

REPORT OF THE CHAMPIONSHIP DIRECTOR

14th FAI WORLD HELICOPTER CHAMPIONSHIP, 21-26TH OF AUGUST, 2012 DRAKINO AIRFIELD, RUSSIA

1. EVENT

14th WHC took place in Drakino airfield in Moscow region during 10 days: from 17th to 26th of August, 2012: 5 preparation and training days and 5 main competition days. WHC was organized in full accordance with FAI and CIG FAI rules and documents.

2. PARTICIPANTS

50 crews from 11 nations took part in the competition, including 6 Ladies' crews, 6 Mixed crews, 6 Junior pilots.

Organizers are most thankful to Konrad Geissler and Jacques Escaffre who did their best to support the Ladies' Championship and brought girls' crews.

For the first time in WHC history 6 international crews officially participated in the competition under the special decision of CIG FAI made in March, 2012. This decision allowed to increase the number of participating crews and encouraged more athletes to take part in the WHC.

3. PROGRAM

We ran 4 mandatory events, Freestyle and optional Helicopter Races.

Fender Rigging was organized on 2 parallel courses with 2 judging teams. This allowed to reduce the time of the event and made it more spectacular for the public. The reduced time made possible running of 2 events – Precision and Fender Rigging – during 1 day and that, in its turn, saved some time for the reserve purposes (in case of the bad weather) and for the optional events.

There was a separate Navigation day for 50 crews flying with 10 minutes interval.

Most spectacular Events – Slalom and Freestyle – both were organized on Saturday and attracted a lot of public.

The Freestyle Event was very representative – 10 pilots from 5 countries on 5 different types of helicopters.

An optional event – Helicopter Races – brought a lot of fun both for crews and spectators. The Rules were invented on spot by the Chief Judge Wolfgang Perplies and the Deputy Chief Judge Valery Bolvachev few days before the WHC started. The Rules were very similar to the WAG rules. The Races were a surprise event – nobody trained them before. Crews from all participating nations took part in the Races.

4. TEST EVENT, CHECKING THE SITE

46th Open Russian Helicopter Championship in August, 2011 – FAI 2nd category Event – was organized prior to 14th WHC as a Test Event. It was held in the same place, in Drakino. Crews from Austria, Germany, Belarus and Ukraine as well as judges and observers from UK and France took part in the competition. 4 members of CIG FAI were among them.

Test Event gave a chance to competitors from different countries to check the site and airfield area. Test Event was a “dress rehearsal” for the Organizers.

David Hamilton, CIG FAI President and President of 14th WHC International Jury, was invited to visit Drakino with inspection in November, 2011. His good advices, as well as recommendations made by Wolfgang Perplies and W-D Tesar how to make organization better had rendered a good service to the Organizers.

5. INVITATIONS, BULLETINS, VISA SUPPORT

The invitations to NACs, as well as Bulletin No 1, registration and entry forms, were sent in time. Organizers provided visa support to all participating nations. In special cases we contacted Russian Consulates abroad to make the procedures running smooth and fast.

6. HELI-FLIGHT

A group of 12 helicopters arrived to Drakino from Europe and back safely. Heli-Flight was a real adventure for the pilots as well as for the Organizers. 108 papers were gathered from the crews and checked by the Russian Aviation Authorities that resulted in getting all necessary clearances and permissions.

Organizers met the Group on the Ukrainian-Russian border and brought them back after the WHC was over. Organizers covered all expenses of the Group, except fuel, in Russia: landing/take-offs fees, handling, leader/navigator R-44 helicopter, custom formalities.

Special thanks to Hubert Gesang, Brenda Nicoll, Monika Arbenz, David Monks and UK military crews for their co-operation and hard organization work.

7. RENTING HELICOPTERS

Organizers provided all possible support to the foreign crews in renting helicopters in Russia. Helicopters of 4 different types were rented by 18 crews: R-22, R-44, HU-269, Bell-206.

Organizers also provided validation of the Pilot Licenses for flying in Russia on the helicopters with Russian registration.

Organizer took over the costs of helicopters' insurance, licenses' validation, instructor for the test flights and mechanics for daily maintenance.

In case with Bell-206 that arrived from Saint-Petersburg Organizer additionally covered part of transportation costs.

Special thank to Elisabeth Tesar for helping in translation of the Renting Contract.

8. SPORT EQUIPMENT AND COMPETITION SITES

Maps for Navigation and sport equipment were prepared in time. After getting some remarks and notes from the Chief Judge some items of the equipment were corrected in accordance with these remarks to meet the requirements of the Rules fully and exactly. All these changes were finished before the competition started.

Competition sites for the 4 main Events were placed in time and in accordance with the Rules.

The setting of the competition site for the Freestyle Event and the positioning of the centre of the box were not correct. It was found out after the event was finished and caused penalty problems for the box infringements.

9. FLIGHT OPERATIONS, FLYING SAFETY, DOCUMENTATION

Flight operations ran smoothly without any incidents. All competitors completed their training and competition flights safely. All necessary information was given to the crews during the briefings. A Chinese interpreter was on duty on the control tower when the Chinese crew was in the air to ensure correct radio communication with the pilot.

The fire brigade and emergency medical service were on duty during the training and competition days.

Organizer checked all the pilots' and helicopters' documents before the General Briefing started. No comments, remarks or problems appeared.

The fuel of 2 types was available in the airfield.

10. JUDGING, RULES

Judging was organized on a high professional level. 38 judges from 9 nations formed the Board of Judges. Scoring was done in time, preliminary results were being published regularly. Organizer thanks the Chief Judge Wolfgang Perplies and the Deputy Chief Judge Valery Bolvachev for their hard work.

Suggestions:

- 1) to mark the judges in the National Lists of Judges who may participate in the Judging of the Freestyle event and have a special knowledge of this type of program
- 2) to create a list of Freestyle figures similar to Aerobic sports

There are some items in the Rules that should be clarified. Sometimes we meet with misunderstanding of the Rules by the crews from different countries.

11. ACCOMMODATION, CATERING, TRANSFER, TENTS

Accommodation was organized in 4 hotels in the airfield or in 10-15 minutes by car. The catering was organized in the hotels (breakfast) and airfield (lunches, dinners). Water, tea and coffee were provided in the competition tent during the day. The judges were also provided with water.

There were shuttle buses to the hotels during the day. Organizers provided free of charge bus and car transfer from the airports to Drakino and back for all delegations.

A large tent for the crews with the rooms for the Jury, Judges and Championship Director was situated in the airfield near the competition sites. It was used for briefings, registration, as a chill-out area during the flights and for the closing dinner. Separate tent was envisaged for the Scoring team.

There were information and registration tents and 3 parking areas for the guests and public.

12. CEREMONIES, AIR-SHOW

Opening and closing ceremonies were held in the airfield where an area with the scene, flags and photo-wall was organized. A group of helicopters with the flags of participating nations opened the Championship. Ceremonies were followed by short concerts.

A prizes of the Organizer were given in all nominations for the first 3 places.

An air-show was organized on Sunday before the closing ceremony. Many different civil and military helicopters took part in the program including the famous Russian Air Force aerobic team "Golden Eagles" on Mil-28, Ka-52 and Mil-38 that made a world record attempt.

Special thanks to the participants of WHC Siegfried Schwarz (Austria, BO-105), Quentin Smith (UK, R-22), Werner Iberler (Germany, Cabri) who participated in the air-show with their helicopters.

13. COMMUNICATION WITH FAI

The Contract with FAI was signed in time. The logo of the Championships was agreed by FAI. The details of insurance of the Sporting Event were submitted to FAI.

Pictures, preliminary and final results were being sent to FAI daily during the Championship.

The sanction fees were partially paid to FAI before the Championship started and finally in a few days after it finished. The final sum – 14.100,- CHF – was checked and agreed by the CIG FAI President David Hamilton.

It was a great honor for CIG FAI, competitors and Organizer to host FAI President John Grubbstrom and FAI General Secretary Jean-Marc Badan who were the special guests of the Championship.

14. MEDIA COVERAGE, SPECTATORS

A press-conference was organized prior to the Championship in ITAR-TASS (Information Telegraph Agency of Russia).

All Russian main TV-channels covered the Championship with short reports in news programs. Many crews from different nations were interviewed and shown on TV and in the newspapers and magazines.

20 000 spectators visited Drakino to watch the competition. There was no entry fee for the public.

A sport commentator Dmitry Guberniev, well-known in Russia, commented on the performance of the crews in the airfield.

15. OTHER

A booklets in 2 languages with full information about the competition, persons and helicopters were published prior to the Championship and were given to all participants as well as some souvenirs with symbolic of the Championship.

16. ATMOSPHERE

The atmosphere of the Championship was friendly, warm and family. It was not only a sport competition but a meeting of old and new helicopter friends and real feast of the soul.

Organizers are most thankful to all the nations that take part in the championship, to the crews, jury, judges, observers and supporters for their personal input in the 14th FAI WHC.

Irina Grushina,
Championship Director

