



PRESIDENT'S MUSINGS #5

Last month we celebrated the FAI Young Artists competition. It was a privilege to meet Mme Suzie Gebb, the coordinator of the Young Artists Competition, and to understand the care that is taken to select the category winners from the – in 2018 – 8,000 – entrants. She has fulfilled this role with enthusiasm and dedication since the competition was started in 1986. The theme for 2018 was *Flying Into The Future* and my sincere congratulations go to the winners, all Belarusians - Marina Shyshonak (Junior), Darya Kavaliyova (Intermediate) and Yanina Rakova (Senior), for their excellent interpretation of the theme.

Invitation letters for the General Conference 2019 in Morocco are being sent out this week. I apologise for them being late and appreciate that this puts pressure on people who need to obtain visas on top of making flight bookings. I am looking forward to joining our host, Mr Hachami, in October and greeting you all in Marrakesh.

In my last “musings” I talked about our finances. An accelerated effort is now underway to develop a proposal that should ensure that we fund our core activities and reduce the burden of subscriptions on our members. The Executive Board will be meeting – via zoom conferencing – in early July to work through the detail of the updated funding model and again in August to finalise the documents for the FAI General Conference. A first draft of the proposal has already been shared with the FAI Commission Presidents and at the Asian Summit and we will engage with as many NACs as possible as we prepare the proposal for voting at the FAI General Conference.

We have continued to strengthen our relationship with the IOC. Kit McConnell (Sports Director) and Andrew Hofer (Deputy Manager, Recognised IFs) spent an hour talking with the Commission Presidents Group in April about the relationship between the IOC and their sports. We have invited Kit to attend the General Conference to share with everyone how IOC works with sports to assist their development.

Last month we were formally notified by Red Bull that their Red Bull Air Race product will finish at the end of the 2019 season. The FAI has been honoured to be a partner of the Red Bull Air Race since - it is a FAI World Championship, FAI sanctions the races, approves the race rules and regulations, provides a dedicated FAI Safety Delegate at each race, and provides specially designed medals for the Championship. We applaud the talented, world-class racing pilots and whole Red Bull Air Race team for providing a fabulous and extraordinarily safe aviation spectacle.

We have been spending some time and energy in the past months negotiating with a potential investment and management partner for drone racing. Regrettably these negotiations have not had a positive outcome. What we have learnt along the way again is that we need to have polished, established high-value products supported by high-quality organisation and with a strong public audience before we talk to potential, sponsors and partners who could support the growth of the market reach.

*Fédération
Aéronautique
Internationale*

And on the subject of Drones – the 2019 edition of the World Drone Racing Championships are in the final stages of confirmation of a venue with a potential date either December 2019 or early 2020.

Turning to the FAI staff, I would like to acknowledge the valuable service provided to the FAI by Mme Cosette Mast over the past 20 years. Cosette decided to leave us earlier this year and Mme Paola Lopez has moved into the position of Finance Manager and Controller. Last week we were pleased to welcome Ms Sally O'Brien to the team.

I have a question to end with. At the GC in Luxor the FAI approved an ***FAI Manifesto Preserving Airspace Access for Air Sports***. This document is intended for sharing as widely as possible. May I ask how many members and commissions have forwarded it on to their internal federations and air sports groups?

Be safe out there and please share this “musings”

Best regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bob Henderson", followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Robert Henderson
FAI President

15th June 2019