

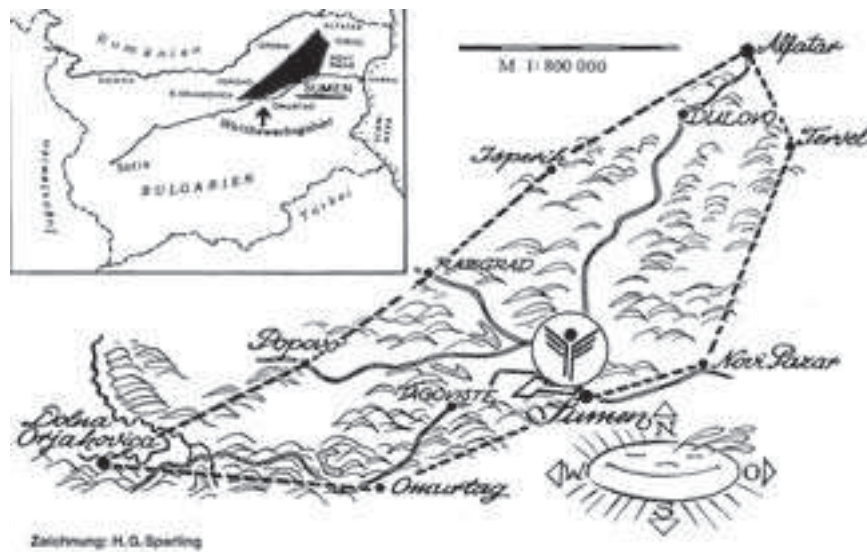
5th European Women Gliding Championships SHUMEN – Bulgaria 1987



Subotica 1985, now Shumen 1987. What happened with the general wish to have these European championships organized alternatively in an eastern and a western country?

The answer is very simple: no other organizing bid.

Even so, by a hair's breadth there would not even have been any such championships at all just for financial reasons.



The first Bulgarian invitation mentioned “entry fee 850 US \$” What? At first I thought maybe entry fee included everything: registration, towing, maps, accommodation, meals etc The sad confirmation came: no, just entry.



I sharpened my pen to write to General Colonel A.Kabatchev, President of the Bulgarian Aero Club: “this 850 \$ is probably a typing error of the secretariat, copying the originally handwritten figure, reading 8 instead of 3”. 850 \$ would indeed mean three times more than the usual entry fee until now. Should the 850 \$ fee be confirmed, then not only the Belgian but also pilots of most other countries would abstain from participating in these TOO expensive championships. And then “in cauda ve-

nenum”: P.S. copy of present letter is transmitted to the IGC Presidency and all European Aero Clubs.

The almost immediate reaction. no, the secretariat had not made a mistake but *luckily* (???) the Bulgarian Aero Club had found sponsors for the event, which allowed them to reduce the entry fee to 350 US \$.

So off we went to Bulgaria.

Shumen is situated some 300 km east of Sofia and only 80 km from the tourist town of Varna at the Black Sea. On various occasions Shumen had organized national championships with tasks varying from 200 to 500 km, with cloud base in the foreseen period usually between 1500 and 2000 m, lift from 2 to 4 m/sec. In other words: hopeful expectations.

What the dear General could not foresee was the extraordinary hot meteorological situation of 1987. Do you remember that summer? Continuous heat waves making hundreds of fatal victims in Macedonia and the North of Greece – and that is really not far away from Shumen! Practically every morning the meteo previsionist took 10 minutes to announce heaps of undoubtedly interesting data and developments – in Bulgarian language of course. Our interpreter Mrs Tontchev, wife of the organizing director, summarized it all for us in English: “To-day weather VERY HOT – any questions?” Questions, always, answers, never.

Linguistic problems in Shumen regularly caused quite upsetting and in the case of out landings sometimes critical confusion. On top of that upon return from these expeditions back to Shumen there was no more possibility to have a meal. “But we have paid in advance an all-in lump sum for the whole duration of the championships! “Sorry, cantina is closed at 7.30 p.m; no exception whatsoever.



New Task!



Christa Hinrichs (GER) and husband.

The unusual heat turning around 40 °C had unexpected consequences. As a personal experience f.i. surprising growth, day by day, of hair and nails. As a flying experience: on various occasions the strong Wilga planes could not take off at all or only tow empty gliders, no water ballast permitted.

On the other hand almost every day pilots and crews enjoyed merry “water bombardment” from the terraces of one floor on the lower one in the Student Home on the border of the airfield, where most of the teams had requested accommodation. Nobody complained – except the personnel of the building.

The Belgian team had preferred to cater for its own meals, with the primitive kitchen means at our disposal. In the morning we went to buy some Bulgarian yoghurt reputed to be among the best in the world, but we really had to hurry home and even so, sometimes upon arrival the precious yoghurt had already turned sour and had to be thrown away.

Our miniature shower produced some drops of water now and then, a situation far from ideal for 4 persons after another hot day, cruel day even on days like the one when Geogeo Litt almost melted away in the cooking 48 °C in her Discus canopy. Even worse experience for both pilots from Northern Finland, participating in European championships for the first time. Heat? Heat! is this what it is like in southern Europe?

But not too much complaining, please. Finally we had 8 contest tasks, although with distances never exceeding 300 km, sometimes even less than 200 km.

Good start for victorious Monika Richter in standard class and the next day the German team could again raise a glass to the victory of Gisela Weinreich in the



Gudrun Emde and Petra Zimmerman (GER).

15 m class, rewarded 1000 points for her 275; 9 km flight Alfatar-Stavianovo with an average of 91,61 km/h. This however was not the **best speed** of the championships in Shumen, this honour was reserved for **Jana Veprekova – CZ** with **104,46 km/h**. True, it was on a short 162,3 km track on the 5th contest day. That same day Christine Moroko also played her “speedy Gonzales” role succeeding 101,04 km/h on her graceful French Pégase after having photographed a large school in Alfatar and then back to Shumen. Poor harvest however for both winning ladies: only 500 points because of too short a task.

Temperamental Tatiana Obretenova only won one task in her home country but she showed remarkable regularity. We insisted that she treated us to a song with her incomparable Balkan voice for her final well deserved victory. She booked 348 points more than the quiet Soviet

(in fact Latvian) pilot Daine Vilne and 405 points more than Gisela Weinreich who mounted on the rostrum once more, but this time not in the middle.

For the first time since 8 years Poland was again represented in Shumen, be it in standard class and only by 2 pilots but the harvest was 50% success. Ursula Wojda indeed guided her glider Brawo to victory before Czech Maria Kyzivatova, permanent podium subscriber. In Shumen Maria paid a high price for her perseverant duel with Christine Moroko who had already booked three daily victories. They spied on each other till Christine landed safely at short distance before the airfield. Kyzivatova waited very long – too long! – to finally be obliged to put her glider down, unfortunately the field surface was stone-hard and

caused injury of two neck vertebrae. Until to-day this injury is still painful at times. But with the help of Eva Daroczy (this time better than her fellow-countrywoman Maria Bolla) Kyzi succeeded in keeping Christine Moroko away from the podium.

Marie-Françoise Gavaret, European champion 1981 had to pay a visit to the cows on day 4, only 30 km on her way – of course 0 points and a gap impossible to catch up. SO She let go and did not care much any more to finish at the end of the 15 m class.

Impossible to ignore another participation: Ozun Zahilde Zuhai of Turkey. She attracted a lot of attention, not only because of her frail lovely person but also because of her trailer. Ozun started in standard class with a Jantar ... and had to land out practically every day. Her crew had at its disposal only a giant high quadrangular lorry and at the end of the championships in Shumen they had become by far the most experienced retrieving team of them all.



Unforgettable, the view of tiny Ozun stepping down from her giant lorry-trailer! Sweet Ozun promised she would join again in the next Europeans. What a pity we never saw her again!

Number one of the social events – read the non-flying alternative programmes and apart from the classical Babajaga evening – was of course an excursion to the coast of the Black Sea.



Gill Van den Broeck (BEL) and Gudrun Emde (GER)

This trip took place on the foreseen rest day but there was nothing restful about it. Anybody who did not bring beach sandals could forget a refreshing jump in the lukewarm water, the sand on the beach literally burned the soles of your feet. A funny experience in Varna. Under an umbrella on a terrace near the sea we wanted to have some ice cream “*like those ones on the neighbouring table*”. The waitress brought three. “But we are 4” – She shook her head: no. Why? No. I went inside and insisted to see the manager. “She is not obliged to serve more than 3 customers at one table”. Well, she will not get a good tip. “Tips are humiliating, here they are forbidden”. I went back to my terrace, sat down alone at one table, ordered my ice cream, got it, picked it up and ate it ... at the Belgian table. Without tipping.

And then came the farewell evening and its richly filled buffet. Exchange of addresses, fixing appointments, hopes to see each other again and if so when and where... The “where” should not be a mystery, the 6th European championships were planned in 1989 in the Soviet Union.

The President of the Bulgarian Aero Club, none else but General Colonel A. Kabatchev wanted to meet the “bad Belgian woman” and asked the official in-



Thirsty German team.

terpreter to look for me. “Don’t worry” friendly Marina said to me “I told him I could not find you”.

One moment, no no, I DO want to meet him. And so we did. The big show! B for Belgium, B for Bulgaria, we are made to be friends, aren’t we? He took both my hands, shaking them over and over again. Why did you have to send copy of your initial letter to ALL European Aero Clubs? But I forgive you. (me: please can I have my hands back?).



Now we are friends. My reaction “Really? May I give you an occasion to prove this?” By all means, tell me what I can do. The poor General was caught. And this is the way Geogeo Litt and me got his promise we could indeed have a seat in his double-decker Antonov next day to fly to Sofia. Inside the Antonov the sides were too hot to lean against but after a bumpy flight and a sizzling hot night in a Sofia hotel we did not miss our connection flight to Brussels. Thank you General!



Podium standard class



Podium 15 m class.

| 15 m class | | | | |
|-------------------|-------------------------|---------|-------------|--------|
| PL | PILOT | COUNTRY | GLIDER TYPE | POINTS |
| 1 | Tatiana Obretenova | BG | Jantar | 6166 |
| 2 | Daina Vilne | SU | Jantar | 5818 |
| 3 | Gisela Weinreich | D | LS4 | 5761 |
| 4 | Irina Borovskaia | SU | Jantar | 5628 |
| 5 | Jana Veprekova | CS | Ventus | 5602 |
| 6 | Valentina Toporova | SU | Jantar | 5537 |
| 7 | Teodorka Radeva | BG | Jantar | 5478 |
| 8 | Guðrun Emde | D | LS4 | 5344 |
| 9 | Jindřishka Palušková | CS | Ventus | 5183 |
| 10 | Diljana Chpistova | BG | Jantar | 5108 |
| 11 | Petra Zimmermann | D | LS4 | 4505 |
| 12 | Marie Françoise Gavaret | F | LS6 | 3280 |

| Standard Class | | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|---------|-------------|--------|
| PL | PILOT | COUNTRY | GLIDER TYPE | POINTS |
| 1 | Urszula Wojda | PL | Brawo | 5754 |
| 2 | Marie Kyzivatova | CS | Discus | 5672 |
| 3 | Eva Daroczy | H | Jantar | 5556 |
| 4 | Christine Moroko | F | Pégase | 5533 |
| 5 | Eda Laan | SU | Jantar | 5459 |
| 6 | Maria Bolla | H | Jantar | 5412 |
| 7 | Yolanta Kopicka | PL | Brawo | 5252 |
| 8 | Christa Hinrichs | D | LS4 | 5172 |
| 9 | Lenka Kucerova | CS | ASW 19 | 5100 |
| 10 | Monika Richter-Treppesch | D | LS4 | 4834 |
| 11 | Maika Hohn | D | LS4 | 4726 |
| 12 | Anne-Marie Pinon | F | Pégase | 4337 |
| 13 | Tamara Sviridova | SU | Jantar | 4150 |
| 14 | Georgette Litt | B | Discus | 3555 |
| 15 | Lora Bakadzieva | BG | Jantar | 3527 |
| 16 | Raija Aulikki Maattanen | SF | LS4-a | 3520 |
| 17 | Eva Elisabet Normmen | SF | Pegase | 3367 |
| 18 | Teresa Toivonen-Renner | S | DG-300 | 3301 |
| 19 | Marija Letic | YU | DG-300 | 2907 |
| 20 | Tzenka Tzekova | BG | Jantar | 2788 |
| 21 | Ozun Zahide Zuhai | TU | Jantar | 1745 |
| 22 | Elena Koleva | BG | Jantar | 24 |