

The Intermediate Power Category – a proposal for change

History and Rationale

Proposed by South Africa at the 2013 CIVA Plenary Conference in Tallinn, Estonia the Intermediate category for power was approved as a first category FAI championship based on the existing CIVA Yak-52 regulatory structure. The first event was run in combination with Yak-52 class at Mossel Bay in South Africa the next year, followed by well-contested repeats in 2019 at Breclav in the Czech Republic, in 2021 at Deva in Romania, and in 2022 at Torun in Poland.

A total of 98 pilots have now enjoyed their introduction to the CIVA championship environment at Intermediate, many building on this experience and moving up to the Advanced category in later years. However with only 20-30 entries per event and the usual full set of CIVA officials to support, organisers have struggled to keep event finances positive.

First step into the Championship System

Encouraging 'new' competitors to enter major FAI aerobatic championships is a vital part of our activities. An expectation that legacy aircraft such as Zlin-50, Extra-230, Pitts S-1, Yak-55 etc. would be commonly used to fly at Intermediate on level terms with more current machinery has proved to be largely false, as most pilots even at this level now have access to modern carbon-wing monoplanes that are preferred because they will take them right through to the higher categories.

A fundamental review is required to determine the possibility of establishing a two-tier structure with balancing formulae to enable pilots of legacy aircraft to participate on a more equitable basis, thus significantly increasing the range of competitors who could be attracted to participate. The essential point here is to approach every aspect from the viewpoint of the competitor instead of naturally adopting long-established CIVA championship principles developed for higher categories.

The validity of international Intermediate power events as preparation for our highly successful Advanced category remains unchanged, with well-developed flight programme standards that have stood the test of time. However CIVA's standard 7-8 days event framework that stipulates a judging panel with non-scoring Chief Judge plus 7 judges & assistants, plus the mandatory FAI 3 person jury, results in a high financial commitment for the organiser and to a lesser extent for the commission.

To abandon CIVA's Intermediate category now would be a strategic error and an embarrassing failure. Revising the regulations to simplify them and thereby drive down costs for this category is the right solution, something we can easily address. A thorough rethink of the underlying structure to retain and support all key aims while adjusting or eliminating unnecessary or over-stated aspects will provide a leaner solution that we can all support.

President's Proposal

Establish a CIVA Working Group to review the existing Intermediate regulatory framework and present its findings, recommendations and a development proposal to the 2023 plenary. These should aim to minimise the cost and complexity for the organiser while preserving an attractive programme of flying for competitors that will maintain and support the necessary FAI World or European/Continental championship status.

The following key points should be considered -

- **FAI status:**
 - Category 1: this is essential to retain the World and European Championship basis
 - Bidding for events per normal CIVA practice, approved or rejected annually at plenary

- **Eligibility:**
 - Competitors must be entered by, or participate with the approval of, their NAC
 - Presentation of a valid FAI Sporting License at registration must remain mandatory
 - Pilots with final/aggregate scores higher than e.g. 65% from combined sequences flown at any CIVA, national or international aerobatic contest in the power Advanced or Unlimited category to be restricted to H/C status. This is necessary to avoid “medal hunting” by pilots whose experience is already above this category
- **Teams:**
 - Normal basis of the overall highest scoring three (3) competitors per nation
 - If no three (3) pilot teams are present the eligible team size will be two (2) pilots
 - Team Results: declared based upon the established team size
 - Team Managers/Trainers are encouraged, and should pay the set entry fee
- **Aircraft:**
 - Establish, if possible/acceptable, multiple standards to enable legacy aircraft to compete on level or parallel terms with more modern (e.g. carbon-wing) machinery
- **Programmes adapted from current CIVA Section-6 Part-1 regulations:**
 - P1: CIVA Free Known, using 5 master figures selected by vote at plenary
 - Subsequent programmes P2, P3 and if time permits P4 either as Free Unknowns per current regulations or to include one prepared compulsory Unknown
- **Gender aspects:**
 - No distinctions to be observed between men and women per current CIVA regulations
- **Awards:**
 - Top scoring three (3) pilots overall: FAI 50mm gold, silver and bronze medals
 - Top scoring pilot overall declared World/European Intermediate Aerobatic Champion
 - Top scoring three (3) pilots in each programme: CIVA gold, silver and bronze medals
 - Top scoring Team of three (or two) pilots: CIVA gold, silver (and bronze) medals
 - CIVA Diplomas for all medal-winning pilots and their Team managers
- **Schedule:**
 - Minimum of two (2) official training days on-site
 - Arrival of CIVA officials during the final training day
 - Opening ceremony and briefing, P2 etc. figure selections during the final training day
 - At least three (3) designated competition days
 - Maximum of two flights per day, with 4hrs minimum prep-time for Unknowns
 - Minimum of two (2) programmes required to declare valid championship results
 - Closing ceremony and awards/prize-giving normally on a Saturday evening
 - Departures on Sunday
- **Performance zone:**
 - Standard CIVA 1,000m square layout
 - Full or at least partial ground marking if possible, but not mandatory
 - Positioning grades applied by judging panel, no box boundary crossing detection
- **Warm-Up Pilots:**
 - Preferred but not mandatory
 - If none then the first pilot in each session to fly through the box at the Low (200m) and Disqualification (100m) heights on the main axis, for judge training purposes

- **Judging panel and scoring:**
 - Consider five (5) judges plus assistants, with scoring Chief Judge plus one (1) assistant
 - Video equipment not mandatory, critical/CHZ decisions can be via panel discussion
 - Score calculations and Results to be created and published using the FairPlay System
- **Jury:**
 - Standard 3-person FAI Jury: one or two on-site, others contactable 24/7 by telephone
- **Accommodation:**
 - Organisers to publish a comprehensive list of low-cost hotel and B&B options, and nominate a key official to manage accommodation requirements throughout
 - For competitors:
 - Camping facilities to be offered if possible, otherwise hotels/B&B per the list
 - Accommodation costs for competitors and Team managers to be paid by themselves
 - For officials:
 - Accommodation 2-3 star for all officials to be provided FOC by the organiser
 - Note: 5 judges + 5 assistants + 2 jury => 12 CIVA officials to accommodate.*
 - Compared to the normal 20 person CIVA team (7 judges + assistants + C/J and 2 assistants plus the standard jury with 3 people), a reduction of 40% to overall costs.*
- **Food:**
 - One meal per day to be available to all competitors via on-site catering, at their cost
 - One meal per day to be provided for CIVA officials FOC
 - Refreshments etc. to be available throughout, paid for by users
- **Suggested Fee structure:**
 - Competitors:
 - a) Accommodation included basis – fee to cover all hotel and on-site costs
 - b) Accommodation excluded basis – fee to cover on-site organisational costs only
 - Officials (judging panel & jury): FOC, accommodation & food costs covered by organiser
 - Reduced sanction fee for competitors, e.g. 100 EUR (to be included in above a & b fees)
 - For trainers, Team Managers (i.e. non-competitors) – fee to be reduced by value of SF
- **CIVA funding:**
 - FAI and CIVA medals and diplomas – all to be provided by CIVA, as now
 - Travel costs for officials (5 judges + 5 assistants, 2 jury members) to be refunded per normal CIVA Travel Allowance system

Plenary is requested to discuss the above suggestions and, provided the overall package is accepted, make recommendations for W/G membership and the required outcomes.

Nick Buckenham
CIVA President
September 2022
Version 1.0