

**67th Coupe Aéronautique Gordon Bennett, Münster, Germany**  
**Jury President's Report and Debriefing Notes**

**APPENDIX D** **IMPORTANT NOTE:** *This report should be sent as soon as possible by the Jury President to the President of the FAI Air Sport Commission concerned. It is recommended to include the final overall results.*

**REPORT BY THE JURY PRESIDENT TO THE AIR SPORT COMMISSION**

**EVENT DETAILS**

TITLE/NAME: 67th Coupe Aéronautique Gordon  
DATE: Sep 12-21, 2024 Bennett LOCATION: Münster, Germany  
ORGANISING NAC: GER  
NUMBER OF FLIGHTS: 1 NUMBER OF TASKS: \_\_\_\_\_ NUMBER OF COMPETITORS: 21

**EVENT PERSONNEL**

EVENT DIRECTOR: Tomas Hora DEPUTY EVENT DIRECTOR: Sam Parks  
CHIEF SCORER: Marc Andre CHIEF JUDGE: \_\_\_\_\_  
STEWARDS: 1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_

**FAI JURY**

PRESIDENT Moniek Vande Velde MEMBER 1: Claude Weber  
MEMBER 2 : Stefan Handl MEMBER 3: \_\_\_\_\_  
MEMBER 4 : \_\_\_\_\_ MEMBER 5: \_\_\_\_\_  
(extend list if necessary)

**COMPLAINTS AND PROTESTS**

NUMBER OF COMPLAINTS: 1 TOTAL NUMBER OF PROTESTS ADMITTED: 0  
NUMBER WITHDRAWN: \_\_\_\_\_ NUMBER UPHELD: \_\_\_\_\_ NUMBER REJECTED: \_\_\_\_\_  
AMOUNT OF PROTEST FEES RETAINED: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE & PLACE: Knokke- Heist, Belgium signed:   
21.09.2024 Jury President

Note: Please give your general comments on this event, and your Jury's recommendation (if any) regarding rules and regulations on a separate sheet. Attach full details of all protests heard by the Jury and return this form to the Air Sport Commission President concerned.

## General Comments by the Jury President Moniek Vande Velde

The Event was overall very well organized. The website, the YB tracking, the Gordon Bennett TV, the Closing Ceremony were great!

The Event Director and team did a brilliant job, very dedicated, very professional, very caring for equal treatment of all pilots, caring for safety.

The launch at the Münster Castle was grand. Stylish, large attendance of local public.

*Debriefing Comments: - the sand was too wet. Standards should be set for the quality of the sand. – very specific attention for inflow of gas for netted balloons. Very smooth on podium thanks to wide podium, large steps. The hotel was very comfortable yet too little parking space for the high trailers. Parking for pilots at Castle was poor.*

The launch was postponed 1 day: finer meteorological conditions, as well for take-off as for En-Route weather: bright weather and heading SW: leaving the horrific rain in Central Europe behind.

4 balloons landed in France, 17 continued to Spain and Portugal, either over a part of the Gulf of Biskaj or the lower Pyrenees. The three very best teams, from Germany, Switzerland and Austria fought a thrilling end over the furthest tips of Portugal, flirting with the Atlantic as well as with the Mediterranean Sea.

Winner was the Austrian team Christian Wagner – Steffi Liller. They flew 2111,17 km in 67h 01 min.

One ATC infringement was reported by the French authorities, and penalized.

*Debriefing comments: The En-Route assistance in Spain and Portugal : room for improvement. ED stating at least 3 ATC people are necessary. All pro group FPL i.s.o. individual.*

General debriefing comment:

*Participation to the Gordon Bennett is extremely expensive; Organising a Gordon Bennett is extremely time-consuming.*

*A solution to both could be to hold the Gordon Bennett in the same location for a few years: now all efforts and goodwill created towards sponsors are in vain for next years Gordon Bennett: more sponsorship: cheaper to pilots.*

*All local procedures and contacts can easily be re-used: less work for organizer.*

*It does touch the GB DNA..., but it seems unavoidable for the future of Gordon Bennett.*

**Event Debriefing Gordon Bennett 2024. Sep 21, 2024 14:00**

Headed by Moniek Vande Velde, Jury President.

Location: University of Münster, Johann Kraneweg 21, Münster

Attendance: Most pilots, Event Director, Dept E.D., Steward, AirSpace Controller, Organizer.  
3 teams sent suggestions in by mail in advance: ESP, NED, USA2 (these remarks are included).

**Pre-Event**

- Consolidate your documents (emails) for registration, few teams needed over 200 mails and others did it in 3 mails.
- New documents replacing the expired ones should be sent in as soon as renewals are available.
- Can we use an Online pre-registration portal?
- Appreciated extra badges for extra crew.

**Check-In**

- Well organized and smooth.
- Not all crew passes were prepared. Could have sped up.

**Food**

- Pilots' lodge – bar: thanks for helpful volunteers.
- At opening ceremony: Poor and not well organized: queue for half an hour for a bland snack.

**Hotel**

- Comfortable hotel yet quite expensive.
- Hotel accommodation should be offered free for all teams by the Organisers.
- Couldn't rooms be blocked for the whole take-off window?

**Hotel Parking**

- It was difficult at the hotel, especially with trailers.

**General Briefing**

- Well led by ED.
- Was in a small space – maybe Pilots and Command Center only.
- Suggestion to use reserved seating for the pilots.
- Especially no family. Especially no children.

**Opening Ceremony**

- No comments.

**Launch field**

- Pilots' Parking too small and most inadequate.
- Clearer communication regarding entering the field.
- Clear parking for GB teams vehicles required. Clear In and Out plan to be sent to teams upfront.

### **Sand**

- Generally problematic: Not good/not dry enough. Difficult to remove from the bags, particularly during rapid landing.
- Moist level must be well communicated: Standard should be set by FAI.
- Sand to be stored in dry environment.

### **Gas**

- Swift. Congratulations to the team. Good that max 10p per balloon filling: calm atmosphere.
- The netted balloon was inflated too fast at first attempt. Inflation crew was not aware of procedures to fill netted balloon ?
- Pilots decide on flow, their responsibility. Incident, almost accident.
- Better communication is necessary at the valve.
- Filling order and placement regarding launch sequence.
- Confusion regarding the filling order and placement with the numbers.
- 'Yellow' balloons were put in the back to allow better promotion of sponsor balloon.
- Too short time between inflation and take-off for preparation.
- Safety: Plastic tarps were forbidden, yet many teams still used it and nothing was done against them.

### **Pre-take-off Briefing**

- Good.
- Emphasis was given to airspace A Madrid yet large restricted area Salamanca was not mentioned at all.

### **Pre-launch Safety Check**

- No comment.

### **Launch**

- 25 balloons launched in 73 minutes = great. Weather was favourable.
- Smooth, well-coordinated. Clear communication. Max 4 crew/balloon= good.
- Relaxed launch.
- ED always tried to calm down everyone, and said we have a lot of time.
- The podium was nice and large, so no unsafe feeling. Not steep, but wide steps = fine.
- **Command Center**  
At least 3 ATC People are necessary – Single ATC controller was overworked.
- Flightplan Issues and unclear communication regarding military exercise (restricted area) in Portugal.
- ATC Briefing – Military Area in Portugal wasn't mentioned anywhere.
- Concern for one competitor having to land – lack of proper flight plan Portugal.
- Give the Responsibility for FPL to Pilots.
- Same FPLs for everyone are an advantage.
- Adhere to ATC Clearances – "Chaos over Cologne".
- The need to be professional aviators was stressed: Follow the rules, call in, don't destroy relationships with ATC.
- Copy of the FPL to the pilots.

- Bilbao and Valladolid: No filled flight plan on record.

#### **Communication via WhatsApp**

- Good.

#### **Landing**

- Closing of FPLs went on in the background –good.
- Turning off loggers in time. The results changed on the website and people were confused.
- **Social Activities:**  
Welcome back was wonderful (basic BBQ & drinks outside), Social activities good.
- Schedule was extremely hectic.

#### **Cost**

- One of the most expensive GB's.
- Hoping for basic support.
- Cost extremely high – Any ways to subsidize overseas teams. On per case basis. To make it more “international”.

#### **Can we change the rule of “The winner takes it home” ?**

- It's part of the DNA of the GB but it makes it hard for organizers.
- Technical Team that stays the same to aid the organizers.
- Pre-Event with “Junior-Pilots” like the Westfalen Take-Off earlier in the day. FAI killed it in 2016 – maybe bring it up again.
- Additional cost to organizer.
- Bid out the event for multiple years and come up with a full package in the beginning (price and all) - Need that to keep the event alive.
- SUI as a rich country bailing out last second, FRA was close this year for next years' GB.
- Is there an idea to get a “Main Sponsor” (example: Hydrogen Sponsor) that stays over the years. That makes it easier on the organizer. Now all success was in vain for next GB in other country.

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VERY CONSTRUCTIVE AND CALM