



PRESS RELEASE
For immediate release

Air Sports triumph at The World Games in Poland

Wroclaw, Poland, 23 July 2017 – **Three disciplines of Air Sports saw gold medals awarded at The World Games in Wroclaw, Poland on Sunday evening.**

Ferenc Toth (HUN) won Gold for Glider Aerobatics; Nick Batsch (USA) won Gold for Canopy Piloting; and Wojciech Bogdal (POL) won Gold in Paramotoring.

The medal ceremony, which saw Gold, Silver and Bronze medals awarded across all three air sports, took place at 7pm on Sunday 23 July at Szymanow Airfield in Wroclaw, Poland.

It followed three full days of Air Sports competition at The World Games, a large multi-sport event that takes place every four years. Held this year in Wroclaw, Poland, it featured 60 different sports and disciplines and 3,500 athletes. Air Sports was represented by Glider Aerobatics, Canopy Piloting and Paramotoring.

Glider Aerobatics

In Glider Aerobatics Ferenc Toth (HUN) took Gold following a final spectacular Freestyle competition programme held on Saturday evening.

Flying with only one smoke canister working, he nevertheless pulled off a perfect routine that saw him win the programme. He scored 3,404 points, well ahead of second placed Luca Bertossio (ITA).

The win gave him a substantial lead of more than 400 points overall - a big gain from earlier in the competition when only a handful of points had separated him and Germany's Eugen Schaal.

He said: "Honestly, this was the hardest competition in my career. We did four flights in two days, and they had a very high difficulty coefficient. There was a lot of time pressure. But finally I was very, very happy that I could win."

Toth is a triple FAI World Champion in Glider Aerobatics and is a legend in the sport. A commercial airline captain he has been at the top of his game since the turn of the century. He won his first major competition in 2000, aged 32, before winning his first World Championship gold medal three years later.

Since then his form has barely wavered – he has been on 11 podiums at major international competitions since, including winning the European Championship and World Championship titles three times.

Canopy Piloting

In Canopy Piloting, Nick Batsch (USA) took Gold after leading the competition for most of the three days. After three days of competition and 12 runs, he finished 17 points ahead of second-placed Curtis Bartholomew (USA).

Batsch led the competition from early on, performing well in all the disciplines: Distance, Accuracy and Freestyle. He only dropped points in the fifth round, Accuracy, when he was ninth.

Finishing his final Distance round this afternoon he played it conservatively, going for a safe performance that kept his competition lead secure. "I wasn't risking it on that one," he said after landing.

After the competition was finished he said: "I just won the World Games 2017! I am super excited about this ... It has been my longterm goal to win The World Games. This is our Olympics."

He added, "This is the biggest competition I have competed in and won."

Batsch fought off strong competition from five-time World Champion Curtis Bartholomew (USA), who was struggling with a shoulder injury, and the UAE's Cornelia Mihai, who at one point was leading the competition.

Nick Batsch, 35, is a professional skydiver with numerous competition wins and world records to his name. He is the current World Champion in Canopy Piloting, the second time he has held the title.

Paramotoring

In Paramotoring, Wojciech Bogdal (POL), won the Gold medal. After flying 9 tasks over three days he ended with a convincing win, 8 points ahead of Thailand's Kittiphop Phrommat in second.

The first Paramotoring session of the last day of competition started early, before 8am, to ensure a quick turnaround of pilots. Organisers were keen to stay ahead of stormy weather which was forecast to arrive later.

Last to fly on that task, all Bogdal had to do to finish in first position overall was get round the slalom flying course safely, which he did. He finished fifth in the task - enough to keep him ahead of the pack.

Later, after the medals ceremony in front of a home crowd at the Air Sports airfield in Wroclaw, he said it had been emotional winning in his home country.

"Standing on the podium I felt the same as at the opening ceremony four days ago. I had tears in my eyes."

He added: "I like to fly in front of my home crowd. People were waving, and one even had a flag with my name on it, that was great."

Bogdal, 23, who lives three hours' drive from Wroclaw, said the competition had been "very hard, but we had a lot of tasks."

Bogdal started to fly solo 10 years ago when he was 13 years old. "When I was three years old my father started to fly, so I am from a paramotoring family."

He was joined on the podium by teammate Marcin Bernat (POL), the only two Polish pilots in the Paramotor competition. "We like to fly together and we train together," he said.

Paramotoring is the most weather dependent of the sports, with all the tasks flown low to the ground, and the competition enjoyed near perfect conditions over the three days. Spectator-friendly, it supplied many of the competition's highlights as pilots carved around inflatable pylons and chased footballs across the ground.

The competition featured some of the strongest Paramotor pilots in the world, including a strong team from France and also Thailand. Current World Champion Alex Mateos finished 4th, while 14-year-old Janejira Chui-Noei from Thailand was 12th.

Winners

Canopy Piloting

1. Nick Batsch (USA)
2. Curtis Bartholomew (USA)
3. Cornelia Mihai (UAE)

Glider Aerobatics

1. Ferenc Toth (HUN)
2. Luca Bertossio (ITA)
3. Eugen Schaal (GER)

Paramotoring

1. Wojciech Bogdal (POL)
2. Kittiphop Phrommat (THA)
3. Marcin Bernat (POL)

Where to find out more

The FAI Media Team will be at the World Games in Wroclaw and will be posting news and rights-free photography to these channels

Results

<http://twg2017.airsports.aero/results/canopy-piloting>

Press releases

bit.ly/TWG2017_press_releases

Rights-free photography on Flickr

www.flickr.com/photos/airsports_fai

Social media

www.facebook.com/airsports.fai

www.twitter.com/airsports_fai

www.instagram.com/airsports.fai

The World Games website for air sports events

<http://twg2017.airsports.aero/>

List of athletes participating in the air sports events

<http://twg2017.airsports.aero/event/athletes>

More about The World Games 2017

The World Games

www.theworldgames.org

Logo

<https://cloud.fai.org/index.php/s/9Ktz4OaDnz3sCjz>

Facts and figures about the World Games (pdf)

www.goo.gl/sZCNUf

The World Games on Facebook (IWGA, the International World Games Association)
www.facebook.com/iwga.theworldgames

About FAI

FAI, the World Air Sports Federation (www.fai.org), is the world governing body for air sports and for certifying world aviation and space records. The FAI was founded in 1905 and is a non-governmental and non-profit-making organisation recognised by the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

FAI activities include Aerobatics, Aeromodelling, Airships, Amateur-Built and Experimental Aircraft, Balloons, Drones, Gliding, Hang Gliding, Helicopters, Manpowered Flying, Microlights, Parachuting, Paragliding, Paramotors, Power Flying and all other Aeronautic and Astronautic sporting activities.

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