

## **AGENDA ITEM 7.2**

### **REPORT OF THE CONTEST DIRECTOR**

#### **XII. WORLD GLIDER AEROBATIC CHAMPIONSHIPS**

**Niederöblarn, Austria**

**16-25 August 2007**

**Manfred Echter**



#### **General**

The 12th WGAC was held from 16 August to 25 August 2007 at Niederoeblarn, Austria. A total of 51 pilots (1 female, 50 male) from 12 nations competed in this contest.

Five programmes were completed successfully. Programme 5 (Unknown 3) however, was only flown by the top 50% of the competitors due to insufficient time remaining.

The full results are available on the CIVA website (<http://civaweb.mwebservices.net>) so I will not repeat them here.

#### **Contest Site**

The site of WGAC 2007 had successfully hosted the same event already in 1999.

Niederöblarn offers the ideal infrastructure for this kind of championships. The airfield is the home of a professional gliding school and is, at the same time, the site of a sports school which offers training in a wide variety of other sports.

The hotel on the airfield housed all the officials as well as all the contest offices, scoring and briefing facilities. Everything was in easy walking distance from the flightline.

The mountainous terrain made it necessary to set up the box at an angle of approximately 30° to the runway. The minimum height for contest flights had to be raised to 300m above the airfield datum.

#### **Personnel**

A sufficient number of voluntary helpers were available at all times. The airfield manager and his staff are a highly professional team. With their assistance, it was easy to run the contest in an efficient manner.



## **Weather**

The peculiar weather conditions in the alpine environment require considerable experience and specialised knowledge from the contest management. With the expert help of the airfield manager and accurate regional forecasts from the Austrian weather service, we were always able to stay on top of the situation.

Wind measuring was done by airborne GPS in a motorglider. From the groundspeed readings it was easy to compute the winds aloft in a timely and accurate manner.

Whenever there was any doubt about turbulence in the performance zone, a check flight was conducted by one of the local gliding instructors in a Fox glider. Due to excessive turbulence, there was a one hour break in contest flying on 22 Aug. and on 23 Aug. there was no flying at all due to turbulent conditions.

Overall, two contest days were lost due to rain and one due to excessive winds and turbulence.

## **Scoring and Publication of Results**

Scoring was done by Ludwig Fuss, using the CIVA ACMS. There were no irregularities observed and the equipment functioned satisfactorily.

Preliminary results were published in near-real time on various display screens in the public area and through the CIVA web server. The competitors and officials had free internet access via PCs provided by the organisers and a WLAN on the airfield.

The organisers had developed an alternative system to the optical reader for entering the scores at the judges' positions. This system was used on a "test only" basis and was operated by the judges' assistants. The data collected by this system were entered into the ACMS and handled exactly the same way as the data entered through the optical reader. The official scoring system and the experimental system, however, ran on completely separate hardware in order to avoid any interference with the regular scoring.

The new data entry system performed beyond expectations and could in principle be used as an alternative to the data entry via the optical reader in the future.

## **Height Measuring**

Height measuring was done by the Meierhofer device (MHMD). The equipment functioned flawlessly, although this system is still a prototype.

If CIVA wants to go on using an electronic height measuring device for glider aerobatics, it is unavoidable to take a decision on the future use of this equipment.



The Huber system, purchased by CIVA in the 1990s, has become inoperative due to age and technical shortcomings. It cannot be repaired and supported economically any longer.

The Meierhofer device was developed as a private initiative and with private funding. So far, Mr. Meierhofer has not been able to sell any of his devices. Since his equipment is still a prototype, it is foreseeable that it may fail in the near future without any replacement in sight. The only solution from my point of view would be an arrangement with Mr. Meierhofer which guarantees the continued availability of his system.

### **Organisation**

Whilst the contest itself could be conducted without any serious problems, there was some dissatisfaction among competitors and officials about various administrative and financial issues.

The reason for this was a peculiar arrangement within the organising committee. The Austrian Aero Club, which was the official organiser designated by FAI, was in fact excluded from most of the decision-making. The managers of Sportunion Austria, which owns the Niederöblarn facility, had taken on the entire responsibility in administrative and financial matters. The contest director was mostly not consulted in these matters either.

As a result, the planning for the opening ceremony was done exclusively by the Sportunion management, which was not familiar with FAI protocol nor with the customs at an international air sports event.

The opening ceremony was a bitter disappointment for the competitors and international officials. The competitors felt insulted by the fact that they were asked to sit with the general public on wooden benches in the rear of the room, whilst the organisers had seated the representatives of their sponsors and some local dignitaries at comfortable tables in a barred-off and guarded section in front of the stage.

The FAI flag was not raised, nor was the FAI anthem played at the beginning of the ceremony.

After repeated interventions in the course of the championship, the closing ceremony was conducted in a proper and satisfactory manner.

### *Recommendations*

- a) *The paragraphs of Sporting Code 6, Part 2 concerning the control of box-outs must be amended. The passage, which calls for averaging the times recorded by two line judges watching the same line, had been omitted in the re-write.*
- b) *A decision on the future use of height measuring devices in glider aerobatics is urgently needed.*



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**Vilnius, Lithuania**

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- c) *CIVA should consider the acquisition of the rights to the data entry system developed by the Austrians for the ACMS.*