



Strategic Planning Group Report *(v2 – revised re: Junior pilot awards)*

The majority of CIVA's championships during 2024 have shown good indications of providing the degree of strategic support for world class aerobatic competitions that we strive to achieve, though not in all areas has everything been to the standard we should expect.

- **WGAC and WAGAC at Oschatz, Germany:** Feedback indicates that the two-category Unlimited and Advanced glider championships at Oschatz in Germany provided a very positive environment for their 55 competitors, though the organisers attempt to add a non-championship contest for other more local glider pilots did not meet its target and was abandoned. We have also heard that the organisers requested a 10€/day fee from teams to compensate for the raised Sanction Fee imposed by CIVA at the 2023 plenary conference; at the time of writing this document (15/10) no reports from other officials at the event have been received so this topic unfortunately remains open for discussion.
- **WAC at Zamosc/Mokre, Poland:** The Unlimited power championships at Zamosc drew a moderate field of 36 pilots that should have provided the organisers with a satisfactory basis for the event. Feedback indicates however that they were slow fielding responses to many pre-event queries, and the mandatory extra hotel cover for officials (notably judges) who arrived a day or so early due to difficulties securing appropriate inbound flight arrangements remains outstanding (as at 15/10) despite strong exchanges with the Chief Judge and the International Jury.
- **EAAC and EIAC at Clinceni, Romania:** With a moderately encouraging 19 competitors from 8 countries the Intermediate section of this well run combined championships can be deemed a moderate success, and in numeric terms the 28 Advanced pilots from 10 nations can perhaps be considered in a similar way. This combination with 47 competitors overall provided the Romanian organising team with a practical basis for their event, and their emerging strength and stability as organisers clearly ensured a high quality result for all present. As the IJ President has reported: This competition is without doubt an example to follow.

Other matters in 2024

Junior pilots

For the first time CIVA has separately identified a new sub-category of Junior competitors for awards during 2024, this producing an interesting outcome at every championship where these pilots, mostly new to CIVA international events, are to be properly congratulated at the –

- World glider Championships in Oschatz: 2 Unlimited and 10 Advanced Junior pilots
- World Championships in Zamosc: Fanny Vaillard
- European Advanced Championships in Clinceni: Margaux Tahar
- European Intermediate Championships in Clinceni: Paulius Židoveinis

The CIVA Survey

The comprehensive CIVA online survey mounted earlier in the year led to over 250 responses, and an extensive spreadsheet with all of the data has been circulated. Attention is clearly growing to reduce the overall duration of championships to fit within a one-week schedule, a break from the long-standing practice that normally spreads the effort over 9-10 days; with pre-event on-site practice this effectively requires competitors to commit three weeks to each event, this aspect thought now to be a significant issue for many whose work and family commitments together create insurmountable problems. Further pressure has been expressed to encourage organisers to target their entry fee with hotel accommodation either as an 'extra' or left to each competitor to organise would help to improve the attractiveness of published entry conditions. Responses in the survey also revealed some pressure to revise the annual plenary conference format to enable a stronger degree of remote participation; while seemingly attractive this raises many practical issues with (typically) Zoom online discussions that would significantly impact the normal two-day schedule of these events, and also does not meet the FAI requirement that restricts voting to members physically present or using FAI certified proxy votes.

Flight videos

Also of strategic value has been the mounting pressure from many sources to release the flight videos we record for judging panel reviews at a much earlier time, either streamed during each flight, immediately following it, or at the conclusion of each programme when any protests have been resolved. I am proposing that CIVA works toward taking over the video duty in order to improve its quality and suitability instead of leaving this as a standard organiser responsibility that sometimes results in poor quality recordings. An online Vimeo resource is also planned to accommodate all such videos so they are openly available for viewing and potential media use.

Other events

Earlier this year CIVA contributed some judging expertise to a venture by Antanas Marciukaitis at the Baltic Airshow for an invitation Freestyle contest, though the late planning process led to a low response. A stronger attempt in 2025 is being discussed, but remains unconfirmed – see my published “FAI Special Aerobatic Events (FSAE) for 2025” report for further details. There was no Sky Grand Prix in 2024 or indeed currently planned for 2025, and the CIVA Open Tour Series has not led to interest or take-up.

Strategy and prospect for 2025

Looking forward to next year we have a European Open Unlimited championship approved in Poland, this time at Kakolew Airfield which is new to us. The organisers will be a different team from the 2024 Zamosc event, and we look forward to a positive management experience. At plenary we will evaluate a bid from France to run the combined 2025 WGAC & WAGAC event at Fayence-Tourrettes airfield, with (as at 15/10) no other bids for this event known. For power Advanced and Intermediate however we know of no intended bids. A message has been circulated to delegates regarding the latter and we can only hope for something to be presented in Athens. The historically low number of Intermediate competitors and the tabled bid to remove it from CIVA category-1 regulations may have negative consequences in this area. We have also been advised that there will be a US bid for WAC-26 to run at Batavia NY (presumably Genesee County Airport); no doubt this will be introduced at plenary by US delegate Mike Gallaway.

Nick Buckenham

Chairman, CIVA Strategic Planning Group