

Development or destruction?

Paramotor sport is fantastic. It is visually attractive and fascinating sport which can offer a lot of fun and challenge to pilots and to spectators as well. But it has to be treated with constant development in mind, otherwise it's reputation can be ruined, interest diminished and participation numbers falling.

After another cancellation of European Paramotor Championships in Estonia by FAI CIMA Bureau in the end of January 2013 we are all facing the fact that most likely a 7 year gap in European Championships history is inevitable.

For detailed information please refer to CIMA Wiki

<http://wiki.fai.org/pages/viewpage.action?pageId=15434427>

but since this content is already moderated (censored) you can get the best picture and latest information from our own page <http://epc2013.eppa.ee/cimahistory>

To avoid such sad scenarios in the future I strongly believe that we all should look back, analyze the reasons and make the best conclusions out of it.

It is possible of course that similar issues are present in other FAI Commissions or in FAI itself as well but this is a view from an Organiser's side, concentrated on CIMA issues and supported by all these frustrated and disappointed paramotor pilots we have been in contact with around the world.

The main message here is that paramotor sport management needs to be improved.

As the development of this sport is responsibility of FAI and CIMA, it is obvious that CIMA needs to be assisted and to be brought much closer to the pilots or this sport will go to miss more support, more competitions, more countries and more pilots.

It is bad of course not to have EPC this year but maybe this is worth it, if everybody will learn from that and more importantly, if everybody will also act accordingly, not just let it go like usual.

I admit that we as an Organisers were late in presenting our Local Regulations to the Plenary. I should have made backup copy of the final draft before my laptop crashed from virus. Mean time I have noticed lately that Task Catalogue for Asian and Oceanian Paramotor Championships 2013 were uploaded same time (8. Nov morning) into the CIMA wiki by president himself with no questions asked?

Despite it all, I am lucky that we've managed to survive tremendous pressure from the Bureau to sign an existing FAI Organising Agreement, which is outdated, confusing, contradictory and irrevocable, since it could put me and our association in really complicated legal situation with harsh financial consequences.

What is wrong with CIMA?

- The whole system is big, heavy, complicated and conservative. Too far from competing pilots and the needs of paramotor sport.
- Many of existing rules and procedures are outdated, unpractical and slow, often against the FAI Statute or General Section, often dangerous and sometimes even illegal.
- There is a serious lack of knowledge and understanding how to harness media and sponsoring the best way into the promotion and development of this sport and into the successful event organising and financing.
- Nominations in the Cima Bureau are often formal, the same with Delegates.
- The CIMA Bureau consists mostly of experts on microlighting disciplines but not paramotor pilots, thus there is too little attention on paramotoring.
- Rules are followed randomly by the CIMA Bureau members as they are privileged to twist any regulations as they like.
- Decisionmakers in the CIMA Bureau are mostly microlighters and there are no single paramotor pilot involved.
- Decisionmaking process is slow, autocratic and unfair.
- Most of the Delegates are not interested in paramotoring, thus too lazy to deal with significant issues and decisions, resulting with abstaining in votings, which strangely sometimes counts as voting „AGAINST“. So, passivity means opposing and thus decisionmaking process is unfair towards active countries/delegates.
- About a half of CIMA delegates are not representing paramotor sport but have still a full voting rights in paramotor decisions.
- As a result, an active paramotor pilots' voices have no value.
- The CIMA Bureau still doesn't accept any critics. If presented, they try to hide it and forget it and not only lately. Please read feedback from WPC 2009 and imagine how much could be improved already. Instead it was not even published in CIMA wiki.
<http://tinyurl.com/wpc09feedback>
- Critical decisions of the CIMA Bureau are too often influenced by personal preferences of the Bureau members.
- The CIMA Bureau's attitude towards an Organisers is untrustful and uncompromised, especially in case where an organiser is willing to improve mistakes from previous practice and needs to show some innovation. It seems like CIMA is expecting an Organisers to be as brainless slaves.

This list is not comprehensive and may seem really negative but in fact there are a lot of positive things in CIMA too and some of the personnel has done a great job in some areas. Obviously everything successful within CIMA should be saved but now it is time to concentrate on improvements.

What CIMA needs?

- Improvements for the better promotion of the sport (media and sponsoring).
- More competitions, more active and independent organisers, more participating countries, more competing pilots.
- Better conditions and more freedom for event organisers with reflection on event quality and satisfaction of competitors.
- Less autocratic management and avoidance of personalised approach.
- Flexibility in decisionmaking.
- Improvement in Internal Regulations, better and fair voting system towards paramotor discipline.
- Implementation of electronic voting and online participation in Plenaries and other meetings.
- Better and more efficient system for proposals' management.
- Simple tasks and integrated tasks.
- Simplified, safe and legal fueling procedures.
- Fair and simple scoring.
- More fun for competing pilots.
- Open mind and compatibility for development.
- Acceptance of inevitable changes.

How to help CIMA?

- Demand your rights, select carefully your representatives, including delegates, and be sure they do their best in representing your interests.
- Be active not only in your trainings and competitions but also in development of this wonderful sport and your future in it.
- Don't let anybody from outside (other disciplines) interfere into decisions about your sport. This is unique sport and to be viable it needs specific attention.

- If you feel any pressure for censoring, find another channel to express your worries. Freedom of speech has never been as effective as today.
- Understand that the future of our sport is in your hands.

If we all try hard, results can be significant and will affect positively each pilot and the future of paramotor sports.

Just IMAGINE:

- competition run by pilots for pilots.
- competition that uses the best ideas from the most successful National Opens around the world.
- effective competition with integrated tasks and perfect weather planning.
- competition with lots of simple but interesting tasks.
- free launching from large decks.
- precision landing tasks when returning from navigation tasks.
- task cancellation system, even after some pilots have launched.
- using InfraRed gates rather than kicking sticks in slalom tasks.
- economy tasks without wasting hours for emptying machines and fuelling.
- all pilots having equal chances to perform in economy tasks and to have fair scoring.
- Team slalom relay tasks that only count towards the Team scores.
- no zero scores whenever possible, even when landing out.
- your voice is counting in CIMA.
- paramotoring as Olympic discipline.

Although this may seem like a dream, I have good news, since we are moving strongly towards the improvement already. The most of this dream is happening this spring, since we are now free of CIMA category 1 obstacles. We are happy to use the opportunity in Estonia to organise alternative and even more interesting event, the same time and same place. Please check our website:

<http://epc2013.eppa.ee>

Everybody is invited.

Registration is open: <http://epc2013.eppa.ee/reg.php>

FB EPC2013: <http://www.facebook.com/events/530585836953654/>

FB EPPA: <http://www.facebook.com/EstPPA>

Life is an adventure!

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