

Jury report

2nd FAI World Paramotor Slalom Championships

Event Details:

Title: 2nd World Paramotor Slalom Championships

Date: 27 June – 5 July 2015

Location: Legnica, Poland

Organising NAC: Aeroklub Polski

Organiser: Stowarzyszenie Grupa Falco (POL)

Number of flights:

Number of Tasks:

Number of competitors: 67 pilots and co-pilots

Event Personnel

Event Director: Jaroslaw Balcerewski

Competition Director: Adam Paska

Deputy Chief Director: Marcin Krakowiak

Chief Scorer: Michael Oleszak

Chief Marshal: Tomasz Surma

Steward: Oscar Mistri (ITA)

Monitor: Joel Amiable (FRA)

FAI-Jury

President: Wolfgang Lintl (GER)

Member: Jana Bobkova (CZE)

Member : Richard Shaw (GBR)

Complaints and Protests

Number of Complaints: 0

Number of protests admitted: 0

Number withdrawn: 0

Number upheld: 0

Number rejected: 0

Amount of protest fees retained: 0 EUR

Venue

The competition site was held on an inactive military airfield.

The site was vast and completely adapted to this event: flat, no obstacles, clearly marked with an old concrete runway in the middle, well away from neighbours. The local inhabitants were attracted to the competition due to a city festival with music food stalls and fun fair attractions on the first weekend.

The pilots equipment was stored under tents and guarded night and day by a security service.

Portable toilets were provided. There were enough for the competitors and they were always kept clean.

The pylon placings was done by official geodatisists. The official measuring protocol was issued.

Access to the site was only possible with identity cards, issued at registration.

Medical care was provided in the form of a first aid tent and an ambulance with two members of staff. There was also an accompanying emergency vehicle. Their response time was excellent.

Accommodation

It was not possible to camp overnight on the field, therefore it was proposed to all the participants to buy a package in an excellent hotel (QUBUS Hotel) located 4 km from the field in the middle of the town of Legnica. The price of 200 € is very good.

Services

Catering was provided on the airfield at a cost of €15 per day. The food was adequate and sufficient. Coffee and croissants was provided at the hotel before leaving each morning. At the airfield a breakfast was provided after the morning tasks. An evening meal was provided after the evening tasks. There was an unrestricted quantity of bottled water.

Buses between the hotel and the venue were provided.

The jury were provided with a car, a tent and full access to the event. There was little need for printing services. When things did need printing, files were delivered to the event directors office via memory stick.

A WiFi network was installed to provide connection for the whole area. In past championships this network was always causing problems, but at this competition it worked very well. The service was well accessible from the decks, a few hundred metres away from the main tents and catering area. Even the high number of users were handled without any problem. Wifi was also available in the hotel for free. This worked well.

Competition staff

The competition staff were all Polish. Everyone was professional and kept the competition moving. The event director, Dariusz Kielkowski, was in charge of the logistics for the competition. There was a hired company who issues the identity cards for pilots before the beginning of the event.

Adam Paska was the competition director and he did a great job of running the tasks. His briefings in Polish were translated into English. He was always well prepared and was never visibly in a hurry nor under stress. He also worked to keep briefings short. Briefings for all of the next day's tasks took place during the afternoon prior to the events. Although it is required at Sec.10 the briefings were not recorded, but at this championships it caused no problems. Michael Oleszak was the chief scorer. He and his teams work was done to a very professional manner during the event.

The marshals did a fantastic job and there were enough of them to get the job done. Their work, fairness, and good nature contributed largely to the success of the championship.

Computer systems

For the competition a timing system was used. It was connected to a computer which shows the real-time performance. The system is highly advanced and specialized technicians ensured proper operation. They incorporated lights on the gates to indicate to the pilot that they had entered the task correctly. There was a computer recording system at the gates themselves in case the laptop recording system failed. Within the software was the ability to ignore passage through the gate before the end of the course. Spare gates were on hand in case of damage. The whole system worked flawlessly.

Competition System

Much of the competition was prepared in advance. The design of tasks and operational rules were published on the website and all the participants got a set of more than 200 slalom tasks, from which the actual tasks were chosen from. The jury was asked to do a random selection of these tasks before the opening ceremony. Weather information was not available at the board but was provided as general information via the website.

There were three accidents whilst flying the tasks where the pilots needed medical attention. One PF1 pilot and one PL1 pilot had fractures to their arm.

A safety in slalom competitions meeting was held between the jury members, the competition organisers and the team leaders. A list of safety items was discussed and it is hoped that this will lead to some proposals of safety being presented in time for the next CIMA plenary this year.

On the last day of the competition during the a qualification round (16 pilots) there was an accident when a PF1 pilot collided with a pylon. The pilot was taken to hospital and was later pronounced dead.

After the accident the competition director announced that no more tasks would be flown. The final scores were taken from the results prior to the accident.

The director followed the recommendation given in the FAI guidelines about accidents like this. All flags were set to half-mast.

Participants

67 pilots and copilots in all classes from 14 countries. There were 3 valid classes with 45 participants in PF 1 class (including 3 women, including 2 PF 1 e) from 13 countries, 11 teams in PL 1 from 4 countries, 1 PF2 team and 5 PL 2 from 3 countries. For PPL 2 CIMA bureau decided on request to make an exemption and keep this class valid although the required number of 4 nations was not reached.

Running the tasks

The general briefing was performed on the Saturday before the event opening ceremony and held in a conference room at the hotel. The tasks were briefed twice daily on the airfield to team leaders and competitors. The briefings were translated from Polish as the task director Adam Paska did not speak English. A megaphone was used by the translator but we found the volume to be insufficient. Briefings were perfectly adequate for the pilots to understand the tasks.

Three rules were discussed with the team leaders and voted on. Decisions needed to be agreed unanimously.

1. Due to a storm and leaks in some of the country storage tents some pilots rescue systems got wet and could not be dried out in time. Team leaders voted to make the use of rescue systems discretionary.
2. If a mixed country team could be entered into the racing team events. The proposal was denied. The proposal was changed to allow mixed teams if they were not scored. This new proposal was allowed.
3. If a country could have more than two racing teams. The proposal was denied.

Complaints and Protests

The competition website was also used for placing complaints and responding to them. There were no complaints therefore no protests.

Anti-Doping

On the last day of the competition a random Anti-Doping-Test was carried out. A MD from Global Quality Sports selected one female and three male pilots out of the ten best competitors for the test. The organiser of the WPSC provided the requested chaperons and facilities at the Team hotel. The procedure was carried out with no problems.

Media coverage

This consisted of online real time video streaming system on the competition website. The live streaming was also shown on a large outdoor video screen approx. 4m x 5m. and on flat screen monitors in the buffet marquee. In the time between the tasks the highlights of previous tasks was continually screened on the monitors and on line. The filming was performed by two full time professional camera men plus a drone operator. All camera operations were conducted from a film production vehicle. The media coverage was an excellent example of presenting the sport to the online and on site public and will hopefully be emulated in future competitions.

Ceremonies

The opening ceremony was good and did not go on too long. The local mayor and the president of the Polish aeroclub gave speeches and the championship was formally declared open by the president of the jury. First we were entertained by actors dressed up in WW1 costumes as part of a biplane and triplane dog fight accompanied by real explosions. Secondly was a stunt plane exhibition and this was then followed by a stunt glider. Following this was a reception with ample food and drinks.

During the closing ceremony FAI medals were awarded to the valid classes PF1, PL1, PL2, National and racing teams. The organisers also awarded a medal to the racing team reserves. Other than stated in the rules certificates were given to every participant, not only to the first ten.

The closing ceremony was kept a bit long but dignified in keeping with the occasion. The Grzegorz Kryzanowski Trophy was again presented to Jérémy Penone (FRA). At the closing ceremony the medals were handed over by the mayor of Legnica, the new secretary general of the Polish Aeroclub and FAI Sports Director Markus Haggeneay.

Recommendations

It seems to be an ongoing problem for organisers to follow the corporate design and naming rules for FAI events. The mention of FAI on all documents like task sheets etc has not always been done.

Conclusion

From the Jury point of view the best indicator of a good championship is the fact that the Jury did not have to make any difficult decisions. The organizers, the competitors, the vendors, and the the volunteers can all be very proud of the job they did.

Unfortunately the fatality highlighted the risk present in paramotor slalom competitions. Hopefully lessons will be learned. There is a need to think about safety within the relevant bodies.

This report was agreed by all jury members

Legnica, 4. July 2015

(Wolfgang Lintl)
Jury President