

IGC Steward Report
5th Junior World Gliding Championships
28rd July to 11TH August 2007
Rieti (Italy)
Contest Director: Leonardo Briigliadori

1 ORGANISATION

1.1 Overall organisation

Overall organisation was effective and friendly.

1.2 Quantity of officials

Sufficient.

1.3 Experience of officials

The CD and the Deputy CD had a good experience of international Championships. They were assisted by officials having experience in running the Coppa di Mediterraneo, an international competition organized since many years in Rieti.

1.4 Suitability of meetings and briefings

The briefings were generally short and to the point.

Several Team Captain meetings were held. At the first one the standard procedures were explained and the local procedures were clarified. Subsequent meetings were held in order to explain the reason organizers opted not to fly on difficult days and to give information about the protocol of the prize giving ceremony.

1.5 Suitability of weather information

The forecasts were made by two meteorologists from the Italian Met Service (which is military). Both were very professional and gave clear and sufficient weather information during the briefings. A local sounding was made every morning.

1.6 Suitability of facilities

The briefings were held in a military hangar on the opposite site of the airfield from the campground. This remote location was a bit problematic because people attending the briefings had to cross the runway. Furthermore, during the first practice days the acoustics were poor, but improved after the walls were covered with textiles.

The competition office, the met office, the office for the FAI officials as well as a briefing room for the team captains meeting were located in the same remote building.

The scoring office was located in an air conditioned container located on the opposite site, close to the campground, under a row of gazebos which had been installed for the officials during the opening and the prize giving ceremonies. The results were displayed on a large screen.

Catering was supposed to take place under these gazebos but the ENAC (Italian National Aviation Authority) prohibited selling any food or drinks on the airfield. For this reason there was no central meeting point where pilots and crews could have a drink while waiting on the results, which was really a pity!

Every team had also a gazebo in the campground for depositing their material and holding their meetings.

The works on the camping site were finished just in time so that the camping facilities were perfect with two new toilets and a swimming pool which was much appreciated when the temperature was above 30 °.

A WIFI network was installed in the briefing hangar and in the camping area. After some initial problems it worked satisfactorily.

Also the tie down area was very adequate since every team had its own water ballast tap with water lines installed in the ground.

At the request of the ENAC, the airfield and the camping area were surrounded with brand new fences and a stringent ID control was performed by security services at the two gates.

1.7 Transportation

The Stewards and the Jury members shared a car from the organizers.

1.8 Information dissemination (Pronouncements, schedules and decisions)

All the official information was displayed on the official notice board located in the briefing hangar. Unfortunately the hangar was closed during the night time. Because of this the protest time was extended so that everyone could check the previous day's unofficial results before the expiration of the protest time. For the future it is recommended that the official board be placed in a location where it can be accessed 24h.

1.9 Pilot assistance

Pilots and crews could always find adequate assistance from the organizers at the competition office.

1.10 Retrieval

In general there were very few problems, but some roads in the mountain area were in bad condition.

1.11 Launch control for fair access and efficiency

The launches were efficient. 12 to 14 tugs (including 4 powerful towplanes from the Italian Air Force) were used to launch 54 gliders. This took usually about 40 minutes.

The launches were generally fair. Only on one day was the opening of the start gate for standard class delayed because a glider had to release and land due to too slow towing speed. This was considered as a fault of the organization by the Contest Director.

1.12 Opening and closing ceremonies including presentation of Jury and Stewards

The opening ceremony was held at the airport in the presence of Pierre Portmann, President of the FAI. It was a bit lengthy with many speeches in Italian and included presentation of the teams, a display by a flag acrobatic team and an aerobatic glider flight.

The prizegiving ceremony was also held on the airfield and included again some long speeches but was fully according to the FAI protocol.

The Jury and the Stewards were presented during one of the briefings.

1.13 Other social events

During the last week of the competition a very successful international evening was held. In addition to that, there were multiple musical events in the town of Rieti. All these were announced in the briefings.

But the culmination of the event was the farewell party held in a fantastic atmosphere and which ended only in the early morning.

1.14 Total number of scheduled days and number of contest days

We had 9 competition days out of 13 possible.

1.15 Media liaison

The organisers put a great deal of effort in PR work. Articles were daily issued in local newspaper. There was also an exposure of the event on local and national TV channels.

1.16 Public and Internet display of real-time aircraft positions and information

Tracking system was based on vPos loggers and a position service provider (not Vpos). Because of this, it was not possible to follow the flights from Silent Wings viewer but only from the internet. The real-time tracking was unreliable in many cases.

1.17 Other organisational comment

The local community had hired the services of a communication company in order to promote the Rieti 2007 / 2008 World Gliding Championships. Many banners were displayed in the city and even a podium was set up on the main piazza of Rieti. Despite these efforts, there were almost no spectators (except at the air show). This may be related to the stringent ID controls performed at the gates of the airfields in order to comply with the requirements of the national aviation authorities.

2 RULES (Comment only where appropriate)

2.1 Adequacy of Local Procedures

The local procedures were adequate and covered all eventualities.

At the first team captains briefing the requirement for circling left before the start was challenged but the CD maintained his position.

2.2 Addendums or changes

During the competition, the organizers added a parachuting area to the list of prohibited airspaces. They also required the pilots to call the towers of Terni and Poligno airfields if they were close to these airfields and lower than 1000m QNH

2.3 Fair applications of Rules and Local Procedures

All rules were applied fairly.

2.4 Possible improvements of Rules and/or Local Procedures

2.4.1 Annex A

- In the penalty list there is a penalty for flying above the absolute limit (1pt/m if the excess altitude is lower than 100m and outlanding if the excess altitude is higher) and another one for entering prohibited area. It should be made clear in the rules that the first one applies if a sporting altitude limit has been set by the organizers whereas the second applies when there is really prohibited airspace above the contest area.

- As in many contests, the organizers decided to penalize pilots flying outside of the contest area by considering them as outlanded at the point where they flew out of the contest area. We still believe that there is no reason to apply such a harsh rule if the contest area is not limited by a prohibited area. We think that an explanatory note should be added to the rules to clarify this point.

- Like in several other international championships no manual timing on the finish line was performed because the organizers considered that preliminary scoring done with the flight recorder was fast enough. We need to decide if a manual preliminary scoring is still mandatory.

- There were some discussions about the method to be used for calculating the team scores. From the wording used in Annex A it is not clear whether the final team scores should be obtained by adding the daily team scores. A clarification would be welcome.

2.4.2 Local Procedures

Nil

2.5 Task setting and operations

The task setter did a good job by taking into account the limited outlanding possibilities in the contest area and the rather large spread in the mountain flying skills of the competitors. In general the tasks were going first to the South then to the North. They were rather short and in most cases the winners of the day were not awarded 1000 pts but this rather conservative task setting contributed to make the contest safe.

The operations were also extremely well managed. Except on one of the first competition days gridding was well organised. As already mentioned the launches were also very effective. Thanks to the use of 4 runways and to an excellent coordination the finishes and landings were safe even when there were mass finishes.

2.6 Scoring system (use and application)

The scorers used See you and the scores were accurate and published with little delay. As already mentioned no preliminary scores based on manual timing were published. Strangely also the display on the screen was slower than the updates of the score sheets made on the board.

2.7 Protest handling and registration

No protests were filed.

3 SAFETY (Comment only where appropriate)

3.1 General safety of the event

The general safety was good. However, little information about the outlanding possibilities had been provided to the pilots before the competition. At the request of some team captains and of the stewards, a briefing on the outlanding fields was finally given at the beginning of the second week of the competition.

The launches were safe even when the gliders had to be launched towards the South (see below). The finishes were also safely managed.

As already mentioned the conservative task setting contributed to the safety of the event.

The safety committee was formed according to the rules and held only one meeting because of a complaint for aggressive flying of one pilot. The issue was solved by talking to the pilot and to his team captain.

3.2 Occurrence of incidents and/ or accidents

No accident was reported but 5 gliders were slightly damaged during outlandings. Only one could not be repaired in time for flying on the next day.

3.3 Availability of medical personnel

A team of military medical personnel was available on site.

3.4 Use of safety officers

The Safety Officer, who was also in charge of the aerotows, was efficient. Military safety officers having appropriate training in case of an accident were also present during all operations.

3.5 Launch safety

Because of the proximity of the city on the South border of the airfield, launches were made from runway 34 on most days, even in case of tailwind. This procedure which is allowed as long as the tailwind does not exceed 12 kts was safe. However on day 9, the wind was too strong and the launches had to be done from runway 16. To ensure that the towplanes and the gliders had enough altitude over the first buildings only one class could be gridded at a time. No incident was recorded during this procedure.

3.6 Pilot skills relating to safety

The pilots have to be complemented because the outlanding possibilities in several parts of the contest areas are quite limited.

3.7 Suggestions for future safety enhancements

We strongly recommend a comprehensive briefing on outlanding fields to be held before the first competition day of the next Championships. All fields should be visited before the competition in order to provide information about their actual status to the pilots. A booklet giving more information should also be published.

General Recommendation

We do hope that there will not be too much political interference and that the team who did a good job and gained much experience in organising these championships will be kept as unchanged as possible for the WGC 2008.

Roland Stuck
Chief Steward

Visa-Matti Leinikki
Steward