

## **18<sup>th</sup> FAI European Aerobatic Championships**

Dubnica nad Váhom, Slovakia

August 9<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup>, 2012



# **Report of the Contest Director**

## **Introduction**

Thoughts, ideas and opinions in this report are based on experience from the point of view of the CD and organizing team. Report should be also understood as thanks to all people who participated at EAC 2012. Special thanks are to the pilots. Without pilots, there will be no championships.

EAC 2012 website: <http://www.eac2012.sk>

## **Pre-championships operations**

Bulletin was prepared with care to provide all necessary information in one attempt. Simplification should be as much as possible in favor of competitors. Real experience is showing that minimum of participants (Officials as well) are reading Bulletins carefully or they are not reading Bulletins at all. I was able to produce complex Bulletin, but only thanks to help of friends and demanding experience from previous championships where I served in the contest office or as CD (Contest Director). CIVA as Organizer's supervisor should provide more help during all stages of Championships. In fact, as Organizer I am missing any kind of supports from CIVA despite the fact the all executives are wise and highly experienced.

I would like to point out help provided from Mr. LG Arvidsson and Mr. Nick Buckenham in this stage of preparation. Without their experience and help will be impossible to cover all possible scenarios and will significantly decrease EAC 2012 organization level.

## **Training Flights**

Training flights were possible starting from August 27<sup>th</sup> till August 31<sup>th</sup> with fully marked box. Everyone who wants to fly have opportunity to make more than 3 flights. Training slots were arranged using web based system at <http://acro-online.com> to allow pilots to make booking as easy as possible. System was still in testing version, but it already makes the slots organization easier for Organizer as well as for pilots. System will be finished during beginning of year 2013 and will be provided also to other championships organizers.

No complaints were received regarding training day's organization.

## **Competition days**

In total there were 35 competitors from 12 countries. Two competitors were flying as H/C. All five programs have been flown. In total 23 pilots were participating in final Freestyle programme. Three pilots specifically arrived just for this programme. Due to low number of participants Organizers decision together with Int. Jury to allow only 15 pilots to fly final Freestyle. Those 15 pilots had fuel

and oil paid by the Organizer. Rest of the pilots was allowed to fly only if they will pay for fuel and oil by them self. This already proved the need of removing fuel and oil expenses from entry fee completely for whole championships. There is also no need for mandatory cutting if weather conditions allow everyone to fly. Instead of “days off” we can fly, like in our case.

Weather conditions were ideal to handle all five programs allowed by FAI Sporting Code, Section 6 Part 1.

## Airport

The grass airfield Dubnica is well known place in aviation mainly as a successful Organiser of FAI Championships like Precision Flying, Rally, Gliders Cross-country and Para Buggy. In 2011 airport hosted 7<sup>th</sup> FAI European Advanced Aerobatics Championships and just two weeks before EAC 2012 was successfully finished WGAC&WAGAC2012. The site is well equipped with a good infrastructure, capability and capacity. Manpower is at the excellent level.

Airport infrastructure was capable to accommodate whole competition without any issues. Hangar space was limited, but we were capable to store all participating aircrafts.

Airport restaurant was capable to serve all participants as well as other observers without issues. No complains in this matter has been received.

## Scoring Office

Scoring office was operated by Dana Jakubíková (CZE) accompanied by Lenka Jiraskova (CZE) as hes assistant. They are both well experienced and did outstanding job. There were no issues at all with scoring office operations. All kind of results were published in appropriate time without mistakes. Paperwork for judging line was prepared on time with perfect quality.

We were facing minor problems with ACRO software used. In the evening before first competition day, we have a problem with start list setup. Thanks to availability of Mr. Buckenham as a producer of ACRO software it has been solved before the Opening briefing. Biggest issue was a problem with starting order creation where with every new generated start list was need of manual input of operator accompanied by member of Int. Jury. This problem rose during automatically generated start lists based on results from previous programmes. Short time delay was crucial to publish new starting order for pilots prior to start next programme. Other problem that rose during ACRO operation were inability to produce women’s web results, but this has been again solved with minimum delay by Mr. Buckenham. Just a minimal repair of the program code was needed. We were capable to finally handle it smoothly thanks to good job of Dana and help provided from Int. Jury President Mr. LG Arvidsson.

## Contest Office

Mr. Stefan Pohanka as a CD assistant was taking care about all matters from the position of President of Dubnica Aeroclub. Thanks to a long aviation experience as well as tremendous experience with international championships of Stefan, I was not overloaded and I was able to focus on the top level of championships management as well as on sporting part of the event.

Mrs. Katarina Pohankova was serving as head of the Information center providing registration, support and payment handling. This was also done with tremendous efficiency and she was one of the most important pillar of all championships stages.

## **Championships Operations**

Starter was Mr. Miroslav Porubcan. He, flagmans and ATC were able to hold appropriate tempo and smooth operation of flights during trainings as well as during competition.

Box has been fully marked and daily checked during whole championship under supervision of Mr. Pohanka.

Accommodation for Int. Jury and Judges were arranged in different hotels in Triencianske Teplice. We were facing big issues with accommodation booking for Judges as well as for some pilots. Many of them were not able to inform us about their traveling plans prior to championships. Some of them were not responding to emails and they just arrived without notice.

Same problem as with accommodation we have with their transport from Vienna/Bratislava to airport Dubnica. I have no problem to understand those particular people are very busy and didn't have time to inform us about traveling plans, but everyone should understand that early booking means less costs! I am sure that CIVA is able and should provide help to organizer by gathering this information. CIVA should improve the judge's management system to help organizer and thus also to pilots.

Accommodation procedure as implemented at glider championships is proven and from the point of Organizer works smoothly. Organizer is just helping to competitors with accommodation selection, but the final responsibility lies on them as well as payment for accommodation. I don't see any issues with having group discounts and other advantages even with this type of procedure. By adopting this, we can get rid of difficult situations when every particular person is satisfied with something else. It will also make the Organizer's life easier, championships economic will be much more clear and pilots will be able to select accommodation according to their precise needs.

Upper wind measurement has been done by balloons operated by David and Alena Kaftanovi. Wind measurements were smooth, precise and quick thanks to their experience and professional approach.

## **Official Judging video**

Official judging video was recorded by professional camera by experienced cameraman Mr. Jan Machula who spent in his function whole competition alone. He was shooting video from hand without any tripod, because video quality was much better than when taken using tripod without fluid stabilization head.

There were complaints about his work, because some of the judges and Chief Judge saw some shaking of the video recording. They were probably right, but I don't see any problem with this. Videos were usable and served to purpose well and was according to FAI Sporting Code, Section 6 Part 1, 5.1.6.3.

## Radio Operations

Air to ground operations was without any issues from the point of interferences and other traffic on safety frequency. Ground radio operations were working without issues. I didn't notice any kind of issues with radio equipment we were using. ALINCO DJ-S45 PMR radios were used for ground communication. FAI Sporting Code, Section 6 Part 1, 4.2.3.5. is requiring from the Organizer to use specific manufacturer of radios. It looks like the one who implemented this into the rules were Motorola company dealer. This is absolutely inappropriate and is conflict of interests. Appendix 1 of this report is showing the proof, why this statement is absolutely wrong!

I propose to change this statement in rules with real technical parameters that must be met by used radios. There is also one very important condition. Even if we use powerful PMR radios, it's still not natural that they will operate on every place on planet Earth without problems. Every technology has limitations. See Appendix 1 for explanation.

## Warm-up pilot

Two warm-up plus one spare were arranged for EAC 2012. Suddenly two of them have health problems shortly before championship and only one remaining was Mr. Bernhard Drummer. Thus Organizer provides only one warm-up. Due to low total number of competitors, we were not able to fully pay for another warm-up, because those both canceled warm-ups were from Czech Republic which meant low costs for us.

If CIVA will adopt any kind of warm-up qualification rules, than I would like to recommend to do it very wisely and not like with other rules in the past. We can easily run to enormous costs rise. And this will be again paid by no one else than pilots!

I personally have discussion with some team managers and they told me, that Bernie is not performing well. Good, I can understand that they are keen on having hot judging line, but specific team managers were also keen on to have their own pilot flying as warm-up and report to only their pilots the real conditions in the box. This is not fair. CIVA than should adopt rule to have warm-up pilot from every competing country paid by organizer (means covered by entry fee). Warm-up pilot should be independent.

## Sequences drawing and submission

Free sequence submission, checking, publication and use at Judging line was without any mistakes and all procedures were smooth. All pilots submitted their sequences in advance and all the necessary check was done without time pressure. I am sure this is a crucial to avoid problems that arose in the past.

However, free sequences submission was not done as written in FAI Sporting Code, Section 6 Part 1. Paragraph 4.3.3.5 a) of Section 6 Part 1 is prohibiting any other submission than in MS Visio or OLAN. MS Visio + ARESTI drawing software is quite expensive piece of equipment and OLAN is not up to date. Checking was done only by me. All sequences were checked unified and then passed to Scoring office as one PDF file. This procedure looks like the most effective; however it can be even more automatized using additional software features. Same situation was also in case of figures for unknown programmes and in case of submission of sequence proposals.

## Closing and Awarding Ceremony

All ceremonies have been organized at the airport. Closing and awarding ceremony was done according to FAI Sporting Code, Section 6 Part 1 as well as according to other FAI rules and guidelines.

Mr. Jean-Marc Badan as highest FAI representative proposed championship as open. Mr. Lars-Goran Arvidsson as highest representative of CIVA was closing the contest. Mr. Nick Buckenham as Chief Judge was announcer of results and awards.

There was couple of problems we faced regarding closing ceremony. Numbers of diplomas and set of medals sent by FAI were not according statements in rules; respectively it looks like diplomas and medals have been delivered according to last year rules version. The problem was, that we were missing medals for Unknown Programmes, we received medals for Free Unknown 1 and 2. We also received medals for Programme "Q", which is not stated in rules for awarding.

Problem is also with number of FAI diplomas passed to competitors. Rules are very unclear in this matter. There is no specification if particular diplomas should be FAI or Organizer's diplomas, but competitors were expecting to be award by FAI diplomas. In fact rules are not in compliance with FAI guidelines for awarding.

I decided to pass medals according to what we received. This was against FAI Sporting Code, Section 6 Part 1, 1.3.1.2. CIVA must clarify this problem immediately and allow Organizer to act according rules.

## Conclusion

Organization of EAC 2012 was a big experience for whole Organization team and especially for me. I really enjoyed this competition thanks to all friends who were participating.

Issues that I stated above in this report were mostly caused by inauspiciously patched rule book and missing any kind of guidelines for the Organizer. CIVA in current situation is not helping at all, just restricting what Organizer should not do. I am really missing Contest Organization Handbook which should help to all Organizers to avoid of reinventing the wheel again.

CIVA delegates as well as executive board should understand that rash decisions in rule making process are increasing costs of whole contest. It must be paid by someone. I am sure that it's not an intention to ruin Organizer, so it must be reflected in future amount of the entry fee. I don't agree with payment for any kind of service or other similar technologies. If there is a must for organizer to have it, than CIVA should buy this kind of system in to own property and then provide it free of charge to Organizer as well as to the pilots. This also applies to MS Visio with Aresti drawing software. By forcing Organizer and competitors to use something that must be paid to third party is creating conflict of interests. This is unacceptable. Especially when the service quality is not meeting rules requirements.

There is also question about creditability of all software/hardware used during championships. CIVA did some kind of undocumented validation process. No detailed documentation is publically available about this certification and what is worse, only initial versions were certified. Since initial validation

we have experience with lot of new versions of all systems. On the other hand, this equipment is crucial for aerobatic community and championships. Producers of those HW/SW systems are putting their own resources and time to demanding system development. CIVA must adopt management of those SW/HW tools to help with versioning, testing and user support. Certification as well as systems should be publically available (or just for aerobatic community). CIVA should focus on the problematic from professional point of view or we can run into same problems like with OLAN this year.

Financial worries are the most demanding part for a continental championship organization. Due to the low number of pilots, we were solving budget issues constantly. We had just 35 pilots and 30 officials! CIVA needs to take proper actions to optimize the necessary competition costs contra more demanding future rules in case of warm-up, video equipment and many other things. If not, the number of future possible Continental Championships organizer will diminish rapidly.

We organized minimalistic European Aerobatic Championship, but I still hope that pilots as well as other participants enjoyed competition at Dubnica.

Vladimir Machula  
October 29, 2012  
Brno, Czech Republic

## Appendix 1 – Radio Equipment Comparison

This appendix to the Report of the EAC 2012 Contest Director explains radio equipment options and is comparing two radio models. One mentioned in FAI Sporting Code, Section 6 Part 1, 4.2.3.5. – Motorola GP340 and second used during EAC 2012 for ground operations – Alinco DJ-S45. This document should reveal inappropriateness of mentioned paragraph in current rule book.

### Comparison of the Motorola GP340 and Alinco DJ-S45

Parameter	GP340	DJ-S45
Frequency bands	VHF:136-174 MHz, UHF:300-350 MHz, UHF1:403-470MHz	center band frequency 446 MHz
Maximum output power	VHF:1-5W, UHF and UHF1:1-4W	0,5W
Receiver sensitivity (12 dB SINAD) EIA	0.25uV	0.28uV
Receiver adjacent channel selectivity	60dB @ 12.5kHz channel width	60dB @ 14kHz channel width

Table shows basic important parameter to compare. You can notice that GP340 have much higher possible output power and more usable frequency bands. Both are PMR category radios. Motorola radio is powerful, but this feature can't be used in Czech and Slovak republic as well as through most of EU countries. PMR radios can operate at the frequency band with center at 446MHz if used as handheld. Maximum allowed output power is 0.5W. Those two parameters are removing the benefit of GP340 completely.

There are two options. We can violate law, which is unacceptable, or we can pay for use of licensed frequency band. Second option is also irrelevant, because price for this license is very high and is often provided for longer time periods.

Stated parameters are showing that it's inappropriate to force championship organizer to very expensive deals or to push him to law violation. Even with GP340 use are raising many issues. Renting of these radio stations is quite expensive (currently approx. 2000 EUR per championships). Buying them is also without any questions. They have internal battery designed specifically for this radio model. It's a common knowledge that batteries lifetime is much shorter than lifetime of radio electronics part. Battery is also most expensive component. If owner of this kind of device have no constant battery management or frequent use he is throwing money into the toilet.

Following chart is showing that even with 0.5W power output is possible to make connection possible without bigger issues. Green line is showing power attenuation during electromagnetic wave spreading through normal environment. Red line is showing radio sensitivity. Connection is possible if signal level is below red line. You can see that connection is still possible up to 3700 meters distance between radios. This is valid for good conditions where is no other interference taken in account. In reality we should expect maximum distance around 3000 – 3500 meters.

