

Stewards Report – 13th European Gliding Championships.

15m and Open Class.

Rayskala,

Finland.

4th to 17th July 2005.

Contest Director: Juha Silvenoinnen

1. Organisation

- 1.1 Overall Organisation. Efficient, effective and friendly.
- 1.2 Quality of Officials. Discharged their duties competently.
- 1.3 Experience of Officials. Rayskala is the Finish National Gliding Centre and their extensive experience of National and International Competitions was evident in all areas of the operation.
- 1.4 Suitability of meetings and briefings. Meetings and briefing were always clear and to the point. The Briefing room was a converted hangar that was well prepared, there was adequate seating and table space for pilots and crews, the lighting, and acoustics were good. A manager meeting was held during the practice week during which all operational procedures were explained and discussed.
- 1.5 Suitability of weather information. The competition forecaster was a professional meteorologist who is also a glider pilot. He had the full resources of the Finish Meteorological services at his disposal and produced succinct and relevant briefings that accurately predicted the weather.
- 1.6 Suitability of facilities. The airfield infrastructure at Rayskala has been used for many competitions, including a multi class WGC and was well able to handle the requirements of this competition. There are however a minimal number of toilets in the club house and additional portable facilities should be considered for future international contests.
- 1.7 Transportation. The Stewards and Jury were all accommodated at the airfield and a car and two bicycles were provided for their transportation. This was adequate given the relatively short distance to be travelled in and around the airfield.
- 1.8 Information dissemination The airfield and surrounds was covered by a wireless internet system that was available to all competitors, crews and the press, but did not adequately cover all areas and at peak times was congested. Notice of special meetings, change of briefing times etc. were produced and displayed timeously on the official notice board and in other prominent places. All officials were able to speak and write English proficiently. Provisional results for “racing” tasks were computed from the recorded start and finish times, “Speed Task Assigned Area” from downloaded flight records. Provisional results were shown on the EGC2005 web site and on a computer screen in the club house as they were computed. Unofficial results were displayed on the official notice board and distributed to competitors as soon as all flight recorders had been downloaded and violations resolved or penalised. Generally Team Captains and the pilots concerned were consulted before penalties were awarded.

- 1.9 Pilot Assistance. The competition office was always manned and available to assist pilots and crews. Pilot registration, in the competition office, was quick, efficient and friendly.
- 1.10 Retrieval. We were not aware of any problems in locating gliders. Local farmers were helpful to pilots. On one occasion crops were damaged by crews who drove their cars and trailers into the field. As far as we are aware no compensation was claimed. The Director commented on this behaviour at a subsequent briefing and asked competitors to consult with the farmer or landowner before driving onto the property. Pilots were given a written introduction in Finnish to give to farmers.
- 1.11 Launch control for fair access and efficiency. The entire field was launched in about 45 minutes. The organisation was efficient and start gates were always opened on time. When soaring conditions were marginal the launch of the second class on the grid was held to allow the first class to climb away.
- 1.12 Opening and closing ceremonies including presentation of Jury and Stewards.
 - 1.12.1 Opening Ceremony. A very short and informal evening ceremony at which the National, FAI and Finnish Aero Club's were raised, but no anthems played.
 - 1.12.2 Jury and Stewards were introduced at morning briefings as they arrived.
 - 1.12.3 Closing Ceremony. This was well organised and was fully compliant with FAI protocol.
- 1.13 Other Social events. Opening Party and Closing Party. Both were well organised and thoroughly enjoyable occasions.
- 1.14 Total number of scheduled days was 13. Tasks were set on 12 days and there was one rest day. The open class had 12 contest days and the 15m class 11.
- 1.15 Media Liaison. The event received extensive TV and Press coverage, well above the average for gliding competitions.
- 1.16 No tracking system was in use. The organisers tried to get access to the Norwegian system but were not successful despite trying for many months. Three months before the start of the Championships they were advised that the system would not be available. They then turned to Finnish companies but were unable to get a system set up in time.
- 1.17 Other organisational comment. It was gratifying to see the number of young people who were working in the organisation, and a good sign for the future of Finnish gliding.

2 Rules.

- 2.1 Adequacy of the Local Procedures. LP's covered all eventualities.
- 2.2 Addendums or changes. The requirement for high visibility markings was made optional and the change published in the 3rd Bulletin published on 6th June 2005
- 2.3 Fair application of Rules and Local Procedures. All rules were applied fairly.
- 2.4 Possible improvement of Rules and/or Local Procedures.
 - 2.4.1 Annex A.

- 2.4.1.1 There were several complaints about the amount of other gliding activity going on at the site that had the potential to compromise the fairness and safety of the competition. Consider introducing a rule in section 1.4 of Annex to say “The organisers shall control other gliding activities at the host site to ensure that such activities do not compromise the fairness or safety of the competition”. See paragraph 2.5.3.
- 2.4.1.2 Rule 5.3.2 dictates that competing gliders must land or return to the competition site when a task is abandoned by the competitor or cancelled by the organisation and may not lead, guide or help other competitors. To provide such help is a serious sporting offence, see penalties, but it is very difficult to actually prove that such help was offered or used. To reinforce the seriousness of the offence and to give competitors and organisers a clear framework in which to work, Dick Bradley thinks that this rule should be expanded to include a presumption of guilt that would apply to other team members. The rule was discussed with the Jury and they do not share this view. However as the rules are currently written there is no prescribed penalty for a pilot who disobeys this rule, and we would suggest the following additional sentence be added to 5.3.2. “Competing sailplanes that do not comply with this rule will be penalised in terms of the penalties prescribed in 8.9”. (Add day disqualification in 8.9).
- 2.4.1.3 Penalties 8.9. Incorrect rounding of Turn Points or Areas. “More than 0.50 km of.....”, we think that this should read “within 0.50 km of...”

2.5 Task Setting and operations.

- 2.5.1 Task setting was imaginative and responsible, some times using the available weather to the limit and on other days setting good racing tasks that gave pilots a wide window for starting and thus reduced gaggling. There was good communication between the Met man and the task setting team. There were however occasions when a “b” task would have been appropriate and might have prevented a high number of out landings.
- 2.5.2 Briefings. Daily briefings didn’t always begin promptly but were always well controlled and focused. The

briefing material provided all the task, airspace, meteorological and safety information required by competitors.

2.5.3 Launching. Both classes were launched within 45 minutes, except in instance where the launch of the second class was held to give the first class time to climb and clear the area. The launch was properly recorded and the opening of the start gates announced on time. The launch marshal was responsible for opening the start gate but we think that this places too much load on one individual and the responsibilities should be split. Task and other changes on the grid were always properly controlled.

2.5.4 Finishes. The finish line crew was quite young but did an excellent job with minimal adult supervision. Data from the finish line was given to the scorers by mobile phone to produce preliminary results. The "12" finish line was only used once and there were several unsafe conflicts. The organiser wisely decided not to use this finish procedure again and there after the "26" finish line was used exclusively. Several pilots were given official warnings for low finishes.

2.6 Scoring System (use and application). The See You task setting, task verification and scoring system was used. We would like to compliment the authors of this system because most of the recommendations that were proposed after the Leszno WGC have been implemented. These have improved the flexible and easy of use of the system. A representative from See You was at the Championships for the first few days, at their own cost. During the course of the competition other problems did surface, and while some of these were corrected by email, others remain.

2.6.1 Definition of assigned areas on the task sheet. A section of the task sheet very usefully provides the specific instructions necessary to define the area in Winpilot or See You mobile. If a fraction of a degree is used in See You to define the area the Winpilot instructions that are calculated only show as a round number with a consequent error for the definition of the radial. We suggest that in the task setting part of See You that areas can only be defined to a whole degrees.

2.6.2 In some instances See You does not recognise valid starts from the flight record, and these have to be computed and entered manually by the scorers.

2.6.3 Occasionally provisional scores were computed incorrectly, and showed values that were clearly in error. This happened on a random basis and would eventually correct itself.

2.6.4 Violations are flagged by the system, but this only shows on the calculation screen. We think that unresolved violations should be printed on preliminary,

and unofficial score sheets with the notation “unresolved penalty” Such penalties can only be cleared by the contest director under some form of password control, and results cannot become official unless all violations have been resolved.

2.6.5 We would like to see some control on alterations to days that have already become “official”. Currently they can be changed and while this is a necessary function we think that it should only be allowed under the password control of the contest director.

2.6.6 Integrity of the data file. All system scripts and scoring information are stored in one text file that can be accessed with any text editor. As far as we are aware there are no integrity checks to ensure that this file has not been damaged or altered.

2.7 Complaints and Protests. There was only one protest against a decision by the director, this was resolved by the jury in favour of the competitor. Full details are in the Jury report. Also refer to para 2.4.1.2. We did however receive verbal complaints, that local flying from the airfield created a safety risk and a potential sporting advantage for Finnish pilots. The organisers had sanctioned local flying under strict conditions that were given in writing to all non-competition pilots. These included the carriage of a flight recorder, different flying area and no radio communication. Competitors were made aware of these conditions during one of the briefings and towards the end of the Championships the launch of non-competing gliders was delayed until the start gate of the last class launched had been opened.

3 Safety.

3.1 General safety of the event. The organisation had safety as their first priority. There was a comprehensive Safety Plan that conformed to FAI requirements. A fully equipped safety vehicle was on the airfield at all times and was manned by trained paramedics.

3.2 Occurrence of incidents and/or accidents.

3.2.1 Major Accidents. Nimbus 4 T (JB). The glider hit the tree tops some 250 short of the airfield while on final glide and suffered major damage, but the pilot escaped injury. Nimbus 4 DM (SD). The glider hit trees on the edge of a lake within 700m of the airfield. The pilots recognised that they did not have sufficient height to complete their final glide across the trees on the airfield boundary and executed a turn to take them back to a landable field while at the same time trying to deploy their engine. Neither the pilot nor the crew were injured. Both accidents happen on the same day and within a few minutes of each other. Ventus 2 (73). During an outlanding the undercarriage was damaged to the extent that the glider was unable to continue flying in the competition.

- 3.2.2 Minor Accidents. 3 gliders sustained minor damage while outlanding. In all cases the damaged was repaired in time for the glider to compete again the next day.
- 3.2.3 Incidents. The Safety Committee investigated a complaint that two open class gliders had joined a gaggle of thermalling gliders in a dangerous and inconsiderate way. Examination of the Flight Records confirmed the pilots report and the two pilots concerned were asked to meet the safety committee to look at the evidence and to discuss the incident. The Safety Steward spoke in general terms about the incident at the next briefing and stressed the need to maintain a good lookout.
- 3.3 Availability of Medical Personnel.
 - 3.3.3 The paramedics were available to offer advice about minor cases and treated 10 people. In more serious cases where they did not feel qualified to offer advice patients were referred to the local hospital in Loppi where comprehensive help was available.
- 3.4 Launch Safety. Safety Officers were dressed in high visibility green jackets and were the only people permitted to be in the area in front of launching gliders. There was only one unsafe incident during launching when a tow rope broke at 500ft. The glider was able to safely complete a circuit and land. All tow ropes were thoroughly checked before the next days launch.
- 3.5 Grid Safety. Cars were asked to move off the grid prior to the start of the launch. At the start of the competition there difficulties in getting crew's cooperation, but this was brought under control during the first few days.
- 3.6 Pilots Skill relating to safety. Other than those incidents previously mentioned the only potentially dangerous incidents took place on the day when the "12" finish line was used. It was clear that several pilots had not studied the briefing notes provided by the organisers, or listened to the briefings.
- 3.7 Suggestions for future safety enhancements. Prior to start of the Championships there should be a compulsory safety briefing to go through launch, relight, and finishing procedures to ensure that pilots do clearly understand these important procedures. During this briefing the importance of thermalling etiquette and good look out to prevent collision, should be emphasised.

Stewards Name Dick Bradley

Stewards Name Ritz de Luy

Stewards Signature.....

Stewards Signature.....