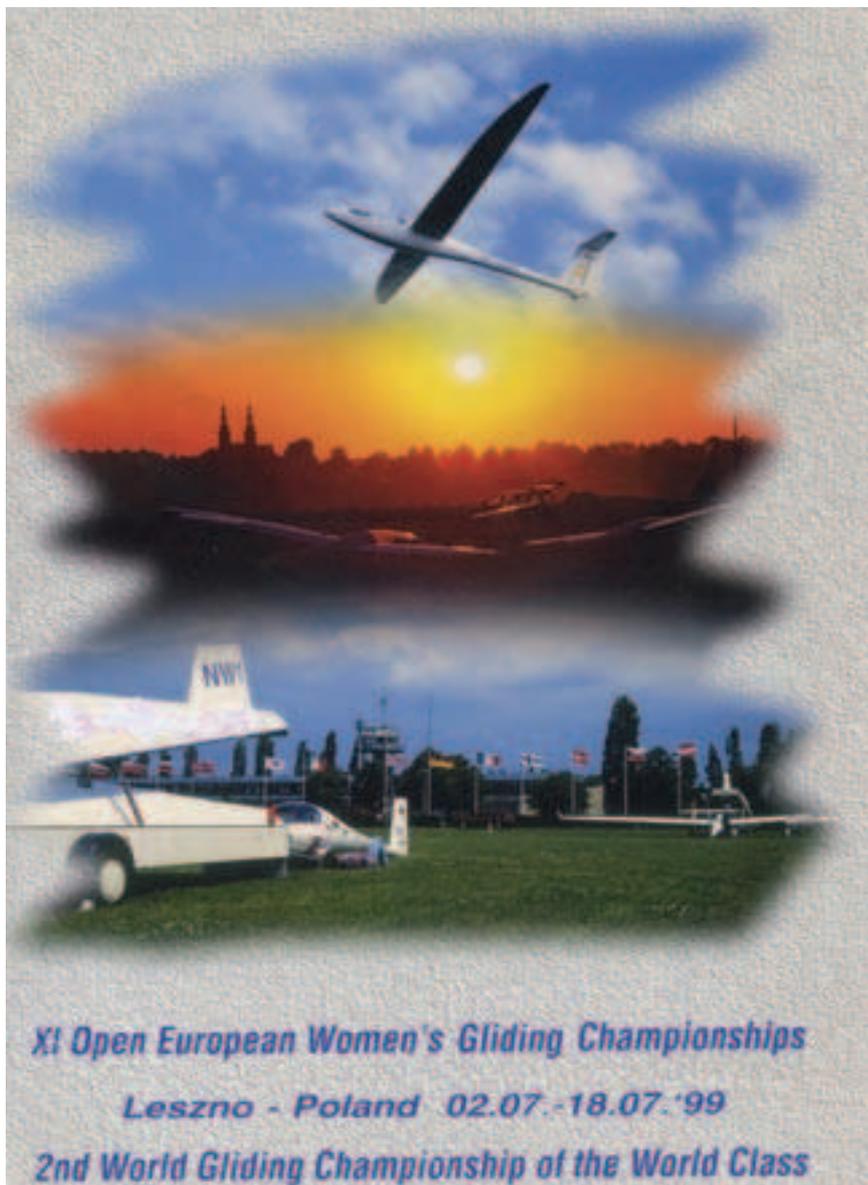


# **11<sup>th</sup> European Women Gliding Championships**

## **Leszno (Polen) 1999**



Is it really necessary to present Leszno? In the West of Poland, between two large towns Poznan und Wroclaw, some 300 km west of Warsaw.

The airfield is ideally equipped with Parking possibilities, Camping, Club hotel, Offices etc etc No wonder Leszno was so often the organizing site of World- and European championships. We women do remember quite well the beginning of the FAI approved international women gliding competitions 1973 and 1975. In Leszno, of course. One could have logically expected, after 10 successful Women's European gliding championships here and there in Europe to make the next one a World championship. But NO, the IGC still hadn't taken this logical decision, so here we go for the 11<sup>th</sup> Europeans.

Leszno has often proved to be able to handle more than 100 participants and gliders and therefore was authorized to co-organize at the same time the 2<sup>nd</sup> World championships of the World class. Not everybody was pleased with this simultaneous organisation, but finally this meeting became a very friendly gathering.

## AEROKLUB POLSKI

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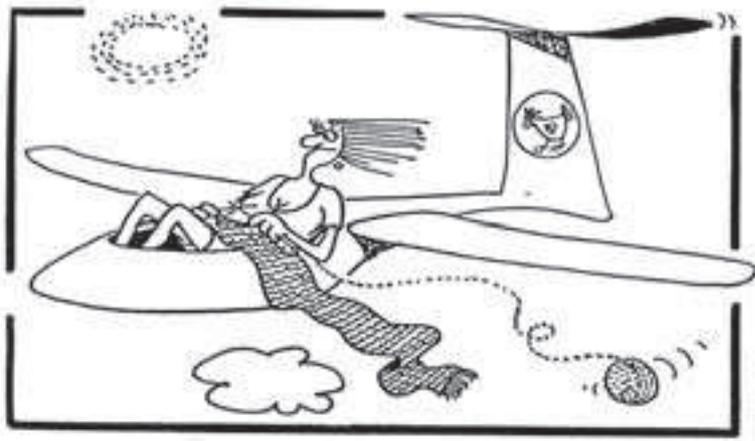
From 25 PW pilots from Europe and from overseas immediately both French competitors Julien Henry (son of former World champion) and Frédéric Hoyeau demonstrated their flying art, success of teamwork) but young Polish Sebastian Kawa showed all the qualities and had the absolute intention to make the competition for the medals very tough. The best glide of the glider PW 5 is 34 and we heard some of the “bigger” pilots here in Leszno whisper (because the “father” of the PW 5 Professor Piero Morelli functioned here as President of the Jury) irreverently “the PW 5 is a flying Sperm”.



**From left to right: Fred Weinholtz, Tadeus Wala; Gill Van den Broeck, Gordon Hookings, Piero Morelli, Wolfgang Weinreich, Waldemar Ratajczak.**

Only one woman started in these World class World championships: well known Kathrin Wötzel (bronze medal in Prievidza), she finished 9<sup>th</sup>, a feat to be proud of among all these men.

But let's come back to the women. Two of them were the living illustration of the saying *rest makes rusty*. They were present as from 1973: the eternal youthful Hungarian Maria Bolla and Polish Ada Dankowska. 26 years ago her husband Josef Dankowski was the respected sports director, now in 1999 son Jacek did the same fine job. Mama Ada participated in standard class.



On contest day 6 son Jacek congratulated his mother on her 63<sup>rd</sup> birthday, “offering” a large 504,1 km task. A present? Yes and no, all pilots had to land out but there was birthday champagne for Ada, victorious with the longest flight 306,8 km, rewarded 805 points. What a way to celebrate your birthday!

As from the first contest day the signal was clear: in Leszno organizers like to impose long flights, immediately 516,5 km in 15m class, 486,6 km in Standard class, 436,3 km in Club class.

Never in the history of these European championships the German team succeeded such fantastic start. Double victory in 15 m class for Angelika Machinek and Annette Klossok with 494,8 km, both harvesting 1000 points. In Standard class Cornelia Schaich and Gundula Goeke (successful pharmacist like her friend and colleague Annette Klossok) were just as happy: each one got 1000 points for being the only ones to come back in Leszno with 77,5 km/h speed and Christiane Casper had the longest distance of the “outlanders” 1000 points also for Claire Luyat who was the only pilot in Club class to make it back to Leszno with 70 km/h.

After this generous “shower” of 1000 points, a real permanent rain kept the pilots on the ground for long days. So there was plenty occasion to organize the usual Babajaga ceremony. – THE ritual with original roots in Poland. Who do you think was the ceremony chief? OF COURSE Super Witch mother Ada Dankowska.



The usual Babajaga ceremony.

The organizers offered snacks and beer, the French Team wine. World class pilots applauded and regretted, in male pilot circles there was no similar happy event organized.



43 pilots from 10 countries.

Then finally there was time ... and weather to fly but on contest day 2 the ambition of the organizers was rather modest. It did not stop Gundula Goeke to win a second victory but the distance covered 120,5 km of the 250,9 km task produced only 265 points.

**In Club Class** – 235,6 km nobody made it back to Leszno. Titleholding champion Claire Luyat was the winner of the day with her Pegase (Handicap 104 not everybody agreed with) after a flight of 115,8 km but her lead was exceptionally small this time, only 8 points more than the rest of the field. Like in Priedviza she continued to surpass the whole group of contenders with 5 day victories on tasks 1., 2., 4., 6., 8.

Conclusion: in club class the battle was for the second place. The home-advantage certainly helped the quartet of Polish who were very strong on 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> day making their way to the top – one exception only, of course of Claire Luyat on day 4. Claire the untouchable, what could be done against this superiority by the German representatives, in spite of the victory of Sylvia Stampke on day 3.

**Endpodium:** Claire Luyat – who else? – but Joanna Biedermann accompanied her good friend Maxi Czmiel-Paszyc on the podium. At 62 years Maxi (perfectly French speaking) had again a European medal around her neck, confirming, if necessary “rest makes rusty”! And believe it or not, the Polish girls occupied places 2 – 3 – 4 – 5, Gudrun Haas, best German, was only half satisfied with her 6. ranking.



Club Class • 16 pilots • 8 contest days

Place	C.N.	Pilot	Country	Type of glider	Reg.	Total points	% Z	% M
1	EO	Luyal Claire	France	Pegasus	PCHLM	6 613	100%	96%
2	BZ	Biedermann Joanna	Poland	Bravo	SP-3333	6 044	81%	87%
3	Y3	Carniel-Pasyc Maxi	Poland	Jantar Sid 3	SP-3584	5 918	89%	86%
4	BM	Golcowska Sylwia	Poland	Jantar Sid 3	SP-3253	5 858	89%	85%
5	QT	Marzalek Kryszyna	Poland	Jantar Sid 3	SP-3446	5 799	88%	84%
6	17	Trestova Jana	Czech	ASW-15 B	OK-3304	5 578	84%	81%
7	HAI	Haas Gudrun	Germany	Libelle Sid	D-9250	5 499	83%	80%
8	S	Sviridova Tamara	Russia	Jantar Sid 3	1965	5 419	82%	78%
9	VS	Geyer Swantje	Germany	LS-1D	D-0609	4 941	75%	71%
10	892	Armstrong Susan K.	G. Britain	LS-4B	NWV	4 680	71%	68%
11	19	Stampke Sylvia	Germany	LS-1F	D-3128	4 664	71%	67%
12	L77	Lewis Jane Patricia	G. Britain	LS-1F	8GA-4666	4 449	67%	64%
13	A1	Vokrinkova Hana	Czech	ASW-15	OK-1600	4 388	66%	63%
14	V	Nivakova Dana	Czech	ASW-15 B	OK-5310	4 023	61%	58%
15	DG	Gavalyte Jurgita	Lithuania	Jantar Sid 2	LY-GPM	3 652	55%	53%
16	91	Vilne Dana	Latvia	Jantar Sid 3	YL-CAJ	3 612	55%	52%

Time  
2350  
17.07.99

Chairperson  
Jan Kozłowski

Scoring Director  
Janek Łazarowski

Total flown distance - 28 165 km

% Z - a quotient of the competitor's points divided by the winner's points, in percentage

% M - a quotient of the competitor's points divided by the number of points possible to get, in percentage

### 15 m Class

After the brilliant start of the Germans they were struck by bad luck on the 2nd contest day. The flight of title holding European champion. Gisela Weinreich and Angelika Machinek lasted only 40 km which should motivate both to better performances the next days – and indeed they did but how to you catch up more than 500 points?

For the Czech star Alena Netusilova it was a black day: she landed 3 km before the airfield in a high cornfield, earning 830 points which brought her in the lead but this meant the end of the championships for Alena. The damage of the Ventus 2a did not seem irreparable but the physical shock caused Alena an injury of her spinal column.

I have visited her in hospital with best wishes for speedy recovery from all teams. Alena did not seem too much discouraged, in 100% horizontal position and her neck immobile in plaster she managed her successful publicity boards business with her GSM. “For this time it is over for me but at the next championships I shall be there again, do tell this to the other gliding ladies, they are not rid of me yet”.

The sun was shining bright for Angelika Machinek on day 3 with 1000 points and her three team mates near by. On day 6 the mission board showed a large triangle of 517,1 km which nobody reached but Annette Klossok had the largest distance with 304,6 km AND 1000 points moving up to 3<sup>rd</sup> overall ranking but that was the end of her hopes because next day she only finished 10<sup>th</sup> and slipped down to 7<sup>th</sup> placing.

The 8th and last contest day brought a nice surprise, at the same time good propaganda for the glider type Lak 17 A of Lithuanian production and it was the experienced Lithuanian Edita Skalskiene who swept over the finish line after 353,3 km



Bozena Demczenko – POL.

with the impressive speed of 115,7 km/h which was the best during the whole championships. But Angelika Machinek was not far, with her speed of 113,8 km/h she managed to precede the quiet Polish Bozena Demczenko and had just enough to secure at least her third position. However, nobody could stop the very regular Ukrainian Valentyna Toporova to stay on top as from the 5th day. She thus became European champion just like she did in Husbands Bosworth 8 years ago. Quite inconspicuously Jana Veprekova had “settled down” in the upper placings, she won the “cat’s cradle” – a task not appreciated by all- and took away the silver medal Gisela Weinreich was very much disillusioned and it was Angelika Machinek who saved the German honour with the bronze.

Exciting is what you could call the competition in **Standard class**. After a rather hesitating start the British pilots improved constantly and helped



15 mt. class – 12 pilots – 8 contest days

1	Toporova Valentyna.	Ukraine	Ventus 2 B	6641
2	Veprekova Jana.	Czech	Ventus C	6432
3	Machinek Angelika.	Germany	Ventus 2A	6373
4	Demczenko Bozena	Poland	ASW 27	6329
5	Mayer Ingrid.	Germany	LS6 B	6242
6	Skalskiene Edita.	Lithuania	LAK 17 A	6155
7	Klossok Anette.	Germany	ASW 27	6152
8	Zejdova Hanna.	Czech	SZD 56	5915
9	Kurstjens-Hawkins Pamela	Great Britain	ASW 27	5695
10	Weinreich Gisela.	Germany	LS-6	5500
11	Johnson Rosemary.	Great Britain	LS-8	5055
12	Netusilova Alena.	Czech	Ventus 2A	1795

each other. They had the better nerves in the struggle for the title. After the 6<sup>th</sup> contest day – victory of Ada Dankowska as a birthday present to her self- Gundula Goeke and Christiane Casper still occupied 1st and 3rd place. Gundula, European champion 1997, could still dream of a title 1999 ... but the three British were going to kill this dream. They kept close in the air and just as close on the ground, on the podium. Nobody had dared predicting such a collective final result. First idea: Gillian Spreckley will stand in the middle of the podium, she won the 8th and last day but commercial pilot Sarah Jane Harland had enough points to counter this last attack. Was there ever a happier team captain than cheerful Bob Bickers: a 100% British podium Harland-Spreckley-Withall. D isappointed Gundula had to stand *beside* the podium.



Standard class – 15 pilots – 8 contest days

1	Harland Sarah Jane.	Great Britain	ASW 24	6150
2	Spreckley Gillian.	Great Britain	LS-8	6097
3	Withall Sarah Lucy.	Great Britain	Discus B	5855
4	Goeke Gundula.	Germany	LS-8	5830
5	Casper Christiane.	Germany	LS-8	5736
6	Schaich Cornelia.	Germany	Discus	5629
7	Kussbach Sue Claudia.	Germany	Discus	5613
8	Bolla Maria	Hungary	Discus CS	5433
9	Dankowska Adela.	Poland	SZD 55	5420
10	Kuthanova Lenka.	Czech	Discus	5362
11	Michalak Anna.	Poland	LS-8	4974
12	Rynkiewicz Halina.	Poland	LS-8	4933
13	Cerna Eva.	Czech	Discus	4479
14	Lassing Anna.	Hungary	Discus CS	3987
15	Chishlakova Vera.	Russia	Discus	3790

From nine medals this time there was only one for Germany. It is true, 6 of 9 medal winners were flying German gliders... but this was poor consolation for the German team.

One little side remark. At the very last moment the risk of a complete failure of the farewell evening could be averted.

Usually contributions for this occasion are included in the entry fee but here in Leszno official administrative director Jan Kurczewski required quite an amount per person. This painful situation caused protests mainly from the east countries who had not counted with such expenses. "They don't come when they don't pay". The west block countries were firm: "If not ALL are coming, then we shall not come either". Dilemma.

As independent steward I have been contacted by Rainer Wienzek and several other team captains who handed me over quite a number of paid tickets, requesting me to discreetly transmit to where they were most needed, "from anonymous sponsors" Was the problem solved? On the tables in the festivity hall were only the flags of the "sponsoring" countries "Order of the director". I went outside to get the missing little flags and put them where they belonged. Kurczewski was furious, I didn't care and I refused to sit next to him at the table of honour. Instead I spent an agreeable evening with the Polish team.

That evening the usual music cassettes were replaced by 4 well paid members of the orchestra. No comment.

Fortunately that was the only shadow in these perfectly organised championships.