



24th WGAC and 12th WAGAC Directors report.

Background.

The organising club at Issoudun had never hosted a Major aerobatic championships before. The small numbers involved during the French national glider aerobatic championships did not prepare us for some of the issues that appeared during the practice days for this event. The operational issues were easily resolved during the practice days. However, some aspects of the working procedures with Judges and Jury only became apparent once the championship had started.

(See recommendations below)

The original bid was for a competition in 2020, the Covid pandemic delayed this for two years into 2022. The delay resulted in the loss of some financial support and the loss of our planned accommodation for the officials as it was not available in 2022.

Entries.

There were 47 entries in total with 45 active pilots (17 WGAC, 28 WAGAC) which was below the expected number of 50+ we had budgeted for. However, we were pleased to have as many as 47 considering the difficulties many teams faced after the last two years of pandemic.

Results.

All results were published in a timely fashion on the CIVA results page. 5 programmes were flown in both categories.

Infrastructure.

All gliders were hangered during the event. A marquee was installed for briefings with seating for all pilots, Jury, Judges and team captains. The Judges had exclusive use of the clubs normal briefing room and the Jury were provided with an office adjacent to the scoring office.

Operations

There were 6 tow planes available plus a dedicated aircraft for wind measurement and one for box marking. During the contest there were 365 competition flights.

Each tow plane was fitted with a Flarm and Oudie navigation unit programmed with the approach and release points, this ensured accurate entry to the box.

We observed some significant differences in the height read out from the aircraft altimeter, the Flarm and the transponder. This was not a serious issue whilst the pilots relied on the HMD system for their box entry height confirmation.

The training period and the last of the advanced programmes were flown without HMD. The last programme obviously required more accurate monitoring of the tow release height than the previous programmes when HMD units were fitted. In preparation a new altimeter was calibrated in an approved chamber for an accurate 1200m level. Each tow plane was then flown with this altimeter to verify any differences in the aircraft altimeter. The differences were also noted from the Flarm transmission allowing us to monitor from the ground in real time the release points and altitude.

Airspace.

A prohibited area was created around the airfield and the Issoudun club circulated the Notam to all aero and gliding operations in the centre of France. There was one infringement of this zone during the championship and the pilot has been reported to the DGAC for their consideration as to what action should be taken. The infringement caused no safety issue or disruption to the operation

Co-operation with CIVA officials.

Due to uncooperative weather the windows of opportunity created some difficulties making timely provision for the CIVA officials with lunch. This were largely resolved but would have been avoided with better anticipation of the timing requirements.

The experience willingness of the Jury and chief Judge to help make the event successful was greatly appreciated. We are particularly grateful to Mady for her insight and positive input whenever we needed it.

Ceremony.

The opening ceremony took place on the airfield followed by a reception in the Top Gun VIP facility sponsored by the FFVP.

A medal ceremony was held at the completion of the Free Known and Free unknown programmes. This was well attended by the competitors and created a media opportunity to further promote our sport. Holding medal ceremonies for individual programmes helped to reduce the time required for the final award and closing ceremony.

Weather

The predominant weather pattern was a slack low pressure. The moist airmass associated with this created cumulus clouds on most days with a base below 1200m until late in the afternoon.

Media

News photos and videos were posted every day on the dedicated facebook page, the FFVP FB page and the organisers page. Videos were created by a dedicated team and published via social media and on You tube. Selected posts were repeated on the CIVA social media outlets.

There is a link on the CIVA results page to a large number of photos of the event.

<https://www.facebook.com/WGAC2022>

HMD

During the championships we had a number of issues with the HMD system very kindly provided by Vladimir Machula and supported by Michal "Cerv" Červený. The system was only available at the championship site from the first championship day. This meant we were not able to hold competition flights on first morning until the system was set up and calibrated. Throughout the championships we experienced a failure rate of the units during each flying session, this significantly slowed the rate at which the programme could proceed. There were numerous issues with incorrect beeping causing frustration and stress for the pilots.

The HMD system was not available for the last programme which caused considerable disruption to the organisers.

It is clear in rule 4.3.1.4 that the HMD and video team are the responsibility of the Chief Judge. The success of a championship is significantly affected by the operation of these systems but the relationship between the HMD team and the organisers is not clear.

(See recommendations below)

Most competing gliders were not fitted with proper mounting brackets to accommodate HMD units. This resulted in the units being fitted with gaffer tape by a member of the organisation and confirmed OK by the pilot or his helper. **This is an unacceptable situation.** There is no rule in the 2020 edition of the rules that require a fitted secure mounting for any ancillary equipment.

(See recommendations below)

Video

The video team was also provided by Vladimir Machula, this appeared to function well but was withdrawn prior to the end of the contest. The FFVP video team personnel were enlisted to help and provided videos for the last programme.

Safety issues.

There were no incidents or accidents.

(see recommendations below)

Recommendations.

Official practice day for all.

*It would be helpful to organisers and officials if there were an "official" **compulsory** practice period prior to the first championship day. This would ensure all officials and supporting personnel had an opportunity to test the local arrangements. At least for a half day with all aspects of the organisation tested.*

It would also be useful to have a formal initial meeting between the Jury, Chief Judge and main organising team members to determine procedures and means of communication.

HMD

In future World championships for gliding aerobatics, it is imperative that CIVA ensure the availability of a more robust system to the organisers. The cost to the organisers of lost time, additional personnel and frustration to the competitors is considerably greater than the commissioning of a reliable functioning HMD system.

All gliders must be required to have a robust mounting point for HMD which must be verified at scrutineering.

Safety

We suggest that during scrutineering each pilot should demonstrate that he understands the procedure for cockpit evacuation in his glider. This is especially important for pilots with rented gliders.

Scrutineering should also ensure go pro and any other equipment mounts are satisfactory and do not impair the pilots vision.

Virtual contest.

The WGAC would make an ideal virtual championship. IGC are having great success promoting gliding by holding a Virtual race event in parallel with the FAI/SGP events. This is something that CIVA might consider as a tool for promoting aerobatics.

Brian Spreckley
Championship director.