

EVENT DEBRIEF MINUTES

24th FAI World Hot Air Balloon Championship

Murska Sobota, Slovenia 23rd September 2022

Present: Event Director Claude Weber, Deputy Director Goran Grgic, Organizer [Matjaž Pavlinjek](#)
Jury President Les Purfield and members Paolo Oggioni and Maury Sullivan (Secretary)
24 Officials, 24 Pilots and 40 Crew

The meeting opened at 10:30, 23rd September 2022 hosted by Maury Sullivan, as the Jury President was detained printing the FAI and Nations Diplomas for the awards ceremony.

Invitation Process

- Consensus was that the invitation process was well organized and run efficiently.
- Complaints on significant increase in entry fees over the past few years
- Director Weber indicated desire to break down fees between true entry fees, propane, housing, etc. and state each separately
- Reported that this event used approximately 120,000 liters of propane estimated to cost about 1000€ per pilot.

Pilot Check In

- Pilots questioned why submit pilot and balloon documents via email in advance. One reason could be to short cut problems before arriving at event
- Problem of pilots not securing or renewing their Sporting License in a timely manner was reviewed

General Briefing

- Run very efficiently with a total time of about one hour
- Large TV screen in front of room coupled with several around the room were very helpful for visibility
- Concern expressed over how to handle potential border crossing and lack of pre-event communication on proper procedures

Flight Briefings

- Posting of TDS on Watchmeffy (WMF) in advance of briefing was very much appreciated
- Pilots appreciated the early start times for briefings allowing plenty of time to seek out launch sites
- Received one email criticizing the quality of the weather information provided
- Audio-visual in tent was great

Flights

- Complaints of relative penalty for aggressive flying, collisions vs ground contact. Criticized 500-point ground contact vs 200-point for basket to envelope collision. Suggest setting up a system to monitor for repeat offenders with progressively larger penalties.
- Concern over high altitude collisions
- Discussion on how to achieve visibility of balloons above via new camera technology of visibility panels in the balloon top
- Several instances of aggressive flying at target areas

Tasking

- Pilots liked the HWZ approach at 'common areas' providing for less congestion and safer flying at target areas
- Concern expressed over Task 21 FON with multiple star targets as "the most dangerous task I have ever flown." Tasking that requires virtually all time monitoring a computer is not safe.
- Suggested that the 2D/3D transition altitude was too high and not representative of the risk/reward to try and achieve a marker in a 30m MMA
- Question was raised as to whether larger MMA's might lead to safer, less aggressive, flying.

General Operations

- Pilots liked benefits of WMF
- All thanked the Organizers and sponsors that afforded a wonderful event especially adding Regan and his media team
- Lack of social programming was noted and pilots and crew would appreciate one more opportunity of socializing. It was noted the WMF and lack of need for in person debriefing removed many post flight opportunities to socialize. Suggestion was to plan a possible social night off if the championship has plenty of good weather and competitive flight opportunities
- Marker colors were criticized noting only bright colors should be utilized
- Target colors were also criticized indicating the best for visibility is all white. Officials also noted need to have all targets with center point grommet for spike
- Ingress and egress from briefing was difficult. Could use a 'pilots' only entrance/exit.

Refueling

- All commented on its efficiency and safety. All applauded the refueling operation.

Debriefing

- Scoring officials emphasized that pilots need to understand the importance of the FRF especially any narrative related to the flight and a basis of comparison in case there are issues with launch, landing locations, etc.
- Suggested setting a time limit on filing of FRF with associated penalty for late filing, e.g. similar to search period
- Officials emphasized that the FRF is a double check on electronics

The meeting closed at 11:30.

Maury Sullivan
Jury Member