President's Letter to Delegates and Committee Chairmen

30th March 2010

13.5M and 20M Class Questions

Dear Friends

We need your assistance in determining exactly how to best include the 13.5M and 20M classes in the WGC calendar.

The 20M Class

The definition of this class in the SC Section 3 – Gliding, allows for the aircraft to be handicapped. It would seem that this class should be a handicap class at the World Championships to enable a reasonably level "playing field" for the competition.

If handicaps are not used it is possible that this class could become the home of a few very high-performance aircraft which goes against our objective of increasing participation. In my opinion, such aircraft should fly in the Open Class where their maximal performance can be utilised.

If you have an opinion on whether this class should compete as a handicap class at the WGC please send an email to either myself or Eric Mozer.

The 13.5M Class

In 2009 the Plenary discussion included comments that this class should have a mass limit of 300kg. The decision taken at the 2010 Plenum sees this class established but with no mass limit. It could, therefore, conceivably turn into a design race of trying to get more and more mass into a 13.5M airframe thus increasing the wing-loading.

However, as we have seen from a recent debate on the "igc-discuss" email group, there are many aircraft within the 13.5M grouping and we should be looking at encouraging the development of this class as a true "light-end" group, not a shadow of the Standard Class.

The suggestion is that we adopt either 300kg as the maximum mass (or an equivalent wing-loading limit). This would have the effect of:

- For those countries who design to CS-22, keeping the aircraft design out of the full certification requirements therefore reducing cost and complexity

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- It would align the aircraft with the “microlight” requirements adopted in many other countries and enable development of 13.5M designs as microlights, again reducing cost and complexity
- It would accommodate the PW5 in its present form and, by doing so, would forestall any development race to increase the take-off mass of the PW5 (which would increase costs for current owners), and
- It would ensure that existing aircraft that fit within the new 13.5M class are not immediately disadvantaged by new, heavier, designs

The bottom line here is that we need to give the designers a clear message about our expectations for this class and we need to protect the current owners of these aircraft from spiralling costs.

The Light-end WG has been asked to look at this question but if you have an opinion on whether a mass limit or maximum wing-loading should be applied to the 13.5M class please email myself or Eric Mozer.

Maximum Wing Loading

We have used maximum wing loading now for three years at various SGP races to reduce the performance differences between aircraft flying in the SGP, especially when we have Standard Class aircraft competing with 15M ships. This practice has been accepted by the SGP pilots and was last used in Santiago this last January.

As a result of this experience the Bureau are thinking about whether we should change our current sporting mass limits to maximum wing loadings for each of the championship classes where limits are applied. This is going to take a bit of research and modelling to ensure that a sensible and appropriate limit is specified, but we are hoping to bring a proposal forward for discussion at the Plenary meeting in 2011.

Why mention this here? The reason is that this limit may first be applied to the 13.5M class (as discussed above)..

Best regards

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