

Jury President's Report for the 28th World Aerobatic Championship

20th to 29th August 2015, Chateauroux-Deols, France

Nick Buckenham, Jury President



The International Jury members at WAC 2015 were Jurgen Leukefeld (Germany), Vladimir Machula (Czech Republic) and myself (UK). Vladimir was a late substitution for Pik Kuchler, whose unexpected spell of duty at the EAAC in Romania left him unable to remain on the jury for this event as originally planned.

Overall the event was extremely well run by the French organising team, the jury being concerned with just two protests and a range of other issues that were quickly resolved.

The following key points concerned the jury during this event:

- The jury had officially appointed two warm-up pilots – Alexis Busque (France) and Mike Ciliberti (USA). Unfortunately Mr Ciliberti became ill but Dario Costa, who had intended to fly in an Hors Concours capacity, opted to withdraw his entry and offered to fly as the second warm-up. Later during the event Mr Ciliberti re-appeared for two warm-up sessions, but his illness returned and he withdrew leaving Mr Busque to fly the remaining warm-up slots for the judging panel.
- Martin Sonka (Czech Republic) was delayed by weather, arriving on the second day of the event and being fully briefed by Contest Director Guy Auger. Both he and Luke Czepiela (Poland) were thus required to fly this aeroplane shortly after its arrival.
- Luke Czepiela had originally entered as H/C but with the late approval of his NAC was subsequently adopted into the Polish team and flew for that country.
- After the draw for programme-1 it transpired that two No. 14's had been set out and No. 37 was missing. The jury requested the 2nd recipient of No. 14, Petr Kopstein, to make a 'blind' selection between 14 and 37 and he drew and accepted the latter, Daniel Genevey remaining as the 'correct' No. 14. A protest was subsequently received from the French team, who requested a re-draw; the jury discussed but rejected the protest, the matter having been resolved to the satisfaction of the two pilots affected.
- The boundary judge radios provided by the organisers were not able to deliver consistent communications, and the air-band alternatives that were initially proposed were rejected by Chateauroux ATC as no frequencies could be dedicated to their use. Fortunately jury member Vladimir Machula had brought six Motorola PMR's (Personal Mobile Radios) with him and these were gratefully accepted for this duty. It should be noted however that the championship was effectively delayed by half a day as a direct result of this problem – see recommendation-1 on this subject.

- The scoring office initially showed FPS score-sheets in the online results, and were requested to revise this to display only raw score-sheet data until each programme was completed, at which point fully detailed FPS score-sheets could be substituted.
- The UAV / drone wind measuring system operated by Vladimir Machula and his assistant provided data for the 500m level quickly and efficiently, though there were some initial problems with the local police and security staff who were concerned with the legality and licensing of its operation.
- The WiFi system available to the flight line was initially inadequate, but later improvements brought this to a better standard. The WiFi systems in both the Info Centre and the Jury and Judge's rooms however were frequently not usable at all, the use of personal memory sticks providing the only reliable though cumbersome and slow means to transfer computer files between officials; see my recommendation-2.
- When the west judging position was used it was necessary to ensure that music and flight commentaries over the PA system ceased, as they were loud and could have affected the judges' considerations.
- The Spanish team submitted a protest regarding the seated position of the south-west boundary judge who had positioned himself outside the corner post rather than inside, requesting that all 'Outs' for programme-2 be discarded. The jury determined that the accuracy of this judges reports were not significantly compromised and that all the 'Outs' he had recorded were also confirmed by one or other of the two adjacent boundary judges, and thus the protest was rejected. The judge was re-instructed in how to position himself correctly.
- It was found that some programme-2 Free sequences had been entered into the scoring system with the wrong SuperFamily designations; this would cause FPS to group the figure data incorrectly during results calculations, and provide an inaccurate result. The jury requested that the SuperFamily designations of all Free sequence figures be checked in the scoring computer by the organisers; three sets were found to need revision and were quickly changed to the correct standard by the scoring office.
- Many of the Free Unknown sequence diagrams received for checking did not have their A to J or Link figure designations set. This step must be completed before checking can begin; it is particularly important as the sequence file data is directly imported into the scoring system to preserve its original accuracy. If the Free Known format is approved for 2016 the number of Free Unknowns increases by 50% from two to three, and my



recommendation-3 refers to improvements necessary to improve the acceptability of these sequence designs through better regulation and control.

- A request was received from the Swiss team to allow competitors with total scores below 60% (see section-6 part-1 rule 1.3.1.1.b) to continue into programmes 3 and 4. Two such competitors were identified and as their flying was deemed safe by the Chief Judge the request was approved. The jury noted that this somewhat arbitrary rule would appear to be unnecessary now that the Chief Judge and the Jury are entitled to disqualify any pilot whose flying is deemed unsafe – plenary to discuss.
- The Chief Judge was forced to request that the launch rate be slowed during programme-3 as the tablet system recording the judges marks could not be operated swiftly enough. The jury observed many occasions when the tablet system could not handle all of the data from all judges within the available timescale, or presented other problems that had to be resolved either immediately or later by the CJ's assistant – I understand that the Chief Judge will comment on these problems in more detail.
- Many of the printed programme-3 Form-B/C sequence diagrams had badly reproduced and/or unreadable figure lines, and better quality replacement sheets produced on a different printer were requested and supplied. The jury noted that the organiser and the scoring office must take great care to check the quality of all printed sequence diagram sheets to ensure that judges are always provided with wholly acceptable paperwork.
- For the Final Freestyle the air-show boss requested that no flying be allowed beyond a deadline adjacent to the west side of the runway, and following discussion during briefing with the programme-5 pilots a restricted performance area was approved with the judges to the east. Two dead-line judges were established at the north and south extremities of the performance area at the runway edge, this being the 'far' side away from the panel of judges but next to the general public area.

Recommendations:

1. **Communications radios:** The availability of high quality PMR's (Personal Mobile Radios) for all relevant contest staff is vital to ensure that the contest control and reporting systems function reliably at all times. The distances for example between the judging line, all four boundary judges and the flight controller and the likelihood of intervening solid objects can often cause simple off-the-shelf walkie-talkies to be ineffective and inadequate for these duties. Even the 'professional' standard Motorola units that were fortunately brought by Vladimir Machula and made available to the organisers were on occasion unable to reliably contact boundary judges where 'line-of-sight' transmission was not possible; the prior installation of a central booster or repeater at a high location (e.g. on the control tower) may be the only viable solution in such situations.

2. **WiFi systems:** The work of the Jury and undoubtedly the Info Office staff was severely affected by shortcomings in the availability and usability of the local WiFi systems during the event. All CIVA championships now rely heavily upon satisfactory WiFi systems being available throughout the contest site for the swift transmission and receipt of data files that are critical to ensure smooth operation of the event. Organisers must therefore ensure that such systems are available with sufficient operating capability to provide the required throughput, and CIVA should make this an enforced requirement in the Guide to Championship Organisation.
3. **Sequence figure definitions:** Some regulatory text should be added in section-6 to define the minimum acceptable standard of sequence diagrams that are submitted by pilots for all programmes. Of particular importance for Free sequences is the identification and correctness of SuperFamilies, for Free Unknowns the 10 (7 for glider) selected and the 1 to 4 (1 to 2 for glider) link figures, and if the Known Free format is approved a combination of the two. Both of the approved CIVA scoring software systems enable the direct import of OpenAero XML files and/or the separate data-file output from the Visio Aresti system, critical to ensure rapid and accurate entry of the original figure data from these sequences. The receipt of diagrams/files lacking the required figure definitions not only places an unreasonable load on the jury but can easily lead to inaccurate data entry into the scoring system – and then inevitably to wrongly calculated results.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Nick Buckenham', is positioned above the printed name.

Nick Buckenham
Jury President, WAC 2015