

# 20<sup>th</sup> FAI World Precision Flying Championships 2011



Brits, South Africa  
16-30 October 2011



## Championship Director's Report

### Introduction

I would like to thank the FAI for the opportunity to host the 20<sup>th</sup> FAI World Precision Flying Championships in South Africa. It was an honour to be appointed Championship Director; however I would like to emphasize that the organization of a competition of this magnitude could not be completed without the assistance of many people. All the people and organizations quoted below gave freely of their time and resources without the expectation of reward. I would therefore like to acknowledge their contribution in this report.

- Brits Flying Club: Deon van den Berg
- Route Planning: Frank and Cally Eckard
- Financial: Debby Vliegenthart
- Scoring: Mark Regensburg and Stephen Davies
- Aircraft: Barry de Groot and Piet Smit
- Air Traffic Control: ATNS
- Weather: South African Weather Services

### Overview

Based on the feedback I have received personally and from other people, the competition was successfully organized. Financially, it was planned with a "zero budget"; that is the competition had to fund itself as there was no sponsorship forthcoming. This made it an expensive competition, doubly so for those visiting South Africa as traveling costs had to be added to the entry fee.

Three weeks before official practice started, we received an offer of sponsorship from Brand South Africa; that offer came with the requirement that we produce a world class Television program of the event. Producing that program and managing the expectations of the sponsor cost 90% of the sponsorship. The remaining amount was used for the benefit of the competitors by organizing an excursion on the final Saturday.

### Unofficial Practice

Unofficial Practice was not uneventful. We experienced multiple problems with the aircraft that were rented for the event. One aircraft was rendered unserviceable due to the exhaust valves on



**South African Power Flying Association**

Contact Antony Russell (tonyr@wpfc2011.co.za) +27 (83) 264-0107

two cylinders sticking, another aircraft experienced serious electrical problems that prevented it from being used and a third aircraft was taxied into a ground marker also rendering it unserviceable. Due to the appropriate planning, there were enough spare places in aircraft to allow every competitor to fly, although some competitors had to share aircraft with someone from another national team.

The only other noteworthy incident during unofficial practice was one pilot becoming lost. His following the briefed procedures and Air Traffic control's handling of the situation allowed this to be resolved safely.

## **Official Practice**

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Official Practice was uneventful other than minor aircraft snags.

## **The Competition**

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The competition was completed without any major problems. My main concern was the forecast of inclement weather for Thursday and Friday.

Consequently the landing competition was started early to ensure that we were able to complete it before the weather started to deteriorate. During landing 4, the wind started to strengthen and become unpredictable; however it was within limits for all competitors.

It is interesting to note that once the landings were complete, the weather did deteriorate and an unusually large thunderstorm passed over the airfield with winds in excess of 40 kts.

## **Complaints**

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There were a few complaints received after navigation. These complaints form part of the report from the Jury. All but one was satisfactorily dealt with.

The unresolved complaint came on day two after the wind forecast by the senior aviation meteorologist (020/12) was used for navigation. Unfortunately that wind forecast was completely incorrect; in fact reports from the competitors indicated that the wind was more like 200/12 at times. This naturally caused problem for the two southbound legs as some aircraft, at the prevailing density altitude of 7500', were not powerful enough to fly the airspeed required. The last leg of that navigation test, which was southbound, contained three secret timing points in addition to the turn point and finish point. After some discussion with Chief International Judge, Paul Szameteit, we decided that the fairest action was to cancel the timing on the last two secrets of the leg and the finish point. This was accepted by all teams except for one competitor from Poland who filed a protest.

## **Protests**

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There was one protest from Navigation and five protests from Landing.



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The protest from Navigation was upheld by the Jury after some very detailed analysis of the track, timing and speeds of the protesting competitor. The jury's decision was to cancel the timing at the first secret check point on the final leg of the second navigation. This meant that the timing for that leg was completely cancelled.

One protest from Landing was withdrawn and the other four protests were rejected.

## **Organizational issues**

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I feel that the major organizational issues were with the aircraft and accommodation.

Not enough consideration was given to the difference between a Cessna 150 and a Cessna 152. There are very few Cessna 152 aircraft available in South Africa and consequently most of the aircraft available were Cessna 150. It was impossible to allocate aircraft prior to the competition as we only knew what aircraft we had when they arrived during the first few days of unofficial practice. In hindsight, it would have been better to communicate with the team managers that we would not be able to guarantee specifically a Cessna 152 for the competition.

One aspect of the accommodation has left a bad taste in people's mouths. We rented the accommodation according to a contract finalised in October 2010. The facilities are traditionally rented as timeshare on a Friday-to-Friday basis and therefore the rate was designed to cover vacant days. The operators of the accommodation made the error of leaving an advert in the units that exposed the "normal" weekly rate. This has left our visitors feeling "overcharged".

## **Financials**

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As mentioned earlier, the competition was run without the expectation of sponsorship. The moneys left over from the sponsorship we received was used to benefit the competitors (small gifts, enhancing the opening and closing ceremonies, providing an excursion on the closing day) and so the competition was essentially run from the entry fees. As it stands at the moment, there is a deficit of approximately R 20,000.

## **Conclusion**

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I believe that South Africa was able to provide a successful competition that was enjoyed by all who attended and was of a sufficient standard to be a World Championship. I think the few problems experienced were outweighed by the success of the event.

Once again, it has been a pleasure serving the FAI as championship director.

Yours faithfully

Antony Russell