

World Air Games (WAG) in Dubai Air Navigation Race Championship (ANR)

Dubai / United Arab Emirates (UAE)

December 1st – 13th December, 2015

Int. Chief Judges Report – Heini Schawalder

General Comments

The Competition director and myself arrived in Dubai on November 27. Our task was to set up the overall organization in Dubai, and to check out the event location, the Skydive Dubai desert airfield located 60KM outside Dubai.

Official training days were set for December 2 and 3. The actual ANR competition started on December 4.

Regarding the organizational challenges and problems I refer to the separate report of the WAG Liaison Report presented at the FAI Cyprus Meeting November 2016.

Participants

The WAG Directors Committee had decided already in November 2014 to limit participation to max. 16 teams from 16 different countries. GAC had defined a clear selection process, which would identify the 16 best teams in ANR. Unfortunately, Italy withdrew its enrollment on short notice.

After Championship start we had to learn that UAE was not starting without any further explanation. Therefore the ANR Championships started with 14 teams from all parts of the world.

Skydive Desert Airfield

The runway of the airfield in the middle of the desert measured ca. 18mtrs by 1'800mtrs, no safety zones or taxiways were implemented. The ANR C172's had to share the small apron with 2 Twin Otters used for parachute jumpers in concurrent operations.

ANR shared the very adequate and generous facilities with the jumpers' offices and flight preparation space. During competition there were air-conditioned briefing tents including catering at our disposal.

Cooperation with Skydive management was excellent. ANR was given first priority for starts and landings to keep our tight competition schedule. This was of utmost importance as we were sharing flight operations with Skydive parachute jumper school flights and other WAG disciplines like WAG helicopters, WAG Microlights, WAG Paragliders, WAG Gliders, among others.

Air Navigation Race - Competition Routes

Our Route Planner managed to create WAG worthy, challenging navigating routes in a difficult geographical area with a good mix of identifiable and blind turning points. Before every flight teams received a complete package, which included the Competition Area Map with 1:200'00 scale, details for starting and finishing points, a flight task with arrival/departure routes, alternate and emergency procedures, as well as an ICAO map with scale 1:500'000.

ANR routes were challenging at a World Championships level. Area maps, which Maurice Ducret was able to arrange from Russia, were excellent and contained up to date area details.

Day 1 and 2 were reserved for Qualification rounds. Maurice Ducret and his team did an excellent job, showing tough negotiation skills to ensure that all flights could be conducted on time. This led sometimes to direct confrontation with the gliders. According to the competition rules the best teams were evaluated for the round of the best 8 after day 2. The other 6 teams went into the relegation round.

Day 3 saw the quarter finals and the relegation round. The 4 best teams qualified for the semi-finals; the best teams from the relegation round were identified as well. With this mode we were able to have every team have at least 5 flights, 2 in training, 3 in competition.

On Day 4 we had to stop competition due to a sandstorm. On Day 5 the accuracy landing competition was held, as visibility was still reduced and sandstorms still lingered in the area.

Semi-finals and final were flown on Day 6. For both races spectators could gather in front of large screens to follow the unfolding, exciting ANR action live and in real-time.

It was remarkable that during the full length of the Air Navigation Race competition not a single complaint or protest was filed by any of the competitors. On the opposite, the organizing teams received many acclaims and congratulations from all participants. The set out ANR rule system has clearly proven itself in the toughest of environments.

Accuracy Landing

Due to the bad weather (sandstorms) the Accuracy Landing competition was pulled forward to Day 5. The target landing area was clearly marked and painted in yellow color on the runway, using the German Landing System. Cross-winds were 8-10 knots on the surface. I had 5 Judges belonging to the ANR Crew distributed along the runway. Skydive Dubai supported us with 2 more of their employees. 2 other ANR Crew Members were staying in the offices. The 12 Local/National Judges, which had been requested again and again since 12 months never showed up. Landings were coordinated by the airfield controller and were flown safely and efficiently. After the contest there were 2 questions, but no complaints or protests were filed.

ANR Scoring Software

The ANR Scoring Software worked absolutely fine and without any faults. After the download from the Dataloggers the exact flown route could be evaluated, assessed, analyzed and printed, listing the exact penalties per team ready for review. Exactly same was achieved with the Accuracy Landing results, which were available 15 minutes after the competition had been completed.

ANR Information

For the first time an ANR Information Webpage was created to keep all teams, judges and supporters informed of the daily events; general information and decisions around the competition were updated on a daily basis. The internet as way of communication worked for 100% perfectly well and was highly appreciated by all parties involved, teams, judges, officials and generally interested people alike.

Accommodation, Meals and Transportation

The ANR Rules Framework has been proven very successful.

Conclusion

The first participation of Air Navigation Race at the World Air Games has clearly shown, that the overall concept of ANR works extremely well, both from an organization, as from a participants' point of view.

Even an event of the size of the ANR/WAG can be managed with a team of 8-10 people. The overall racing concept with training, position race and direct one-on-one elimination heat, was extremely well received by all participants, creating an exciting race atmosphere. Medalists were only set at the very last moment of competition, while all participants had their chances to enter into the final races at multiple occasions.

Not only the winners, but all participants gave excellent feedback to the Organizing Committee on the overall ANR racing concept.

My congratulations and very special thanks go to Maurice Ducret as Competition Director and his ANR Team as they were:

ANR International Jury	Cabanero Pedro
ANR Accuracy Landing Scoring	Jean Birgen
ANR Assistant	Jesus Mas
ANR Scorer	Egli Lorenz
Ground Operation	Kleuser Andreas
Ground Operation	Holzer Sabine
Steward	Bosse Rainer
Electronic Landing System	Pietsch Hans
Electronic Landing System	Kirchner Thomas

Last, but not least, let's don't forget our Route Planner John Ducret, who, from his home in Switzerland, had meticulously been working out this type of events to perfection, as always.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'H. Schawalder', written in a cursive style.

Heinrich Schawalder
International Chief Judge
ANR – WAG Dubai 2015