

2008 CIAM F6 Working Group report

Most of the 2008 activity has been concentrated on WAG 2009 and selection of WAG competitors in the three WAG classes Artistic Aerobatics (F6A), AeroMusicals (F6B) and Hand Thrown Gliders (F6D).

Selection requirements had been approved by the CIAM Bureau in June, 2007 and immediately circulated through the CIAM Delegates FAI mailing list as well as direct communication. The selection period was to begin in October, 2007 and come to an end by November 30, 2008 as the absolute deadline to select and invite the WAG competitors was the December, 2008 CIAM Bureau meeting.

It appears that, at first, communication has been slow to non-existent between NACs, potential selection contest organisers and potential competitors, to the effect that no selection contest was held during 2007 and very few during the first half of 2008. This had a detrimental effect on the AeroMusicals selection as competitive indoor aerobatics to FAI rules is in practice, exclusively flown in a limited number of European countries. With the 2007-2008 Winter contest season already finished and the 2008-2009 season not yet open, the number of selection contests was minimal. This should improve for WAG 2011 with the introduction of an extended selection period and a better awareness of World Air Games by NACs and competitors.

Early Hand Thrown Gliders (F6D) selection contests have been especially difficult, due to a widespread campaign claiming that WAG was a CIAM instrument to oppose 2009 F3K World Championships. This slowly declined when it became known that F3K World Championships were already scheduled while the number of selection contests registered in various parts of the World increased up to the very end of the selection period.

During the second half of 2008 an increasing number of selection contests was registered when competitors began to realise what WAG are and how they can benefit the air sports at large and aeromodelling in particular. Finally a total of 284 competitors from 17 countries entered selection contests, the last ones taking place on November 15.

Because selection contests were international or local with all results affecting the World ranking, it was found necessary to have some control over the contests. This was achieved at local contests through a requirement for an Official Observer nominated by the NAC and with the same role as the FAI Jury at international contests. In addition, a specially-designed online entry form sent simultaneously the entrant's data to the contest organiser, the NAC and the F6 WG, providing a mean for the WG to have a better control over the actual number of competitors (an important feature when the selection contest was linked to another contest held on the same field and on the same day).

To summarise, the way WAG are perceived and satisfaction with the contest rules improved with time. After lengthy discussions within the Working Group and with a number of major competitors from several continents, minor amendments are proposed to the rules for application already during the WAG 2011 selection period. A review of the contests held during the WAG 2009 selection period and of the World ranking system shows that the ranking formula also needs minor changes in order to reduce the effect of a single win. With no initial indication on the number of contests that would take place the ranking formula, as devised, was adequate, but the number of selection contests (8 F6D selection contests during 2008 in Belgium only !) we can reasonably expect during the next cycle calls for a milder points spread that will allow more competitors with an average placing at their first contest to still be able to make up for the gap with one or two additional contests.

WAG are a special event because they are meant to promote air sports with a better exposition to spectators and Media. With most air sports in spectators view during any single WAG day, another competition is created, between the individual air sports themselves. The sport that will best capture Media and spectators' interest will also benefit the most. A review of the various events scheduled during WAG 2009 shows that the CIAM competitions are in a favourable position in this respect.

Guy Revel
Chairman, November 28, 2008

