



## Future FAI Special Aerobatic Events Report 2018

### Sky Grand Prix aerobatic events

During 2018 it had been hoped that one of the promising leads being pursued by John Gaillard would lead to another Sky Grand Prix event, but ultimately the commercial drive or some other key factors were insufficient and this well proven format did not come to life.

### World Games

FAI has continued to work at defining and developing the scope and practical basis of these events, which are generally modelled to fit into existing competition structures comprising other sporting genres. CIVA was a strong participant with a well-run Unlimited glider category at Wroclaw in Poland last year, though it was ultimately thought that the quiet and relatively unobtrusive start of each sequence was too challenging to present to the public and the techniques and skills displayed by pilots to meet the relevant accuracy criteria very difficult to convey in a meaningful way. A key organiser at this event was Grzegorz Pyzalka, who has now joined the FAI head office staff as their Events Manager.

### Air Games Series

This is a current discussion thread between FAI and the air sports commissions, with the aim of staging repeated categories of aviation sport in continental locations around the world, then a final Master event to determine overall champions. The series planning is at an early stage, seeking support from interested FAI air sport commissions (ASC's) with a view to assembling a viable structure. There appears to be a good level of interest in this type of event in the Far East, the emerging Asian Games providing a key example.

### The World Air Games

The next of these events is set to take place at several locations across Turkey in early September 2020, and CIVA bureau member Phillippe K uchler joined a small team of FAI staff and ASC representatives to survey all the nominated sites earlier this year. This will be the fifth FAI WAG, those previous being –

- 1997 – the inaugural event in Turkey when CIVA ran its European Aerobatic Championship and a parallel WGAC at Antalya.
- 2001 – this second event was held at several locations in Spain, our power WAC being part of this at Burgos and the WGAC was run at Cordoba
- 2009 – based around a principal airfield at Turin in Italy. Here CIVA ran a short series of programmes including a never-to-be-repeated power 5 minute Free programme (no max K) and a set of more normal glider programmes.

- 2015 – the most recent event, held in Dubai, UAE where CIVA fielded 8 power and 9 glider pilots who flew several formal Aresti programmes plus a Final Freestyle sequence.

While the logistics for competitors in many aviation sports to bring their flying machinery and support staff to a WAG (or for that matter to a WG or AGS) is relatively straightforward to assess, for some the time out, transit management and operating costs are a major consideration. After the Dubai event CIVA took the opportunity to evaluate realistic operating costs for unlimited power competitors, this pointing to a total commitment of between 20 and 30k EUR for a WAG; something around half of this value is probably pertinent for gliders.

When considering Turkey 2020 we can also see that the September timing of the event will be well within the window reserved by many top power and glider pilots to service their display and sponsor commitments, and losing access to the aeroplane for the pre-event transit to Antalya, the on-site competitive activities and the post-event transit back to base plus the engineering tear-down and rebuild operations may render unlikely their desire to participate. Whereas World and European Aerobatic Championships are extremely desirable targets for top-class pilots because of their competitive opportunity and significance, by comparison the value of participation at a restricted / selected entry WAG event is a good deal less. This combination of interruptive and expensive time-out and comparatively low event prestige will be a hard to sell.

Following this plenary in Poland the CIVA bureau will quickly finalise a cost plan to support the presence of 12-15 aerobatic pilots in both power and glider categories at WAG 2020, including best estimates for the pre-event and on-site attendance of a small management team and the necessary officials to operate the programmes to a good standard. This will be discussed with the FAI and THK organising teams, and hopefully some acceptable parameters can be agreed and approved. Our aim will be to make CIVA's presence at least cost neutral for everyone in order to present the most attractive prospect for pilots, sponsors and NAC's throughout.

With the 2020 WGAC/WAGAC already set for late July / early August in Italy but no bid received yet for the EAC that year it is not possible to forecast the response that CIVA will receive from NAC's and the top unlimited power and glider aerobatic pilots for the trip to Antalya. We have also seen that establishing a significantly different pattern of programmes adds its own level of uncertainty, thus a fairly normal set of tasks will be the most likely solution. We will therefore quickly finalise the programme formats for an aerobatic presence at WAG 2020, and make direct contact with the NAC's we feel most likely to consider supporting one or more pilots for this event. Provided the level of commitment we receive is sufficient to build viable teams for each category then the selection process can be completed and individual pilots contacted to determine whether they will commit to the event itself.