



PRESS RELEASE
For immediate release

19th FAI World Glider Aerobatic Championships takes off

Lausanne, Switzerland, 20 July 2016 - **The 19th FAI World Glider Aerobatic Championship starts on Wednesday 20 July 2016 – and there will be brand new trophies for the winners at the end of the 10-day competition.**

The competition is the highlight of the international Glider Aerobatics calendar and will take place at Matko Airport in Hungary.

A dual-competition, it will see two world champions crowned. Running in parallel, the 19th FAI World Glider Aerobatic Championship and the 7th FAI Advanced Glider Aerobatic World Championship are being organised by the Hungarian Aeronautical Association and the Hungarian Aerobatic Club.

Contest Director Tamás Abranyi said the whole team was “working hard” to prepare. “The last days are the busiest ... We have to pray now for suitable weather too.”

Glider Aerobatics is a high-adrenalin, highly visual air sport. Pilots compete in specially built gliders to successfully complete a series of high-G manoeuvres.

Gliders are towed up into a performance zone – the ‘box’ – at 1,250m above the ground. The box is a 1,000m x 1,000m x 1,000m invisible cube in the sky. It is marked out by GPS, as well as white stripes on the ground.

Pilots then have to complete a complex aerial routine within the boundaries of the box. Six programs have to be flown during the championships.

An international jury of judges scores each program, penalising pilots for altitude infringements or incomplete sequences. The programs are a mix of set routines and free programs, where pilots are free to invent their own sequence.

Fifty-nine pilots from 15 nations are competing. The biggest teams are Poland, with 11 pilots, Hungary, with nine, Germany with eight, and France, Czech Republic and Italy with five pilots each.

Contest Director Abranyi said Hungary’s Ferenc Toth was “one to watch”. Toth is a Hungarian Glider Aerobatic pilot who won the FAI European Glider Aerobatic Championships in 2000, 2006 and 2008, and the FAI World Glider Aerobatic Championships in 2003.

Abranyi added: “Hungary’s David Józsa and Miklós Hoós in Advanced categories are also ones to watch. The Polish and Czech teams are strong too.”

Whoever does win, there will be shiny new silverware to take home in triumph.

The President of the FAI Aerobatics Commission (CIVA) Nick Buckenham announced a week before the competition started that there will be brand new trophies for the competition.

He said: “We have been able to create a brand new trophy for each category. Each trophy carries the full history of Glider Aerobatic champions. For Unlimited that is Jerzy Makula at Mauterndorf in 1985 and for the Advanced pilots it was Johan Gustafsson at Jämijärvi in 2010.”

He added: “The trophies at Matko will be handed to the new Unlimited and Advanced World Champions.”

The trophies feature a glider in bronze mounted on a wooden stand.

President of the International Jury for the championships is Manfred Echoer (DE). Chief Judge is Phillip Kuchler (CH), and President of the Technical Committee is Janos Geczi (HU).

ENDS

Key dates

20 July

8am-9.30am: Opening briefing

10am-5pm: Competition flying

7pm: Opening ceremony

21-29 July

9am-sunset: Competition flying

30 July

9am-1pm: Competition flying

2pm-5pm: Reserve time / airshow

5.30pm-6pm: Awards ceremony

7pm: Gala dinner

Where to find out more

Competition website, including pilot and team lists: www.wgac2016.hu

Rights-free interview with Tamas Abranyi, Contest Director: www.goo.gl/xjkGdN

Photography and other media assets

The FAI Media team will be at the competition from 27-30 July. They will be producing rights-free photography, news reports and social media for media distribution. Over those dates check:

- High-resolution photography: www.flickr.com/photos/airsports_fai/
- YouTube: www.youtube.com/user/airsportschannel
- Facebook: www.facebook.com/airsports.fai
- Twitter: www.twitter.com/airsports_fai
- Instagram: www.instagram.com/airsports.fai

About FAI

The World Air Sports Federation, FAI, is the world governing body for air sports and for certifying world aviation and space records. The FAI was founded in 1905 and is a non-governmental and non-profit-making organisation recognised by the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

FAI activities include Aerobatics, Aeromodelling, Airships, Amateur-Built and Experimental Aircraft, Balloons, Gliding, Hang Gliding, Helicopters, Manpowered Flying, Microlights, Parachuting, Paragliding, Paramotors, Power Flying and all other Aeronautic and Astronautic sporting activities.

For more details, please contact the FAI (Fédération Aéronautique Internationale)

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