



Chronicle of FAI Continental Gliding Championships of Cat 1 events

Author – Gisela Weinreich

IGC Trophy Mangement

Editor – Peter Purdie

Rules and retrospective record of venues, classes, year and Champions,

Awards

The host of an FAI European Gliding Championship shall organise trophies for the winner of each class to be kept by the winners.

The FAI will award a gold, silver and bronze medal in each Championship class to the competitors placed respectively first, second and third. Up to 10 FAI Diplomas will be awarded to the first third of the competitors in each class. The Organisers may award local prizes. If they do, prizes must be awarded to all the Diploma awardees.

The FAI will award gold, silver and bronze medals to the captains of the first, second and third placed teams in the Team Cup Final. The team that wins the Team Cup shall collectively bear the title of Team Champion. (See FAI SC3 Annex A 2022 Edition).

History

The FAI / Gliding decided in the early 80's to establish European Gliding Championships, in addition to the World Gliding Championships, on a rotating basis. Every 2 years a World Championship would be held in the year between the European Championships. FAI EGCs were not entirely new to the FAI gliding calendar.

FAI Women's European Gliding Championships.

These were established in 1979. The first WEGC was held in Dunaujvaros, Hungary, in 1979 and was held regularly every 2 years until the IGC decided in 2001 to transform the Women's European Gliding Championships into FAI Women's World Gliding Championships. Since then there have been no further Women's European Gliding Championships.

FAI European Motor Gliding Championships

The FAI European Motor Gliding Championships are also history. The first European Championships for motor gliders were held in 1978 at Burg Feuerstein airfield, Germany, in 3 classes: Standard, Open and Two Seater with a total of 35 participants from 5 nations.

In 1990, after six European Motor Gliding Championships, the IGC decided to transform the Europeans into a FAI World Championship for motor gliders. The first FAI World Championship for motor gliders took place in Issoudun, France, in 1990. However, this was the only world championship, no more WMGCs followed. In 1992, the most recent European Motor Gliding championship took place in Rieti, Italy. This was the 7th European Motor Glider Championship and was organised in the Open class and in the mixed class 15 m & 18 m class. The competition was poorly attended with 26 participants from 7 nations (Aerokurier 1992).

The IGC closely followed the development regarding the installation of propulsion systems in gliders. More and more glider pilots wanted to have self-launching or sustaining power system. Piero Morelli, Italy, proposed a schedule for motor gliders to be integrated into the pure gliding classes. (IGC Plenary Minutes 1996 - Marly-le-Roi, France) as follows:

- An international championship for the integrated classes would be held in Germany 1998
- European and World Championships from 2000 onwards:
FAI Sporting Code, Section 3 – Gliding 1999 Edition AL8 stated:
7.6.2 Motor gliders are integrated into the other championship classes (except the one-design World Class) under championship rules for motor gliders (see SC3D Annex A)



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FAI European Gliding Championships Club Class

These were established 1979 for the new competition class - Club Class: The first one was held in Örebro, Sweden. The European Championships in this class were held until 1998. The EGC Club Class was discontinued and replaced by the FAI World Gliding Championships. However, in 2005 the Club Class was included in the FAI continental competitions, at the 13th EGCs in Nitra, Slovakia.

FAI Junior European Gliding Championships

In 1991 the first Junior European Gliding Championships took place in Falköping, Sweden, and were held every two years until 1997 in both Club Class and Standard Class. These competitions were replaced by the FAI Junior World Gliding Championships in 1999. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the calendar was revised to move the World and European Championships by one year and to reintroduce the European Junior Gliding Championships as a stand-alone competition in 2021. The FAI Junior European Gliding Championships was to continue to be held every two years, as would the FAI Junior World Gliding Championships. The FAI would award gold, silver and bronze medals in each EGC Championship class to the competitors placed respectively first, second and third. Up to 10 FAI Diplomas would be awarded to the first third of the competitors in each class. The FAI would award gold, silver and bronze medals to the captains of the first, second and third placed teams in the EGC Team Cup Final. The team that won the Team Cup would collectively bear the title of Team Champion.

The FAI European Gliding Championships from 1982

In 1982 in addition to the WGCs, the first FAI EGCs in different competition classes were held in Rieti, Italy, for the Open Class, the 15m Class and the Standard Class. "The international gliding community enthusiastically supported this development", (ref. Sailplane Gliding, October 1982.) A total of 83 pilots from 19 countries arrived in Rieti. The well organised European Gliding Championships, with 8 challenging days of competition, proved to be a great success and was well received and reported by all the well-known aviation magazines in Europe. On the podium the winners received a trophy donated by the organisers. FAI gold, silver and bronze medals and diplomas were also presented. There was no Team Cup competition at Rieti 1982.

In 2002 the 18m class was added and in 2005 the European Gliding Championships were extended to include the Club Class. For reasons of flight safety, two venues were sought for the 13th European Gliding Championships. Nitra, Slovakia, applied to host the Club Class, the Standard Class and the 18m class while, in the same year, the 15m class and the Open class were held in Räyskälä, Finland. Since then, two European Gliding Championships have been held in the same year at different venues. **In 2007** the European Championships were extended to include the World Class and the 20m Multi seat Class. **In 2014** the World Class was discontinued as an FAI gliding competition class.

In 2019, the rotation of World Gliding Championships and European Gliding Championships that has been in place since the first European Gliding Championships in 1982 came to an end. **From 2022**, there would no longer be two European Gliding Championships in different classes in the same championship calendar year, but one EGC per year, with the classes alternating.

The 21st EGC was held in 2022 at Pociunai, Lithuania, for the Club, Std. and 15m classes and in 2023 at Leszno, Poland, for the Open class, 18m and 20m Multi-seat classes. The FAI World Gliding Championships or the FAI Continental Gliding Championships in the respective classes are held every 2 years.



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FAI Pan American Gliding Championships

In 2015 the FAI IGC established the first FAI Pan American Gliding Championships. On behalf of the FAI the champions of each class would be awarded the Gold, Silver or Bronze Medal and Diplomas. Trophies would be donated and presented by the PAGC's Organiser. The winner of the Team Cup competition would receive the FAI Gold Medal, which would be presented to the Team Captain of the winning Team.

The event took place at McMinn, Tennessee (United States) in two classes with 26 participants from Argentina, Brazil, US and Canada. It was proudly announced: "The 1st Pan American Gliding Championship is now a part of gliding history"!

The 4th PAGCs championship in 2021 had to be cancelled. In April 2023 the Director of the 2023 4th PAGCs Championship at Hutchinson (USA) announced the postponement of the event to 2024. 4th PAGCs at Hutchinson / USA in 2024 had to be cancelled due to insufficient entries.