

## International Gliding Commission Report of the Sporting Code Committee for the Plenary meeting, March 2006.

Another busy year for the Sporting Code committee reflected the decisions of the IGC Plenary meeting in March 2005. Much of the work involved finding suitable Sporting Code wording for the proposals of the World Record Review Panel. The resulting year 2 proposals are included in the agenda for this 2006 Plenary meeting. If approved, they will come into force as usual, on the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2006.

One proposal drew some adverse criticism that should be considered. This is the requirement for the OO certifying a world record to be specifically approved by the NAC as "approved OO" or "senior OO". There was some concern that an outstanding flight made at the spur of the moment may be disadvantaged by the lack of an approved OO being available while "ordinary" OOs were available. The comments received range from "too bad" to suggestions that the OO could be approved after the flight.

One other year 2 proposal, in the 20 metre multiseat competition class definitions, also led to discussion. In the composition of the crew, the originator of the proposal asked that the crew consist of one Pilot in Command, plus one or more crewmembers from a pre-declared list. In this situation, the Pilot in Command receives the title "Champion" while the remainder of the crew that flew with him may be mentioned in the results. This is the same as the current Open Class rules for multiseat gliders. The alternate suggestion was that the crew be just two pilots, the crew of the winning glider would then equally share the title Champion. This seemed a way of differentiating from the Open Class but the wording is as originally requested.

There were some delays involved in publishing the Sporting Code on the FAI website, due to technical changes made by the FAI to font and layout conventions. It is hoped that this is a one-off circumstance that should not reoccur this year. At the last minute some changes of the General section of the Sporting Code were noted and led to some liberalisation of the time limits and the authority to permit delays in presenting world record claims. These were incorporated in the published version during October but as far as is known, the delay has caused no problems for world record claimants.

Over the past few years, there has been a continuing debate regarding the use of Commercial Off The Shelf (COTS) GPS units with recording facility to be used to verify gliding flights. The arguments have ranged far and wide, ranging from the use for all types of flight, to don't use at all due to lack of security. Our experts in the field of GNSS recently decided to suggest approval for a limited level of purposes within the gliding movement, but after a flurry of conflicting opinions, the SC3 committee decided to put in a year 1 proposal in general terms, to allow the principle to be debated again at the IGC Plenary. From many of the arguments (see papers from GFAC and the ANDS committees) it was apparent that for lower level badges, up to Gold badge level there was little disagreement, that the COTS units could be used for position and timing verification, essentially replacing a camera in the current rules. Should other aspects of the COTS units be proved to be satisfactory, they may be added in subsequent years. This may become a further step towards making photographic evidence superfluous.

During the year, the Bureau asked that we look at the possibility of Continental Records. There are rules in the General Section of the Sporting Code defining the Continental grouping of countries. The opinion of the FAI Secretary-General was sought as to the practicability of Continental records. He was not enthusiastic about them. The main points of his comments follow.

*"Whilst I understand the meteorological reasons for this proposal, I must warn against it. The international federations that have continental structures bitterly regret having ever introduced them. They are the source of endless fruitless arguments and would introduce a most unwelcome source of political conflict into FAI/IGC discussions. The definition of continental regions is controversial. That is why we have a very flexible system for Continental Regional Championships. We can vary the region from one event to the next to suit the circumstances. You could not do that for records."*

He went on to give several instances where conflicts have occurred. He concludes:

*" So having set out my objections, here is the solution: simply establish an official IGC web-site page on which NATIONAL records are displayed in rank order, grouped together under each of the Continental Regions listed in GS 3.5.4. It will then immediately become clear to all which of the national records is "de facto" the Continental Record.*

*National authorities then retain responsibility for the accuracy of the information displayed, and controversy is eliminated."*

The SC3 committee has gone no further with the suggestion, it is not seen as requiring changes to the Sporting Code to implement it. It is more a question of obtaining and putting the information on the website should a final decision be made to go ahead with the Secretary-General's suggestion.

I wish to thank the members of the committee, Tony Burton, Axel Reich, Tor Johannessen and Judy Ruprecht for their help. All the members are available again in 2006 to carry on the good work.

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