



January 2012

Report from IGC President to the IGC 2012 Plenary

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Welcome to Potchefstroom and my thanks to our South African hosts for providing this opportunity to hold our plenary in such an exciting location.

Congratulations to the new FAI Secretary General, Jean-Marc Badan, on his recent appointment. Jean-Marc's elevation to the senior position in the FAI marks the beginning of what I believe will be a new era for the FAI and for the Sports Commissions. I also take this opportunity to extend a welcome to Robert Hughes as the new FAI Senior Sports Manager. His addition to the team in the office and his experience with air sports will be of benefit to us all.

The IGC continues to face significant challenges. While we routinely seek solutions we all need to be aware that new challenges will surface, whether it be taxes or competition issues or airworthiness or airspace, and we need to be ready and willing to invest time and effort in meeting these challenges as they arise.

The outcomes from the IGC Bureau meetings are challenging. There were 27 action items from the meeting in Paris in October, and most have now been completed. My thanks to the Bureau members for their dedication to our vision of making gliding a safe, strong and effective sports organisation.

- A significant amount of work has now been done on starting the planned library of safety videos
- The capability for the Chief Stewards to quickly assemble a graphic video from the trackers to look at questionable flying techniques during championships is in development
- We have established a list of emails for gliding federations, delegates and magazines. This has taken a quite some effort and I have to note that communication is a 2-way street; if national organisations want to hear about what the IGC is doing then we need to be able to talk directly to them
- A formal proposal has been put in front of the Executive Board to enable us to form a company to manage the SGP series. Our past efforts in creating partnerships have shown that we really cannot sit and wait for someone else to make the SGP happen; we need to take that initiative ourselves
- We continue to actively seek efficient and economically viable solutions to enable us to provide an internet-based tracking capability to support the SGP series

The IGC Committees, Working Groups and Specialists have all reported separately on their activities and my thanks to all who serve in these groups for their contributions towards our sport.

The EGU is to be applauded for setting up a workshop at their Congress this year to discuss membership, recruitment, retention, marketing and club development. I wish them well with this initiative and I look forward to hearing from the EGU President when he presents his report in Potchefstroom.

The very real issues of Out-of-Competition doping testing were raised this year and considerable effort is now going into ensuring that any testing that is done is appropriate and focused on the high risk areas. Just adopting the suggested WADA way of doing business is not acceptable in our sports, especially when you consider that WADA consider the use of oxygen as being a “doping” practice (which has been resolved, but there are other similar issues). WADA have recently requested submissions on the “WADA Code” and letters have gone out from the FAI Head Office to all ASCs and NACS requesting their thoughts on how the Code might be amended for the better. Please follow up with your NAC to ensure they provide a submission to the FAI Office.

On the subject of substance abuse, however, I must express my personal concern that there is a culture of alcohol abuse in some parts of our competition scene. This is not acceptable and the Bureau has instructed the Chief Stewards to be vigilant for occurrences of pilots “*partying too hard*” and stopping them from flying before they can do harm to themselves or to others.

A considerable effort has been made this last year by the many volunteers that enable our sport to continue to develop and we continue to be indebted to their efforts. I am personally very grateful to the efforts of every member of the IGC Bureau in working to achieve our joint visions for the future of gliding as a sport.

Pilot Rankings

The top three pilots on the IGC Ranking List (at time of writing of this report) are:



1st

Michael Sommer (GER)



2nd

Sebastian Kawa (POL)



3rd

Zbigniew Nieradka (POL)

IGC Sanctioned Championships

We have a great group of World Champions from our 2011 Championships and my congratulations to them all. Congratulations also to the winners of the IGC-OLC World League. The success of these events is due to the dedication and hard-work of all the organisers and their volunteers, and the enthusiasm of our IGC Stewards and Jury members. Thank you to you all.

The **6th Womens' World Gliding Championships** was flown at Arboga, Sweden, with 47 competitors from 12 nations flying a total of 16 tasks across the 3 classes. The Team Cup was won by Denmark and our Womens' World Champions are:



Susanne Schödel (GER)
15 M Class



Sue Kussbach (GER)
Standard Class



Agnete Olesen (DEN)
Club Class

The **7th FAI Junior WGC** at Musbach in Germany was completed with 37 Standard Class and 44 Club Class pilots achieving seven days of flying in somewhat trying weather conditions. The Junior World Champions are:



Standard Class
Felipe Levin (GER)



Club Class
Tim Kuijpers (NED)

The **4th FAI World Sailplane GP Final** was completed at the end of July at the Wasserkuppe, in conjunction with the centenary celebrations at this historical site. The weather was not as kind as it could have been, but five competition days were achieved at Wasserkuppe by the 20 competitors.



GP World Champion
Giorgio Galetto (ITA)



2nd
Sebastian Nagel (GER)



3rd
Peter Hartmann (AUT)

The two **16th FAI EGC** completed in 2011 had quite different weather conditions. The Pociunai EGC had nine days in the Open Class and ten days in the 18M and 15M Classes with 20 nations competing with 21 entries in the Open, 29 entries in the 18M and 25 entries in the 15M classes.

The Nitra EGC was troubled by very poor weather but the Standard, Club and 20M classes managed to complete four days racing. However, the World Class only achieved three days racing even though an additional competition day was used to try and achieve a result. 19 nations competed with 31 pilots in the Standard Class, 33 in the Club, 11 in the World and 16 crews in the 20M class.



Open Class
Markus Frank (GER)



18M Class
Karol Staryszak (POL)



15M Class
Christophe Ruch (FRA)



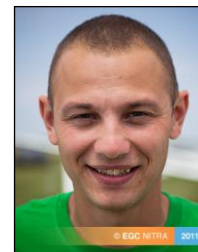
Standard Class
Sebastian Kawa (POL)



Club Class
Roman Mracek (CZE)



20M Class
Harri Hirvola & Visa-Matti Leinikki (FIN)



Winner, World Class
Jakub Barszcz (POL)

The **3rd FAI South American Continental Championships** are currently in progress. The rapid development of these successful Championships is a credit to our colleagues from Argentina and all of South America. There are 109 pilots representing a total of 14 nations competing in 3 classes at Adolfo Gonzalez Chávez, Argentina, with the event running from the 8th to the 20th of January.

The OLC 2011

The activity level for the OLC continued at a very stable level in 2011 with 2108km per participant with the average flight being 266 km. Total activity for the OLC for 2011 had 13,092 participants flying 101,990 flights over a total distance of 27.2 million kilometres. The 2011 season of The IGC-OLC World League saw activity levels sustained with entries from 1027 Clubs and gliding organisations. Congratulations to the top three placed clubs for 2011:

- 1st FLG Blaubeuren (Germany)
- 2nd TSA-Texas Soaring Association (USA)
- 3rd Albuquerque Soaring (USA)

Albuquerque Soaring continues to be the club setting the standard, placing in the top 3 for the 3rd year in a row.

Records

Activity levels on the record front have increased compared to 2010. One World Record claim was ratified. Continental Records, with minimum standards, have been instigated and the first claims are now being received. There have been regrettable delays in the processing of some record claims, occasioned by the website and staffing difficulties experienced by the FAI Head Office during the past few months.

Class	Record	Location	Spd/Dist	Date	Claimant
15M (F)	Free distance using up to 3 turn points	Bitterwasser (Namibia)	1051.4 km	26 Dec 10	Susanne Schödel (GER)

Thirteen claims for 2011 have been received by the FAI Headquarters:

Class	Type of Record	Spd/Dist	Date	Claimant
Open (F)	Continental: Speed over a triangular course of 750 km	126.8 km/h	30 Dec 11	Susanne Schödel (GER)
15M (F)	Continental: Speed over a triangular course of 750 km	126.8 km/h	30 Dec 11	Susanne Schödel (GER)
Open	Speed over a triangular course of 750 km	158.72 km/h	24 Dec 11	Laszlo Hegedus (HUN)
15M	Free distance using up to 3 turn points	1152 km	20 Dec 11	Johan Luyckx (BEL)
15M (F)	Free distance using up to 3 turn points	1066.2 km	20 Dec 11	Susanne Schödel (GER)
15M (F)	Free triangle distance	1062.5 km	20 Dec 11	Susanne Schödel (GER)
Open (F)	Free triangle distance	1062.5 km	20 Dec 11	Susanne Schödel (GER)
Open	Continental: Speed over an out-and-return course of 500 km	167.18 km/h	2 Dec 11	Laszlo Hegedüs (HUN)
World	Free Distance	793 km	10 Jul 11	William B. Snead (USA)
World	Free distance using up to 3 turn points	814 km	10 Jul 11	William B. Snead (USA)
Ultralight	Speed over a triangular course of 100 km	122 km/h	2 Apr 11	Robert W. Spielman (USA)
Open	Distance over a triangular course	1750.6 km	12 Jan 11	Klaus Ohlmann (GER)
Open	Free triangle distance	1755.5 km	12 Jan 11	Klaus Ohlmann (GER)

The Next 12 Months

The economic crisis in Europe and elsewhere threatens to put significant pressure on the air sports community. We are seeing taxes being proposed for people crossing borders to participate in their sports, which is not acceptable given the value that sports provide to the health and well-being of the community at large. We are seeing the withdrawal of central funds from sports organisations, which again is contrary to the return that a competent sports programme can provide in terms of social well-being and personal development and fitness. The difficulties for the hosts of our competitions to raise capital to enable them to organise air sports events are going to increase.

In my opinion it is vital that the Air Sports Commissions work together, with the FAI and the NACs, to enable initiatives that can develop air sports events capable of promoting our sports and generating income. The most significant threat that our whole organisation faces right now is airspace or membership or over-regulation by bureaucrats that do not understand the joy and freedom provided by sports aviation; but that the NACs may no longer be able to afford to pay for the services provided by the FAI Head Office.

In my opinion, the ASCs, individually and jointly, have the capability to start generating income for the FAI which will help to enable the organisation to develop. To do this we need to have courage and invest in our sports products and we need to convince the NACs this is the pathway by which the FAI can be enhanced and re-generated.

We all have a part to play in this process.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bob Head". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

President, IGC