



**Report for IGC Bureau on the 9th FAI World Sailplane Grand Prix Championship
La Cerdanya, Spain June 2nd to 8th 2019
Director of the competition: Brian Spreckley**

Overview

La Cerdanya, located two hours by car north of Barcelona, is one of the best places for organizing Grand Prix event. Surrounded by beautiful landscapes and the impressive Pyrenees Mountains, the venue can not be better for pilots, crew and spectators.

The competition had 6 races out of 7 days. 19 gliders, 18 m class, wing loading limited to 48 kg/m².

Again, Grand Prix is a great way to promote gliding as it is easy to understand as spectator.

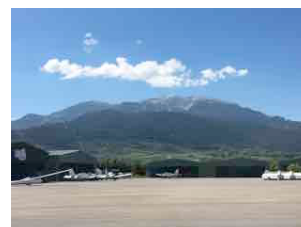
SGP Team did a tremendous amount of work. It is difficult to express in a report all the volunteer work done by all the members of the team. Special thanks to Angel Casado who had to set all antennas in advance to have the race covered using special trackers developed for the event.



In summary it was a fantastic event. The amount of energy put by the local organizers was tremendous. Special thanks to Sergi and his team. Definitely they deserve the Qualifying to be held next year in the same place on May 31st to June 6th.

1. Facilities

Tie down area for the gliders were provided close to the club house. Some gliders were hangared too. Water pipe were available close to the main hangar for water ballast purpose. All very well prepared.



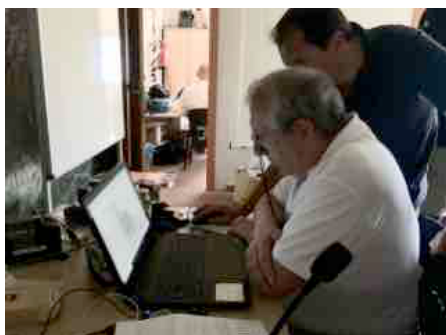
Club house was suitable for the event, providing enough room for all pilots, crew and spectators. The service provided was fast and very reasonable prices.



Briefing room was suitable for the event with nice TV screen – multi media system. After the briefing, the room was used as Restaurant, which is the original purpose of the room.

SGP team room. Fantastic place to run the event. This room was suitable for:

- Media Team. This is probably the best media team ever running a GP event. It will be glad to have them again during next series.
- Scoring
- Tracking
- Live broadcast



2. Organization

The organization worked really well. They raised resources to provide an excellent event.

We as FAI/IGC need to make sure that the SGP Team is highly motivated. This is very important for the gliding movement. Without SGP Team, the finals with this high standard would not be possible, We need to help them to find resources (money) to have full paid professionals in specific areas like media, logistic, etc.. (same as the report from Potchefstroom in 2016). SGP is in a delicate position as it depends on volunteers, the amount of dedication will be difficult to maintain and we need this format for the future.

Sailplane Grand Prix championship is well developed and the standard set in this event (format, broadcasting, social networks, etc.) is very high and we need to look after this asset.



3. Day to day operations

Normal daily operations as follows:

- Grid: 9:30 to 10:30
- Briefing: 11:00
- Launching: 13.30
- Start: 14:30
- Prizegiving: 18:30

Weighing procedure was performed accordingly. 19 gliders to be weighed is not a problem. No complains. All volunteers were very friendly.

Launching procedure was performed well. One long pavement runway, Gliders were placed in two rows. Everything was performed well and safe.

Tasks were set according to the weather. Brian did an excellent job due to his experience fling these mountains. Local pilots helped a lot too confirming Brian's plan.

Scoring was performed by Angel Casado, with remote support from Alexander Georgas. Once the IGC files were sent to the scoring email or by hand, the results were immediately.

Daily prizegiving were performed smooth. I was a bit disappointed to see that one of the podium pilots did not show up one day and also there were times when spectators during the prizegiving (mainly pilots) did not show either. We made the comment by Whatsapp and briefings, so the behavior changed. We had more pilots during the next ceremonies.

Finish line was set perpendicular to the runway and the aligning point from the east perpendicular, thus making an easy landing (right pattern) after crossing the line. Just according to the rules.

4. Safety

We had a safety event with few incidents.

Proximity analysis was performed. Very few encounters, nothing that could had created a dangerous situation. We showed that one day at the briefing and one of the pilots did not like to be shown on the screen. At the end, we found all pilots behaved and no close encounters to be reviewed were found.

Flytool (electronic safety box) was used. One report was received. Close mid are encounter with a tow plane. It was addressed immediately with the tow pilot, He recognized the mistake and the reporting pilot very happy the way it was solved.

We had a delicate arrival situation on day 4 were one pilot crossed the finish line, low energy and three gliders in front. He had to make a shortcut and land parallel to the runway on the grass. The situation was handled accordingly.



On day 5 one pilot landed with the wheel up. Minor damaged, no repair needed, so the glider was ready for the next day.

We believe the reduction in the Wing loading to 48 kg/m², improved safety, also the fact they knew we were watching the proximity analysis tool, improved the behavior.

5. Internet and Media

The competition was very well covered on internet. Races were broadcasted through SGP Youtube channel, which allowed watching the full transmission afterwards too. Twitter and Facebook with photos and videos, provided a good coverage too. Maybe I would like to see more in the social media but it requires more resources we do not have available.

A fixed and very well prepared format allowed to understand clearly what was happening everyday. Highlights video and a summary of the race of the day, created a good way to follow the history behind the race. The format included: interviews on the grid, races, funny fast and furious, etc.

Telescope camera: a local friend Pilot Jorge Arias and his team, installed a very nice telescope that provided online images about the race. We could see gliders, mountains, thermals and of course the clouds far away to understand the behavior and decisions pilots were making during the race.



Once again, well done Briand and the Media Team. Tremendous amount of work.

6. Public

The event did not have too many people on the field. Gliding is not very popular yet.

7. Complaints and Protests

No complains and no protests.

We had a very delicate situation on last day with the Polish pilots (Sebastian, Adam and Lucaz). We had the rumor that they were using an independent frequency. On last day, we received the “alternate frequency” and monitored it with a Polish spoken person. We were shocked that all three pilots were communication prior to the start and after the start. The communication was not about safety but as a team to help each other and to find the best way to accomplish the task. I called on the radio saying that it was not allowed to do that. They continue and Brian



called telling to stop otherwise we will disqualify them. The said “ok” and stopped. Five minutes penalty was applied.

We all were very shocked about this situation because we do not know if they were cheating during the whole competition.

For me as Referee is very upsetting to see the top or probably the best pilot ever, participating in such situation. It is lack of respect, not only for him and his country, but to all pilots and volunteers like myself, who take free time away from our families. The whole gliding community does not deserve that. I will propose some rule changes to the SGP Team and the IGC Bureau.

But, to finish the report in a better mood, I have to say we all were very happy that Tilo won his first World Championship, specially because he has supported the Grand Prix from day one, making easy our job in promoting our sport.

René Vidal

Referee of the 9th FAI World Sailplane Grand Prix Championship
Cerdanya 2nd to 8th June 2019.

