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<i>Author:</i>	Alberto Martin Paracuellos, Canopy Piloting Committee Chair		
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## **CANOPY PILOTING COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2022**

During the year the CP Committee has held numerous online meetings that kept us busy specially the first half of the year before our 3 Official CAT 1 CP events. The World Games in Birmingham, Alabama, and the 9th FAI World Canopy Piloting Championships together with the 3rd FAI World Canopy Piloting Freestyle Championships 2022 in Eloy, Arizona. There were also many other CP Competitions all over the world that we keep an eye on, that were also very well attended. We have seen an increase in participation and interest in the CP events all over the world after the pandemic era, and we are seeing new competitors coming up to the World Championships. This is showing us how our discipline and sport is developing and how much it still can grow.

The World Games 2022 in Birmingham, Alabama took place in July 2022 and it ran in accordance with rules specifically developed for that event. The modified speed event worked very well for the site. The Zone Drag Distance proved to be an excellent choice for both Competitors and public, even though it was more challenging for athletes than the standard version. These new event formats had been developed by the CP Committee and tested during the 6<sup>th</sup> Dubai International Parachuting Championship in December 2021 thanks to Dr. Rainer "Exi" Hoenle's personal involvement in both events, as reported during the last plenary.

The World Games were originally scheduled for 2021 but due to the pandemic they were delayed for a year. This fact caused some major organization problems in the Birmingham Organizing Committee (BOC) but never the less in the end the World Games in general was successful.

My congratulations to the winners.

GOLD Cedric VEIGA RIOS - France

SILVER Nicholas BATSCH - United States of America

BRONZE Abdulbari QUBAISI - United Arab Emirates

The preparations for the WG in Birmingham, Alabama, started more than 5 years ago. In 2018 Dr. Rainer "Exi" Hoenle started working on the WG and he was officially ratified in his position as World Games ISC Liaison Officer during the plenary in 2019, during that plenary he already presented a report on the work and advances already achieved. This was reflected in the minutes of that plenary meeting. From the very beginning it was made clear that the intention was to have as much local support as possible as it had always been done in the previous editions of the WG but specially more on this occasion since it was going to take place in the USA which was the birth place of our discipline and a nation where many events are held.

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Contacts were made with major stakeholders in our discipline. During those 5 years Dr. Rainer "Exi" Hoenle as Liaison Officer and other members of the CP Committee worked on various aspects of the planning and organization of the WG. Contacts and many zoom meetings with the BOC were maintained during this time and some site inspections were performed by various parties. The BOC presented a location for the event and we needed to adapt our rules to accommodate for the site. Jasper Williams a member of the CP Committee and a well-known Course Technical Director with international experience worked hand in hand for over 4 years with the contracted Pond constructor. He assisted the constructor with his unique highly skilled knowledge, not only of the Discipline but also regarding the construction of ponds and with all the equipment needed to properly set up the courses, noticeable to say that he was the advisor in the construction of the ponds for the 2 previous WG events in Colombia and in Poland. His work resulted in the construction of the pond where and how he instructed the constructor. The unique competition site (that is the pond design and its exact position on the site) required detailed modifications in our standard format rules. The entire CP Committee worked as a team on the development of the rules which included two new event formats and the modification of the freestyle event to make it both attractive for the public and a valid FCE. That unique format leveled the playing field for those athletes that normally do not compete in freestyle but that would have to do 3 rounds of freestyle for the WG. These rules worked perfectly in all aspects.

Due to the postponement of the event for a year the BOC seemed to function on idle mode and in reality preparations were not moving along as fast as we would expect. 6 months before the event the pond was not constructed, although this was as planned, and other issues had not been finalized, contracts had not been signed and some Officials were still not named. The BOC recognized that they were at blame for not giving continuity to the preparation of the CP event

After the Plenary in Bucharest a local meet director was named and preparations continued. It was well received by everybody since we were in need of a local contact that could continue the work already initiated years before. Unfortunately, and to everybody's surprise the named meet director started to make some unpredictable decisions and started to disregard the advice of most part of the CP Committee. A pity because most of the Committee had been involved in the previous editions and we learnt some valuable lessons that were not considered for Birmingham. For years the CP Committee had taken the experience and the lessons learnt from the previous events and improve our performance in the next WG event. Unfortunately, the previous team was dismissed, Jasper Williams wasn't properly compensated and Dr. Rainer "Exi" Hoenle was not even allowed to enter the competitor's area in Birmingham even though he made his own way to Birmingham and was on site ready to help with his experience and

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even with the judging. And the CP Committee was left out of the decision making process, in fact we were not even informed of the development of many aspects of the event.

The Meet Director requested a new site visit just to see an empty parking lot where the pond would be allocated. Did a good job at scaring everybody with warnings that the event site was dangerous for the competitors and that the competitors would need a special Pro-rating in order to participate, implemented wind seeking jumpers before each round, increasing the costs, and other absurd ideas that came up, like metheo ballons which fortunately did not materialize. All this raised some red flags and concerns about our sport that we had worked hard to avoid and that had not been an issue in previous WG editions. Like for example to consider that our sport is dangerous and that a competitor could in fact get seriously injured. I would imagine that from now on the next organizer will look into insurance matters that up to now had never been on the table.

One of the main problems encountered was with the scoring system, which had been approved expedite specifically for the event. It was not ready for CP events nor for the WG. The system provider produced an unprofessional post event report where he actually recognized that the system was not ready because he had used the wrong set of rules to create the scoring system. As a reminder, all the rules for WG, as all the competition rules, are approved by the Plenary and are published on the ISC web, a site freely available for downloading, and with clear name and date on the rule's edition. This mistake led to unforgivable delays in the output of the results, some were made public the next day. This is absolutely unacceptable for an event like the WG where they specifically require results to appear as soon as possible after the competitor's performance. We knew that one of our main objectives for ISC was to present our sport in a manner which would highlight our sport and discipline and this was not achieved at all. The use of a new scoring system in such a short notice was not justified, in my opinion. And it is important to clarify that for a number of years the scoring system provider InTime had been used and developed specifically to allow for WG modifications. It has not only been tested on previous events throughout the years, but also the changes to make it suitable for world games formats have been commissioned and paid for by the ISC. The InTime scoring system was used for previous WGs and it had worked flawlessly.

Another of the key aspects for ISC was the presentation of our sport to the world and the media. Something that has been developed since World Games in Cali in 2013. South African FAI Judge, Andrew du Toit had been working since 2019 in developing a video surveillance system that is already being used for judging, and then the next part was for the images used to present the event in a big screen provided by the Organizer. Here we had high expectations that our sport would be presented to the public the way it deserves. This did not materialize as expected since the appointed Meet

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Directed did not consider it at the level of importance that it actually has. The costs of developing automated software to stitch the images together were not approved and the media company contracted by IWGA didn't use the videos on site to make the videos as they could have for instant replays with competitor information displayed, which has an enormous potential for the development of the discipline.

Despite all that the event, in the purely skydiving aspect was run correctly and successfully, apart from others, special thanks must be given to Albert Berchtold and Greg Windmiller from the USPA, and Björn Korth and the whole panel of Judges who made it possible. Unfortunately, the overall expectations were not by far met and in fact now the participation in the next WG is in question. As you may know after every WG the IWGA carries out an evaluation of the different events and of the International Federations involved and, still pending the final outcome, we have heard news that we are now in question and our participation in the next editions is more than doubtful. Furthermore, and to make things worse at this point, the ISC Bureau seems to question the whole event and that has led FAI to also question our participation and involvement in the WG, the second biggest sporting event after the Olympics. The FAI and IPC/ISC has been present in the WG since 1997 and I think that the participation of a skydiving air sport discipline, such as canopy piloting, in the event of such weight as the World Games has been adding an important high value and has been an intangible asset for the FAI and ISC brand as a whole.

I most sincerely trust that the ISC Plenary will continue to support our participation in the WG and that the plenary will give a clear mandate to the Bureau to defend our interest in front of the FAI and ultimately the IWGA.

In regards to the World Championships, The 9<sup>th</sup> FAI World Championship of Canopy Piloting 2022 and the 3<sup>rd</sup> FAI World Championship of Canopy Piloting Freestyle 2022 took place in Eloy Arizona. There were 67 Competitors from 20 NACs participating in CP World Championship and 42 Competitors from 14 NACs in the CP Freestyle World Championship. There were 10 National teams participating in the Standard Team event and 6 in the Freestyle Team event. 6 CP Committee members out of 12 were present either competing, judging or serving as officials. The enormous pond at Eloy is state of the art with a unique design that allows for impressive freestyle performances. Skydive Arizona proved again that it is an extraordinary and committed DZ and all 12 competition rounds were done in only 2 days.

The following records were achieved during the event;

World Record Drag Distance 50m, 201.57m by Jason Sanders, USA

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North American Continental Record Drag Distance 50m, 201.57m by Jason Sanders, USA

Next year 2023 we will be hosted again by Skydive Arizona in Eloy USA. For sure the event will be an outstanding one as this year. For the year 2024 we had received an intention to bid by Skydive Pretoria and we are looking forward to go to South Africa once again. The Bid will be presented during the plenary to the delegates for approval.

There was a CP Judge's training Course in Klatovy CZE run by Björn Kolth during the Pink CP Open 2022 (GER, AUT, CZE, GBR nationals) from the 9th to the 14<sup>th</sup> of August. In total 7 judges participated, Ron Miasnikov (ISR), Marcin Sen (POL), Jan Nejedly (AUS), Nancy Grieger (UK) as newly evaluated judges and Christine LeTourneur (FRA), Yves LeTourneur (FRA), Liz Warner (UK) were reevaluated. All of them completed the course successfully. Congratulations to them.

Last year, the FAI & ISC signed an updated agreement with the Air Sports Group for the continuing organization of the FAI Swoop Freestyle World Championships. The Championships will probably be relaunched in 2023 with some events happening all over the world. Host Cities are to be confirmed. The CP Committee continues to support this excellent initiative and we hope they continue to be successful.

I would like to thank the members of the Committee for their work and support throughout the year, Mike Teague, Deputy Chair (RSA), Björn Korth (AUT), Jasper Williams (RSA), Ian Bobo (USA), Nina Engel (GER) Rainer "Exi" Hoenle (GER), Agnieszka Sobczynska (FIN) and Julia Sotnikova (RUS), and advisors Marylou Laughlin (USA), Greg Windmiller (USA), Silvia Wagner (AUT) and George Blythe (DEN). And I would like also to welcome Anna-Karin Lovisa Nordin (SWE) as a new advisor to the the Committee.

Alberto Martin Paracuellos,  
Chair, Canopy Piloting Committee  
30 November 2022

## **IPC CANOPY PILOTING OPEN MEETING AGENDA (Time and date TBD)**

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- 1.- Opening by the CP Committee Chair.
- 2.- Composition of the Committee for 2023.
- 3.- Annual Report.
- 4.- Report on 9th FAI World CP Championships 2022, Eloy Arizona.
- 5.- Report on 3rd FAI World CP Freestyle Champ. 2022, Eloy Arizona.
- 6.- Report on World Games 2022 in Birmingham Alabama.
- 7.- Future Competitions, Eloy Arizona 2023 and Pretoria RSA 2024.
- 8.- Any other business.

**IPC CANOPY PILOTING OPEN MEETING  
RULE CHANGES PROPOSED FOR APPROVAL**

- 9.- Proposals coming from the committee close meetings.
- 10.- Any proposals coming from the floor.