

<i>SUBJECT:</i>	ISC World Games (After action Report)	<i>AGENDA #</i>	9.1
<i>AUTHOR:</i>	Marylou Laughlin, World Games Meet Director and ISC World Games Liaison		
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ISC WG Liaison After Action Report 2022 World Games Birmingham. Alabama

Very little knowledge can be gained from the World Games in Birmingham, Alabama for any future World Game event. The World Games are truly a one off with extremely unique situations based on the host country, the actual venue and the organizational structure, because of this not much is actually repeated in the different World Games. I will use broad brush strokes to give an overview and I will focus on what I believe will be relevant for future World Games.

World Games are for the spectator value and are actually a demo in competition format. The athletes worked very well within that concept. They put on a spectacular show for the crowd. They went into the spectator area on the other side of the pond and shook hands and shared information. They gave huge waves to the crowd as the helicopter took off through the opening in the trees. The buzz around the World Games was that Canopy Piloting was a favorite and had sold out tickets on most days.

In February the FAI funded an additional site visit to include myself as the Meet Director, Ian Bobo and Greg Windmiller. At the last-minute Greg was not able to join us in person. Greg and Jasper were able to join us on WhatsApp. We were tasked with evaluating the viability of Barber Motorsports Park as the CP venue. The venue is surrounded by extremely tall trees with only a 50-meter opening at one end. (The report is attached.) The ISC and FAI decided to move forward after implementing most of the proposals in our report.

In March I was asked to fill an additional role as the USA World Games Liaison and later the ISC World Games Liaison. The first key person to have on the team so the event could successfully move forward was Larry Hill. He immediately and without hesitation said “yes”! His only stipulation was that OmniSkore! CP be used. Research was done and the ISC Bureau wrote an IBD to approve OmniSkore! CP as the scoring system that would be used for the World Games. Larry and Skydive Arizona supplied what was fondly referred to as “a competition in a trailer”. Larry was a wonderful partner to work with. We shared a common vision and goal, the success of the CP World Games. We had only 4 months and after many long hours and challenging situations together we along with an incredible team achieved our goal, the success of the 2022 CP World Games in Birmingham, Alabama.

The members that joined our team filled multiple rolls.

1st Pre- CTD and competitor – Greg Windmiller

2nd Pre-CTD, Safety Manager and Advisor and Wind Evaluator – Albert Berchtold

World Games CTD – Shawn Hill

Heliport Manager and Pilot Coordinator – Larry Hill

Work with FAA and FBI, Hazard Overview and On Site -Safety Advisor – Michael Katrup Lasson

Hazard Overview - Rasmus Thorsted

2nd Safety Officer, 1st Ground to Air Coordinator, Wind Evaluator and Advisor – Ian Bobo

2nd Ground to Air Coordinator and Pond Crew and Pre-work on video and scoreboard designs – Jim Rees

Pond Crew and Quick Response Force –V Prib, Sean Haysom

Manifestor – George Hargis

Helicopter Supplier and Pilot – Billy Richards

OmniSkore! CP and Pre-work on scoreboard designs – Ted Wagner

Pre-work on video and scoreboard designs and On Site, video and camera set up – Andrew de Toit

Pre-work on video and scoreboard designs and On Site, video and camera set up –Benjamin Ninnemann

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Greg Pyzalka, the World Games Competition Manager from the FAI, was a major support volunteering his spare time for the World Games. He was there for the many difficult issues that rose to the surface. Just one example was when the BOC removed our venue's jumbo screen because of the expense and Greg held firm. He went to the IWAG and won; our screen was returned. He assisted the athletes, judges and both organizational teams from both FAI events (Drones and Canopy Piloting), before the event. Greg traveled to Birmingham to continue his support and used his previous experience to solve problems.

An integral part of our success were our brothers in air sports, the Drone team lead by David Roberts and Major Kyle Sanders. Kyle's knowledge and experience was invaluable with the FAA and FBI. The support and assistance was immeasurable, and their friendship has carried forward after departing Birmingham. David and Kyle were involved with the World Games before our team was brought in, so they knew all the players as well as their contact info. David and Kyle were there at the other end of the phone to help with the current critical situation.

The Birmingham Organizing Committee (BOC) were wonderful individuals, but they were totally in over their head with organization and set up of a competition at this level and scope. Unlike Europe, where there is a Ministry of Sports, the BOC had to secure sponsors for all of the funding of the World Games itself. It was difficult to get answers to questions and solutions to issues. Finally, 2 months before the event we started to have biweekly Zoom meetings. For the last month it increased to weekly Zoom meetings with the Drones, CP, Greg Pyzalka, and the BOC and occasionally the IWGA. We would learn about updates and it was a time for everyone to ask questions in both directions and try to solve problems.

We did not actually have a signed contract with the BOC because of the difficulties with Swiss Timing until a week before the World Games. In fact, we never actually signed a contract with SwissTiming only with the BOC. However, Ted Wagner, of OmniSkore! CP did sign a contract with SwissTiming. In the contract he was only allowed to give results directly to SwissTiming and they were solely responsible for sending the results out to the world.

The winds above the trees were a safety concern and we did not want to subject competitors to questionable conditions. We decided to have 4 wind evaluators, Ian Bobo, Albert Berchtold, V-Prib and Sean Haysom jump at the beginning of each session to check the wind conditions before sending competitors. The BOC agreed to increase our allotted passports by 3 to include 3 of the 4 wind evaluators.

A bid was presented to BOC for a 4-place helicopter and it was approved. The original plan was for a six-place national guard helicopter. In the US it is not possible for civilians to jump out of military aircraft. The 4-place helicopter became a major issue with the IWGA. In the end it was accepted, and the helicopter pilot, Billy Richards, flew a load every seven minutes. The number of loads flown were physically difficult for one pilot. It would have been a good idea to have an additional pilot and the two pilots could have rotated.

It was discovered that not everyone on our team was a team player. On a number of issues, one individual attempted to circumvent the authority of the FAI and ISC by approaching the IWGA directly. This made a difficult situation even more difficult.

Michael Katrup Lassen and Rasmus Thorsted with the Air Sports Group worked with the different groups to complete an in depth 44-page Emergency Response Plan document. Michel was key with the multiple Zoom meetings with the FAA, FBI and the CIA to discuss airspace, and safety issues. He was also key in securing the airspace with a 1.5-mile TFR over Barber Motorsports Park and the 7711 approval since no permission had previously been requested. He also volunteered his time to come to Birmingham to assist and advise in following the document for the success and safety of the competition. Both Michael and Rasmus were a major support for me before the competition and Michael during the competition.

Michael Knight, the USPA Director of Government Relations assisted with his contacts with the FAA. He joined in on all of the Zoom meetings with the FAA, CIA and FBI. The FAA requires everyone to have a pro rating for the World Games because of the size of the landing area at Barber Motorsports Park. Greg Windmiller brought it to the attention of the USPA Board that it was

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necessary to find a viable solution for all of the foreign athletes that do not have US pro ratings so that they could compete. The solution was to include in the Athlete Packages a document that each NAC had to sign stating that their athlete had the equivalent to the US pro rating, and the athlete had to sign additional documents. Michael at USPA wrote all of the NAC and athlete documents in the Athlete Package.

A score board and presentation of scores in each of the athlete's profiles was designed by Ted Wagner. Andrew de Toit, Benjamin Ninnemann and Jim Rees volunteered many hours of their time and multiple Zoom call to design the video presentation that threaded all the images from the cameras together for each jump. Some of the athletes wore Go Pros to capture their approach to the course and their run. A World Games volunteer downloaded the Go Pro video to be included as the lead in for the video. All of this work was never seen by the spectators. The difficulty projecting the images and videos appears to rest with the operator of the jumbo screen and its capability.

The World Games had the highest level of security in the United States, which Alabama had never experienced before. Everyone received their badges which allowed them to access the appropriate areas. Our venue had sheriffs and FBI agents in addition to SWAT teams on the ready. The SWAT teams actually assisted in looking for 2 cutaways that where in trees deep in the Alabama swamps. There were surveillance cameras everywhere except the bathrooms and security details were monitoring all calls and computers in our venue. Our athletes were fed pre-packaged food for lunch every day to keep them safe from possible terrorist attacks. Luckily all of this security was not needed.

The pond construction hit a layer of rock about halfway down to the required depth causing the pond to have to be built partially above ground. This required creative design solutions to allow for a safe exit from the pond to the land portion of the course. The 2 construction engineers, Albert Berchtold and I worked together to find solutions. Additional truckloads of pea gravel and dirt were brought in to build up the exit end of the pond. Lastly the top of the dirt walls on the sides of the pond were covered with wood chips. When the pond was filled with water Albert Berchtold, Jim Rees, V Prib Sean Haysom and I hit the pond and started laying out the courses. Because of the hard rock and soft mud at the bottom of the pond the metal anchors were not able to secure the buoys in place, cement buckets had to be made and installed as anchors. There were only two common buoys between the 3 courses. The finishing touch was when Shawn Hill, the TCD, added the turquoise dye to the water and all of the mud vanished and it looked like a tropical pond. All of this was finished at the end of the day before the athletes and judges would arrive for the first day. Everything looked beautiful as we drove out and looked back over the pond and the entire venue. All was ready for the games to begin.

Van Wagner was the production company, they are the ones that do the Super Bowl and the Kentucky Derby. They hired Regan Tetlow to be the announcer and he did a wonderful job of informing the spectators, interviewing the athletes and keeping the energy high. It was important that he knew our sport to be able to present it well to the spectators. Van Wagner requested the athlete's names, pictures and jump order prior to arriving in Birmingham to prepare for display on the jumbo screen. The chief judge organized the competitor jump order and I sent the 4 people on each pass a request for their exit order. Van Wagner received everything as requested and they created the athletes profile slide, but they were also never able to be used on the jumbo screen.

A pre comp the year before was not possible because the pond was not able to be constructed before the World Games. As soon as the pond was built the BOC was required to start paying rent for the land that is normally used for overflow parking for Barber Motorsports Park on the big race days. In fact, it was not possible to start the pond construction until 2 weeks prior to the World Games. To assist the athletes with familiarizing themselves with the venue and for safety reasons the BOC did agree to additional practice jumps for 2 1/2 hours the day before the OPP. The cost was a flat fee of \$150 no matter how many jumps were made. Everyone was pre-manifested in their predetermined official jump order and if they chose not to jump that was fine, they did not have to pay. George Hargis, the manifestor, collected the cash and it was given to the BOC. The number of jumps that each person made was fair for everyone.

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Modified courses for the classical events worked well and achieved the goal for the venue. Freestyle modifications however were not designed well for a spectator event. Instant scores were not possible. Each judge was required to write five numbers down, and all 25 such numbers had to be entered into the scoring system carefully and without any errors. In the 3rd round (multi-moves) the complexity doubled as each judge was making 10 separate assessment for a single performance, and 50 separate values had to be hand-entered into the scoring system. The CJ requested to run separate passes for each competitor so judges could review the video before finalizing their scores. This was impractical but in the end a compromise was reached, and the helicopter would wait 30-45 extra seconds on the ground before taking off with each load of jumpers. This was helpful to the judges but added to the costs.

The course changes went very smoothly for all events, the pond team lead by the CTD, Shawn Hill including V Prib, Shawn Haysom and Jim Rees were absolutely amazing. Their organization and teamwork allowed for the courses to be changed at the end of every round when the helicopter went to get fuel. The competitors were very accommodating and agreed to the course changes because it increased the spectator excitement to see a different event every round.

The Barber Motorsports Park staff were fabulous, George Dennis was the venue manager. We communicated every morning and would evaluate the weather and what was ahead for the day. He responded immediately to any and every need or request that we had and "yes" was always the answer and nothing was too difficult.

The winds were not an issue during the entire event but there were late starts because of clouds. A major storm went through Birmingham one afternoon soon after we stopped jumping and carried on into the night. Many of the other venues had extensive damage including the Drones. CP was lucky, George and his staff did a good job of securing the venue. The pond wall that was facing the spectator stands did start to break down, but the construction man was there with his equipment at 1:00am repairing the damage. The weather caused us to utilize the reserve day which was included in the schedule specifically for weather. Before the last round the chief judge had to leave to catch a plane. The meet had to be stopped, until the jury could meet to approve a new chief judge. The remote jury member was not available for the meeting. The President of the Jury and the other jury member voted in favor of appointing the proposed CJ. The meet restarted with the final round of Speed which completed all 12 rounds. The award ceremony was in the afternoon. The end of a successful World Games!

Thank you for the opportunity to serve my country, The United States of American and at the same time my passion, skydiving. The extra benefit was all of the people that I met and all the knowledge that I gained. It truly was the experience of a lifetime!

Respectfully Submitted,
Marylou Laughlin
2022 World Games, Meet Director and ISC WG Liaison
30 November 2022