

Report of the CIVA President - 2016

Review of CIVA events since the 2015 plenary conference

The following power and glider championships have taken place –

- The glider WGAC and WAGAC at Matkó Puszta in Hungary
- The power WAAC at Radom Sadków in Poland
- The power EAC at Moravská Třebová in the Czech Republic



In addition a selected group of pilots and officials took part in the FAI World Air Games in Dubai last December, a memorable event with outstanding views for the competing pilots.

All these competitions experienced mostly good weather with just one or two days, usually at the start, lost through poor conditions. In each case however sufficient programmes were run to reach a satisfactory stage from which to declare champions and team results –

- **At the WGAC/WAGAC** each category completed five programmes, only the last Unknown being not flown as by the time we reached this point the jury were satisfied that we had done all that was necessary. In fact there is a proposal from the Glider Committee to remove programme-6 from both levels as in reality five programmes is enough. The Polish PHMD system was in continuous use, and in addition their 3-axis aircraft locator was carefully monitored by the Jury and Chief Judge – at one stage it enabled some comments about possible boundary judging bias to be effectively reviewed and an acceptable of trust restored. Overall the event was well run and progress brisk, with few unnecessary hold-ups. Particularly welcome this year were the brand-new trophies sponsored by Roland Küng for both categories – these will be retained by CIVA while a series of miniatures are created, so that champions each year can keep a permanent memento of their status.



- **In Poland this time the WAAC** was run at Radom's mixed military and commercial Sadków airfield, an excellent setting with good facilities. There were unexpected interruptions to the championship flying on many days however due to scheduled



arrivals and departures for passenger aircraft and departures, returns and training flights for military aircraft, for which some notification both at plenary and through the bulletin system should have been made. We also lost the first day getting

some basic structures such as the boundary judging system and personnel up to an acceptable standard, and I have proposed that to overcome this a thorough operational check through all of the contest practical systems before championship flying commences would be well worth the effort and time that it would take. Due to weather and other matters the flying reached a position after programme-2 where it seemed likely that a 'cut' programme-4 could be run, but ultimately the time available was not enough and the final programme-3 competition flight was completed as the precipitation started on the final Saturday morning, truly a "Just in Time" performance.

- **The European unlimited championship at Moravská Třebová** was very positive throughout, the early weather problems during which the judges spent time running their own sharply contested paper plane event quickly giving way to allow a full set of programmes to be run at this new-to-us venue. The contest briefings were well prepared and on-time, the accommodation for judges and officials



pleasant enough in a local 3-star pension though the pilots were sited much further away with almost an hour's journey to the airfield each day, the food was excellent and cheerfully served by the local staff, and finally the box was situated immediately to the east of the airfield – but by all accounts not an easy one to orientate within. Once again, as in Poland, the involvement of local government officials in the opening and closing ceremonies was extremely welcome, clearly demonstrating how these championships can become an integral and media-friendly part of public entertainment in the area.

- **At the FAI World Air Games** held at the end of last year the nine glider and eight power competitors we selected hugely enjoyed their flying from the uniquely situated Dubai Sky-Dive "runway-in-the-sea" while performing in a 'virtual' box overhead the astonishing Palm sea-scape area. Not without its difficulties within CIVA during the planning stages and also needing a clear view of the cost implications by each pilot, the



workings of this event are reported in detail elsewhere. Though confined to only a few unlimited pilots it was a memorable contest, one that most of us would not have missed.

Final thoughts – when comparing the significance of the event for aerobatic pilots, the expected loss of their valuable aeroplane in transit for probably over two months, plus the unusually high planning and practical work-load required from the competitors and CIVA officials over many months of preparation, it is not easy to see how events of this type with such limited representation can offer the level of prestigious return that we have come to expect and value from an aerobatic World or European championship.

Introduction of the Free Known programme

At each championship this year the new Free Known programme was in operation for the first time. This was fairly straightforward for the gliders but at WAAC and EAC the need for careful handling by pilots and judges of the ‘warm-up’ options gave some food for thought. The programme itself proved to be trouble-free to judge, the different sequences each flight being easily handled by the panel through good paperwork which this time, as in Poland, used the new Left and Right forms rather than the legacy A-B-C system.

Overall I think that the introduction of this new sequence format in place of the previous “Q” and Free sequences has gone extremely well, undoubtedly serving its purpose to bring the Free Unknown sequences one stage earlier and provide all competitors with an added sense of urgency to become proficient with these more testing programmes in order to achieve a position near the top of the final ranking.

Judges and judging

The judging committee specified seven judges for each event, though in both Hungary and Poland one additional NAC was represented by a judge who self-funded to enable them to join the panel. It seems clear that a seven judge panel is sufficient to spread the inevitable anomalies thinly enough for FPS to identify and reject them, though if finances permitted a move back to the previous ten could be to our advantage.

One area that is giving cause for concern now is the rather static pool of active international judges who are prepared to come and work at our championships. For these officials the duty is quite formidable ... long days at a distant location well away from the interesting action, sitting in not the most comfortable chairs in the world in direct sun and with basic refreshments, and quite often with accommodation at a separate hotel so that contact with colleagues from their NAC and the flying fraternity can be unusually restricted.

In addition we must bear in mind that CIVA’s credibility as the world’s epicentre of aerobatic judging standards is seriously undermined by a total lack of centrally managed formal judge training, a situation that I wish to radically change during the next few months with the



development of an all-new Judge Training hub on the new CIVA News website. To attract new faces and fresh experience to our panels we need to sharpen-up our act, and the presence of an in-house learning centre for aerobatic judges and judging – hopefully with some clear instruction to pilots on exactly what the judges expect from them – is the right first step.

International Juries

With a workload that often seems to vary between feast and famine, juries can make or break the efficient running of an event. An ability to work quietly and productively with the contest management is essential, and this year – as in most – we have seen that a well-run jury can be a real force for good. This year the juries have been blessed with very few protests, in itself the most promising sign that things are proceeding in an orderly manner.

Finance, the Budget and Travel Allowances (TA's)

CIVA's treasurer Jürgen Leukefeld has again been well supported by Mady Delcroix this year, the latter taking on the full load of organising our Travel Agreement programme to manage officials' claims for reimbursement of travel costs. While this appears to be a relatively simple task it demands considerable preparation to secure a realistic understanding of how our officials can best organise their transit from home to each event, plus an ability to resolve the many little problems that seem so hard to avoid.



In the recent past only some 60-80% of each claim for the principal element of the journey has been met, and without doubt this is a critical part of the expectation each official has when a contest position is secured either at plenary or at a later stage through the judging committee's work. Our relatively secure financial position at the moment and the strong prospect of at least two FSAE's next year that will provide good sanction fees indicates that for 2017 we should look to pay 100% of the main leg of each journey once the right solution has been approved, the initial and final home-to-airport element remaining a matter for the individual concerned.

Urgent and President's Proposals for 2016

You will see from the two separate documents that there is a good range of Urgent and Presidents Proposals to be assessed. All of these have their origin in some contest or regulatory situation that we would prefer to overcome before next year, and I urge you to give them good attention in the best interest of the sport so that we can resolve them as expected – or at least debate their qualities to reach a sensible decision.



Nick Buckenham
CIVA President