

STATUS AND FUTURE OF THE WORLD CLASS

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Introduction

The 2nd World Gliding Championship of the World Class took place in Leszno, Poland, July 2nd to 18th, 1999, in the frame of the World Class initiative officially started by IGC on March 1988.

Highlights of the initiative were the flight and ground tests of seven competing prototypes at Oerlinghausen, Germany, Sept. 1992, the selection of the Polish PW-5 as the winning design on March 1993, the type certification of the PW-5 on March 1994, the start of the production by PZL Swidnik in 1994, the 1st World Gliding Championship of the World Class in Turkey, Sept. 1997.

Limited number of entries in the 2nd Championship

The 2nd World Championship of the World Class was flown at the same site and in the same period of the 11th Open European Gliding Women's Championships. It was a successful event: 7 contest days, speed and distance successfully flown by the majority of the competitors, no accident, and no protests. The remarkable speed of 87.8 km/h was attained on a 307-km triangle.

The limited number of competitors, however, was a surprise. The list of the 25 competing pilots (Annex 1) shows that 7 European teams (France, Germany, Great Britain, Lithuania, Poland, Portugal, and Russia) and 6 non-European teams (Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, New Zealand, USA) entered the competition.

Countries usually present at World Championships were not represented in Leszno: Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Hungary, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and perhaps more.

What are the reasons?

PW-5s requested on rent were made available very late, when pilots had given up and made different plans. This affected both the number of countries and the number of pilots per country. In fact 43 were the preliminary entries.

Did the IGC delegates adequately stimulate and support the participation of their respective countries?

It is most probable that the higher participation in Turkey (42 entries) was partly due to the attraction of the newly introduced World Air Games; and even more perhaps to the cleverly managed import of 12 PW-5s to New Zealand made by the former IGC delegate John Roake.

Decrease of orders

A lack of new orders is reported by PZL Swidnik, the only producer of the PW-5 so far. What are the reasons?

Let us refer to a document (Annex 2) that was prepared on behalf of the IGC World Class Subcommittee for the

World Class Summit: Marketing and the Future, taking place on July 12th at Leszno during the Championship, and about which I'll report later.

Possible causes listed are: lack of promotional activity; lack of response to potential purchasers; lack of customer friendly attitude (glider pilot to glider pilot); insufficiently aggressive action to counteract rumours on bad characteristics of the glider (e.g., winch launching); no response to proposed modifications; inconsistency of price policy; unadequate offer of options and accessories; delay on extension of operating altitude; and more.

Surprising that a few but influential German personalities, although showing appreciation for the FAI World Class initiative, openly declared at Leszno that the PW-5 was the wrong choice as the World Class glider. They said that the PW-5 is expensive; its performance is poor; its handling in flight unsatisfactory; it doesn't look nice or attractive; and finally: the German clubs will never buy PW-5s preferring used gliders of higher performance available in the market.

Of course, such declarations are very detrimental for the expansion of the World Class initiative. We can't believe that such opinions are shared by the German manufacturers, glider pilots themselves, supposedly conscious that the expansion of gliding worldwide benefits their production of high performance gliders.

Leszno offered an opportunity for an inquiry among the competing pilots about the PW-5. A questionnaire (Annex 3) was circulated. 24 of the 25 pilots gave an answer. Results are summarized in Annex 4. They reflect the general opinion, as from many unrequested testimonies of appreciation, sometimes enthusiasm, expressed to the members of the World Class Subcommittee and others.

Possible action for the increase of orders

With reference again to the document of Annex 2, several initiatives could be taken by the designers and/or manufacturers, such as: circulation of information through Internet and gliding magazines; organized tour of a small team carrying a PW-5 and a PW-6 on trailers, visiting clubs for ground and flight demonstration; a stand for information and demonstration at any international gliding competition, also offering technical assistance, as successfully done at Leszno 1999; a kindly customer service giving prompt response to inquiries of potential customers and offering options and accessories; careful consideration of proposed modifications; enhancement of quality control during manufacture; offer at special conditions of the combination PW-5 plus PW-6.

Possible actions of IGC and supporting bodies (like the highly meritorious World Class Soaring Association, WCSA, founded in the USA but extending its action and influence worldwide) include: announcement of World Championships of the World Class with a fixed periodicity; announcement of other types of world or continental events in connection or not with the World Air Games; promotional action towards NACs and/or Gliding Federations through media, Internet in particular; to announce in due time a

possible time extension of the World Class glider beyond the year 2009; to stimulate the interest of more manufacturers to produce the PW-5; to promote a connection of the World Class manufacturers and pilots with manufacturers and pilots of other class gliders for the sake of harmonious development of the FAI Classes with the common objective of the expansion of gliding worldwide.

The FAI Technical Specifications for the World Class Glider state (1989):

"The World Class Glider must be:

- I - The one-design glider of the new class, its design remaining unchanged for a long period of time,**
- II - of performance good enough to allow the achievement of badges and challenging competition flying;**
- III - of construction simple enough to allow low-cost manufacture by not necessarily highly specialized manufacturers and also by individuals starting from kits;**
- IV - suitable for use in clubs and by private owners, including pilots who are not necessarily aiming at competition flying;**
- V - suitable for training purposes including early solo flights."**

Requirements IV and V clearly refer to gliding clubs and gliding schools. The promotion, therefore, should have an eye to the competition and an eye to the club use, the latter determining a much larger market.

World Class International Competitions

With reference to the 2nd World Air Games in Spain, year 2001, the alternative of having the traditional 3rd World Championship of the World Class or three contemporary World Class events, one for Women, one for Seniors, one for the rest, was discussed with much concern in Leszno. A questionnaire (Annex 5) was circulated, 50 came back. A clear majority was in favor of having the traditional World Championship of the World Class (Annex 6).

Nine special ideas were expressed:

HENRY (France): World Championships of the World Class permanently held at, and only at World Air Games. Division of competitors in two groups according to skill and experience, with a system of up- and downgrading. The two groups compete at the same time in the same site, but on different tasks.

MEMMERT (Germany): separate years for FAI World Air Games and FAI traditional World Gliding Championships. Postpone the 2003 WGC to 2004: easy, because the 2001 event is in December 2001.

PIN (USA): all in WAG 2001: World Championships of the World Class and two World Class competitions (Senior and Women).

DAINA VILNE (Lithuania): World Championships of the World Class when no Women's World or European Championships take place. Introduce the World Class in the Women's competitions.

HOYEAU (France): MASTERS on PW-5 only. World Championships together with other Classes (Std, I5-M).

W. WEINREICH (Germany): combine World Championships of the World Class with other World Championships (Junior? Women?).

G. GOEKE (Germany): two levels: experienced countries - less experienced countries (similar to Henry).

TUCKEY (USA): add a MASTERS or SENIOR Championship to the World Championship of the World Class.

P. SHEARD (Great Britain): national teams of one man and one woman. Only the combined score to count like mixed doubles in tennis.

Matter for thought!

World Class Summit: Marketing and the Future

An idea of David Habercorn, President of the World Class Soaring Association, WCSA, realized by the combined initiative of the Warsaw University of Technology (PW-5 and PW-6 Design Team), DWLKK (a technical branch of the Warsaw University of Technology, Figure 1), the Aero Club of Poland, the World Class Subcommittee of IGC on behalf of FAI-IGC, and WCSA, the Summit took place in a hotel of Lesno on July 12th.

Issues listed in the agenda: (a) marketing of the PW-5 glider; (b) capital investments; (c) engineering support in the production of PW-5 and PW-6 gliders; (d) competitions; (e) PW-5 and the World Air Games.

Twenty-eight persons convened, representing the above mentioned bodies at high or the highest level and including representatives from four manufacturers (PZL Swidnik, Diamond, Czech Schempp-Hirth, Avionic).

PZL Swidnik expressed their firm intention to continue the production of the PW-5, taking into account the many suggestions for improvements, but also declaring the lack of funds for a promotional campaign.



Figure 1.

This emerged as the real problem also for the other manufacturers. There is a hope, however, that this problem be overcome. Wait and see!

Personal impressions about the Summit were very positive. There were a lot of interest, a lot of information, clarifications, reciprocal acquaintance. One can be sure that every attendant went back home with something to think about.

Useful outcomes? Next month will tell us.

The PW-6

Designed by the same team of the PW-5 led by Dr. Roman Switkiewicz, the Warsaw University of Technology, this tandem two seater, based upon the same design philosophy of its predecessor, is a reality (Figure 2).

One of the prototypes, built by PZL Swidnik with the technical assistance of DWLKK, was exhibited in Lesno during the whole period of the Championship.

Thanks to the generous offer of PZL Swidnik, 35 pilots had a chance to fly it, free of charge. All of them filled in a similar questionnaire as for the PW-5.

The results (Annex 7) speak for themselves. The PW-6 is likely to be a big success.

The combination PW-5 + PW-6 appears to be ideal for the clubs and gliding schools for training purposes. It has been stated that type certification was expected within 1999 and that the production could start immediately thereafter. The expected selling price will probably be particularly interesting (less than 100,000 German Marks, including trailer).

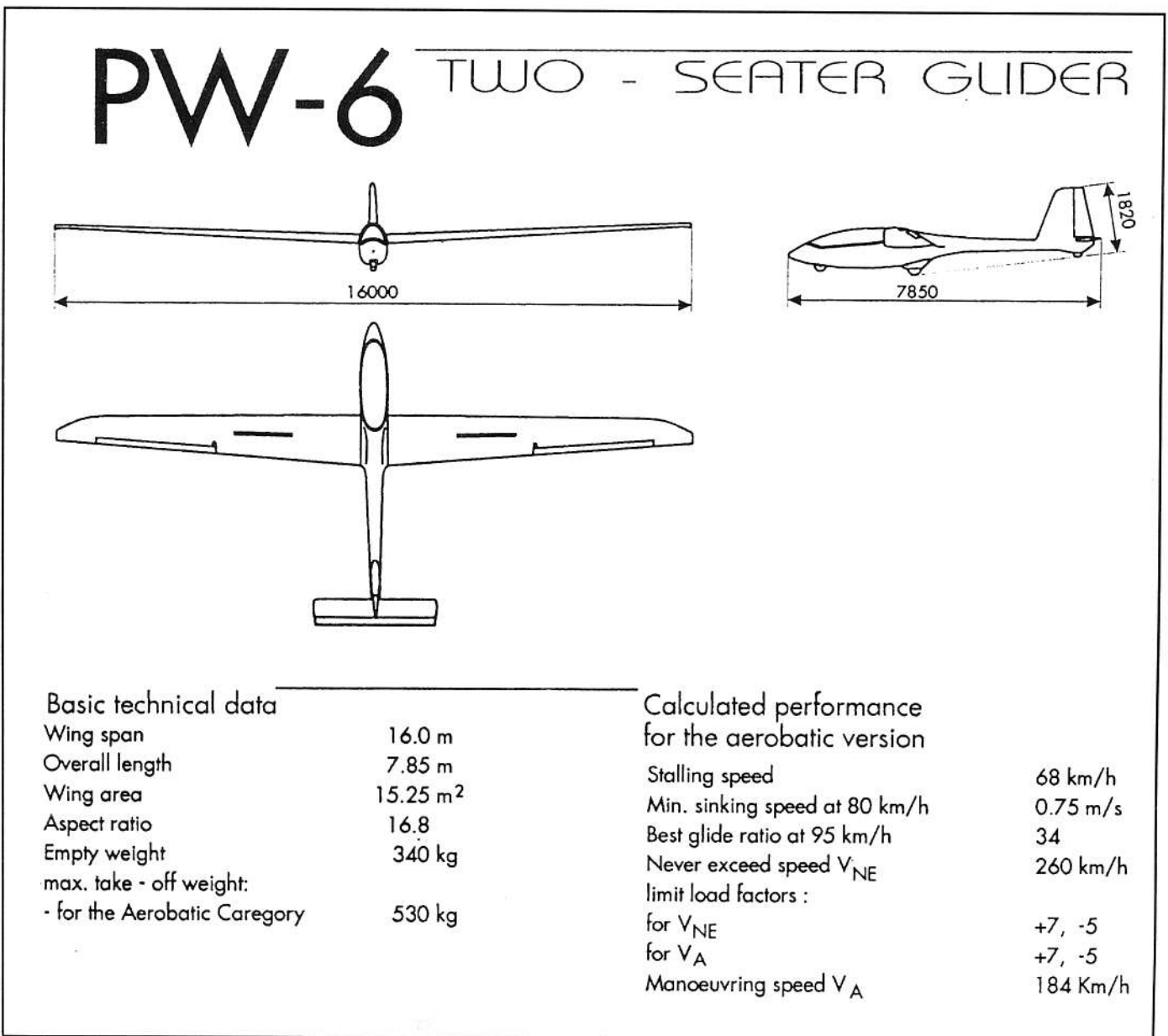


Figure 2 .

ANNEX 1**Official Competitors List**

Date 01. 07. 1999

• Pilots who have returned the PW-5 questionnaire

WORLD CLASS

No.	Country	Name	C. No	Reg. No	Glider
• 1.	Argentina	Mattano Aimar	V9	OE-5651	PW-5
• 2.	Argentina	Repicky Fernando	LB	1705010	PW-5
• 3.	Argentina	Shinzato Miguel	ZA	SP-3641	PW-5
• 4.	Australia	Gilbert Thomas Charles	LU	SE-ULU	PW-5
• 5.	Australia	Sanders Ronald Edward	XF	SP-3643	PW-5
• 6.	Brazil	Duarte Claudio Blois	CB	SP-3642	PW-5
• 7.	Brazil	Volf Zdenek Peter	II	SP-3639	PW-5
• 8.	Canada	Yeates Charles	YC	C-GBVS	PW-5
• 9.	France	Hoyeau Frederic	FH	F-CICD	PW-5
• 10.	France	Henry Julien	EY	F-CICC	PW-5
• 11.	Germany	Huhmann Sebastian	YY	D-8843	PW-5
• 12.	Germany	Memmert Diether	45	D-0060	PW-5
• 13.	Germany	Woetzel Kathrin	KW	D-3180	PW-5
• 14.	G. Britain	Sheard Peter Graham	JS1	BGA-4325	PW-5
• 15.	G. Britain	Innes David Sant	PW-5	HYM	PW-5
• 16.	Lithuania	Sabeckis Vytautas	UA	LY-GUA	PW-5
• 17.	N. Zealand	Reid David	GAT	GAT	PW-5
• 18.	Poland	Kawa Sebastian	F1	SP-3622	PW-5
• 19.	Poland	Nieradka Zbigniew	LOT	SP-3621	PW-5
• 20.	Poland	Zawirski Dariusz	F18	SP-3590	PW-5
• 21.	Portugal	Jorg Herrman	JH	SP-3644	PW-5
• 22.	Portugal	Jose Paulo Rosado	C5	SP-3640	PW-5
• 23.	Russia	Silvanovitch Alexander	V		PW-5
• 24.	USA	Pin Francois	TS	SP-3603	PW-5
• 25.	USA	Tuckey Patrick	01	PH-1041	PW-5

**WORLD CLASS MARKETING SUMMIT
INTRODUCTORY DOCUMENT**

1. Possible reasons for the decrease of orders of the PW-5

- 1.1 Lack of promotional activity directed to increasing the sales of the PW-5 (insufficient advertising, lack of flight demonstrations, presentation to Clubs by correspondence, etc.).
- 1.2 Lack of prompt and encouraging response to potential purchasers. Lack of customer friendly attitude.
- 1.3 Insufficiently aggressive action to counteract rumours on bad characteristics of the glider (e.g., winch launching).
- 1.4 Insufficient consideration of proposed modifications of the glider (easier access to cockpit ballast, provision for tail ballast, reduction of empty weight, etc.).
- 1.5 Inconsistency of price policy. Non-compliance with promise of price reduction in special cases (participation in Inönü).
- 1.6 Unadequate offer of options and accessories (trailer, covers, additional instruments, ground handling equipment, spare parts, etc.).
- 1.7 Delay on extension of operating altitude.
- 1.8 Situation existing in a few (but important) countries for availability of used higher performance gliders at competitive prices.
- 1.9 In the leading gliding country of Germany influential persons declare: (a) the PW-5 is an expensive glider; (b) its performance is poor; (c) its handling in flight is unsatisfactory; (d) it does not look nice or attractive; (e) German clubs would never buy PW-5's preferring used gliders available on the market, like the LS-1 or LS-4, having a comparable price and much better performance; (f) the idea of the World Class is excellent but the PW-5 is not the right choice as the World Class glider, it should be replaced by a better one.
If these opinions are confirmed, the German market would be closed to PW-5's (and PW-6's?).

2. Possible actions of designers/manufacturers for the increase of orders

- 2.1 Circulation of information worldwide referring to a specific web site on Internet. Advertising in gliding magazines worldwide (see 1.1).
- 2.2 Tour of gliding clubs of a small team (two persons?) with cars and trailers carrying PW-5 and PW-6 for ground and flight demonstration.
- 2.3 Presence at any international gliding competition with a stand for information and demonstration flights. Offer of technical assistance.
- 2.4 Prompt and kind response to inquiries from potential purchasers (see 1.2).
- 2.5 Aggressive counteraction to rumours on bad characteristics of the glider (e.g., winch launching of the PW-5 (see 1.3), prejudice (see 1.9)).
- 2.6 Promotion of articles and press releases.
- 2.7 Offer of options and accessories (see 1.6).
- 2.8 Consideration of proposed modifications of the gliders (see 1.4).
- 2.9 Enhancement of quality control during manufacture.

3. Possible action of FAI-IGC and supporting bodies (WCSA) for the development of the World Class

- 3.1 To announce World Championships of the World Class every two years in the traditional way.
- 3.2 Alternatively or additionally to announce other types of world or continental events in connection or not with the World Air Games.
- 3.3 To promote or to support presentations of the World Class with updated information to National Aero Clubs and/or Gliding Federations through media, in particular through Internet.
- 3.4 To announce in due time a possible time extension of the World Class glider beyond 2009 (15 years after the type certification of the PW-5, March 1994).
- 3.5 In compliance with the *Agreement* undersigned by FAI and the Warsaw University of Technology on September 1994, and with article 21 of the *Rules for the Selection and Production of the World Class Glider*, to stimulate the interest of more manufacturers to produce PW-5 gliders.
- 3.6 To promote a connection of World Class glider manufacturers and pilots with manufacturers and pilots of other classes' gliders for the sake of harmonious development of the FAI Classes with the common objective of the expansion of gliding worldwide.

Leszno, 10 July 1999

PW-5 Questionnaire

PILOT: _____
Last Name
First Name

ADDRESS: _____

Telephone Number

Fax

E-mail

GLIDER: **PW-5** REGISTRATION NUMBER: _____ EMPTY WEIGHT: _____

ESTIMATED TAKE-OFF WEIGHT: _____

FLIGHT: _____ AERO-TOW _____ WINCH _____
Site & Date
YES/NO
YES/NO

TAKE-OFF TIME: _____ FLIGHT DURATION _____ RELEASE ALTITUDE _____

WEATHER CONDITIONS _____

GOUND HANDLING

Overall impression: poor sufficient good very good

Remarks (if any): _____

TAKE-OFF

Overall impression: poor sufficient good very good

Remarks (if any): _____

BEHAVIOR DURING LAUNCH

Overall impression: poor sufficient good very good

Remarks (if any): _____

FREE FLIGHT

STABILITY AND CONTROL: poor sufficient good very good

TRIMMING: poor sufficient good very good

CIRCLING: poor sufficient good very good

Remarks (if any): _____

APPROACH LANDING

Glide Path Control (airbrakes): poor sufficient good very good

Landing Run (wheel brake): poor sufficient good very good

Remarks (if any): _____

Date: _____ Signature: _____

ANNEX 4

PILOTS' OPINIONS ON THE PW-5

After the questionnaire circulated in Leszno 1999

Number of questionnaires returned out of the 25 circulated to the pilots competing in the 2nd World Championships of the World Class: **24**

	POOR	SUFFICIENT	GOOD	VERY GOOD
Ground Handling		3	9	12
Take-off		1	11	12
Behaviour During Landing		3	9	12
FREE FLIGHT:				
Stability and Control	1	3	11	9
Trimming		2	8	14
Circling		1	13	10
APPROACH AND LANDING:				
Glide Path Control			5	19
Landing Run	1	3	8	11

NOTE: A few remarks concerned the wheel brake (not 3 sufficiently effective - 3 pilots), the rather uncomfortable seat (1 pilot), pedals requiring excessive force (3 pilots), low position of the tailplane for outlandings in high grass (2 pilots), tail wheel restricting seat angle (1 pilot), some mirroring on the canopy (1 pilot).

TO COMPETING AND VISITING PILOTS AT LESZNO 1999

The next FAI WORLD AIR GAMES will take place in Spain in 2001.

It is decided already that the gliding event there will be a WORLD CLASS competition.

It has been proposed to IGC by Delegates such as Eric Moser (USA~), Brian Spreckley (UK), Angel Casado (Spain) to have, instead of the 3 World Championship of the World Class, a different type of World Class event, namely 3 World Class competitions (or World Championships) at the same time on the same site; one for WOMEN, one for SENIORS, one for THE REST.

The reason for this innovation is given as a type of competition more appealing to the public and to the media.

Are you in favour of these three contemporary events? YES NO

OR

Would you prefer the traditional World Championship? YES NO

OR

Have you a different idea to propose? YES NO

If YES is the answer to the latter question, please describe below:

Note: please take into account that in the same year 2001 and period the 1st World Women Gliding Championships will take place in Lithuania.

Leszno, July 1999

NAME (capital letters): _____

ADDRESS: _____

ANNEX 6

RESULTS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE CIRCULATING AMONG THE PILOTS COMPETING AT THE 2ND WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP OF THE WORLD CLASS 11TH OPEN EUROPEAN WOMEN'S GLIDING CHAMPIONSHIPS LEZSNO, 2-18 JULY 1999

50 Copies of the questionnaire were returned dully filled in.

Are you in favor of these three contemporary events?	11 YES	39 NO
Would you prefer the traditional World Championship?	39 YES	11 NO
Have you a different idea to propose?	9 YES	41 NO

ANNEX 7

PILOTS' OPINIONS ON THE PW-6

After the questionnaire circulated in Leszno 1999

35 Pilots, after flight testing the PW-6 prototype, returned the questionnaire duly filled in. Thier opinions are summarized as follows:

	POOR	SUFFICIENT	GOOD	VERY GOOD
Ground Handling		2	12	17
Take-off			12	23
Behaviour During Landing			9	25
FREE FLIGHT:				
Overall Impression			14	19
Trimming	1	9	13	12
Circling			15	20
APPROACH AND LANDING:				
Glide Path Control (Airbrakes)		1	11	23
Landing Run (Wheel Brakes)	1	2	16	11