



Contest Director's report on the

14th FAI Open European Advanced Aerobatic Championships

3rd FAI Open European Intermediate Aerobatic Championships

18th-26th of September 2026, Deva, Romania

As there was no initial bid submitted before or during the 2025 Civa Plenary Meeting for neither of the above mentioned competitions, taking into account previous experience with organizing this kind of events, Romania presented in January its bid for organising both competitions as a combined event in Deva, Romania. Although the time was short, this tough decision was made in order to sustain this sport, preventing a break in the organization of Category I FAI Aerobatic Championships for ADV and INT on our Continent.

The combined event took place in Deva, Romania, featuring 35 pilots from 9 countries. (20 pilots from 7 countries in Advanced and 15 pilots from 6 countries in Intermediate).

Event Highlights

- **Program validation:** All competition programs were conducted and validated, ensuring adherence to international standards.

Communication

- During the championships, essential information was made accessible through multiple channels: an Info Office, an info point inside the Briefing Room, a panel on the apron and the most efficient - a Whatsapp Community. The following key details were communicated:
 - o Briefing times
 - o Schedule and deadlines
 - o Flying order
 - o Wind & Weather conditions
 - o Breaks information, ASAP
 - o Provisional and final results

The venue

The event took place at LRDV - Deva/Săulești - Constantin Manolache Airfield, located about 160 km southwest of Cluj- Napoca, and 400 km northwest of the capital of Romania, Bucharest. This location was chosen due to:

- Deva is one of the closest available airfields to the Central and Western Europe;
- The available facilities: 2 hangars for aircraft storage and maintenance, Fire and rescue services, Grass runway 700x40m (12/30), Office space for contest administration, Briefing room and classroom inside administrative building, Free parking

Accommodation and food



All participants were accommodated at Hotel Sarmis, in Deva, at 10-15 minutes driving distance from the airfield.

Breakfast was served at the hotel, while lunch and dinner were available at the airfield, with two main courses to choose from for lunch, including salads and dessert.

Performance zone, judging positions

All box markers were well-visibly placed according to the rules. All judging positions (E, W, S) were established and available. Due to prevailing E-W winds (aligned to the valley), only the South Judging Position was needed throughout the contest. This was very convenient as this position was situated 230m from the main building.

Wind measurement

Wind direction and velocity was measured using a professional drone at 300m and 600m QFE. The only issue we found was the impossibility for measurement while there was bad weather (precipitation and fog).

Incidents

During the 4th day of training, one of the pilots managed to hit a runway side (wooden frame) panel during a missed approach. The subsequent landing was normal. There was no visible damage observed on the aircraft. There was a voluntary safety report formulated and sent to our Safety Department. The pilot and his Team Manager were debriefed and briefed by the Organizer. The pilot was closely supervised by his Team Manager for the following landings.

Briefing

We started with a general briefing that took place on the airfield on September 17, at 15:30. Key topics covered included:

- Regulations
- Safety protocols
- Drawing lots
- Design of Programmes #2 for both Advanced and Intermediate categories

Each flying day (including training days) began with a briefing to ensure that all participants were updated with essential information regarding the upcoming competition activities. These briefings covered:

- Schedule for the day
- Weather updates
- Ground and Flight procedures
- Safety protocols
- Flight order and any changes to the competition program

This consistent communication helped maintain clarity and preparedness among all pilots and officials throughout the event.



Official training days

The slots for the official training days were available for booking online, 1 month before the competition. These slots were later optimised and forwarded to the Whatsapp group by the Organizer, in order to ensure fairness and equity. (1 slot per pilot each day, backup slots at the end of days 2-4, and flexibility to re-fly missed slots due to poor weather or late arrivals). 165 flights were completed during the 5 official training days.

Competition flights

To adapt to changing weather conditions, the organizing team prioritized efficiency throughout the competition. Here's a breakdown of the activities over the eight days:

- Day 1 - P1 ADV (bad weather during first part of the day)
- Day 2 - P1 INT & P2 ADV
- Day 3 - P2 INT & P3 ADV
- Day 4 - P3 INT
- Day 5 - Scheduled break due to bad weather - Deva Fortress and Corvin Castle visit; Romanian Traditional Evening
- Day 6 - Cancelled day due to bad weather
- Day 7 - P4 ADV & P4 INT. There was a cut made for INT P4 according to Sporting Code Section 6 - 2.1.2.2, due to worsening weather forecast for Day 7&8, but all of the pilots in both categories managed to fly (one INT pilot did not fly P4 at his own request).
- Day 8 - Awards&Closing ceremony, small Airshow, Dinner party.

This structured approach ensured that all programs were executed within the schedule while maintaining safety and competitive integrity. 139 competition flights were completed in 5 days of flying.

During the competition, there were two protests, one in INT and one in ADV, each regarding a HZ matter. Neither of the protests was upheld.

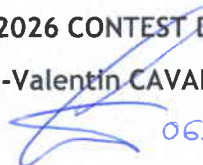
Awarding and closing ceremony

The awarding and closing ceremony took place on September 25, 2026, at the airfield, starting at 17:00. The competition was officially closed by the CIVA President, marking a successful conclusion to the event. Conclusion: The championships successfully brought together a vibrant community of aerobatic pilots, fostering international competition and collaboration in the sport.

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EAAC & EIAAC 2026 CONTEST DIRECTOR

Mihai-Valentin CAVAL


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