

Report of the Chief Judge

14th World Helicopter Championship, 21 – 26th of August 2012, Drakino (RUS)

Preparation

On Organizer's invitation I arrived to Championship venue 6 days before the commencement of WHC. Together with Deputy Chief Judge, scoring and computer team we prepared the pattern for bilingual judging and scoring sheets (English and Russian). This experiment proved to be advantageous. Russian speaking competitors, judges, press, media and spectators had no problems with evaluation of published documents.

I recommend to have in the future bilingual sheets in English and in the language of the Organizer's country.

It was also important to have judges at least one and a half day earlier at the place. So it was enough time for a detailed judge seminar to make them familiar with judging sheets and improve judges knowledge.

Material

During the inspection of Championship material was detected some inaccuracy in weights, lengths, and quality of ropes, skittles or fenders. Except that the buckets had 11 instead of 9 holes all others could be corrected in time. The use of these buckets was permitted, because there was no disadvantage for the competitors.

A British crew presented to inspection team its own bucket with rope and asked to use this equipment during Slalom Event. Bucket, ropes and balls were manufactured according the rules and in the WHC Rules it is not forbidden to do so. Therefore this crew got finally permission for using own equipment in Slalom.

In the future there should be a clear regulation which allows only the equipment produced by the Organizer.

Rules

I gave instruction about strict and literal application to the rules with intend to detect contradictory regulations and uneven relations between different events and infringement points.

During competition therefore sometimes arose discussions about correct interpretation and meanings of English words.

Obviously some regulations in the rules of Navigation, Precision and Chapter 2, especially about "other infringement" need revision. Details will be led out in the draft for Rules revision.

Events

In general there were no disturbing problems in carrying out the events.

In Navigation event the literal application of rules led not only to astonishment and discussions, but also to some cases of hardship.

We must reflect upon regulations about mobile phones and separation of competitors after finishing event and relations of penalties.

Unfortunately the used German logger program had communication problems with Russian printers. So it was not possible to print logger plots.

Fender Rigging was carried out in parallel courses. That proved to be a good matter to give the Organizer organizational flexibility.

On the eve of Free-Style Event we checked the submitted descriptions of manoeuvres together with the Championship Director and 3 experienced display pilots, among them the chief instructor pilot of a helicopter company.

Three competitors were asked to give further explanation. Because it was difficult to consider the flight figures safe or unsafe with respect to the concerned operational flight handbooks every competitor was asked to sign a statement on his description, that he had all the manoeuvres already flown before and that they don't violate the limits of flight handbook.

In future I recommend to create a catalogue with descriptions of manoeuvres and flight figures to be flown in Free-Style with reference to difficulty for the different types of helicopters.

Under those circumstances the degree of program and skill could be better judged. The same manoeuvre flown by a Robinson 22 and Bo 105 require very different degrees of difficulty and skill. Such a catalogue should also be examined by qualified personnel with reference to limits of flight handbooks.

Further I recommend to introduce an additional qualification for judges for judging difficulty and skill in Free-Style.

Complaints and Protests

Among numerous requests for verifying penalties from judging sheets and explanations of penalty reasons there were 3 serious written complaints submitted. All of them were decided negative and 2 of them led to protests afterwards.

Due to a dubious information from a German Assistant Judge a German competitor claimed, that 2 judges during Precision Event stood in an unfavorable position and could not correct judge a corridor. He asked for cancellation of penalties.

The result from investigation was, that the described situation was not true for this crew and the judges definitely stood in correct position. The Deputy Chief Judge had himself

positioned the judges in correct places after the first competitor. The Assistant Judge was earnestly warned.

Because of organizational reasons a British crew could not attend the initial briefing of the Chief Judge. Later they got penalties from infringement of rope handling. The correct handling of rope was explained in detail during the briefing. The crew complained, that they could have avoided these penalties if they have had the possibility to attend the briefing.

The complaint was rejected, because every crew is themselves responsible for correct understanding of the rules and the competitors did not use the chance to ask Team Manager, other crews or even the Chief Judge for explanation about briefing items.

The crew was not satisfied and lodged a protest. The jury did not change results of this crew.

The day after Free-Style in the morning the Championship Director explained to me, that from Organizer`s fault the dimensions of the display box had been laid out incorrect and therefore penalties for border infringement should not be counted. Altered results were posted on information board with the change of first and second place.

The British Team Manager asked for explanation and was promised to start investigation.

The Austrian Team Manager presented a sheet of paper with drawn distances measured by a motorcar. From these dimensions the box was undersized at several positions, but from center sign to the border line on right side the distance was more than 500 m and so correct. Just at this right border the infringement happened. The two responsible judges again stated that the Austrian competitor left the box two times during presentation with the helicopter in full.

I informed the Austrian Team Manager about these findings and explained him, that the penalties for border infringements will be upheld and the results of previous evening - British competitor first - will be valid again. In addition there was no objection from competitors to box dimensions after driving around the pilots before commencement of the event.

I suggested the Team Manager to lodge a protest if he is still dissatisfied.

In the late afternoon of Sunday I was informed, that the jury not accepted the protest because it was not lodged according the Rules requirements and that the jury recommended the Organizer to give back the penalties for border infringement.

The Championship Director asked for consultation how to proceed. I made clear, that I would not change my decision. After further discussion I agreed with the Championship Director to have two first places without publishing scoring points.

Wolfgang Perplies

Chief Judge 14th WHC