



CIMA Historian Report

Tom Gunnarson



10th CIMA Plenary 1991 Prague



CIMA Plenary
Prague, Czech Republic
21-22 February 2025



CIMA History on CIMA Website



- CIMA founded in 1980 to develop and manage FAI Class R contests and records for the worldwide air sport community
- History project is a work in progress
- Captures stories, information and photos (while there is still a chance) of the people and actions that have made an impact on the sport
- Submissions are welcomed (send to tomgunnarson@earthlink.net)



All CIMA spaces

- CIMA
- CIMA Competitions
- CIMA Flight Recorders
- CIMA History
- CIMA IT WG
- CIMA
- Microlight Committee
- CIMA Paramotor Committee
- CIMA Paramotor Endurance Championships
- CIMA Plenaries
- CIMA Section 10
- CIMA WAG Microlights
- CIMA WAG Paramotors
- CIMA World League Cup
- Other CIMA events

This space

- CIMA History
- CIMA History home

[Home](#) [View](#) [Tools](#) [Administration](#) [Help](#)

[Dashboard](#) > [CIMA](#) > [CIMA History](#) > [CIMA History home](#)

CIMA History home

Since its founding in 1980, the FAI Microlight and Paramotor Commission (CIMA) has developed FAI Class R contests and records for the worldwide air sport community. FAI mainly provides the public with information on results, meeting minutes and the like. But those of us who have participated in CIMA activities know there are colorful and uplifting stories of people and events behind what is published.

Who remembers the infamous meeting in Rome or the "goose" championships or the first official scores for Kicking Sticks? Where was the first world microlight championships held in the southern hemisphere? What did it take to have gone the highest, fastest or longest in their respective FAI Class R record class? CIMA's rich history should be captured for future generations to learn about the character and decisions of those who have pioneered the sport as well as those who have had special experiences to share.

In 2013, CIMA created the position of Historian and asked me to take it. Reflecting back, taking over secretary duties from CIMA founder Ann Welch at the 1993 plenary in Poznan, Poland was my initiation to a long path of service to CIMA as commission bureau member and championships official. I am honored to take on this new role to help capture and preserve our history.

Much material has been collected over the years by competitors and the media on people and events. We will use this space to share some of that to preserve the spirit and heart of what makes participation in CIMA activities a fulfilling and rewarding experience.

Tom Gunnarson, CIMA Historian

The Formative Years (1978 - 1984)

The first indication of activity from the FAI archives was in a [20 December 1978 FAI notice](#) of an upcoming International General Aviation Committee (CIAG) meeting in Geneva, Switzerland included an annex to the agenda titled "The ULTRALIGHT AND F.A.I." Authored by Ann Welch, it provided background on a new and exciting air sport and expressed the need for FAI to become involved. The rest, as they say, is history.

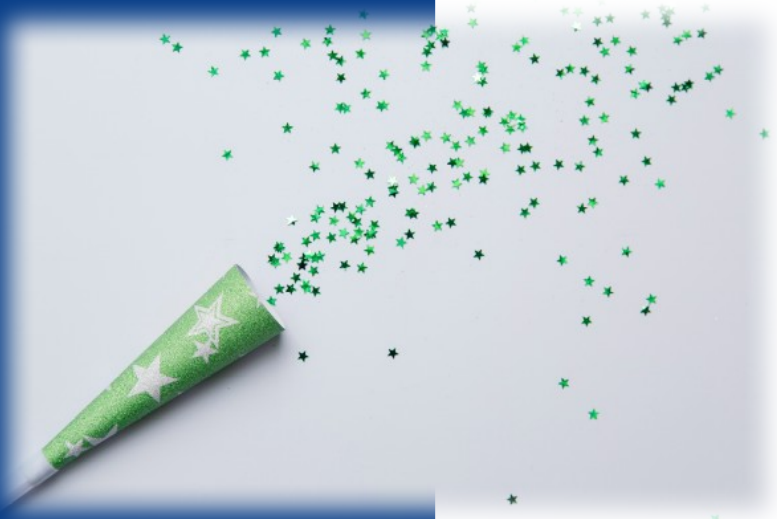
The introduction of small gas engines attached to hang gliders and lightweight fixed wing designs in the mid-1970s opened up the possibilities of sport and recreational flight to a new generation of enthusiasts. A short takeoff from a small field with sustained flight over the local countryside fulfilled many dreams of bird-like flight. Interest in this those early pioneering efforts quickly turned into an explosive growth of activity, with mass-produced microlights (also called "ultralights") populating the skies. Public interest, and concern over noise, privacy and safety warranted the need for national advocacy organizations and new sections of National Aero Clubs to educate and advocate for this new segment of aviators.

A few enlightened aviation personalities at the time could see the natural progression of the competitive spirit, from manufacturers vying for customers to adventuresome souls eager to test their new aircraft to the limits



Happy CIMA 45th Anniversary!

- Established 1980
- First CIMA President Ann Welch





Share and add to CIMA history

- 10-minute interview
 1. What got you interested in microlights? When did you first start flying competitively?
 2. When did you first get involved with CIMA sanctioned activity (CIMA meetings, FAI microlight records, FAI sanctioned microlight/paramotor championships?)
 3. What are the three top memories you have of your FAI microlight/paramotor involvement to date?
 4. Who were/are the 3 people who have made the most impression on you and why (FAI or CIMA official, team leader, competitor, etc.)?
 5. What FAI sanctioned microlight or parameter championships was most memorable and why?
- In Memorium
- Stories, Photos, videos, Internet links, etc.

In Memorium

List of those Shining Stars of our sport and community who have passed on

Jan Bem

(1947 – 2022)



- Czech Republic delegate to CIMA
- FAI Ann Welch Diploma, 2011 and 2017
- World record holder in Class R



CIMA's Future?



AIR ONE



Pivotal Helix



Live Tracking and instant scoring



eVTOL and Multirotor Categories



Preserving our History

FAI Mission - "FAI - the global organisation for the promotion of air sports and recreational flying"

FAI Vision - "A world where safe participation in air sports and recreational flying is available to everyone at reasonable cost"

CIMA Championships purpose: "... to reinforce friendship amongst pilots of all nations."

Keeps CIMA visible to the World