AA Working Group minutes and recommendations to Rules Sub Committee

Minutes

The AA Working Group has been notified that a motion will be made in the Plenary to allow the winning team of the last Gordon Bennett to receive an automatic slot for the next Gordon Bennett. It is the opinion of this WG that this would be in conflict with article 5 and should not be accepted.

ARTICLE 5: PARTICIPATION

Only NAC members of the FAI shall be able to participate in the race for the Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett. They may not enter more than three balloons each.

Gordon Bennett Challenge Cup

The AAWG is exploring the feasibility of developing a new event that will be ran in conjunction with the Gordon Bennett. The objective is to increase participation of new pilots by offering the opportunity to participate in the GB without being one of the nominated NAC teams. We are looking into several options including but not limited to allowing mixed nationalities to fly as a team. Possibility limiting the flight time of this event to 24 to 36 hours. Only allowing a couple of teams and only if the organizers have the capabilities and gas to accommodate extra balloons.

Recommendations to Rules Sub-Committee

Motion n.1

If the following motion is adopted the current 2012 version of the GBMER will be changed to
2015 GB MER

Motion n.2

Guidelines to be placed in back of 2015 GB MER
Guidelines for Organizers
intending to host the FAI Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett

Location: When submitting a proposal to host the Gordon Bennett, organizers should consider a location where long distances flights can be achieved based on statistically normal weather conditions for the date of the event. The current generation of 1000 cubic meter gas balloons has the capabilities of flying up to 100 hours and a range of 3000 km, so plenty of flyable area down wind is sensible. The Event Director should review

historical trajectories to ensure the proposed site is suitable for a long distance event.

Timeframe: The Gordon Bennett should be held in the autumn months (preferable weather conditions: no strong thermal activity and not too cold) The launch window shall be as close as possible to a full moon (from launch to landing provided a four day flight window considering also the inflation window, full moon for better assistance for a possible night landing).

Organizers should plan for a three day launch window to insure the best possible chance for a successful inflation. A three day launch window will also give the Event Director the ability to select the best conditions for the flight. A start of the launch window on Friday proved to be more sensible in Europe.

Launch field: The field selected for the balloon inflation and launch should be large enough to avoid balloons bumping into each other in windy inflation conditions. A square of 30 by 30 meters for each balloon is required for a safe inflation and considered adequate room for each team. The inflation should be conducted in calm winds if possible. For inflation, a maximum wind speed of ten knots is possible if no gusts are present but is not recommended.

Sometimes during inflation problems occur with the rigging of the balloon. As an upright balloon is about 18 meters tall it could be hard to reach up to fix a tangled line. The organizer should have means for getting people up on a balloon on site (a long ladder or some other lifting devices)

The launch field will need to be accessible for the large and heavy trucks with the lifting gas that will be needed to fill the balloons. All government bodies that may have jurisdiction for the event should be informed about the type of lifting gas that the event will use. It is suggested that organizers seek permission from these government bodies before the bid presentation.

Organizers should submit the name of the company (companies) providing the lifting gas with guarantees their trucks can be on site for the three day launch window and can start the flow of gas when the Director requires balloons to start inflation. Fueling manifolds and about 300 meters of fueling hoses must be organized in advance and presented in the bid presentation. It is recommended to have enough equipment to fill three balloons at the same time.

Lighting (flood lights) will be needed that will illuminate the entire launch area. Many Gordon Bennett events end up inflating in the evening hours.

A 3 by 3 meter stage is required for launching balloons with lighting and a sound system. There should be signage on field with safety precautions such as "no smoking or open flame" and the launch field should be flagged so spectators cannot mingle/walk among the balloons.

Accommodation and Briefing facilities: Hotels and the pilot briefing center should be close to the inflation field, preferably within in walking distance. Briefing rooms should have room enough space for 80 persons and a loudspeaker system (for voice). Reasonable internet accesses should be at the hotel and at the briefing facilities and the launch field. Food establishments should be close by or catering should be arranged for the pilots, crews and staff.

There should be an opening ceremony and an awards banquet for pilots, crews and staff. Any dress requirements should be given to the pilots already in the entry documents. A good sound system, that has been tested, should be in place for briefings and open and closing ceremonies. National anthems must be tested and be on site for launch and awards. FAI and country flags must be available for all functions.

The command center should be equipped with telephone, fax, wireless internet, printer, copy machines and office supplies. The Command Centre should be close to the hotel (at least for the officials) or within the hotel and should stay there for the whole time of the competition. If a change of location is needed, this information must be forwarded to the ED before the event and to the Teams at least at the General Briefing.

Ballast Sand: There should be 1.5 tons of sand per balloon, grain size from 0.1 to 1 mm (avoiding fine dust). Sand does not need to be completely dry but should be covered on the site to keep it as dry as possible. If freezing temperature is expected to be encountered during the flight (at high levels) organizers should have adequate salt for each team.

Ballast sand handling before inflation: Teams will fill their inflation ballast and flight ballast bags from the sand pile. They will put their 60-90 bags on four palettes (per team!) nearby, for the later pickup and delivery to the actual inflation point. A front end loader (forklift) should be on site for delivery of these palettes of sand bags to the balloons.

After the take-off the inflation ballast (approximately 900 kg per team) will need to be disposed of. Each team should have a container or a big industrial bag to empty their sand bags after the balloons are launched. These containers need to hold one ton of sand. The onsite forklift can then take these containers back to the main sand pile.

A command center should be staffed to follow the balloons and help with ATC and any rescue services that pilots may require. A staffed command center is always great help for crews that have numerous issues while following their pilots.

A meteorologist should be on staff and give complete weather details before pilots launch. Briefing should include all weather during inflation and what the teams may face while in flight such as landing winds along balloon trajectory paths. Trajectories and weather forecast should be printed and given to each team at all briefings.

ATC members of the Directors team are essential to help keep our sport alive. These members help with permissions and with notifying ATCs that balloons may be flying into their airspace. Pilots should be able to call into the Command Centre and talk with these ATC advisors.

A tracking system must be provided by the organizers that are capable of transmitting pilot's position on the internet. That also helps the Air Traffic Coordination as well.

Phone numbers for all crews and pilots should be complied latest at registration and distributed to all teams (confidential, not to be publicized). Frequencies and emergency procedures should be given to each team. A comprehensive page of useful phrases in several languages should be complied. This list will help pilots communicate after the landing (assuming that the pilots don't know the language of the locals).

Teams should be allowed to have as many crew members as needed to help with inflation. Ten crew members are not unreasonable as pilots need as much rest as possible before the flight.

Organizers must accept credit cards or pay pal for entry fees. Bank transfers are fine as an option for pilots but not to be made mandatory.

Organizers web page must be current and updated in a timely manner. The FAI is now reasonable for the Gordon Bennett web site.

Change to rule 4.1

4.1 FLIGHT INSTRUMENTS

Each balloon must carry at least;
Barometric Altimeter

Variometer
Barograph or other altitude recording device
720 channel VHF radio, minimum 5 watt radio plus back up radio
Strobe light with minimum brightness required for aircraft
Beam light for night landing
GPS
Life raft or survival suites shall be carried for any anticipated flight over large bodies of water
Transponder <* specify type: Mode S OR Mode C with 4096 codes OR other *>
ELT each balloon will be equipped with a Digital 406 MHz S-ELT or EPIRB which should contain an integrated analog (121.5 MHz) homing beacon and be registered with Cospas-Sarsat.
Satelite Phone recomended for 2015 madatory in the 2016 Gordon Bennett