

1st European Women Gliding Championships 1979 Dunaujvaros – Hungary



First impression of these European Championships: a very elegant logo – so was the coat of arms of Dunaujvaros, a workers town south of Budapest, with red smoke rising from the chimneys of the iron- and steel works.

Excellent first impression also looking at large airfield with huge hangars and great equipments. It gave you the agreeable feeling, it will be nice to live and to compete here in these first European championships!

The official opening ceremony with an impressive air show programme confirmed this positive impression. Mass parachutists, triple drops with “Mattresses” in triangular form just delighted the 20.000 spectators. The whole ceremony ended with the traditional folklore groups so popular in middle- and eastern Europe.

A question-mark: in the maps, photo book of all the turn points and other useful documents handed over to all teams there was a list of world records of “lady pilots” among which “*looping the loop*” Author: Adele Dankowska. Really THE Super-Aerobat with 672,2 km.? I finally found out, this world record “looping the loop” was nothing else but a world record of an out and return flight! Translation fantasy!

Most competitors of Oerlinghausen 1977 were present with the sad exception of Pela Majewska missing in the Polish team. Fortunately DDR had again decided



GN Monika Warstat and GM Irgard Morgner, perfect DDR team flight, condition for success and recommended for imitation

to delegate both their stars Irmgard Morgner and Monika Warstat. Also present: USSR, Czech Republic and Bulgaria. Faithful Sue Martin had again made the longest trip from Australia. Three new names in the team of the Federal Republic of Germany: Gudrun Emde, Helmi Lebok und Marlis Kall, they accompanied Gisela Weinreich. So Dunaujvaros welcomed representatives of 11 countries, 24 Pilots were to compete with their own glider in one standard class with 5 % reduction penalty for the six registered 15 m gliders.

Everything will be running smoothly – indeed Fred Weinholtz, official observer of CIVV/IGC had been designated as President of the international Jury, taking over from absent Edward Makula.

The training week made it clear, it would not be easy to adapt to the poor visibility conditions and therefore difficult navigation. Furthermore landing out in Hungary should be restricted to asphalt roads, because the next telephone was often miles away and of course GSM had not been invented yet. Luckily the local population was very friendly and helpful.

To summarize the meteorological situation during the whole length of the championships: various high pressure zones offered mainly late and often blue thermals, the early ending of which disagreeably surprised many a pilot. Cloud base varied between 800 and 1800 m, climbs from 1 to 2,5 m/s with rare maximum of 5m/s. Usually the wind was not strong. Agreeable temperatures varied between 24 and 34 °C. All of this allowed NINE tasks set and achieved, exactly like 1973 in Leszno. Here in Dunaujvaros three tasks exceeding 300 km distances.



24 participants from 11 countries, first row extreme right: Sue Martin (AUS).

Unlike their Polish colleagues in Leszno the Hungarian meteorologists “walked on eggs” the first day. They set only a small return flight of 131 km, to afterwards regret this decision, because cloud streets soon offered climbs of 2 to 3 m. Teresa Toivonen made the best speed of 98,4 km/h with her LS3 but the 5 % handicap factor “punished” Teresa and victory went to temperamental Bulgarian Tatiana Kamburova (later Obretenova) with 96,8 km/h on Standard Jantar.

A little more meteorological confidence... and Day 2 sent the pilots on a 361 km task. The four Hungarian ladies made the best of their home advantage. 7 pilots had to land out, among which world recordholder Sue Martin who only got 380 points – a cruel blow when the winner collects 1000 points!

Day 3. – Return flight of 306 km to Kaszapar – only 6 pilots made it back to Dunaujvaros, half of which were the Hungarians Benke-Daroczy-Bolla, but also Monika Warstat “GM Golf Mike”, Gisela Weinreich and Teresa Toivonen.

Benke won with 63,5 km/h but “handicapped” Teresa Toivonen again made the best speed 64, 7 km/h. Three fourths of the participants made 7 hours long wearisome flights And “careful” was the word: landing out in “dangerous zones” caused penalties for Kamburova, Riatipova and Bertels.

Landing out, coming back, ups and downs for everyone... especially on Day 4. A 231 km quadrangle. Just passed the Danube rain showers made visibility very problematic. For Irmgard Morgner, “half” of the DDR team, these showers even became a mini- catastrophe. At the 2nd turn point she immediately noticed she had not caught the correct photo angle. Turn back? Or accept 100 penalty points and continue team flying with Monika Warstat to allow her to keep or even improve her present position in the overall ranking? Spontaneous sporting gesture of Irmgard, she continued.

On this 4th contest day the Hungarians had to pull out the landing gear of their Jantar only a few kilometres away from the finish. Last home comer was Geogeo Litt (with penalty points for photo angle). Everybody else landed out. It was a very black day for the Hungarian team, f.i. Maria Bolla got only 516 points compared to 965 for the Czech winner Jindra Paluskova (although the second Belgian pilot Annemarie Bertels and the French Marie-Françoise Gavaret were quicker, both on ASW 20).

Jindra, the most experienced of the group with not less than 60.000 km cross country in her log book, took the lead at the end of this 4th day.

Gisela Weinreich also paid a high price for not coming back and on top of that she got 100 penalty points for photo error. Her fate was almost shared by both DDR girls some 25 km before the finish, at 150 m above the ground, absolutely “dead” air...

Until a stubble field was burned! Saved by the bell... this rising air offered the patient pilots the necessary height. Not so for Helmi Lebok and Marlis Kall who tried in vain to get the best lift from a straw fire but had to land out.

Overall ranking was quite shaken up. However, this is not the end, normally the same number of flying days could be expected, everything was still possible!



VIPs at opening ceremony.

On contest Day 5, 181 km triangle half of the group just made it before the announced local thunderstorm and the brave ladies reached the second turn point in the splashing rain. Gone was all hope of good speed. Finally Irmgard Morgner won the day, a nice reward for her sporting gesture of the day before. Teresa Toivonen came second, Gudrun Emde and Marlis Kall were ex aequo third. Astonishing rules: 125 km. gave not less than 994 points and for 108 km pilots still got 761 points, quite a present, 12 points per kilometer!

Shall we finally get the fervidly wished for 500 km task? Keep waiting for this bomb... or rest day? Unanimous NJET of the pilots. They want to fly, fly! All right, as you wish, 235km return flight on this Day 6. Fortunately the ladies were spared all thunderstorms and in quickly lifting weather Maria Bolla achieved 84 km/h. Result: 1000 points. Therefore a good strong advantage? Forget it, 16th placing still yielded more than 900 points.

And now THE 500? Early briefing, false hope, 306 km return flight Kaszaper was the 7th task the same as Day 3. Nervousness everywhere, including the starter: “negative start” (twice even, regretted Helmi Lebok!). On the last 60 km climbs became very weak. Only the “speedy gonzales” made it: victory with 92,3 km/h for cheerful French Francine Hannhart, 90,8 km/h for Sue Martin.

Seven days without interruption, with successes and disappointments. But *relax, girls*, the evening hangar ball brought relief and recreation to all, with wine and music till late in the night. Planned or not, the hangar ball was followed by two well deserved rest days and then a not planned “weather depending” rest day.

SO: time for alternative activities with a lot of tempting Hungarian offers. At the end of long roads passing picturesque villages with stork nests everywhere on the roofs, the historical capital Budapest was waiting: citadel, Matthias church, Parliament, fishermen's bastion, shopping street Vaci Utca, the bridges on the Danube splitting Budapest into Buda on the hills, Pest centre of town.

Not to forget the attractive Balaton lake.

And how to describe the exciting visit to the Puszta and its stud farms, the "shikosh" showing their astonishing horsemanship, the storming racing horses. (Hungarian rodeo) and the romantic drive in the horse carriages? Championships Director Janos Dobosi was in excellent temper, he accepted to act as the "horse" with Belgian Geogeo Litt as lady equestrian, a vividly applauded spectacle as you can imagine!

Not to forget the always happy **Babajaga ceremony** with the burning nightly camp-fire. Chief witch was Judit Pollerman.



And then things became serious again. 181,5 km triangle for Day 8. With 33° C bikinis had become the flying uniforms in the cockpits. Blue thermals? Nobody is in a hurry to start, favourites are watching, spying on each other: Jindra Paluskova on top in overall ranking before Monika Warstat and Eda Laan.

Neither of them wanted to be the first to start, but these wait-and-see tactics proved to be wrong. Quite unconcerned Swedish Teresa Toivonen took off and came back – 59,1 km/h. So did Australian Sue Martin – 55,8 km/h. On the track 137,5 km from Dunaujvaros 7 pilots landed all on the same field were all seven ranked 3rd ex aequo. Meanwhile Jindra and Monika were in big trouble, spiralling together in the same upwind, very near the ground. Was this the end? Jindra gave up first and decided to land safely on airfield Oczeny, the second turn point, where she was “welcomed” by 5 other competitors. With less than 200 m height DDR Monika struggled in mini-lift for every meter, refusing the “easy-way” of landing more comfortably. She knew and realized every meter gives points.

When she put her glider down she had achieved 5,5 km more than her rival. Radio failure? wrong announcement or misunderstanding in the dispatch office? We shall never know but the fact is that Monika had to wait till midnight to be found and retrieved. She had a very short night rest BUT she was 33 points richer than rival Jindra who now became third overall, leaving top placing to



Happy Monika Warstat, first European champion in the history of FAI approved women gliding championships – Reward for iron will and fairness.

Eda Laan of Estland (but of course under Soviet colours) with 58 points more than Monika Warstat, second...

Nothing but tired faces at briefing of Day 9 – LAST day

213 km triangle. No waiting tactics, go go! Three minutes after both DDR



From left to right: Eda Laan (SU) 2nd, Monika Warstat (DDR) 1st, Jindra Paluskova (CZ) 3rd.

women had gone we heard Eda Laan announce her start, hoping to catch up with Monika. Why didn't she choose the easier way to final success by just staying with her? This last day the best speed was achieved by Geogeo Litt with 79,9 km/h (the handicap factor however crowned Sovjet Nadejda Riatipova for the day). Sweet consolation for the Belgian who had made a dramatic outlanding in Rumania with all unimaginable problems and difficulties at the Rumanian-Hungarian frontier next morning.

Eleven minutes after Monika Warstat there came Eda Laan landing on Dunaujvaros. Was it enough for final victory? Tension like in a Hitchcock thriller. Please computer, hurry up!! Then the PC spat it out: with this nerve racking flight **Monika Warstat** became the first official European champion with 6 points more than Eda Laan. Impressive victory of an iron will pilot, of the whole DDR team inclusive manager Rolf Peter. Team flying was the secret but no longer the secret of the ladies of the East block. The "Westblockers" have understood this but such knowledge and experience are not acquired in one-two-three, it needs time and exercise.

"Loners" like Teresa Toivonen from Sweden are exceptions – she became 8th and as such best pilot of the West countries.

Too little competition knowledge played a trick on participants of the West, especially at the beginning of the championships. Landing out was heavily penalized on 1000 points days. Example Gudrun Emde, after 3 days she already had more than 1000 points to catch up – imagine the energy needed and yes, deliv-

ered: from Day 4 on, in 6 tasks she collected 97 points more than... Monika Warstat! Gudrun finished 12th, so not Gisela Weinreich but Gudrun Emde was the best pilot of Federal Germans in Hungary.

Not even thunderstorms and a giant dust cloud of the passing cold front during the final prize-giving ceremony could ruin the festive joy of pilots, teams and successful Hungarian organizers.

Good-bye Dunaujvaros,
Au revoir in Chérence (FR) in 1981.

1st EUROPEAN Gliding Championships for WOMEN

DUNAUJVAROS (Hungary) 1979
24 pilots from 11 countries

FINAL RESULTS after 9 tasks

(return 131 km/ return 361/ return 306/ quadr 234,5/
triangle 181/ return 235/ return 306/ triangle 181,5/ triangle 213,5)

1. Warstat Monika	DDR	St.Jantar	GM	7629	pts	
2. Laan Eda	SU	St.Jantar	64	7623		
3. Paluskova Jindra	CSZ	ASW 15 B	16	7573	victory 4 th task	
4. Bolla Maria	HUN	St.Jantar	BM	7545	victories 2 nd and 6 th tasks	
5. Kyzivatova Maria	CSR	ASW 15 B	17	7455		
6. Daeoczy Eva	HUN	St.Jantar	TL	7414	co-victory 2 nd task	
7. Morgner Ingrid	DDR	St.Jantar	GN	7382	victory 5 th task	
8. Toivonen Teresa	SWE	LS 3	R 3	7313	victory 8 th task	Y
9. Badura Hanna	POL	St.Jantar	FK	7143		
10. Pollermann Judit	HUN	St.Jantar	IV	7051		
11. Benke Ilona	HUN	St.Jantar	11	6914	victory 3 rd task	
12. Emde Gudrun	GER	Cirrus 75	MD	6907		
13. Hannhart Francine	FR	Mosquito	PF	6875	victory 7 th task	Y
14. Riantipova Nadejda	SU	St.Jantar	65	6862	victory 9 th task	
15. Kamburova Tat.L.	BUL	St.Jantar	15	6852		
16. Dankowska Ada	POL	St.Jantar	HP	6814		
17. Martin Sue	AUS	ASW 20	FN	6628		Y
18. Lebok Helmi	GER	LS I F	YC	6232		
19. Bertels Annemie	BEL	ASW 20	AM	6036		Y
20. Kall Marlis	GER	LS I F	KY	5663		
21. Lin Geogeo	BEL	Mini Nimbus	GA	5459		Y
22. Weinreich Gisela	GER	Hornet	WX	5351		
23. Radeva St.Todorka	BUL	St.Jantar	14	5335		
24. Gävaerit M.Franç.	FR	ASW 20 F	X7	4395		Y

Y : FAI 15 m class gliders 5 % handicap