take advantage of the presence of the public in greater numbers than on Sunday. After a parade in town, we were received at the town hall of Macon for the speeches and Mr Hans Schwebel from South Africa, GAC FAI President of honour, officially opened the 23th WRFC. It was followed by a cocktail.



The judges' briefing and the general briefing were held on Sunday afternoon at the airfield with the presence of all the competitors, team managers, judges, jury and organisers



From Monday, transport from the hotels to the airfield was arranged for each competition day by bus. The competition took place with 2 groups of 22 and 23 crews with 15 shared planes. Quarantine was planned before flights.

The schedule of the competition days was as follows.

SCHEDULE NAVIGATION DAYS

- 07:45 : bus from hotels to the airfield for the first group.
 - 7:45 IBIS – 8h10 MERCURE
- 08:30 : daily briefing first group
- 09:00 : plane preparation first group
- 09:20 : check, device sealing and quarantine for the first crew
- 09:40 : first crew go to plane
- Around 10:00 : first enveloppe delivery
- 10:30 : first take off Plane preparation second group
- 09:15 : bus from hotels to the airfield for the second group.
 - 9h15 IBIS – 9h35 MERCURE
- 09h45: daily briefing second group
- 10h: plane preparation for no shared aircraft second group and check, device sealing and quarantine for the second group.
- 10h15: all crews second group in quarantine.
- 11:00-15:00 : lunch in quarantine and briefing-lunch room.
- 15:00 First bus to Mercure and Ibis
- 18:00 Team manager briefing
- 18:30 Second bus to Mercure and Ibis
- 20:00 Diner at the hotels



For the landing visual judging help, we had four Ipad with 120 fps on each side. Several video controls were required before a final judgment.



It was a hard, long and perfect preparation for the navigations by Philippe Odeon. He has five competition navigations available prepared with the help of David. For the debriefing, we had planned a logger uploading station with Christian Cote Colisson. Then two observation correction positions. Then the crew retrieved his track and timing on the computer station with Thomas Weise and Joël Tremblet. The observation corrections were displayed on the the wall and allowed an immediate possible clarification with the Chief Judge and the route planer. A complain was written if the pilot was not satisfied. Chief Judge respond immediately and the crew could fill a protest if he wanted have a final jury's decision. So the crew individual results was available at the exit of the debriefing room.

First day:

It's Navigation Charlie that is launched. Its duration was approximately 1h30. Charlie had 14 turning points, 20 photos, 5 canevas and an intermediate landing on the Montceau-Les-Mines airfield between PT7 and PT8. In Mâcon another scored landing on the way back. The giant screen was broadcasting with commentary the tracking of the navigations and the landings filmed. At the end of the day, the Czechs Petr Jonáš and Marek Velát won this round, followed by their compatriots David Cerny and Ivo Lengal. France's Olivier Rivière and Jérôme Jireau finished third. The crew of Alexis Fuchs and Jean-Baptiste Trouche finished fourth.

Second day:

This second day has started very badly... Due to unpredictable weather with a risk of thunderstorms in the afternoon and a serious medical problem touching me after my first morning briefing, the jury decided, after consultation with all the team managers to cancel the events of this day. Well it took for them, the wind picked up in the afternoon forcing the organization to dismantle a certain number of stands to secure them.

Third day:

After a day without flight, the competition resumes. The Bravo navigation is launched. It promises to be extremely demanding because the wind was blowing quite hard over Burgundy. The crews took off to the north-west of Mâcon. After a hundred nautical miles of navigation, the landings followed one another on the Mâcon aerodrome with a strong wind component, first in the axis of the runway and then, in the middle of the afternoon, full crosswind, forcing the judges to raise the red flag several times. Around 4 p.m., the landing event was finally cancelled. The last competitors will therefore land safely on the runway. The Czech, Polish and French crews share at this time the top spots in the rankings.

Fourth day:

The weather was a little milder and the Delta navigation was underway! Heading east for our 45 crews who took off for a very demanding navigation. On the menu for Delta: curved legs, scenic tracks and a new intermediate scored landing on Bourg-en-Bresse airfield. First take-off at 10:30 a.m. for the German plane...Although it took place mostly on the plains, it has been perhaps the most difficult and selective navigation.

The championship will be decided over 3 sails as the weather forecast for the reserve day was not very encouraging.

All the management did a fantastic job and as competition director I thank very warmly:

- Jury : Paul SZAMEITAT as President, Joao FRANCISCO, Hans SCHWEBEL
- International Chief Judge : Ralf GRUNDWALD
- Route Planer : Philippe ODEON
- Local Chief Judge and Competiton Director Deputy: Jacques CARRIQUIRIBERRY
- International Judges: Edmund SCHLAPLCHY, Martin HRIVNA, Filipa GARCIA DE OLIVEIRA, Pablo Manuel KENOY, Barbara FREIBOESE, Rob JONKERS, Martin MEYER, Julien CHERIOUX, Andrzej MARSALEK
- Juge observer: Liliane PARNIGONI, Wei ZHANG, Esther RIMENSBERGER, David LE GENTIL, Solange MIRIGAY
- TRA coordinator: Alain FORET
- Canevas Poser: Renaud DU GARDIN
- Computer Team : Thomas WEISE, Joël TREMBLET, Christian COTE-COLISSON
- Competition Coordination: Loïc LOGEALS
- The FFA team, local judges, helpers, local aeroclub members and their president François DASSONVILLE



The price giving and closing ceremony was held in the halls of the Town Hall with the presence of the Mayor.

RESULTS

- **Young Pilots :**
 - 1- Matous ADAM, Stepan SEDLACEK CZE
 - 2- Paul SAUCE, Mariano FUSTER FRA
 - 3- Robin SHEARER, Oliver MEINDL GER
- **Women:**
 - 1-Adèle SCHRAMM, Marjorie PERRISSIN-FABERT FRA
- **Landings :**
 - 1- Lukas BEHOUNEK, Krystof BOBEK CZE
 - 2- David CERNY, Ivo LENGAL CZE
 - 3- Alewyn BURGER, Steve VAN DER MERWE RSA
- **Individual :**
 - 1- Petr JONAS, Marek VELAT CZE
 - 2- Olivier RIVIERE, Jerome JIREAU FRA
 - 3- Alexis FUCHS, Jean-Baptiste TROUCHE FRA
- **Teams :**
 - 1. Olivier RIVIERE – Jerome JIREAU, Alexis FUCHS – Jean-Baptiste TROUCHE FRA
 - 2. Petr JONAS – Marek VELAT, Tomas RAJDL – Ondrej POKORNY CZE
 - 3. Marcin SKALIK – Joanna SKALIK, Michal WIECZOREK – Marcin KWIATOSZ POL
- **Observations :**
 - 1. Petr JONAS, Marek VELAT CZE
 - 2. Olivier RIVIERE, Jerome JIREAU FRA
 - 3. Alexis FUCHS, Jean-Baptiste TROUCHE FRA



FAI GAC President Mr. Hans Schwebel, officially closed this 23rd World Rally Flying Championship by looking forward to seeing you in Italy in 2025.



In Conclusion:

During this championship, there were no major security problems.

I would like to thank our authorities: civil aviation and air gendarmerie for not making our work more difficult with controls.

Very good atmosphere between teams and crews and a big thank you for coming.

Excellent national organization and international management team.

During the debriefing after the competition, the city acknowledged that it could have done better for its communication to the public. We had a little less people than in Albi. There was also a small opposition between the 2 adjoining towns of Mâcon and Charnay which could explain this.

Initially, France was to organize a World Rally Championship in 2015. GAC's calendar adjustments and the pandemic meant that this championship was held in 2023. And it's the same organizing team that has been waiting all this time. In addition, we ended a period with 3 world championships in less than a year.

So some of us will now devote ourselves to other aeronautical passions.

As for me, I hope with all my heart to be able to take part in new international sporting adventures.

Mandelieu La Napoule, 14th February 2024

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'P. Muller'.

Philippe MULLER