

Subject:	WEBMASTER & MEDIA LIAISON OFFICER REPORT FOR 2013	Annex No. -	6
Author:	Susan Dixon, IPC Webmaster and Media Liaison Officer	Agenda ref. -	7.2
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Report on 2013 – FAI/IPC Website and Media Liaison

I have always believed that the FAI/IPC Web Site is an essential arm in the IPC Strategic Plan. With this belief I planned to attend all the 2013 First Category Events in order to work at fulfilling the aims of that Plan:

The vision of IPC is to develop competition formats and presentations that clearly communicate and demonstrate the competitive element of the disciplines to the participant and the audience.

IPC will:

- Strive for immediate judging and presentation of results in all disciplines
- Develop presentation of the sport for media

Before committing myself I contacted all the organisers notifying them of my intention to attend and offering my services as IPC's Media Liaison Officer. I also contacted, where possible, the persons responsible for the electronic production of results to try and set up, in advance, the smooth transfer of results from their systems directly to the IPC Results Pages. For this work I am indebted to Fay Kimble who set up the necessary transfer protocols and the receptive files on the IPC-wcresults (<http://www.ipc-wcresults.org.uk>) pages.

Banja Luka: World Cup & European Championships in FS & AE

Ted Wagner of OmniSkoreHD, the scoring system used for this event, could not have been more helpful before (setting up the necessary files and protocols), during (assisting us with hardware/software where necessary and generally being supportive) and after the event in planning for the future to make our lives easier. He set a high standard and lulled me into a false sense of security for what followed after Banja Luka.

Once the Event Judges had confirmed the score it appeared on the screens on the Drop Zone, IPC Results pages and OmniSkore's web page simultaneously, always with the proviso that these results were "unofficial" until signed off by the Chief Judge. In addition they produced some clever software and made it possible for Fay and I to load all the jumps made during the competition onto the IPC channel on YouTube: (<http://www.youtube.com/user/IPCwcresultsvideos>). We also provided Faustine Carrera, FAI Communication Manager, with videos of the top teams for loading onto the FAI YouTube page. Fay and I worked the whole time with Doris Merz (FS) and Steiner Lillas (AE), the Chief Judges without any conflict.

The Organisers did all they could to make our life easier, responding to any request positively and referring to me whenever dealing with the press and TV. They had certainly taken on board their responsibilities under the strategic plan, with good local publicity and local TV coverage every day.

Consequently we had a good response to our results page, with 18,087 hits to date.

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Chekbosary: World Cup & European Championships in Style & AL

Having failed to receive any acknowledgement from the Organisers with regard to my attendance, registration or payment nor any response to my emailed requirements (place to work, reliable internet connection etc), I took the opportunity to air my concerns with Vladimir Gazetov and Alya in Banja Luka regarding my planned visit to Chekbosary.

In addition we had been unable to make contact with the persons providing the judging/scoring systems, despite our best endeavours.

I arrived at Cheboksary Rail station having travelled overnight from Moscow to find no one waiting to meet me. I took a taxi and made my way to the Drop Zone at the airfield.

There was no publicity in the town for the event, even at the entrance to the airfield. The first indication I had that this was a World Cup and European Championships was the banner over the old control tower being used as the base for the competition.

Once I made myself known to the organisation and they realised who I was, having failed to understand my e-mails (addressed to the person detailed as the contact in the Bulletin, but having no English), nothing was too much trouble to ensure I was settled in the Hotel, had a place to work and an internet connection at the DZ.

I was very encouraged to learn of the plans to bring local people to the event as well as the planned TV coverage, due to the Minister of Sport making a tandem jump. This TV coverage continued throughout the competition.

However my wish to fulfil the aspect of the Strategic Plan to "Strive for immediate judging and presentation of results in all disciplines" put me in conflict with the Chief Judge. Having been an FAI Judge myself for 28 years I found myself in a very difficult position – understanding his concerns – but also needing to fulfil the requirements to inform and promote.

In the past, for Style and Accuracy First Category Events, I have taken the results as published on the DZ and re-input them in table form in a web acceptable format – however that is fraught with danger and it is for that reason I wished to receive electronic results from the system used for judgement directly in a web acceptable format. However, those responsible for these systems were instructed not to release any results to me. These would be given to me, by the Chief Judge at the end of the competition.

The publication of results for competitors, coaches, the general public and those following the competition via the internet is an essential element of the competition and must happen, in my opinion, as soon as possible after the scoring jump has been made.

This was a First Category Event, the most prestigious in our sport, the one occasion we have to truly promote the top athletes in the world and recognise their dedication and effort to excell. We failed them in Cheboksary.

With events like FS, AE, CF and Style where the input of scores by each judge is collated electronically and validated by the Event Judge in a static environment, these results are

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easy to control and makes for quick release. However Accuracy and CP rely on an individual translating result information and inputting it manually into an electronic scoring and calculation system. Therefore these need to be checked for correct input before being released. I believe that the cross-checking this requires should be a priority amongst the judging staff and not wait until the end of the day, weather break, competition end etc.

This failure to release leads to results being circulated in a haphazard format via social media, smart phones and other modern technology – with no control as to what was “official” or even “unofficial”, often photographed from the DZ score-board.

There was no attempt by the organisation at Cheboksary to provide information to the visiting public on the progress of the competition; in my mind this aspect was a complete disaster and did nothing to promote our sport.

With the inability to conclude the publication of the results until after the end of the competition, the hit rate on the IPC-wcresults page totalled a disappointing 3,076.

Kolomna: World Cup & European Championships in CP

I am sorry to say I had similar problems in Kolomna, although everyone concerned with the competition there worked really hard to help me and try to provide what was needed, including all the judging staff. My personal thanks go to Anders Berggren (Chief Judge) – despite being under enormous pressure due to weather problems and the prospect of trying to complete a 5 day competition in one day, for his unfailing support.

They organisers did achieve local TV coverage but even this was not available to competitors nor anyone on the DZ.

Whilst Kolomna had purchased the Intime scoring system outright, their nominated/ trained operator had been made responsible for too many different things and was under such pressure he had not responded ahead of time to either Fay or Intime concerning what was needed from him in order to transmit the results. Consequently the results were severely delayed in reaching the IPC-wcresults page.

Although the Intime system incorporates a public display element this was not used and there was no public display, other than a static score-board, of the progress of the competition at Kolomna. When it came to the CP Speed results, PD set themselves up with binoculars and reported the electronic speed recorder result directly onto their Facebook page. Another example of the haphazard reporting of results.

The hit rate for the Kolomna results totalled 6,174.

Conclusion:

The need by all to follow our fast moving Attractive and Dynamic sport and know who is leading, where the dramatic highs and lows of competition are, is part of today’s society. No one could imagine an Olympic Sport result being announced some time after the event had taken place.

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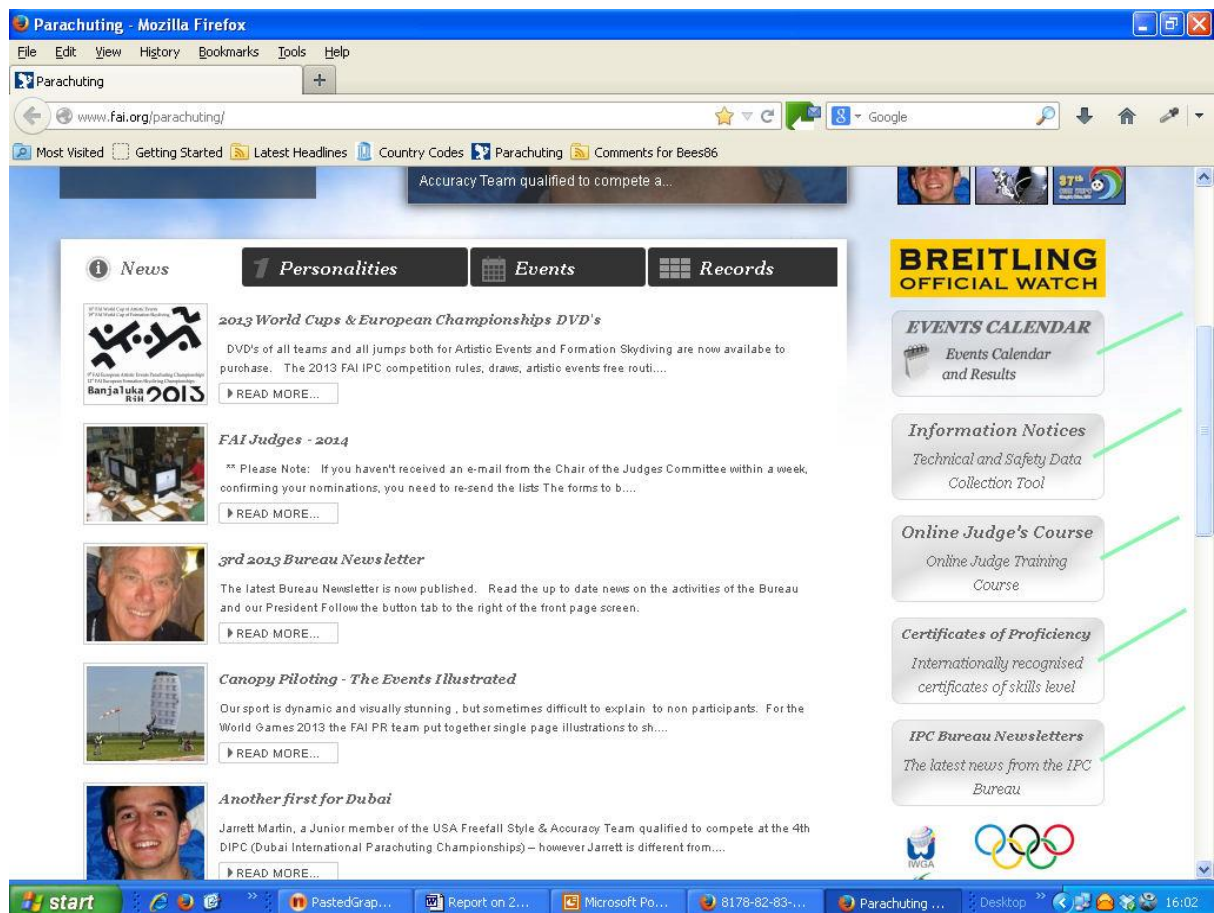
My recommendations as a result of this summer is that whatever system of electronic judging and scoring is utilised at a FCE, it has the ability to be linked to a public results display system (and that this element is utilised) and should not be used if this feature is not available. Further, whoever is responsible for the system should have experience of FCE result transmission, even if this means employing the designers to be present on site.

That the Chief and Event Judges realise that they have a responsibility to release results as the competition progresses, obviously with the proviso that any result is "unofficial" until finally signed off by the Chief Judge.

It is also reasonable to conclude that where we had been unable to display the results from the start of a competition, people soon got fed up returning to blank pages on the results web site, which more than likely had a bearing on the hit rate.

FAI/IPC Web Site

I have continued to keep the web site updated with information provided by the Bureau; Newsletters, Technical Information notices and other items of interest. We have finally persuaded the FAI to let us personalise the front page more and today we have direct access by buttons to our own special elements:



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I am still working on the possibility of creating our own web-site outside of the FAI but the more I look into this the more fraught with problems I discover it to be. Meanwhile we will continue to work with the FAI to improve what we have.

With the increasing use of Smartphones, both Android and iOS, being used to access the web, I am disappointed to note that the FAI/IPC website still cannot be viewed on either of these devices, regardless of browser. Similarly, the site is not backwards compatible with some older browsers, notably Microsoft's Internet Explorer pre version 10, particularly when used with operating systems prior to Windows 7. I look forward to seeing these shortcomings addressed in the very near future.

For the World Games in Cali, Faustine Carrera and others of the FAI attended and she ensured that the web site and press were kept informed on the progress and back-ground to the Sport and Discipline.

No doubt 2014 will bring new challenges, however the good working relationship we have with the Wagners and OmniSkoreHD will, I hope, enable us to bring the results and videos to you from the World Championships in Banja Luka and Prostejov for CF, FS and AE – I have yet to contact the scoring system providers for the other disciplines. Fay and I will be there to report on the progress of the competitions. I have yet to make contact with the organiser, Chief Judge and scoring system provider for the ParaSki World Championships in Russia.

Thank you to so many people for the help and support I had this year and to the competitors who make it all worthwhile.

Susan Dixon
IPC Webmaster and Media Liaison Officer

29 November 2013