WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS 2012 IN MARUGAN

ORGANISER´S REPORT

This document doesn't intend to be exhaustive, the aim is to give an input of the key decisions along the organising process and their effects, in order to help future organisers in their own process. Of course, every organising team and venue is different and potential problems to us cannot arise to others. We hope this helps.

DECIDING TO PRESENT A BID

This is normally an unconscious decision, even if you have experience as an organiser, due to the long time from the bid to the championship. Conditions in both national and international levels can change very quickly. In this case, Mr. Esteban and I took this decision in 2010.

We first decided to put a bid for the classic classes for 2011. We were beaten by Israel, so we moved our bid to 2012 as it was going to be a World Championship again.

Later on, during the first winter of preparations, Nino Muelas and other members of the Spanish paramotor community stepped forward to organise a Paramotor World Championship the same year.

SELECTING THE VENUE

We made a selection process to choose a good venue. First 3 candidates were invited and we took a decision based on the following criteria:

- Existing infrastructure.
- Price of renting the venue.
- Support offered by the local authorities.

Our three candidates were pretty balanced, but the project for the Paramotor Championship considered using Marugán Airfield, which is also the base of the organiser's paramotor school (Nino Muelas). So finally Marugán Airfield was selected.

An important issue was to negotiate the hiring fee of the venue related to competitors. That means that we have paid a fixed fee for each competitor, getting a good balance between incomes and expenses in this particular case.

JOINING BOTH PARAMOTORS AND MICROLIGHTS ONE INMEDIATLY AFTER THE OTHER

This decision of was taken to:

1.- Share many common expenses (wifi, computer stuff and camping, mainly).

2.- Manage a larger project to show to potential sponsors and government.

Both goals were achieved, although unfortunately government support has been very small due to the crisis situation.

However, it was problematic to manage two consecutive championship due to:

1.- It's difficult to find skilled people able to work as a marshal, scorer, or maintenance during a whole month, mainly as volunteers, without monetary compensation. Apart from that, some of those people were competitors in one of the competitions.

2.- That means that finally we needed to form two teams covering 90% of the functions involved in the organisation. Some key people were present all the time, but of course this is extremely tiring and could affect performance.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT WITHIN THE CRISIS

We expected this not to be a problem, but eventually we only got some sponsorship from companies owned by members of the organising team or very close to them, mostly in the form of personal effort, goods, etc, but never money. The most remarkable goods that we got were:

- 3 cars for the organisation provided to Jury, Stewards and Competition Directors.
- Big tents were borrowed from the Army, but the organising team had to mounting and transport them.
- Most computers were owned by members of the organising team.
- A fast A4 colour laser printer.
- Air shows during closing and opening were provided by the Royal Aeroclub of Spain, the FIO (Infante de Orleans Foundation) and the local Microlight club and friends.

Leon University and other small entities sponsored us with 10.000 €.

The regional and local governments have supported the championships with a total of 17.000€, but of course, we are still waiting for that income. Our national government gave no support at all.

The main income has been the entries. Honestly, for the current model of championship and the present economical situation, the amount of our entries is not enough to cover the cost even with most people working for free as volunteers (and this is not very practical as organising teams get burnt very quickly).

A realistic figure is closer to 1.000 € than to 500 €. This may sound scandalous, but reading news about New York Marathon I discovered that the entry fee is 300 $, for an event that happens only during 1 day!

On the other hand, If we want to maintain the current entry fee amount or even decrease it, we should think about what it is included.

THE ORGANISER AGREEMENT

This document is a source of conflict instead of agreement, for several reasons:

1.- The wording is dark, sometimes impossible to understand even for native speakers and lawyers.

2.- It makes the effort of getting media coverage complex, as you never know if FAI is going to execute their infinite and undefined rights. Achieving an agreement with media producers is very difficult when they read the OA.

3.- The insurance that FAI requires is undefined and difficult to get.

We kindly request CIMA and FAI to work on the improvement of this document.

DISCOUNT FOR EARLY PAYMENTS

With the situation described, this discount strategy has been very important as we had enough money to do all kind of necessary payments before the competition.

On the other hand, we lost some income due to the discounts.

An additional problem is managing who had paid or not, as some countries made the early payment mixing both championship and later other payments to add people. Some countries were too lazy to send the nominal entry form. That turned a potentially easy job into a complex one.

Summary:

- 52% paid the cheapest price.
- 40 % paid the medium price.
- 8% paid the highest price.

WEB PAGE PRIOR TO COMPETITION

First we set up a Google Site (free) but eventually we decided to move to another server. This produced some confusing between competitors. A similar problem happened the contact email addresses that were changed. Despite the new web was clear some people didn't realize of this change and it has been complex to attend different addresses. We strongly recommend to be consistent in this aspect even a long time before the event.

WIFI

We tried to improve WIFI coverage based on the experience from previous championships. Basically we installed a net with professional outdoor wifi antennas linked to the switches and router by cable. The investment rose to almost 5.000 €.

But we failed as everybody knows due to different problems:

1.- The network was constantly blocked. New smartphones get a connection (and, consecuently, an IP address) permanently, and with a few hundred phones around the network runs out of available IP adresses.

2.- We trusted in the internet links and our official board was in a server hosted outside the intranet. That was a clear mistake as those connections are not fully reliable.

We tried several methods to fix this situation during both championships, including the delivery of personal passwords to team leaders, but the results were all unsatisfactory.

VIRTUAL OFFICIAL BOARD AND ON LINE ENTRY

The official board, that included an on line entry system, was developed by José Luis Esteban and has shown to be clear, efficient and easy to use. We believe that when a organiser developes a tool that works fine, CIMA should encourage to future organisers to use it and improve it.

This does not only save time and probably money to organisers, but it is also a help to Team Leaders and competitors that get used to that sort of tool year after year.

During the World Paramotor Championship 2009, the competition director, Richard Meredith-Hardy, created a website called the WPC 2009 Intranet that was used as the central source for all available information during the championship. Following that experience, a Virtual Official Board was created for both World Microlight and Paramotor Championships:

http://marugan2012.es/microlight/

http://marugan2012.es/paramotor/

The site was built on top of a content management system named Drupal. It was installed in a virtual server in a hosting company called Gigas.

The site was used before the competition for the registration of participants and during the competition as the virtual official board. The initial idea was to have two hosts, one accessible through the Internet and another one installed at the competition venue. However, it was not possible to set up the mirroring of both hosts without a minimum of effort and expertise in short time and the idea was abandoned. Only the site in the hosting company was used, so the official board depended entirely on the possibility of reaching the Internet from the championship's venue. This was done privately through mobile carrier or through the WiFi access supplied at the venue. The issues with the WiFi access are commented elsewhere in this report.

The website was used for a number of purposes:

The Documents and News section was used to publish official documents and notices before and during the competition.

The Competitors section was used for competitor registration and public access to competitor lists and statistics. In order to allow teams to register their competitors, an account was

created for every team leader, who was responsible for the registration of aircraft and pilots (properly typing their names and uploading their photos).

The Tasks section was used to publish task definitions and details.

The Tracks section contained the flight tracks once they had been analysed using MicroFLAP and converted to Google Earth format including the definition of turn-points or gates and the related events.

The Scores section contains the published scores in all their different versions so that all changes could be reviewed.

The Complaints section allowed identified team leaders to post their complaints and competition directors to reply to them.

The Summary section displayed a comprehensive view of the the status of each task at any given time (pending, provisional, official, final) along with the number of complaints presented and pending. This was extremely helpful for the competition director and the scorers who were able to speed up the task workflow.

The complaint system seemed to invite team leaders to complain, and they did. 93 were received in the Microlight competition and 75 in the Paramotor competition. There was not an equivalent system for placing protests, as long as these must be physically signed. When FAI accepts digital signatures protest might be managed electronically as well.

CAMPSITE

This is one of the most complex items in an organisation, for several reasons:

1.- It consumes a lot of the available surface in the airfield.

2.- It's hard to foresee the correct size as you never know how many people is going to use this service. Not only the people sleeping, but also the team’s headquarters were used during the day.

3.- Cost of electricity is becoming higher every year. Camping electricity consumption t is a lot of money especially if you need a generator.

4.- Control of who is using the camping is almost impossible with the normally available resources. Trying to register all accompanying persons is also a tough job.

The camp-site is very expensive, especially electric power, and it is used by a lot of people who don’t pay. From our point of view, the camp-site is essential, as long as team's headquarters must be somewhere. But providing electric power must be covered somehow independently from the entry fees.

We provided big tents for teams that proved to be useful.

CATERING

It is difficult to establish the proper size for the same reasons that the camp site. It's hard to foresee the amount of people that it's going to use it. Anyway, as it is a service that is paid every time is used, is not as problematic as the camp site.

MARSHALS

Finding enough skilled and volunteer marshals for two consecutive championships has been the most difficult task. We have made a marshal's training course during all our national teams' trainings and during the national championship.

The number of marshals is especially critical regarding the control of take off and landings in 3 simultaneous decks, having to control the quarantine area simultaneously.

MAINTENANCE

This is a hidden job made by less-known people but extremely important, who work on the camp site toilets, showers and electricity, the inflatable pylons, decks, flags, team tents, etc.

Again, getting skilled and volunteer people has been very hard.

OFFICE TEAM

These people were much more important during the entire contest that we planned. First we thought this team could have been smaller during the contest than during the training period, but you really need to maintain their capacity during the whole the championship.

ACCOMODATION FOR THE STAFF

We got to accommodate all the staff in rented houses near the airfield, getting a very good price per night compared to a hotel.

SCORING

The scoring has worked well, mainly thanks to José Luis Esteban, with complex excel files prepared in advance and using Micro Flap to analyse the tracks. FRDL was used to download the tracks from the AMOD loggers.

Some problems arose when we tried to download a few Air Observer loggers, where the download PC was left unusable after installing the software.

We would recommend to CIMA to encourage competitors to use high-capacity, fast and reliable loggers and download systems. At this moment the AMOD model is the only candidate.

SECURITY AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

We did our best within the available budget. If you don´t get this services from local or regional public resources, be ready to pay a lot of money to have an ambulance with paramedics inside.

MONITOR, JURY AND STEWARDS

In general, all FAI officials have been extremely kind and the total cost affordable, thanks to:

1.- Limit some travel expenses to standard European flights expenses.

2.- Accommodate them in rented country houses.

3.- Limit the number of officials to the minimum.

COMPETITION MAPS

For paramotors, the 1:50.000 map printed to 1:70.000 has been a good solution, as this map in Spain is accurate and updated.

For microlights, the map has been 1:200.000, but a big effort was made to get a tailor-made map, adding new layers of information (woods, power lines, antennas, wind farms, tracks, etc) and to update everything, as the original map in this scale is made for touristic purposes only and it is updated for the whole Spanish every 10 years. The result has been good, but expensive, and has taken a lot of effort from the organiser's team, especially from Antonio Marchesi.

VENUE SPACES DISTRIBUTION

Even in a big airfield as Marugan, distributing space has been complex as the camp site consumes a lot of surface. Especially difficult was to set enough 100x100 decks for paramotors, and organisers must pay attention to this despite of the apparent big size of the plot avaliable.

It would be a good idea to resize paramotor decks for different airfield elevations, we have learnt that at 1000m height, decks were very tight for tandem classes.

PRINTING SOLUTIONS

Even with an on-line official board, printing is still a problem as you must provide pilots with last minute task information, especially when this information includes pictures and coloured maps.

We had several small printers and two big machines, and at the end of the second championship they were about to fail.

Again this is an important matter to which organisers must pay attention.

AIRSPACE

Managing the airspace was not a problem in this case, as we got a notam for both championships allowing competitors to fly higher than 300 m above the ground. Our only concern was not to disturb a number of busy glider airfields located alongside the mountain range.

PERMIT TO FLY

Our authorities and competitors managed the permit to fly for foreign microlights very well, via email, including some late requests.

ON-SITE INSURANCE

For microlights, only one team requested this service as their standard insurance didn't match the requirements, but finally they got one from their country that was cheaper than the spanish company's offer. Insurance companies don't seem to like insuring foreign aircrafts and ask for high prices.

For paramotors we made around 10 insurances, solving this with the spanish sport license that includes an insurance.

QUARANTINE

This method was used in both championship and we think that it is a good system to avoid Google flying the night before, so this increases safety and equal conditions. We truly think that the flight plan is an individual job and part of the pilot skills.

In paramotor, quarantine was new for pilots and they were happy with the system because it avoids the use of external help or from the technology.

AIRCRAFT WEIGHT

We already had a set of scales to weight aircraft up to 600 kg, so we only had to calibrate them and the cost was reasonable. But if organisers need to buy a set of scales, this cost can be relevant.

FUELLING

Fuelling prior to fuel limited tasks has been again a complex and time consuming job, but still affordable. One scale failed and the last two fuelings in paramotor were slower with only two scales avaliable.

If you plan to store fuel in cans for the next day, you need to take into account that storing hundreds of liters of fuel in a hangar could not be legal in your country, and you need to set a proper store.

INFLATABLE PYLONS

This has become something essential today, but getting enough pylons and air pumps is not a easy job. This is the kind of material that CIMA could finance in the future.

AUTOMATIC TIMING SYSTEM

We used a professional system used for skiing, and it is shown to be very reliable, despite one single mistake. We didn't get an explanation to this mistake, but fortunately we kept manual timing as backup and the situation could be solved.

Anyway, during the complaint and protest process, some arguments in favour of using a video evidence as a source of timing rose. We honestly think that this is not a good idea, and CIMA should declare that only official timing (manual or automatic) can be used. We can find ourselves retiming watching videos for every pilot as a difference of 1 second can be very significant.

START ORDER IN PRECISION TASKS FOR PARAMOTORS

In this matter we can distinguish between two cases:

- In precision landing tasks we used big numbers manually operated, but pilots weren't able to see them correctly from the height needed to descend at least 60 seconds without engine. This 60 second procedure is difficult to control for marshals and it makes the order management complex.
- In slalom task with pylons the competition number was displayed during 1 minute in a electronic display and this worked much better, as pilots are waiting from a reasonable distance to read the figures.

PILOT SATELLITE TRACKING TRUCKS

Our intention was to have a portable live tracking, similar to a logger, for security and monitoring by amateurs, even we got to make two test units but the budget was not sufficient to provide one to each pilot .

We suggest the possibility of using monitoring systems already available in the market.

Madrid, 7th of november 2012

Antonio Marchesi

On behalf of :

- Club Altair (2012 World Championship Organizer)
- Microlight and Paramotor Commission of the Royal Spanish Aeronautical Federation

WMC - WPC 2012 Budget Summary

Expenses

STAFF	
Food	19800
Accomodation	7200
Maintenance	3300
Travelling expenses	7224
OTHER	
General Maintenance	3300
Bath rooms	3000
Campsite (Electriciy and water)	5000
Alge Timing (crono)	2500
Inflatable pylons	3200
Maps	3000
Scales calibration	380
Small supplies	1500
Office	500
Copier	1000
Opening and closing ceremonies	3000
Airfield renting and catering	16500
Intranet	4500
Flag poles, printing advertising posters and flags	5000
Medals	3360
FAI sanction fee	6322
Electricity	960
Cleaning	1600
Filming and producing images	2000
Press	800
PA system	500
Merchandising	8500
Excess insurance (3 claims for the tornado)	1500
Insurance (Global Marine Spain) Insurance Company: Circles Group	450
TOTAL	**112.596 €**

Income

Entry Fees	83600
Regional support	7000
Local Support	10000
National support	0
Catering	1000
Sponsors	10000
TOTAL	**111.600 €**