



IGC PRESIDENT REPORT TO THE FAI GENERAL CONFERENCE 2008

The International Gliding Commission held its annual meeting in Rome at the end of February 2008. The Delegates were the guests of the Italian Aero Club and the FIVV and I wish to extend our thanks to our Italian colleagues for their generous hospitality.

Awards

The Plenum was pleased to confer the following awards:

- The Lilienthal Medal to Mr Derek Piggott, United Kingdom
- The Pelagia Majewski Medal to Ms Maksymiliana Czmiel-Paszyc, Poland

Regretfully, no nominations were received for the Pirat Gehriger Diploma prior to the close-off date

Decisions

Significant decisions taken by the IGC Plenum included:

- Bureau members to be elected for 2-year terms starting 2009
- A recommendation to the FAI Navigation and Airspace Commission that common open standards for critical electronic systems be adopted to allow for the development of traffic awareness equipment for light aviation.
- The continuation of the major overhaul of the Sporting Code Section 3, started in 2007, to allow for further editing and review with a target date for approval now of March 2009
- A long-term agreement with an appropriate party be sought to cover internet publishing rights for Sailplane Grand Prix events

Working Groups

The Plenum agreed to form the following Working Groups (WG) to continue our drive to make the sport of gliding more attractive and available:

- GP Business WG – to continue the next phase of development of the GP racing product
- Country Development WG - to foster and organize improved support to new counties developing the gliding sport
- Continental Record WG - to consider how to make access to record flying more available in regional areas.

2008 Gliding Championships

The IGC congratulates the winners of the 2008 Championships and the IGC-OLC World League. We are also grateful to the hosts of these Championships for their tremendous efforts in presenting very successful events.

FAI World Gliding Championships 2008

The first FAI World Gliding Championships, in the new format, were held this year.

Luesse, Germany hosted 130 competitors from 34 countries in August 2008 for the 30th FAI World Gliding Championships in Open, 18 metre and 15 metre classes. The World Champions are:

- Open Class Michael Sommer (Germany)
- 18M Class Olivier Darroze (France)
- 15M György Gulyas (Hungary)

Rieti, Italy hosted 104 competitors from 25 countries in July 2008 for the 30th FAI World Gliding Championships in Standard, Club and World Classes. The World Champions are:

- Standard Class Michale Buchthal (Germany)
- Club Class Matthias Sturm (Germany)
- World Class Laurent Couture (France)

1st South American Continental Gliding Championships

The 1st South American Continental Gliding Championships was held in Club de Planeadores Otto Ballod, Argentina from the 20th of January to the 2nd of February, 2008.

The 84 competitors represented a total of eight countries: Argentina (66), Brazil (8), Chile (4), Colombia (1), Italy (2), Sweden (2), and USA (1)

The Championship was held in two handicapped classes (Standard and Open) to accommodate the variety of aircraft in South America. Six flying days were achieved and the Champions were:

- Open handicapped Mauricio Delfabro (Argentina)
- Standard handicapped Carlos Adrover (Argentina)

These new Championships are this first on the gliding calendar for a long time and the Plenary in March this year charged the IGC Bureau with ensuring that every assistance should be provided to countries wishing to establish new gliding championships.

The IGC-OLC World League 2008

A very successful 3rd season for the IGC-OLC World League for 2008 has recorded entries from 1050 Clubs and gliding organisations – a staggering increase from the 374 clubs that entered the 2007 league. The winners were:

- 1st Aeroclub Langenselbold, Germany
- 2nd Warner Springs Gliders, USA
- 3rd Black Forest Soaring, USA

The winning effort of Aeroclub Langenselbold is all the more remarkable because they are located in the Frankfurt/main area, under the C-class airspace surrounding Frankfurt

Airport. Their persistence and enthusiasm is commendable in the face of these airspace restrictions.

IGC Grand Prix Racing

In December 2007 the 2nd FAI World Sailplane GP Final, 2007 was contested in Omarama, New Zealand. Good weather and excellent camaraderie was overshadowed by a fatal accident involving one of the German pilots. At the time of writing this report the accident investigation by the New Zealand Civil Aviation Authority is not complete.

The results of the 2nd FAI World Sailplane GP Final were:

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|-----------------|-----------|---------------------------|
| 1 st | 30 points | Sebastien Kawa (Poland) |
| 2 nd | 25 points | Uli Schwenk (Germany) |
| 3 rd | 25 points | Ben Flewett (New Zealand) |

Uli Schwenk (Germany) was awarded the “Air Sports Live GP Gliding Trophy” for his work as an ambassador to the sport of gliding and for representing the GP as a racing concept in Europe.

The pilots and their gliders then competed in the inaugural New Zealand Air Games at Wanaka on the 27th and 28th of December.

Future Championships

Bids were received from several countries for the calendar of FAI World Gliding Championships in 2011. The bids awarded were:

- 6th Women’s FAI World Gliding Championships, 2011 to Arboga, Sweden
- 7th Juniors FAI World Gliding Championships, 2011 to Musbach, Germany

In addition, the 15th FAI European Gliding Championships, 2009, Open, 18M and 15M was awarded to Nitra, Slovak Republic.

Future Initiatives and Opportunities

In July 2009 we will all gather in Turin for the 2009 World Air Games. The IGC is looking forward to this opportunity to showcase our sport and we are determined to support our Italian colleagues to make these air games a success.

In 2007 the IGC published it’s first set of Strategic Actions. While progress has been slower in some areas than we would have liked, a review of these Strategic Actions in 2008 showed that we had made significant gains in specific targets such as improving membership in the sport (up by 4% from that planned for the year) and increased the number of pilots on the IGC Ranking list by 12%. We have continued to improve the quality and management of our International Championships and continued to work on improving our communication with our Delegates and the wider gliding community internationally and also on improving our budgeting.

Increasing participation by nations at IGC level continue to be one of our challenges. We have a growth target of five nations a year participating at IGC-level that we are working hard to achieve.

Recruiting new volunteers to take on necessary work in the organisation also remains a challenge. Looking back at our history, so much of the work necessary to maintain the standards that IGC has set, and to improve on those standards, has been undertaken by a

relatively small number of unselfish volunteers. The gliding movement is indebted to these people and we need to find more to spread the workload.

Access to airspace and protection from increasingly sophisticated and expensive technology solutions to airspace management are major threats to our sport and all air sports. The latest threat approaching us all is a world-wide shortage of Air Traffic Controllers which will manifest itself by the closure of airspace to general and sport aviation. The FAI initiative with the new CANS Technical Commission will be invaluable for us all to be able to speak with a united voice at the highest levels. We need to all support CANS in it's work.

Finally, safety continues to be at the forefront of our challenges. Our sport continues to have – what should now probably be preventable injuries. The technology exists to improve the rash-worthiness of our aircraft. The training tools now exist, using computer-based technology, to expose pilots to high-risk situations in a safe environment so that they can learn their personal boundaries and the performance boundaries of their aircraft. We will be having a major focus on safety and training at our next Plenary meeting in March 2009 and it is my desire that we move rapidly to create change in this area.

Finally, it is my honour to acknowledge the excellent support and assistance provided by Secretary General Max Bishop and the staff at the FAI Office and to thank them sincerely for their efforts on behalf of the IGC.



President

International Gliding Commission