



IGC 2023 Plenary Meeting

Agenda Item 10.2.3

Annex D Committee

Reno Filla, Chairman

Report to IGC Plenary 2023

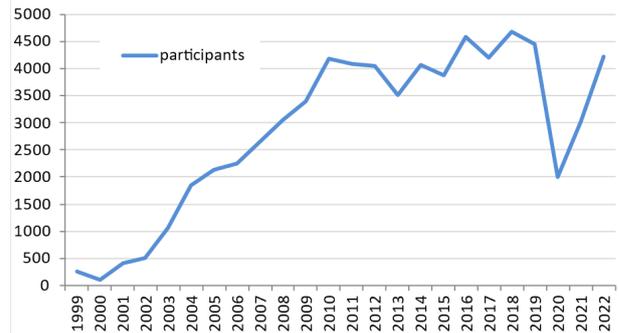
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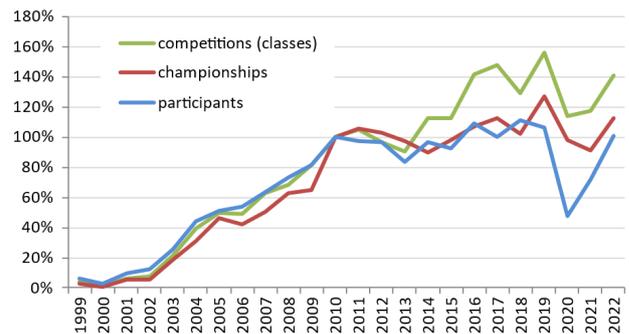
Annex D Committee Report to IGC Plenary 2023

STATISTICS

From 2010 to 2018 we had approximately the same amount of championships every year as the growth had previously levelled out in 2010. However, in the 2019 season we have seen a jump in number of competitions (from 141 to 175) and classes (from 261 to 318) because in that season we tried to promote the Ranking List by giving a discount to attract entries from championships that would otherwise not have considered IGC ranking. This seems to have worked well. Looking at the number of participants we can detect an upwards trend until 2019. Then came COVID'19 which in 2020 and 2021 impacted all numbers quite significantly. In 2022 we saw a good recovery, though we are not yet back to the pre-COVID record years:



Also the other usual charts below show a return to pre-COVID levels: in figure on the right-hand side we see that the number of participants in gliding championships has been about the same in 2022 as in 2010 but spread among a higher number of competitions (classes).



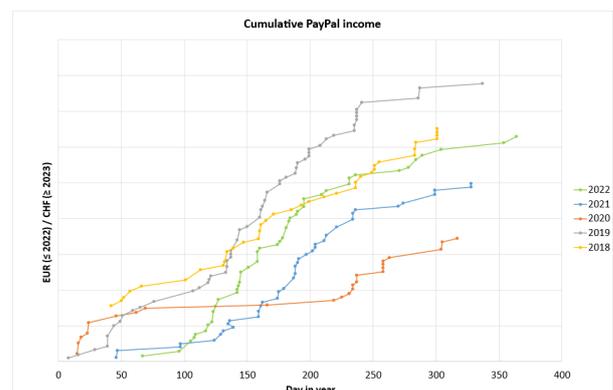
The distribution of championships and competitions over the year also resembles a normal situation for 2022, as compared to the previous two years.

Back in 2020 there was a certain catch up towards late summer of the northern hemisphere yet in total a significant drop from previous years (note that the diagram shows the moving average of two months in order to account for the fact that a contest may start late in one month and continue into the next). The shapes of the 2021 curves resemble the normal situation we otherwise see each year – although with a slow build-up in late spring.



Naturally, how many championships/competitions are ranked impacted the RL income. In order to give the IGC Bureau the chance to monitor the situation the RL team sent monthly income reports to the Treasurer. This also helps FAI to correctly attribute PayPal income from the Ranking List to IGC.

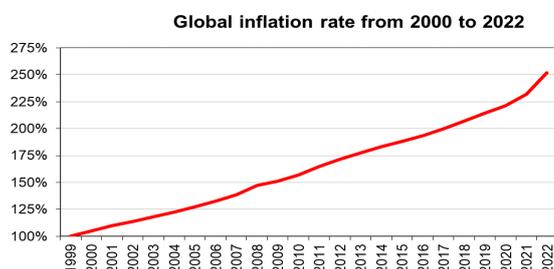
The chart to the right shows the accumulated income by PayPal for the past five years. The dramatic impact of COVID'19 on the income is clearly visible.



RANKING FEES

The 2023 edition of the FAI By-Laws section 1.2.9 ¹ states that any invoice is to be issued in Swiss Francs as the official FAI currency. The valuta conversion rate EUR to CHF has been virtually 1:1 which made the switch easy. All ranking fees are now invoiced in CHF.

Early in 2023 the IGC Bureau decided to increase ranking fees by 1 CHF from previously 4 EUR/pilot to 5 CHF/pilot. This 25% increase has been applied to all other ranking fees, too. This increase addresses compounded inflation since 1999 when the IGC Ranking List started. The fee has actually never been raised ever since 1999 – unlike the global consumer price index which has gone up to over 250% ² of what it was back then.



With the introduction of PayPal as the main way of paying for events the RL team saw a steady decrease in workload related to such administrative matters. On the other hand we see many times that despite the instructions on the website it appears unclear that successful completion of the PayPal procedure is a prerequisite of a successful registration of an event: anyone registering a championship needs to pay for it by PayPal right away, which means the login details for PayPal need to be at hand. There is no normal way of coming back at a later time and continuing a registration. The non-normal way is for the RL team to recover the partial registration and ask FAI to send an invoice. This creates extra work and therefore there is an extra fee of 20 CHF per championship in such cases.

For another extra fee of 20 CHF per championship the RL team also offers to register single events.

For country bulk deals the procedure has always been that NACs register their events themselves. We want to stress that it is very important that all events are properly registered. If results for a registered event are missing we can easily see it by the end of the season and many times we either hunt them down ourselves or contact the organizers, sometimes through the respective IGC delegate. If, on the other hand results are submitted for an event that has not been registered we also take notice and contact the organizers.

In case of a double fail, i.e. both are missed the RL team has no chance to intervene as we are simply not aware of any results still missing – because no events are registered with us in the first place. In this case the only chance for recovery is that the NAC or the pilots themselves use the extra time allotted to RL review after the end of the RL season to review if all results are uploaded and correctly calculated (see table to the right).

Date	Description	Explanation
1 October, year "Y-1" 00:00 UTC	RL season year "Y" starts	All championships that <u>end</u> between these two dates belong to the RL season of year "Y".
30 September, year "Y" 24:00 UTC	RL season year "Y" ends	
24 October, year "Y" 24:00 UTC	Registration period for events of year "Y" ends	All championships that are to be ranked in the RL season of year "Y" must be registered at the IGC RL website latest by that date and time. <i>Later registrations are invalid, any fee for a late registration will be forfeit.</i>
31 October, year "Y" 24:00 UTC	Results submission period for events of year "Y" ends	All results for an event registered for RL season year "Y" must have been submitted in an acceptable form to the RL team at the latest by that date and time. <i>Later submissions are invalid, any registration fee already paid will be forfeit.</i>
8 November, year "Y" 00:00 UTC	Preliminary ranking for RL season of year "Y" published	At the latest by this date and time the RL team publishes the preliminary rankings for RL season of year "Y". <i>Depending on the backlog this might also happen earlier, beginning on 1 November, year "Y" 00:00 UTC.</i>
31 December, year "Y" 24:00 UTC	Request for adjustment period for RL season of year "Y" ends	Any request for adjustment of the preliminary results for RL season of year "Y" must have been made by that date and time in order to be considered in the final ranking. <i>Later submissions will still be processed and will affect the rankings in future RL seasons, but the final rankings of RL season year "Y" will not be re-calculated, unless ordered by the IGC Bureau or FAI.</i>
8 January, year "Y+1" 00:00 UTC	Final ranking for RL season of year "Y" published	At the latest by this date and time the RL team publishes the final rankings for RL season of year "Y". <i>Depending on the backlog this might also happen earlier, beginning on 1 January, year "Y+1" 00:00 UTC.</i>

Note: A Ranking List season is typically described by a year "Y", but should for clarity's sake be designated "Y-1/Y". For example, RL season 2022 ran from October 1st, 2021 to September 30th, 2022 – and should be called "RL season 2021/2022". Nevertheless, in most communication, as in this document and on most pages of the RL website a season is referred to with one year only.

¹ https://www.fai.org/sites/default/files/documents/2023-01-01-fai-by-laws_effective-01-jan-2023.pdf

² <https://www.statista.com/statistics/256598/global-inflation-rate-compared-to-previous-year/>

If no review by the NAC or the pilots flying in the events is undertaken for championships that have been missed to first register and then to submit results for then there is a high risk that the Ranking List will not include these events for the season in question. Luckily, no such triple-fail occurred in 2022.

However, other incidents did happen. For example, it never occurred to the RL team that someone would register and pay for an event only one hour before the submission deadline lapses – but without actually submitting the results. Thus we had a properly registered and paid for event that one hour later missed the deadline for results submission. We noticed but couldn't get hold of any official in that short period of time. This resulted in a new deadline described in the Annex D to the Sporting Code 3D³: one week prior to the deadline for result submission there is now a new deadline for event registration in order to prevent above scenario.

Perhaps it should also be pointed out to organizers that in order for an event to be included in the IGC Ranking List said event must actually be registered and paid for. Submitting results to an event not registered will sadly not result in any ranking.

SUBMITTING COMPETITION RESULTS

In previous years a major source of additional workload for the Ranking List staff and frustration for the pilots have been late or wrong result datasets. After having had a staggering amount of late submissions of results in 2018, including late registration of competitions, the 2019 IGC Plenary approved clear deadlines. Since then the situation has improved significantly, though some 2022 results have still been delivered after the deadline and consequently had to be refused.

Another classic source of delay also occurring in 2022 is that sometimes competition officials have to be reminded that it is their responsibility to send the results to the RL team.

The next reminder is a classic: late submission of results prevent continuous updating of the RL, which in turn means the current rankings are not really current. This becomes more than a vanity problem in case of Two Seater competitions where only the pilot with the higher ranking at the start of the competition (then to be set as Pilot in Command, "P1" in the scoring software) is eligible for the ranking points generated from that contest. If competitions prior to the Two Seater contest are late with their results then it might well be the case that the wrong pilot is pointed out as P1! In order to record and document historical standings the Ranking List features a way to go back in time and check pilot score and rank for any previous day of the season⁴. Please note that Pilot Ratings change all the time due to new results being added and old ones getting devalued. To reflect this in full the IGC Ranking List should be automatically recalculated each day – which is impractical at the moment. Therefore the results as published at a certain date are to be regarded as the official results for that date, even though some changes might occur in case of a recalculation.

In last year's report we asked for help with improving the RL by reporting double pilot profiles. These doublets are created whenever contest scorers don't follow the instructions⁵ and skip referring to a pilot's Ranking List id, either through negligence or to minimise their own workload. During upload the system then creates a new id for the pilot in question and assigns the ranking score to this doublet instead of the pre-existing profile.

Usually pilots first recognise this when they fail to qualify for their respective National Team and realise that results are missing from their Ranking List profile. The RL staff then needs to edit the results in the database manually and re-calculate the ranks for the season concerned. Thankfully,

³ https://www.fai.org/sites/default/files/sc3d_2022.pdf

⁴ <https://rankingdata.fai.org/SnapshotRLstandings/ShowSnapshotRL.html>

⁵ <http://sailplane.aero/igcrankings/competitions/instructions-for-scorers.aspx>

also in 2022 a number of NACs worked with their respective pilot lists and notified us about required changes. This is highly appreciated! Unfortunately, new such double profiles are created all the time, also during the 2022 season. However, previously the largest source of such double profiles have been when whole championships have been submitted without referencing pilot IDs, thus automatically creating many new double profiles at once. Such result data sets without pilot IDs referenced are now ruled incomplete and thus not legible for inclusion into the RL until corrected by the Competition Organizer. This has drastically improved the quality of the Ranking List.

SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT

Further improvements of the Ranking List are continuously on-going. For example a JSON API is now in place that allows NAC's to display the ranking of only their pilots on their own website.

The previously announced new RL website for presentation is mostly ready for use but still lacks functionality for registering events.

This work will be merged with another major upcoming change: the mentioned change in the FAI By-Laws section 1.2.9⁶ also stipulate that all invoices are issued by the FAI Secretariat or by using electronic workflows that are approved by the FAI Secretariat. The current processes of the IGC Ranking List creates manual work at FAI Head Office for both financial follow-up and registration of sanctioned event in the official FAI calendar. By integrating our respective systems this manual work can be avoided and the overall process quality is significantly increased.

The task ahead is thus to integrate the event registration and payment process of the IGC Ranking List into the FAI Application Management System AMS (and FAI's PayHub) which has been used by CIVL and CIAM since 2019 to great success. This is also a good opportunity to develop new features that have been on the development list for a long time but have been too difficult or too time-consuming to implement in the current system:

1. Take the next step in simplification and abandon the concept of sequences and series completely.
 - This is an internal concept where competitions that a part of a series (like all WGC in Standard class or all 15m in Eskilstuna Open) share the same series number, which used to determine the devaluation of results over time and otherwise was also handy for offering a history table.
 - IGC plenary 2020 approved a change of devaluation of old competition results to be based on age rather than sequence in a series. Since then the series number internally only mattered for providing the history table – which is just as easy to accomplish with the proper set of SQL statements.
 - When registering a new competition people would frequently forget/ignore to properly assign a competition as part of a series and break the feature anyway. Historically this has resulted in lots of manual work for the RL team (still does to a certain extent)

Pos	Name	Country	Points	Pilot ID
1	Sebastian Kwas	POL	990.0	145
2	Christophe Abadie	FRA	989.4	2252
3	Simon Schindler	GBR	989.3	7029
4	Ivan Novak	CZE	987.6	903
5	Felipe Lavin	GBR	987.1	1824
6	Ivan Wastly	GBR	986.9	8648
7	Riccardo Brigliadori	ITA	983.9	19
8	Olav Grønliheim	NOR	980.8	280
9	Jakub Barotcz	POL	977.9	2804
10	Davide Schiarretto	ITA	976.9	2009
11	Stefano Chiarone	ITA	976.0	190
12	Adrien Henry	FRA	973.2	4058
13	Markus Kneeling	GBR	972.8	78
14	Tomáš Suchanek	CZE	972.2	41
15	Yann Arnaud	GBR	972.0	737
16	Paul Tracy	CZE	971.4	1688
17	Tomasz Bubaj	POL	971.3	288
18	Pavel Lonsky	CZE	970.6	56
19	Steve James	GBR	968.9	176
20	Lukasz Blaszczak	POL	968.8	920
21	Finn Bligh	GBR	968.7	1014
22	Milano Gaboulet	FRA	968.3	7056
23	Wolfgang Isenhardt	AUT	968.2	126
24	Anne Ducarouge	FRA	968.2	120
25	Jan-Ola Nordh	SWE	966.5	1401

⁶ https://www.fai.org/sites/default/files/documents/2023-01-01-fai-by-laws_effective-01-jan-2023.pdf

2. Give people full freedom to name their competitions and classes as they like.
 - Today this has been prevented by the concept of series. When moving away from series everyone can finally call their comp and classes like they do on SoaringSpot (which is a frequent problem for the RL team: class names like “Promozione”, “Leichte Klasse”, etc. on SoaringSpot have to be matched to what has originally been registered as “Handicapped” with the Ranking List)
 - For convenience we will provide a list of suggestions: all FAI classes + “Handicapped” – and in addition to those everyone can assign own names

3. Selected users can be given the role of “Country Manager” to administer their respective NAC’s pilot details
 - A few NACs (like France) today perform a meticulous review of all their pilots once a year and ask to perform the necessary changes. This is highly appreciated by the RL team but of course creates extra work. It would be easier for everyone involved if a “Country Manager” could modify their pilots (and only those) directly.
 - Proposed exception: Country Managers can only request deletions and mergers of pilot profiles (which in any case will be logged for accountability). Only after approval by RL staff the requested deletion/merger will be performed. This because such modification cannot easily be undone.
 - Exception to the exception: Country Managers can assign a different NAC membership to one of “their” pilots, which is not a deletion but a move to a different NAC (example: new Belgium pilots are frequently registered as French when they attend competitions in France)

4. Payment needs to be simplified and made more fair
 - Despite the fee structure been explained on the RL website ⁷ we have to frequently explain that today a competition’s registration fee is based on how many pilots had results the last time this competition was held (see: series). Admittedly, this is a rather complicated way of calculating the fee. It means that if a championship in year 1 had 25 pilots (= 125 CHF for first time registration) and then in year 2 has 50 pilots (= still 125 EUR because of year 1) and then in year 3 had 25 pilots again, they then would have to pay 250 CHF for the 25 pilots in year 3 because the year prior they had 50 pilots, which back then they “got away” with for only 125 CHF. If the championship in year 3 is held by a different organization at a different place, yet the event itself is part of a series, then the unfair situation arises of the year 3 organization with only 25 pilots participating have to pay for the 50 pilots that participated in year 2, while the year 2 organization back then only paid for the 25 pilots of year 1.
 - Rightfully, this frequently leads to confusion and sometimes not-so-much rightfully to people creatively registering their comp as part of a completely new series, thus starting from scratch in year 3 as a new year 1 with 25 pilots, avoiding having to pay for the 50 pilots the year prior. Of course, there might also be a more innocent explanation to this, but there is a pattern and a potential unfairness that cannot be ignored.

⁷ <http://sailplanegp.aero/igcrankings/about-the-igc-ranking-list/sanction-fees.aspx>

- Our proposal is to keep the fee of 5 CHF/pilot but change the way payment works:
 - Upon registration of a comp a pre-registration fee of 125 CHF is to be paid by PayPal (or by invoice with additional invoice fee). This pre-registration fee includes 25 pilot results “for free”.
 - During registration the possibility exists to pay for additional pilots at a rate of 5 CHF/pilot. If, for example, the person registering the comp knows that 50 pilots will compete then it is better and cheaper to register them right away for only +125 CHF. If registering later the fee will be higher, for example 7.50 CHF/pilot (see below).
 - During result upload the RL system compares the number of results to be uploaded to the number of pilots registered and paid for. If there are more results uploaded than paid for the RL team creates an additional invoice at the rate of, for example 7.50 CHF/pilot.
 - Only after successful and verified payment will the comp results be further processed.
- “What if a comp registers too many pilots in advance, will there be any refund?”
 - That might be a possibility in the FAI system. Today we can't do that.
 - If the rate per pilot for late additions was, for example 1.5 times higher than normal, i.e. 7.50 CHF/pilot compared to 5 CHF/pilot then we can say that 10 late pilots are the same fee as 15 pre-registered ones. It would thus be more economical to just register some more pilots in advance than having to pay for the exact amount afterwards.
 - (All figures are subject to IGC Bureau approval)
- Overall this will result in a much fairer payment process.

ORGANISATIONAL MATTERS

During 2022 the Annex D committee consisted of Brian Spreckley, Keith Nicholson, and Reno Filla (chairman). Reno Filla has been the RL Manager since 2016 (solo since 2017) and since 2018 Lars Rune Bjørnevik is the RL Administrator. The work split between us is as follows:

RL Admin (Lars Rune Bjørnevik)

- Pilot support (pilot profile/account management)
- Contest support (contest registration, results upload + calculation)
- System admin / main developer (including support for external developers)

RL Manager (Reno Filla)

- Pilot support (pilot profile/account management)
- Contest support (contest registration, results upload + calculation)
- System super user / occasional developer
- Commercial point of contact (invoicing, NAC support, bulk rate negotiation)
- Chairman of the Annex D committee

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The IGC Ranking List has become a success thanks to the dedicated work of initiator and long-time RL Manager Brian Spreckley, original developer and RL Administrator Keith Nicholson, as well as developer and administrator Paul Crabb, whose past tremendous efforts as well as their continued willingness to render help in times of need we gratefully acknowledge. Keith in particular still provides valuable and highly appreciated hands-on help with code development in times of great need while Brian can always be depended on giving good advice and support in general matters. Thank you all!

Operating the Ranking List and keeping it a success through constant improvements is a surprisingly labour-intensive job and always less publicly visible than what it deserves to be. We are indebted to the Ranking List's Administrator Lars Rune Bjørnevik who also put down a significant amount of time on improving the stability and security of the system even before he officially joined the RL team.

We also would like to acknowledge the good working partnership with the software developers of SeeYou/SoaringSpot and others. We do understand that occasionally there might be other, more urgent priorities than the IGC Ranking List and hope for continued collaboration and swift support.

Reno Filla

Manager of the IGC Ranking List

Chairman of the IGC Annex D Committee



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