Annual Report 2008 CIAM F5 Subcommittee

2008 brought a real culture change for competitive electric flying in the gliding (F5B and F5F) and pylon racing (F5D) categories. For the first time, at the request of the subcommittee and several NACs, the energy amount was limited as follows:

F5B: 1750 Watt * min
F5F: 1300 Watt * min
F5D: 1000 Watt * min

The energy amount is monitored using an electronic logger/limiter and the motor is automatically stopped when the maximum has been reached. The objective was to prevent excessive and expensive battery consumption as well as exaggerated battery selection by competitors. Introducing an electronic energy limit about five months prior to the World Championships was a certain risk, as although there was sufficient experience in electronically measuring consumed energy in electric flight models, there was little experience when it came testing these electronics. During the summer, with the help of subcommittee members – many thanks – I put together a proposal for the procedure of limiter testing for the forthcoming World Championships.

The World Championships in Kiev, UKR then brought the day of reckoning. A competitor from Switzerland had built a very simple limiter testing device. Numerous trial runs with this device were carried out before departure. Using the simple method of a water heater, the energy is dissipated and measured with a data logger. Results of the measurements during the World Championships show that our new idea is the correct approach. Competitors in the glider category were allowed to use only two batteries. Even in pylon racing, many competitors managed with only two or three batteries for the entire race. That represents significant progress! As everyone has the same amount of energy available to them, battery quality now has less impact on rankings – whereas model and pilot have all the more. The huge expenditure in terms of cost and time for selecting batteries is thus a thing of the past.

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