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**INDOOR FORMATION SKYDIVING LIVE JUDGING REPORT**

At the request of the Chair of the ISC, the Judges Committee was tasked with travelling and attending 3 private Formation Skydiving wind tunnel competitions in Voss Norway, Lille France and Charleroi Belgium.

We had to observe the course and these competitions judged according to the new format of the live judging.

The purpose of this mission is to report on our observations:

- in order to modify the current FS judgment formats for wind tunnel competitions,
- to consider ways to make these competitions more attractive to the present public,
- make these competitions more readable for uninitiated spectators,
- to meet the demand of some competitors and organizers who wish to evolve this discipline,
- to improve the quality of judgments and to achieve a result as quickly as possible for competitors to adapt a sports strategy.

For this mission a member of the Judges Committee went to Voss and Charleroi as a guest judge, while I went to Lille as an observer.

For all these competitions the panel of judges was made up of competitors or former competitors. In all two cases the chief judge did not have the status of FAI judge. For the 3 competitions an FAI judge was part of the panel of judges.

**Voss:**

Small number of competitors.

Scoring system App Skydive Planner and/or stop watch. One administrator for Excel file results list.

Start of working time by each judge without any control of the gap between judges.

Flight score as soon as competitors went out the flight chamber.

The score display reflects the number of points and busts. These are neither positioned nor explained.

No freeze frame.

FAI judges in the panel of judges.

Very small audience. Competitors were very happy of this new way of judging. No complain.

**LILLE :**

Interesting test with 27 teams in all disciplines including 4 nations.

The organization had with the competitors/judges had adapted a new regulation mixing the current regulations with very innovative innovations.

Dynamar judgment system adapted to FS with high-performance operator.

Entering the flight room and departing the working time at the initiative of the judge in charge of counting the formations.

3 judges (2 current or former competitors) and a guest FAI judge. The Chief Judge is an FS coach and a very high level competitor.

Use of the organizing structure to facilitate the understanding of flights for the public. Use of different coloured lights to indicate the beginning of working time, busts, end of working time.

The judges are seated in front around the tunnel and judge live on computer screens. A judge is dedicated to busts, the second to the counting of formations, the chief judge, also judges live. At the end of the working time the judges can review as many times as desired the disputed points or points after request to the operator, either at normal speed or at slow motion. The score is displayed a few seconds after exiting the flight chamber. The busts are counted but not yet fixed and explained.

The average judgment time for "simple" flights is 45 seconds. For flights that are "difficult" to judge the average judgment time is 55 seconds. All the teams at the exit of the flight chamber have their final result. Note that when flight schedules are no longer respected "contentious" flights are judged at the end of the round. For the VFS the judges can position themselves and move around the vein depending on the draw.

No freeze frame at the end of the working time. A few more seconds recorded at the end of working time to decide on the last point.

The audience, made up mainly of competitors but also non-skydivers, was very interested. No public sound system provided by the organization for the audience present.

Competitors appreciate having the result of their performance immediately and do not seem to question the busts placed by the judges.

#### **CHARLEROI:**

Small competition 11 teams FS and 7 VFS. Panel of judges: 2 FAI judges and 2 competitors, whose Chief Judge.

Scoring system provided and developed by organizers, with a very good operator. Will presented during the next ISC meeting. Performance judgment at the discretion of the judges: around the wind tunnel on a balcony, or in front of a screen. Use of a joystick to count the formations and fixe the bust.

Connection by Bluetooth to the scoring system.

Start of the working time by the chief judge. After the flight judges have the possibility to check only special bust on demand. Very quick checking, using slow motion and frame by frame of point(s) of interest. Judges used this opportunity frequently without any consequence with respect of the flight schedule. Team gets its score just after the end of the flight.

No freeze frame at the end of the working time. No explanations and positioning of the busts. This seems to be a criticism of the scoring system from the competitors.

Competitors appreciate to get their results very quickly. No complain.

## **ANALYSIS AND SUGGESTIONS:**

It is objective to note that the competitions, of private organization, chosen to study this new concept of judgment, did not bring together enough competitors to formulate a definitive opinion in relation to the mission entrusted.

However, it is also objective to note that live judging is demanded and appreciated by competitors. Without currently knowing whether this request is in the majority or not.

Since the judgement is tested live, it should be noted that the panels of judges were competitors, coaches, the majority but also FAI Judges of the discipline. In 2 out of 3 cases the chief judges had no judge qualifications.

Judgment systems currently have no official approval but seem to adapt from the moment if they are accompanied by a high-performance operator.

The competitions took place in a "good child" climate in a good spirit of competition. Experience shows, however, that as soon as the stakes rise, the method of judgment must be very rigorous with a panel of judges well versed in high-quality judging techniques. The quality of the judgments rendered during these three tests is in no way questioned. However, in another context of major-stakes competitions, judges' panel, competition rules and scoring and judging systems will need to be radically overhauled.

Common denominators in these three competitions:

- Private competitions, small number of competitors,
- Unapproved FAI Scoring and judging system,
- Incomplete Competition Regulations,
- Mixed Judges Panel, Competitors and FAI Judges,
- Absence of Freeze Frame,
- Lack of reference in relation to busts,
- Satisfaction of competitors,
- Delivery of results almost immediate,
- Live judging requested by competitors.
- Errors of judgment seem to accept,
- Audience consists mainly of competitors.

This experience leads to the following suggestions:

We have to take into account the demands of the competitors. We need to evolve the development of the discipline in wind tunnel competitions. We need to make FS wind tunnel competitions more readable for an uninitiated audience. We need to evolve our judgment skills. We must win the support of the organizers, the competitors, the ISC bodies concerned.

With regard to the organisation of competitions, the judges' committee refers to the selection of the decision bodies of the ISC. We will be able to bring our expertise only in the area of selected scoring and judging systems and designated judges.

Live judging as currently presented requires a complete overhaul of our methods of judging and selecting judges.

The fact that the live judging of the flights is carried out by competitors or former competitors gives a new direction to the judgment. The big difference between competitors and judges lies in the fact that the former are constantly researching and evolving techniques. Currently, video judgment stagnates and escapes the notion of speed and immediacy of results.

In the live judging, the judges no longer have time to check on the draw sheets if the points count is correct. It becomes necessary or even mandatory to know the figures by literal and digital designations but also the transitions from figure to figure. The support of competitors, coaches becomes mandatory. The key word is speed of judgment, so judges and competitors must integrate and accept any mistakes.

That right now is very uncertain.

In this new context, it is imperative that the judges' committee review its methods of training indoor judges, their selection and the verification of competency levels. Currently they are unsuitable. A new parameter becomes essential: judge live among the competitors and the public. The psychological aspect of this novelty is decisive in the appointments by the chief judge of the members of his panel.

In addition, the role of the chief judge is strengthened. The chief judge becomes an actor again in the judgment of performance. He decides quickly and his involvement is total and constant throughout any difficulties in the course of the competition. Its action still essential, but with new parameters, imposes a new mode of selection.

Reducing the number of judges is an important economic factor. However, a judge panel of less than 7 chief judges cannot be envisaged for FCE.

Finally, it is essential that judges have scheduled rest time. The planning of wind tunnel flights occupies an important time slot. Depending on the number of teams, flights very often start very early and end very late. It is inconceivable to maintain one or more panels of judges without a period of rest during this period. The tensions generated by the live judging, the concentration of all the moment, the proximity of the public, the competitors, the uncontrollable sound atmosphere, are all factors of intense fatigue. It is therefore necessary to allow for rest for the judges in the course of the competition.

Members of the judges' committee remain very involved in the evolution of this possible new technique of judgment. It will therefore be necessary to amend the regulations in collaboration with the reference committee, to modify the training of judges with perhaps a qualification "indoor VR judge", to review the selection of judges, to monitor the training of these new Judges.

But it will also be necessary and essential to change the mindsets of the actors of this evolution, organizers, competitors and judges.

To conclude, the IPC office had allocated a sum of 2000 € to cover the expenses of the judges of the committee of judges appointed to supervise these 3 competitions. To help minimize costs, for two competitions the designated supervisors were included in the judging panel. Only one event generated a fee, for a sum of 163€.

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