

Michael R. Heuer
President of CIVA
4547 W. Woodlawn Circle
Collierville, TN 38017 USA
Tel: +1 (901) 850-1301
Fax: +1 (720) 294-5609
E-Mail: mike@mheuer.com



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PRESIDENT'S REPORT TO THE 98th FAI GENERAL CONFERENCE

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The FAI International Aerobatics Commission continues its work in promoting, administering, and improving the sport of aerobatics worldwide. Achieving our goal of making our sport more visible and accessible to more participants is in no small part due to the extensive and dedicated work of volunteers around the world who are deeply committed to the sport. As I do every year, I pay tribute to them in this report. The purpose of this report is to provide you with updated information on this work as it is noteworthy and deserving of your recognition.

World and European Championships

One FAI Continental and Two World Aerobatic Championships were held this year. The World Aerobatic Championships were concluded in Burgos, Spain in June and July. The Advanced European Aerobatic Championships were completed in Hradec Kralove, Czech Republic and the World Glider Aerobatic Championships were successfully finished in Serphukhov, Russia in July.

The WAC in Spain was a success under the direction of Antonio Quintana. Altogether, 48 pilots from 8 nations competed in Burgos. The new World Aerobatic Champion is Sergey Rakhmanin of Russia. Sergey took home the Aresti Cup after a superb, consistent performance in his Sukhoi SU-26M3, RF-00177.

Women's World Aerobatic Champion is **Svetlana Kapanina** of Russia in the Sukhoi SU-26M3, RF-38352. This is Svetlana's fifth world victory.

Gender divisions exist at WAC so the Men's Team Results were **(1) Russia, (2) France, and (3) USA**. Unfortunately, due to the fact that only two nations sent full women's teams, a women's team competition was not possible.

Meanwhile, at the WGAC in Russia, Georgy Kaminski of Russia flew to victory and claimed the world title. Team results were **(1) Poland, (2) Russia, and (3) Hungary**. Organisation was excellent, and six flight programmes were completed.

Farther to the west, the Advanced European Aerobatic Championships was organised in the Czech Republic under the leadership of Jiri Kobrle. Mr. Kobrle has been consistent in his strong and long support of the Advanced category and has organized several competitions for these pilots over the years. I pay tribute to him at this General Conference as a long time friend of air sports, aerobatics, and FAI.

Gerard Bichet of France was the winner flying the CAP 231, F-GPAU. Team results were **(1) Russia, (2) France, and (3) Czech Republic**.

The Future

The final aspects of my brief report have to do with the future.

This year, FAI President Pierre Portmann successfully negotiated an agreement with the Jose L. Aresti family to settle the outstanding issue of the aerobatic catalogue used by competition pilots for many years. I appreciate Mr. Portmann's skills and diplomacy and how he supported CIVA during these difficult discussions. I also thanks Alvaro de Orleans Borbon and Antonio Quintana for their advice, assistance, and counsel. FAI is lucky to have leadership of this quality.

The next World Grand Prix event will be held in Al Ain, UAE in 2006 and CIVA will provide Jury and Judges for this competition as in the past. Events were held this year in Al Ain and Lausanne and were quite successful.

Once again, I also thank Max Bishop, Thierry Montigneaux and the entire FAI staff for their fine cooperation and assistance throughout the year.

Michael R. HEUER
President
FAI Aerobatics Commission (CIVA)