

ANNEX 1

Annual Report to IPC Plenary 2002 Presented by IPC President B.J. Worth

This past year was a very busy and challenging one for the IPC. Several important competitions were conducted, new world records were set, and significant advances were made toward the future development of our sport, through implementation of the IPC Mission Plan.

Mission Plan: Ronald Overdijk is working with the Chairs of IPC competition committees to develop the Format Synchronization Plan. Srečko Medven has developed a new IPC Ranking System. Leanne Knowles, Team Leader for the News Media Plan, took big steps forward during the World Games, and has solid proposals for further improving this Plan. Bids for hosting the IPC Technical System will be soon be tendered, and work on the IPC website is underway. Details will be presented at the 2002 Plenary meeting.

General Conference: The FAI General Conference took place in Montreux, Switzerland, in mid-October. As a result of the FAI restructuring project, the role of the Air Sport Commissions is increasing, and each ASC now has three votes at the FAI General Conference. On a most encouraging development, the ASC Presidents are working together more closely than ever before, and are firmly united in their commitment to ensure that the World Air Games become a viable first class event in the future.

WPC of Para-Ski: In March, the German Aero Club conducted a very successful WPC of Para-Ski in Germany / Austria. Fortunately, the weather cooperated, and all events were completed on schedule.

World Air Games II: One year ago, the IPC was faced with a difficult dilemma. Do we withdraw from the World Air Games due to the poor conduct of the test events and inadequate preparation of the WAG's IPC events? Should we conduct these four World Championships by ourselves? Or, are we able to find a solution by which the WAG Organizers will make the necessary preparations to conduct the IPC events in a professional manner, as promised when they bid to host these Games?

After receiving numerous promises from the WAG Organizers in Madrid that the IPC events would be conducted in a professional manner... and after the IPC's unprecedented agreement to allow the Organizers to increase the entry fees by 100 Euros per participant, the IPC was convinced that its four World Championships would be conducted in a manner worthy of the 1000 competitors who had been training for two years for this opportunity.

When the dust settled after the conclusion of the Second World Air Games, most IPC events had been completed. However, virtually all participants expressed serious disappointment about the dismal conditions under which they were forced to compete, about the total lack of promotional efforts by the Organizers, about the lack of media coverage, about the restriction of public access to the events, etc.

Due to the severely sub-standard conduct of this premier IPC event, and the non-adherence of provisions in the Sporting Code which are important for the IPC's future development, the IPC Jury decided that it would be best if the IPC Plenary collectively decided the destiny of the remaining entry fees being held by the IPC in excess of the sanction fees, per Sporting Code, Section 5, 4.1.1 (2). This issue will be addressed as a separate item during the 2002 Plenary Meeting, based on all relevant information gained by that time.

It is important to note that several IPC Delegates played key roles in helping to run the WAG events. Meet Director Patrice Girardin (1st VP) worked extremely effectively with his Operations Staff from France to make maximum use of the limited time, aircraft, and air space available during the WAG. Venezuelan Delegate Pedro Luis Gonzalez volunteered his time and expertise to serve as Public Relations Director for the Organizers. To a certain extent, Pedro Luis's diplomatic skills, knowledge of the language, and ability to bridge multiple cultures was the glue that helped prevent the IPC's WAG events from falling apart.

Future WAGs: To evaluate the FAI's only bid for the WAG 3, IPC VP Pål Bergan conducted a thorough inspection of the proposed site for IPC events in Slovenia. After reviewing his detailed report, the IPC's WAG Working Group and Bureau informed the FAI World Air Games Coordinating Committee that the Slovenian bid for the IPC events was not acceptable, based on the limited information provided. This same situation occurred with several other elements for the Slovenian bid, so the FAI decided not to accept it.

The FAI plans to redefine its WAG product, and intends to use the lessons learned from past WAGs to maximize the effectiveness for future WAGs. All facets of the event will be scrutinized, including bidding criteria, bidder qualification, overall WAG format and size, events to be included, location and proximity of venues, etc. Immediately following the IPC Plenary meeting, the WAG Coordinating Committee and FAI Executive Board will meet in Lausanne to decide on these criteria, and open bids for future WAGs.

World Games: Fortunately, the World Games in Akita became one of the IPC's finest hours, with regard to its future goals. This success started with an exhibition jump for the Opening Ceremonies, with six 4-way teams swooping into the Stadium towing colorful streamers – to the cheers of 60,000 spectators. A mere 90 minutes later, before the ceremonies ended, a special edition newspaper was distributed with a photo of Airspeed filling most of a two-page spread – landing center stage in their trademark V-formation.

The organizers from the Japan Aeronautic Association were very well prepared, and the drop zone functioned like a multi-stage presentation theater for next three days, ... with activities shifting smoothly between the accuracy target, the huge video screen, the manicured lawn for swoop landings, and the athlete interview area – where 20,000 thousand spectators were kept abreast of the action by enthusiastic multi-lingual announcers, including the FAI's Roland Hilfiker.

The FAI's Olympic effort was exponentially bolstered at these Games. Several World Games and IOC officials were drawn to the skydiving venue, including IOC Vice President Kevan Gosper (highest ranking IOC official at the World Games) and IWGA President Ron Froehlich. Once these officials observed the presentation of IPC activities on site, they voiced their strong approval for skydiving as a spectator sport. For a full review of the IPC competition, please see: <http://airsports.fai.org/oct2001/issoct2001.html>.

On every front, the 2001 World Games were a huge success for the FAI and the international skydiving community. This great event allowed the IPC's top athletes from multiple disciplines to interact and compete together on the same playing field. This was the IPC's most professional competition presentation to date – significantly attracting the public's interest via spectator interaction. Hopefully, this standard for organization and presentation will become the norm throughout 2002, and the 2003 Mondial in Gap.

News Media: In sharp contrast to the WAG II, there was extensive media coverage at the World Games. The exhibition jump during the opening ceremonies was aired on live TV, followed by daily TV and press coverage of the IPC competition events throughout the World Games. In addition, the IPC sent Leanne Knowles to Akita to establish contacts with the international media representatives, and to provide freefall images of the IPC competitions to the international TV and press corps. This proactive effort by the IPC, and diligent work by Leanne, resulted in extensive world-wide TV exposure for these high profile events.

TV Programming: The FAI has also been proactive in producing TV shows featuring skydiving events during this past year. One of these programs, featuring the 2000 World Cup in Eloy, was aired on the Discovery Wings Channel several times during this past year in North America. Another new TV program was produced during the World Games in Akita, for later airing in multiple international markets.

Financial News: Due to the diligent efforts of IPC Treasurer Richard "Buzz" Bennett and US Alternate Delegate Larry Bagley, the sanction fees from the 1997 World Cup of CF (USD 1175) have been found – sitting in a bank in New York City. Still outstanding are the sanction fees from the 1997 WPC of Para-Ski, which was conducted in Italy. Buzz continues to work with IPC / FAI officials to recover these funds.