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AUTHOR:	Gillian Rayner, ISC President		
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ISC PRESIDENTS REPORT 2022

For the first year of my third term, the situation was less volatile than the previous two years but there were still some unexpected situations that occurred.

Our Plenary was successfully run as a hybrid meeting thanks to the excellent organisation provided by our Romanian friends. Altogether 49 NACs were present or represented with about 30 people physically present in Bucharest. The hotel enabled us all to participate on Zoom even though a number of us were in the same room. It worked very well.

Unfortunately, in April we had to say goodbye to Aliya, our Vice President. This was very painful for us to accept and was caused by an Executive Board decision to suspend the NACs of both Russia and Belarus. All Committee members of those two countries should have been suspended at that time although I understand some Committees have continued to include these representatives in their exchanges.

I would like to thank Aliya for everything she has contributed to our Bureau and she is sorely missed. I would also like to thank Elisabet, Rina, Gail and Vera for their constant hard work.

COMPETITIONS

This year we had four major events which had all initially been scheduled in 2021 even 2020 for the Indoor World Cup. Bids were consequently several years old and it was impossible to hold organisers to the Entry Fee that they had initially submitted. The cost of energy whether it be electricity for the tunnel or fuel for aircraft has significantly increased since 2019 and that had to be taken into consideration. This led to the bureau issuing several IBDs following receipt of updated bids (IBDs # 4,5 and 7).

The Indoor World Cup was successful and there was good attendance. However, the loss of both the Russian and Belarus athletes representing about 70 people, was very noticeable and it also impacted the overall budget both for the Organiser and for ISC through loss of sanction fees. We were very sorry not to see our friends and understand how disappointed they must have been after training hard and not being able to show off their skills. They were missed regardless of the justifiable reason for their absence.

The situation with Russia and Belarus is not likely to change in the immediate future and depends on an Executive Board decision.

Our outdoor events this year were all World Championships with the exception of the special event that is the World Games.

Freefall Style and Accuracy Landing was held in Strakonice, in the Czech Republic. The event was very well run with a magnificent opening ceremony the middle of town. A competitor meeting was held at the end of the competition for the first time in many years and was well received by all. However, even eight years after the event in Banja Luka, tension between some competitors and judges was palpable.

All the other World Championships were held at Skydive Arizona in Eloy, USA. The events were held over two periods with a short break in between. An exciting Opening Ceremony was held at the start of each period and included dancing by indigenous Americans, a demonstration of shooting from horseback and the second week an aerobatic demonstration by a talented pilot who had been part of the Red Bull Aerobatic Team.

The first week Canopy Piloting was held on the main drop zone while Wingsuit Flying and Canopy Formation was held at a secondary drop zone in Sawtooth, about 20 kms away. This worked out well but was not ideal as the site was isolated and little infrastructure was available. The organiser did his best to make people comfortable. Wingsuit Acro was cancelled prior to the

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event due to lack of participation and Canopy Formation, in spite of a promise of a come-back for 4-way sequential, had a small turnout, particularly in 4-way rotation. The loss of both Russian and Belarus competitors was felt in all these events.

The second period all events took place at the main drop zone: Formation Skydiving, Artistic Events and Speed. The events went smoothly and the vast experience of Skydive Arizona and the Hill family in hosting First Category Events (9) was visible.

One major difference between all this year's events was the provision of food. In Belgium lunch and snacks were provided, in the Czech Republic both lunch and dinner were provided but, in the USA, no meals were provided at all. This can cause logistical problems for teams, particularly when the drop zone is isolated. It highlights however, just how complicated competition organisation can be and the challenge to find the right balance between our requirements, the cost of running events and the expectation of our competitors.

Several issues arose during these competitions. Lack of clarity in rules led to two protests during the first week in the USA. Lack of harmonisation in our rules, particularly concerning start lists, caused unnecessary complications for the Organiser.

The use of judging assistants or additional individuals provided by the Organiser also caused some problems and highlighted the lack of precision and harmonisation in our rules on the question

Only some competition rules clearly define the number and qualifications required (CP), the others are vague. It is important for an organiser to know exactly what is required as this additional staff has a cost and requires logistical planning. This is a responsibility we have bestowed on the organiser and ISC should not be imposing any additional persons and definitely not family members as was the case this year and generated ill-feeling.

Also, this year there have been incidents regarding judge presence at competitions sites, either arriving early or leaving early. This is not acceptable except in the case of emergency circumstances, in which case the situation must be handled according to the rules. Being selected is an honour and becomes a commitment that must be respected.

The judges committee are looking into this and other matters including judge numbers together with the Committees. The bureau is proposing to remove the rule concerning additional judges which creates an unfair advantage to a few and is not justified if judge numbers are correct.

The final major event this year was the World Games. FAI and in particular, ISC has been part of this event for almost 25 years. Whereas initially multiple skydiving events were included, this has changed and for the last few editions, only Canopy Piloting has been retained. Other Air Sports have been tried and not pursued. This year Drone Racing was included for the first time and was very successful.

Each event presents its own challenges and, contrary to our usual practise, we are working with organisers who have no knowledge of our event. CIAM chose to work with a local professional from the start and he was able to establish a good relationship with the organiser and navigate the difficulties brought about by the delays due to Covid. He gave much appreciated assistance to our team.

I won't go into the detail of all the events that have occurred since the start of this process, but when, in January 2022 the Organiser expressed serious concerns about the organisation of the event, both FAI and ISC bureau had to take a closer look after highlighting the problem to the CP Committee at the Plenary. An additional site visit was arranged following receipt of correspondence from the USPA concerning safety. Finally, in a Zoom meeting set up by the Organiser in February, it was decided to find a single source provider to cover all skydiving needs. This was coordinated by Marylou Laughlin, who was to be the Meet Director, and became the new liaison officer following the resignation of Dr Hoenle. Larry Hill responded with a

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complete bid which included the use of Omniskore even though it had not yet been approved for CP. A new TDC was nominated after several successive nominees resigned. The complete team brought together by Marylou, managed, with great personal efforts, to pull off the event successfully. You can read the details in her report. I would like to thank them all for the tremendous work accomplished at such short notice and also to thank Exi for the work he carried out in the previous years. The Committee also contributed preparing special rules for the event taking into consideration the location which was particularly challenging. TWG led the bureau to issue a IBD #1 & 3 covering several of the above points.

FAI now has to decide if it will continue participating in the World Games. The IWGA expect a lot of the participating Federations but in return, depending on the discipline, there is little gain: limited or zero media coverage, limited knowledge of our needs which in this case, were not entirely satisfied, no financial return either directly or indirectly, no visible growth of or increased interest in our sport from our presence at TWG. It is certainly exciting for the competitors and judges to find themselves in the middle of such a big event and the opening and closing ceremonies are usually excellent. The set-up, working with people who have no knowledge of our sport, is difficult and a lot to expect of our volunteers. The next event is to be held in China which will be a very different environment and present other challenges. The IWGA selection process has been kicked off, the EB will be looking at this question and working jointly with the Commissions to determine if we continue and, if yes, which Air Sports should be proposed. We will also work closely with the ASFC and contact has been initiated.

FINANCE

You will receive the full finance report from our Finance Secretary, Gail who has worked hard again this year both for us but also in supporting and assisting the Head Office with the new finance and expense claim system.

I would like to raise a couple of points though. What we called the "missing million" has gone. The bank reserves are down. During the first term of office of David Monks, the Executive Board and the Head Office made an enormous effort to optimise the workflow and staffing. The situation is improving and will continue to do so. The EB is committed to assist Commissions with any special projects but, following advice from the Auditor, can no longer accept unbalanced budgets from us. We cannot continue to run at a loss as by doing so, we continue to deplete the FAI bank balance.

Our "special reserve" which was built up over many years, has been whittled down progressively by us for the last almost 10 years to try and prevent exactly what happened, it being used for other purposes than those approved by ISC. This deliberate action, rather than fund our own special projects, has mostly been used to keep our sanction fee down therefore giving the money back to the competitors. The money still appears in the books and will remain there until the balance is built up again.

So, we now have the challenge now to try and keep to a balanced budget. We have a competition cycle set over four years culminating in a Mondial. The years in which we have World Cups and an Indoor World Championship, our expenses are not covered by our sanction fee. The outdoor World Championships and the Indoor World Cup attract more competitors and we can break even and in the Mondial year, we usually make a profit.

We need to look at the reasons for these variations, perhaps redefine our competition cycle, and determine how we manage the sanction fee needs to ensure we do not function at a loss. Gail has projected regular increases of the sanction fee but all that has happened over the last three years has shown that things are not always linear.

Whereas the number of judges is usually the same for both World Cups and World Championships, (although not strictly true depending on the discipline), the number of Juries necessary when there are multiple competitions increases considerably.

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This brings the question of remote juries back to the table. This year, for the three competitions there was a total of 3 protests, only one of which could be said to have required the Jury members to be on site (wingsuit). However, there were numerous records, and their management has become a major role for a Jury, but even they could be managed at distance using our results website. A question for debate.

Another point that needs to be understood and accepted is that some disciplines, over the years have never been self-funding. Should something be done about that and if so, what?

There are different solutions, some already in place in some disciplines. We need to think outside the box and provoke a paradigm shift. Here are a few that are worth at least discussing:

- allowing multiple teams per NAC,
- increasing the minimum number of NACs,
- increasing the sanction fee to match the cost of each event,
- increasing the sanction fee for all,
- having remote juries for World Cups (if not World Championships),
- making World Cups second category events,
- reducing the number of judges,
- use off-site judging for World Cups,
- and more...

Whatever decisions we make, we must start matching our annual income with our outgoings or negotiate with FAI to allow our income to be balanced out over a longer period in line with our competition cycle.

INSURANCE

On the financial front, FAI introduced insurance coverage for FAI Officials from April 2022. This was initiated at the request of CIVL following a very serious accident of one of its officials. It is optional and officials are asked to fill in a short survey form to be included on the list. All this year's Judges and Jury members were informed of this option. We do not yet know the cost to us and are consequently unable to determine if it is worthwhile pursuing this next year. We are the Commission that has the most officials at competitions.

RECORDS

The process of managing and paying for records was introduced in 2016. Initially it was a FAI Controller responsibility but that was transferred to the Jury in 2017. Whatever we do for our competitors, the ultimate responsibility for claiming records must lie with the claimant. We provide a service but cannot be held responsible for any omission or error.

The financial impact to ISC for record management is considerable and this year we stopped paying for continental records that were not also a world record. We did continue providing the dossier to the athletes though.

This year 87 records claims were submitted of which 23 were world records (plus 23 continental) which means that there was a total of 41 continental records dossiers that we no longer had to pay for. We renegotiated the process with the HO and now pay 75CHF for a world record and another 75CHF if a continental record is also claimed. Continental records only are 300CHF each and paid for by the claimant (or the NAC). A proposal will be made to pay for all world records achieved during a competition but only pay for the best resulting continental record per competition. Nothing prevents a competitor from claiming and paying for the additional records though.

The way the General Section is written regarding simultaneous record (GS 7.6) caused some confusion regarding multiple records broken on the same day by the same person. Following

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this I have proposed to CASI a modification to GS including a new paragraph that covers this specific situation. There is no reason not to accept that a person can break his/her own record several times in any one day, whether we pay for this or not is another matter and needs to be decided.

AIR SPORT GROUP

Last year we renewed the Agreement between ISC and ASG. No competition has been held this year but there are projects for next year which we look forward to learning more about. In spite of the inactivity, we have been in regular contact with ASG and the company very generously made Michael Katstrup Lassen available to us for the World Games. He oversaw risk assessment and safety and did an excellent job. His work was pro bono, we only had to cover his travel expenses.

ISC WITHIN FAI

It is important for the voice of ISC to be heard (and listened to) in FAI and this bureau has been active on that front.

As President of a Commission, I am ex officio member of the Commission Presidents Group. For the last two years, David Monks has instituted a monthly meeting of the CPG. This has been very beneficial and constructive and is a major change from the previous annual meetings.

The President of a Commission is also a member of CASI and I was re-elected 1st Vice President again this year. I was part of a CASI WG that reviewed the General Section, a revised version of which will be implemented from 2023. For CASI, I am also chairing an International Appeal Tribunal. Elisabet has been re-elected as CASI recording secretary.

I was nominated Chair of the FAI Statutes Working Group, of which Gail is also a member.

Gail has, as I already mentioned, been active helping FAI introduce the new accounting and expense claim system.

Due to the suspension of Russia and consequently of Aliya as our Vice-President, we will be holding an election to replace her as no change appears likely in the coming months/year.

We are lucky that we have hosts for our events in most disciplines in 2023 and are awaiting a bid for S&A. In 2024 we already have some events on our calendar and bids in the pipeline for others. We have also had expressions of interest for hosting a Mondial in 2026.

This is very promising as it is not easy to find hosts and other Commissions are struggling.

Activity has picked up and the problems generated by Covid seem to be behind us so we can look forward to 2023 with enthusiasm.

As I said last year when I stood for election, this will be my last term and consequently 2023 will be my last full year as your President. I have submitted some proposed changes to both the Internal Regulations and Section 5. These stem from situations that have arisen this year and are also based on my experience as President. I hope they will stimulate some debate even if they are not adopted.

I look forward to our Plenary and all the other activities scheduled for 2023 and in the meantime wish you a very happy festive season.