

A TEAM EFFORT

by Chuck O'Mahony

"It was a good day, we were all running pretty well and Jae Walker and I got ahead of the pack. We had to cross a broad valley of the Durance River and on the long glide there was rough, rough down wash... wind shadow thermals almost too frightening to turn in. The glider was nearly uncontrollable, banging around and yawing from side to side. At one point I saw the pee bag about two feet over my head and I thought 'this is going to be bad,' but it was a freezer bag, good and strong, so it didn't bust, and I was happy about that." This is Doug Jacobs, snuggled into the cockpit of his LS-8, flying a task in France's Southern Alps during the twenty-fifth World Gliding Championships.

"I gained some altitude on the Ubac ridges, and now to get to the turnpoint I've got to get around two more ridges that ended in the river valley. I got as high as I could on the first one, then dove for the backside of the last one. This ridge, unfortunately, curved around to the north and diverted the northwest wind and made it flow east. I was in the most violent downwash I've ever encountered. I radioed Jae not to come this way as I went crashing down the hill side, at what I'm sure was over ten knots of sink.

"I barely made it around the corner of the ridge at less than 300 feet and about then I started thinking about Charlotte and Molly and dancing at their weddings. I'd never, ever pulled one out this low and I was ready to drop the gear.



Eric and Rudy Mozer at ASH-25.



Front row (L to R) Doug Jacobs, Jae Walker, Bill Bartell, Gary Ittner. Back row (L to R) George Moffat, Ron Tabery, Christophe Veron, Eric Mozer, Mark Huffstutler.

But there was a safe field right across the river, so I decided to give it one last shot and took a quick right down into the river valley. I started working a little hill maybe two to three hundred feet high, a river bank actually, and after sawing back and forth a couple times I finally got something I could get a wing into. I inched up, one knot turned into two, and after about 30 minutes of froggin' around I finally got high enough to dive for the next ridge, the Chabre, where seven and eight knot lift got me to that ridge top and I was flying again. It was an absolute miracle!"

Doug Jacobs, a gold medal winner the first time he ever flew in a WGC, was flying in Standard Class here at St. Auban. His team mate



Tapio Savolainen (from Finland) and Hannes Linke, Stewards.

Lead Page Photo: Eric Mozer and Christophe Veron soar high above French soil in a Schleicher ASH-25.

was Jae Walker, competing in his first WGC, flying a Discus. Walker is a DC-9 captain for USAirways. In the 15-Meter Class Bill Bartell was flying his Ventus 2B in somewhat familiar territory, having competed in last year's pre-worlds, the Lavender Glide. His team mate was Gary Ittner, flying his second WGC in a Ventus CA. Ron Tabery in Open Class, a veteran of two previous Worlds, piloted a brand new ASW-22. Rounding out the field were Eric Mozer and Christophe Veron in the two place ASH-25. This was the seventh WGC for Eric, and he had garnered Bronze medals in two of the previous contests. "When I knew I was going to fly here, the first phone call I made was to Christophe," Mozer said. "He has 3,500 hours of flying here, and I wouldn't have wanted to attempt this without him." Veron, now a native of Texas, originally came from this area. Mozer first met him in Uvalde in 1991 where he was crewing in the Worlds for French pilot Gerard Lherm. This was the seven man U.S. team that had come to fly in an area with a reputation for

chewing up pilots and gliders with alarming regularity, where the wind often blew two directions at once and every change in direction and velocity rearranged the lift. The pilots had practiced for a week at Gap, a field 50 Km to the north, and occasionally found they were ridge soaring crabbing into the mountain.

Captain of the U.S. team was Mark Huffstutler, and he got lots of help from his wife, Kerry. They replaced the able team of Jim and Jackie Payne, who handled these roles for the five previous Worlds. A key addition to the group was a team coach, George Moffat, twice a Worlds gold medal winner, in Marfa, Texas in 1970 and in Waikerie, Australia in 1974. Moffat's aim was to instill a positive attitude in our pilots. Rule #1, "From the moment you arrive at the contest site, it's showtime! You're on! Look, act and talk confident. Mental attitudes are more important than minor differences in flying skills." Moffat was asked if he thought the shift in Standard Class from the Discus to the LS-7's and LS-8's (25 of the 36 Standard gliders were LS ships) was based on better performance. "The LS may be 1/2% better," he said, "but contests are often won by less than that margin." Moffat is a pilot who won by thinking in terms of seconds and fractions of percents.

Although he is English, Bill Malpas also wore a red, white and blue U.S. team cap. A close friend of Moffat's, Malpas agreed to act as the local area adviser and brief our pilots each day on what to expect while out on task. Malpas was extremely well qualified, a CFIG who has flown



Grid shot.

more than 2,000 hours in these Southern Alps over the last 20 years. "We fly here for pleasure," he said, "and we use a 'what if' technique. Before we leave the lift at a key point we ask 'what if the lift isn't working at the next key point?' Then we choose a backup. The competition pilots can't always do this. They are flying fast and often low, and there is pressure to win. That's when this area becomes dangerous."

Another new weapon in the team's arsenal was Bob Leve who holds a doctorate in psychology. A former U.S. Nationals Master cycling champion, a lecturer at Lake Placid Olympic training center, Leve was a military heli-

copter pilot and now flies his own ASW-20. Another Moffat choice, Leve was responsible for the physiological well being of the team and also helped them deal with the psychological aspects of world class competition. He worked to get these highly individualistic pilots to place trust and reliance on their flying partner to gain the advantages of team flying. Leve gave instructions on energy management for the long tasks and a long contest, and suggestions on what to eat. Leve considered recom-



Bill Bartell and Christophe Veron.



John Good, Jae Walker and Doug Jacobs.



David Ellis receives a special OSTIV prize for GPS development from Manfred Reinhardt.

mending a "final glide cocktail," ingesting sugar or caffeine near the finish line to spike the blood sugar level. My personal choice after a flight in these Alps would have been a jeroboam of vodka.

The U.S. involvement in the Worlds has been completely restructured in the past two years, and Mark Huffstutler reviewed the planning it took to get this team and its support group to St. Auban. "In the Spring of 1995

at the SSA Convention, the board of directors ratified a World Soaring Championship team committee and I was appointed chairman. The primary objective was to get a fully funded, totally prepared team to the Worlds in 1997, and to improve our team standing. Individual medals were a secondary consideration, the main focus was on the team.

I picked four people to work with me. George Moffat was chosen to get the team pilots into the right frame of mind for the competition. The administrative tasks - rental cars, hotel arrangements, shipping - were done by Dale Bush. Dick Mockler managed the fund raising and John Good was a great choice to handle all things technical. Good matched

glider performance of the two ships in each class wherever possible to facilitate team flying.

At the SSA Convention in Dallas all the team members spent eight hours together talking about France and getting to know each other. A big boost came later from Jerry Mercer, builder of the Genesis, who invited everyone to his ranch in Montrose, Colorado. April of this year Moffat and I and all seven team pilots spent five days at Jerry's



A view of St. Auban/Chateau Arnoux, Contest Site.

and he paid for the whole thing, air fare, catering, the works. The pilots did some flying, but the emphasis was on working as a team, getting to know one another, establishing rapport. The guys were a little apprehensive at first, but when it was over they agreed it was very productive."

On funding, Mark said they determined they needed \$125,000 to get a six glider team and their crew person here. "We got a start from the Robertson Fund, established by Robbie Robertson's family, which generates about \$25,000 in interest every two years. We fancied up a PW-5 sailplane with a red, white and blue paint job and raffled it off along with some other prizes, and that netted \$40,000. Merchandise sales brought in another \$20,000. Donations from members came to about \$12,000. Then Lawrence Wood donated his Nimbus 3DT, which we were able to sell for \$120,000, and we put \$100,000 of that in trust. Down the road we hope interests from investments like these will support the team totally."

The icing on the cake came from the Air Force. "Doug Jacobs had talked to Air & Space Museum Director Don Engen at the SSA Convention, asking if there was any



Ron Tabery, Jae Walker and George Moffat.

way to get U.S.A.F. sponsorship. We needed an Air Force connection, and Engen and I hit on the idea of having Air Force Academy cadets work with the team as crew. Engen contacted Gen. Moorman at the Pentagon who agreed to airlift team personnel and gliders on a space-available basis. Gen. Moorman contacted Gen. Stein, Academy Superintendent, saying he thought this was indeed good for the AF and should be especially reward-



Grid shot with Montfort in background, a centuries old village overlooking the airfield.

ing for your Cadets.' Our group met in Dover, Delaware, and 11 team members and four gliders were airlifted to Ramstein, Germany on a C5A. (Two sailplanes were already at the contest site. Tabery had bought a new ASW-22 in Germany, and Mozer had taken his glider over in May to practice.) We not only saved rental costs, but being able to fly their own gliders was a big psychological boost for the guys, too." The U.S.A.F. Academy cadets were Holly Cooper, Brian Burke and Tom Paynter, all going into their senior year at the Academy, all instructors in the Academy's glider program. They were accompanied by Capt. Ken Gates, an ex B-52 pilot, and they all crewed for one of the contest pilots. The cadets were apprenticed to a premier group of crew persons, electronic wizards and first rate glider pilots in their own right. John Seaborn, the "supply sergeant" who always had what anyone needed, flew as Jacobs' team mate in the WGC in Rieti. John Good won the Hilton Cup a couple of years ago and was rewarded with ten days on the Flying M. This was a well planned and professionally executed mission, and the team had a lot of skilled members.

After two years of work and planning the games were about to begin. Morning showers gave way to clear skies for the opening day ceremonies. Speeches took longer than usual because they had to be translated English to French or vice versa, but our guys managed to liven the occasion by doing a "wave" after each speaker. The other teams and the folks in the stands caught on quickly and joined in. There was a loooonng break between the speechifying and the air show, from noon till about three PM, probably to allow ample time for the hallowed French lunch. (The Postale is open in France from 9 to 12, then from 2 to 5. The mail must go through, Oui, but not till after lunch.) Highlight of the airshow when it finally did come off was a screeching performance by a Vampire jet, followed by a graceful aerial ballet by three of the



Ron Tabery and his Schleicher ASW-22 captured in flight.

long-wing sailplanes.

Monday, 30 June, official Contest Day One. Ninety two sailplanes representing 24 countries gridded up on the spacious St. Auban grass field, 400 meters wide, 1200 meters long, elevation 1509 feet. The gliders had room to line up in rows of 12, and 16 tow planes revved up and readied for the launch. There were three Pawnees and eight Rallyes with 235 HP engines, and a half dozen 180 HP Jodel D-140s. The tugs carried only an hour and a half's fuel to expedite tows, but even at this lighter weight the Jodels weren't used to pull the big Open Class ships.

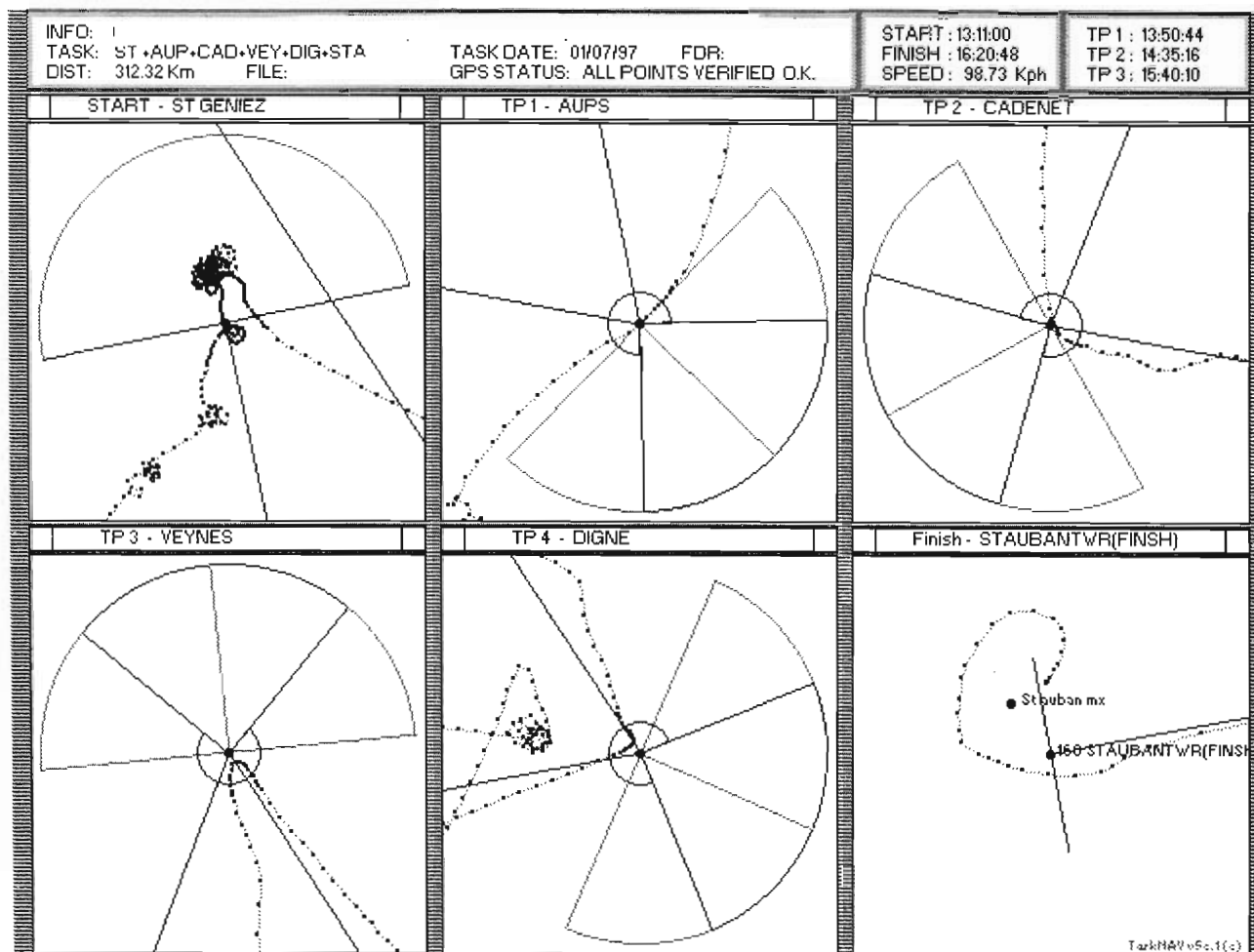
The frustrations of contest soaring kicked in right from the start. After briefing at 1030 there were several launch postponements as

the weather deteriorated, and finally a decision that only the Standard Class would fly. At 1450 the first glider was launched into a dark, menacing sky. Task One was a 212 Km course, automatically devalued because it was less than the 250 Km minimum for a 1000 point day. Twenty-one year old John Coutts of New Zealand was the first to cross the finish line in his Discus. Coutts was the youngest pilot in the field, flying his first task in a WGC. Heluva start! The French triplets, Caillard, Lopitiaux and Barrois streaked across the finish line in a "v" formation, but finished only in a tie for 17th. Doug Jacobs got off to a good start with a sixth place finish. There were six landouts, and a dejected Jae Walker was one of them. Just eight Km short of the field, Jae wisely opted to land out rather than try to stretch it. "I was a couple of minutes behind Doug," Jae said ruefully, "but what had been good lift for him fizzled into rain. What made matters worse was I could see the airport while still sitting in my glider." Better times were ahead.

On Tuesday the weather was not much better, but all three classes flew. Doug Jacobs was first in the Standards, a single point ahead of another gold medalist, Baer Selen of the Netherlands. Doug was first for the two day cumulative also. Jae Walker showed true grit following his



Gerard Lherm of France, 1st Place Winner in the Open Class, being towed in his Schleicher ASW-22.



The scorer's GPS track of one glider. (1) Circling and going through Start Gate, 2-3-4-5 good turnpoints (6) high speed finish, pitch up and landing.

landout and came home in sixth place. Gary Ittner had a sixth in the 15-Meter, and team mate Bill Bartell came in eleventh. Ten more points and Bartell would have placed right behind Ittner. Uli Schwenk and Robert Schroeder of Germany did their usual good job of team flying and finished one-two in the Open Class, but our pilots weren't far behind. Ron Tabery was fourth and Eric Mozer sixth. It was an excellent day for the U.S. team, especially nice to savor since the next two days were rainouts.

Looking at the contest sailplanes you would notice two things out of the ordinary. The first was the mandatory application of "anti-collision" strips on the glider wings. Dayglo orange and a foot wide, they went top and bottom on the wing tips, two per wing on the 15-Meter ships, three for the Opens. There was, of course, much objection, but it's a congested area and every little bit helps. The other design mod was a rule stating that all tail contest ID numbers or letters had to be 40 centimeters high. All manner of vertical stretching took place with paint

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brushes, but Ron Tabery took the prize. His ASW-22 is Sierra Sierra, and Ron converted the double SS on his tail to \$\$\$. It even made the daily contest newspaper.

Friday was the Fourth of July, time to resume the fireworks. Thunder rumbled and lightning crackled just east of the field as gliders were being assembled, and Mozer wondered aloud that this was an exercise in futility. But Open and 15-Meter classes were launched, while the disgruntled Standard pilots put their gliders back in the box.

Short tasks were called, 187 and 170 Km. The forecast thunderstorms didn't happen, and in what proved an undercall the pilots blistered around the course. Gilbert Gerbaud lived up to his nickname of "Speedy" and won the Opens with a speed of 128 km/h. Tabery was hot on his heels at 124 km/h, good for seventh place. Mozer and Veron finished 12th. Germany's Grund and Meuser flew even faster in 15 Meters, both posting speeds of 138 km/h. Ittner and Bartell did a nice job of team flying and finished 10th and 13th, less than one km/h apart in speed, only two points apart in score.

That night in the hangar the U.S. sponsored a Fourth of July celebration, with a paper airplane flying contest that



Stan Foat keeps Gary Ittner cool.



Tabery's way of making "SS" legal height.



Air Force Cadets: Capt. Ken Gates, Tom Paynter, Holly Coopers and Brian Burke.

was awesome. Nine year old Conrad Huffstutler tossed his entry for a convincing win, and later outside threw it for a wind-assisted 200 feet. Hot dogs were cooked on the grill, hamburgers were trucked in from the McDonalds at Digne, 24 Km distant. At McDonalds over here they sell beer and you can pay for your vittles with a credit card. Vive la France!

The classes were now even, each having flown two tasks. Saturday the Mistral brought winds from the northwest, and the promise of wave. Bill

Malpas talked to the pilots about the complex nature of the winds in this area. "There are two wind systems here, the valley breezes and the gradient wind. First thing I look for in a met report is valley breezes. If they are present, I really don't need to look at much else. The high mountains heat first and convection starts quite early. Cumulus form, and that process sucks air up the valley." Mountains in the task area were as high as 13,500 feet. "The valley breezes run opposite to the flow of the rivers in the valleys,

and they generate both thermal and ridge lift." On several occasions during the contest 92 gliders were spotted on the grid at 0930 for what appeared would be a downwind takeoff, but by launch time when the valley breezes had



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begun, the wind had shifted 180 degrees.

"The other wind is the gradient, the air flow above the mountain peaks dictated by the major weather systems. The Mistral is blowing today and will generate wave." Malpas had prepared a map for the pilots with "lozenges," small ovals marking areas of good lift. Each day in the team hut he would evaluate wind conditions and point out which lozenges would most likely be working. Maximum allowable altitude for the gliders was 19,500 feet, and they all carried oxygen and used it according to their personal preference. Malpas cautioned that on a strong wave day you don't want to land in a field. "You never know what the wind will be doing. It can be very strong, from any direction, and change quite suddenly. In a strong Mistral, fly close to airfields."

Conditions favored the locals today, and the French finished one-two-three in Standard. This was the day Jacobs had his low save and limped home, happy to make it back at all. Walker fared better and finished 11th. All pilots made it across the finish line in 15-Meter, and the French finished two-three-four. Tabery and Mozer were 12th and 14th, with "Speedy" Gerbaud between them at 13th.

On Sunday, July 6, Director Michel Fache decided the weather called for longer tasks. The Standards drew a 404 Km task, 15-Meter had 469 Km, and the Opens were being sent 508 Km. Surface winds were gusting to 35 MPH and there were no clouds to mark thermals or wave. Coming home from the south the pilots were bucking a strong headwind. A rock formation called The Penitents formed a ridge just to the east on their final approach. (The Penitents resemble a long line of monks and stand over 300 feet high. Legend has it they actually were monks who looked lustfully at some Moorish maidens. To save their souls, the abbot petrified them on the spot and turned them into a tourist attraction.) A lot of the gliders were on the wrong side of this ridge and landed out just short of the field. Some made it around the corner and had to ridge soar the Penitents on final approach to make it across the finish line.

Jacobs and Bartell landed in the same recently plowed field just seven Km from home, and Martha Jacobs went on the retrieve. "When we got to the field there were a dozen gliders there, and three or four more landed while we were putting the glider in the box. It was a huge field (I'm quoting Martha exactly here) about as long as long as a football field and about four football fields wide." Because of a knee-high stand of corn they had to land in the 300 foot direction on this field, and this is not the average glider pilot's definition of a huge field. But then these are not average glider pilots.

Gerd Spiegelberg of Germany and Graham White of New Zealand damaged their sailplanes on landouts and

both were out of the contest. In all there were 57 landouts, and only Mozer and Tabery from our team made it home. With four task days completed the contest was now official.

The tasks were flown in an area roughly 150 miles long and 110 miles wide. It was bordered on the north by Switzerland, on the east by Italy, on the west by the valley of the Rhone, roughly a line running from Lyon to Marseilles, and on the south by the auto route to Nice. Among Jae Walker's notable moments in the contest was "viewing the Mediterranean from 15,000 feet in wave...beautiful!" There were 162 turnpoints, 40 off-field landing sites and 15 airfields which the pilots programmed into their GPS units.

On Day Five Mozer and his co-pilot didn't make it home from the 472 Km task. Neither did gold medalists Ingo Renner and Gilbert Gerbaud. (Renner had opted to fly an ASH-26, at 18 meters the shortest wing in the Open Class. Uli Schwenk's ASW-22BL was a majestic 29 meters.) There were 16 landouts for the day, but the rest of the U.S. squad made it back, with Jacobs making the best showing with a

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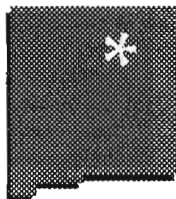
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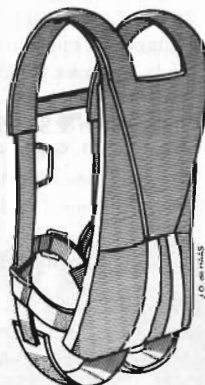
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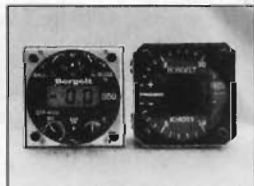
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tenth place finish. By the end of Day Five, our team had three pilots in the top ten, with Jacobs and Tabery fifth in Standard and Open, and Bill Bartell eighth in 15-Meter.

A couple hundred feet made the difference between a disappointing day for Mozer and Veron and a big day for Tabery. "Ron and I are trying to team fly but yesterday he got into the wave and was 4,000 feet above me before the start," Mozer said, critiquing Day Six. "He had to take advantage of it and go. Three or four of us were just low enough that we couldn't connect." Tabery, a reluctant convert to GPS, put it to good use on this task and won the day. "The mountains aren't lined up here, and GPS eliminates a lot of finger-on-the-map navigating. Up north I got some welcome help from the French pilots in getting to the turn. There was only a 1,000 foot operating band, the distance from the 12,000 foot peaks and cloud base. We had to pick our way through snowy passes, very close to the rocks and glaciers, 20 miles in, twenty miles back out." Competing in his third WGC, this was Ron's first win. For one day he was the best Open Class pilot in the world. "My only regret is my family isn't here to share it," Ron said. Bartell and Jacobs had fast days, and were very much in contention. Tabery was in fifth place, Jacobs in seventh, Bartell in eighth.

The weather on Day Seven was the kind us sparrows like to fly in, no wind to speak of and friendly cu's marking the thermals. It was not as appealing to these eagles. Bill Bartell got trapped in a valley with low cloud bases and no ridges working and landed out. His crewman, Mike Wilson was amazed that Bartell was able to put it into the field that he did. Bartell laughed and said "It was either there or a little further down... in the lake." A dozen other 15-Meter sailplanes didn't make it home, but Ittner finished 11th to move to 11th place.

Jacobs finished a strong fifth and was in sixth place overall, and Walker came in 11th and was now in 16th place. Nine Standard pilots were booby-trapped by GPS and got ZERO scores for the day for failing to cross the start line. The start line is a semi-circle, and it rotated each day according to the direction of the first turnpoint. The unlucky nine pilots paralleled the start line, agonizingly close but never actually crossing it, and the computer readout nailed them. Even Dave Ellis, developer of the GPS flight recorder, admits it is a weak point in the scoring system and needs

to be changed. Eric Mozer had a little bit of overdue luck and finished ninth, and although Tabery was 11th for the Open task he held on to fifth place.

After additional briefings and moving gliders to the grid, the task on Thursday, July 10, was finally scrubbed. The French expression for a landout is "Aller aux vaches," to go to the cows, to their green pastures. With no flying, the overworked outlanding staff posted a sign on their office door, NO MILK TODAY. With only two days to fly, the leader board looked like this: In Open, Uli Schwenk and Robert Schroeder of Germany were one-two, with Gerard Lherm and Didier Hauss of France in a virtual dead heat for third. In Standard, France's Caillard, Barrois and Lopitiaux were win, place and show. In 15-Meter, Grund and Meuser of Germany were tied for first, Giorgio Galetto of Italy (where else?) was third.

On the next to last day, Hannes Linke's announcement at briefing lightened the tension, for some at least. "There will be a doping control test today at the conclusion of the task. First place in each class will go directly to a waiting car after landing and be driven to the tower. They will be given water to drink and then tested." For a semi-dehydrated pilot that might take a lotta water and a lotta waiting. Five additional pilots were to be tested from a random drawing, and the U.S. team picked a bad time to get lucky. Jacobs, Bartell and Mozer were three of the five names drawn. Is nothing sacred?

When the gliders were trundled to the grid in the morning they were aimed south, a 15 MPH wind at their tails. By the 1315 launch, the valley breeze gave them a headwind, but towering cu's and even anvil head clouds were building in all quadrants. The 15-Meter pilots came a cropper at the fourth turnpoint, Vinon to the south, and only seven sailplanes made it home. Things got worse for Bill Bartell, who fell victim to the GPS start trap. His trace showed he had not officially crossed the start line and he earned zero points for his 271 Km flight, a devastating loss of over 800 points. Eric Napoleon made the same slip, and while preliminary results showed him second

for the day and second in the class, his zero dropped him out of contention. Napoleon was trying for a hat trick, having won the WGC gold medal in Sweden and New Zealand.

In Open Class, Denmark's Jan Andersen did everything right and blew away the field. He flew the course 23 Km/h faster than the runner up and finished 232 points ahead of Gerard Lherm. Uli Schwenk, no stranger to bad luck, landed out and dropped from first place to fourth. Fifteen landouts in Standard, but Jacobs and Walker made it back.

The grand finale, Contest Day Nine, and the leaders proved to be true champions under pressure. In the first three slots in all three classes there was not a change. In the Standards Jean-Marc Caillard took the gold, Jean-Denis Barrois the silver, and Jean-Claude Lopitiaux the bronze. A sweep for the French, all flying LS-8's. (Maybe St. Jean is the patron saint of glider pilots?) The nearest Discus was seventh. Popular Brit Andrew Davis won the day, although earlier in the contest he had allowed as how he was "too old for this. There are too many young pilots here who don't realize this is supposed to be difficult." Cumulative, Doug Jacobs wound up 11th and Jae Walker was 14th.

In 15-Meter, Werner Meuser and Michael Grund of Germany finished one/two, with Giorgio Galetto of Italy third. It was the only class without a French medalist. Gary Ittner finished 13th, Bill Bartell was 24th. All three winning pilots were flying a Ventus. It was a close race in the Open Class, Gerard Lherm and Didier Hauss coming in one/two for France, and Robert Schroeder placing third for Germany. Only 15 points separated the first three finishers. Ron Tabery finished a strong fifth behind two pairs of pilots who knew the area intimately and had a wealth of team flying experience. In team standings France won by a good margin, but the U.S. was sixth, a good move up from our 13th place finish in New Zealand.

We didn't bring home any medals, but this competition

1997 World Gliding Championships 15-Meter Class St. Auban, France

Day One 1-Jul Distance: 312.33 km				Day Two 4-Jul Distance: 170.13 km				Day Three 5-Jul Distance: 343.83 km				Day Four 6-Jul Distance: 469.35 km				Day Five 7-Jul Distance: 402.60 km				Day Six 8-Jul Distance: 427.79 km				Day Seven 9-Jul Distance: 477.49 km				Day Eight 11-Jul Distance: 290.17 km				Day Nine 12-Jul Distance: 341.86 km								
Pos.	Cntry	Contestant	Plane	Cntr	Day	Pos	Score	Pos	Score	Day	Pos	Score	Pos	Score	Day	Pos	Score	Pos	Score	Day	Pos	Score	Pos	Score	Day	Pos	Score	Pos	Score	Day	Pos	Score	Pos	Score	Day	Pos	Score	Pos	Score	Final
1	D	MEUSER Werner	Ventus 2a	WM	7	860	7	860	2	287	3	1147	9	812	5	1959	5	985	4	2944	2	992	1	3936	4	951	1	4887	4	978	1	5885	1	1000	1	6885	7	935	1	7800
2	D	GRUND Michael	Ventus 2a	HP	8	859	8	859	1	290	2	1149	10	810	5	1959	4	989	3	2948	3	987	2	3935	4	951	2	4886	2	979	1	5865	9	820	2	6685	1	989	2	7674
3	I	GALETTI Giorgio	Ventus 2a	YL	1	907	1	907	25	246	1	1153	13	786	8	1939	2	995	5	2934	8	930	5	3864	1	1000	3	4886	2	979	3	5843	8	831	3	6674	4	966	3	7640
4	F	NAVAS Gilles	Ventus 2a	Y	3	890	3	890	21	251	7	1141	3	856	1	1997	7	984	1	2981	14	922	3	3903	16	813	5	4716	6	966	5	5692	4	977	4	6659	11	862	4	7521
5	GB	WILLS Justin	ASW 27	PR	20	685	20	685	3	286	17	971	16	747	15	1718	3	991	10	2709	6	938	9	3647	10	924	9	4571	12	911	6	5492	15	787	6	6269	2	984	5	7253
6	NL	RAIMOND Steven	ASW 27	IR	5	874	5	874	12	270	5	1144	8	813	7	1957	19	829	8	2766	7	936	7	3722	13	882	7	4604	18	850	7	5454	6	972	5	6426	26	709	6	7135
7	I	GHIOZZO Stefano	Ventus 2a	VS	27	627	27	627	27	245	27	872	18	742	24	1814	10	846	23	2460	11	926	20	3386	2	994	12	4300	5	977	9	5357	11	807	10	6164	5	962	7	7126
8	F	KUNTZ Regis	Ventus 2	EV	23	634	23	634	21	251	24	885	2	858	14	1743	9	850	12	2593	17	918	12	3511	15	854	13	4365	1	1000	8	5365	7	858	8	6223	9	866	8	7089
9	I	GOSTNER Thomas	Ventus 2a	VS	12	818	12	818	25	246	13	1064	1	860	9	1924	28	573	21	2497	16	919	17	3416	3	978	11	4394	17	852	12	5246	11	807	13	6053	3	967	9	7020
10	CZ	KREJCIRIK Petr	Ventus B	ZV	31	576	31	576	10	271	30	847	12	799	22	1646	20	827	22	2473	5	944	16	3417	11	904	16	4321	15	896	13	5217	4	977	9	6194	21	760	10	6950
11	GB	KAY Alistor	Ventus 2a	K1	17	693	17	693	18	254	19	947	19	729	19	1676	24	822	19	2498	9	927	15	3425	7	940	13	4365	13	897	10	5262	2	981	7	6243	29	653	11	6896
12	GB	JONES Steve	Ventus 2a	110	18	692	18	692	18	254	20	946	19	729	21	1675	17	841	17	2516	9	927	14	3443	23	741	18	4184	13	897	15	5081	3	979	11	6090	17	788	12	6848
13	USA	ITTNER Gary	Ventus 2a	P7	6	873	6	873	10	271	5	1144	25	651	13	1795	26	791	13	2586	13	923	13	3509	18	804	17	4313	11	936	11	5249	11	807	12	6056	20	778	13	6834
14	CH	HAUSER Fridolin	Ventus 2a	HJ	10	856	10	856	7	277	10	1133	5	853	3	1986	25	821	7	2807	23	809	10	3616	25	726	15	4342	21	795	14	5137	16	763	14	5900	10	863	14	6763
15	F	NAPOLEON Eric	Ventus 2	EW	4	888	4	888	21	251	8	1139	3	856	2	1995	5	985	2	2980	15	920	4	3900	6	950	4	4850	7	964	4	5814	31	0	15	5814	6	938	15	6752
16	A	RIEBEDER Karl	Ventus 2C	KR	21	682	21	682	24	250	21	932	17	744	19	1676	12	844	16	2520	21	872	19	3392	27	701	20	4090	9	958	17	5049	16	763	16	5812	16	792	16	6604
17	S	PETERSSON Axel	Ventus 2	PC	14	803	14	803	5	283	12	1086	32	412	28	1496	1	1000	19	2498	24	792	21	3290	29	594	24	3884	10	946	21	4830	11	807	18	5637	13	814	17	6451
18	CZ	DEDERA Milos	Ventus C	LF	27	627	27	627	9	273	22	900	11	801	17	1701	20	827	15	2528	1	1000	11	3528	8	934	10	4462	22	419	20	4881	16	763	17	5644	19	781	18	6425
19	NL	VAN BREE Max	LS 6a	MT	19	690	19	690	14	268	18	958	15	756	16	1714	20	827	14	2521	29	459	26	3000	28	668	25	3668	18	854	22	4522	9	820	20	5342	14	808	19	6150
20	SLO	THALER Michael	DG 600	MT	30	610	30	610	31	219	31	829	26	845	29	1474	10	846	26	2320	22	849	24	3169	22	757	23	3926	8	963	19	4889	30	528	19	5417	24	729	20	6146
21	B	JANSSENS Paul	LS 6	PJ	24	632	24	632	20	252	25	884	33	381	31	1265	27	790	29	2055	26	768	28	2823	20	762	26	3585	20	806	25	4391	16	763	23	5154	8	889	21	6943
22	N	BULUKIN Bilger	LS 6	BP	13	804	13	804	16	258	14	1062	27	626	18	1688	20	827	18	2515	20	881	18	3406	26	704	19	4110	23	405	23	4515	16	763	21	5278	23	743	22	6021
23	SLO	PRISTAVEC Boetjan	DG 600 S	BB	23	673	23	673	31	219	23	892	22	723	23	1615	18	839	24	2454	25	782	22	3236	19	765	21	4001	24	404	24	4405	16	763	22	5188	22	745	23	5913
24	USA	BARTELL Bill	Ventus 2b	OF	11	850	11	850	13	269	11	1119	14	766	10	1985	12	844	9	2729	12	924	8	3653	9	931	8	4584	26	403	18	4987	31	0	25	4987	18	787	24	5774
25	D	THEISINGER Martin	ASW 27	WT	9	858	9	858	6	281	8	1139	7	821	4	1960	8	853	6	2813	4	972	6	3785	12	883	6	4668	29	389	16	5057	31	0	24	5057	31	521	25	5478
26	E	de ORLEANS B. Alvaro	ASW 27	AJ	25	630	25	630	30	231	28	861	30	575	30	1438	12	844	27	2280	32	0	31	2280	17	807	31	3087	19	841	27	3928	16	763	26	4691	15	798	26	5589
27	AUS	JANSEN David	LS 6	CC	15	778	15	778	17	255	15	1033	31	467	27	1500	33	402	31	1902	27	764	29	2666	24	737	27	3403	28	393	28	3796	27	843	27	4439	29	653	27	5092
28	CH	HOFSTETTLER Christian	ASW 27	AC	16	712	16	712	8	274	16	988	8	847	12	1633	12	844	11	2677	28	463	25	3140	34	0	30	3140	24	404	30	3544	16	763	28	4307	25	720	28	5027
29	B	STOUFFS Patrick	Ventus 2S	78	31	576	31	576	4	285	28	862	23	703	26	1584	30	491	29	2055	19	910	27	2965	33	315	29	3280	34	164	31	3444	16	763	31	4207	12	815	29	5902
30	A	FALKENSAMMER Wolfgang	Ventus 2b	71	28	621	28	621	15	261	26	881	24	699	25	1551	12	844	25	2425	32	0	30	2425	14	858	28	3284	30	363	29	3647	29	573	30	4220	27	687	30	4967
31	SAF	GOUDRIAAN Laurens	ASW 27	LIG	2	906	2	906	28	240	4	1146	21	724	11	1870	32	403	28	2273	18	917	23	3190	20	762	22	3952	33	316	26	4268	31	0	29	4268	33	45	31	4313
32	SAF	BRADLEY Richard	Ventus 2	210	33	24	33	24	29	233	33	257	28	622	33	879	29	494	33	1333	30	260	33	1633	30	576	32	2209	26	403	32	2612	26	704	32	3316	28	661	32	3917
33	PL	KEPKA Franciszek	ASW 27	VM	25	630	25	630	34	0	32	630	29	585	32	1215	31	443	32	1659	32	0	32	1659	32	392	33	2051	31	362	33	2413	28	629	33	3042	34	0	33	3042
34	DK	ANDERSEN Knud, M.	Ventus C	SX	34	0	34	0	33	176	4	176	34	34	34	40	34	253	34	733	31	166	34	899	31	166	34	899	31	312	34	1735	25	721	34	2456	32	168	34	2624

was a success. There was much pre-contest apprehension about safety, and rightly so after the unacceptable losses in last year's pre-worlds, The Lavender Glide. But only two gliders were damaged, making this one of the safest contests in years. The Met staff did an excellent job of calling the weather in mercurial conditions. Much credit is due the task setters, even more to the pilots. Our pilots, and every pilot in the contest, flew aggressively and with incredible skill and courage in this beautiful but very challenging arena. Of our team, Bill Malpas said "Their progress was astounding."

Mark Huffstutler and George Moffat created two teams, one with seven pilots and a larger, support team that did the work to bring them to St. Auban. The big team included volunteers from coast to coast, boosters from the Air & Space Museum, the Pentagon and the Air Force Academy. It was a good start for this new team concept. The future looks even better.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

A long-time SSA member and frequent contributor to Soaring Magazine, Chuck O'Mahony lives in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. His work as a photojournalist in reporting on the annual SSA Conventions and various World Championships was noted at the 1995 SSA Convention in Reno when the SSA Board Recognized him with an SSA Exceptional Achievement Award. He has also had several soaring related articles published in various other aviation related publications.



1997 World Gilding Championships

Open Class

St. Auban, France

Pos			Cntry	Contestant	Plane	Cntr	Day One			Day Two			Day Three			Day Four			Day Five			Day Six			Day Seven			Day Eight			Day Nine		
							Day	Pos	Score	Day	Pos	Score	Day	Pos	Score	Day	Pos	Score	Day	Pos	Score	Day	Pos	Score	Day	Pos	Score	Day	Pos	Score	Day	Pos	Score
							1-Jul Distance: 349.62 km			4-Jul Distance: 187.84 km			5-Jul Distance: 384.87 km			6-Jul Distance: 508.83 km			7-Jul Distance: 472.90 km			8-Jul Distance: 453.58 km			9-Jul Distance: 533.24 km			11-Jul Distance: 337.98 km			12-Jul Distance: 365.55 km		
1	F	LHERM Gerard	ASW 22	AA	14	804	14	804	5	365	11	1169	7	788	8	1957	4	975	3	3885	3	987	3	5882	2	727	1	6589	4	944	1	7533	
2	F	HAUSS Didier	Nimbus 4	RH	7	852	7	852	2	380	5	1232	8	785	5	2017	6	894	5	2911	5	965	4	3876	2	989	4	4865	2	986	4	5861	
3	D	SCHROEDER Robert	ASW 22BL	1E	2	917	2	917	3	374	2	1291	5	795	2	2086	1	1000	2	3086	3	997	2	4083	5	899	2	4982	6	945	2	5927	
4	D	SCHWENK Uli	ASW 22BL	KS	1	961	1	961	4	369	1	1330	6	794	1	2124	2	999	1	3123	4	967	1	4090	4	900	1	4990	3	925	4	6460	
5	USA	TABERY Ron	ASW 22	SS	4	903	4	903	7	357	4	1260	12	734	7	1994	5	919	4	2913	10	931	5	3844	1	1000	5	4844	11	903	5	5747	
6	CH	THUT Daniel	ASH 25	IQ	15	799	15	799	16	272	15	1071	2	886	8	1957	8	850	9	2807	1	1000	6	3807	8	835	6	4642	16	861	7	5503	
7	CH	SCHILD Rudolf	Nimbus 3	JB	12	816	12	816	11	338	14	1154	9	766	12	1920	8	850	10	2770	1	1000	8	3770	7	842	7	4612	15	866	8	5478	
8	PL	KAWA Sebastian	ASH 25	LOT	10	828	10	828	6	362	9	1188	11	741	10	1929	7	892	8	2821	8	953	7	3774	10	732	8	4506	1	1000	6	5506	
9	DK	BREIDAH Henrik	Nimbus 3	PR	5	886	5	886	10	340	6	1228	17	412	15	1640	11	792	14	2432	13	891	10	3323	6	869	9	4192	10	909	9	5101	
10	DK	ANDERSEN Jan	Nimbus 4	IAA	3	914	3	914	7	357	3	1271	10	751	3	2022	10	826	7	2848	17	316	13	3164	13	668	12	3832	8	938	11	4770	
11	F	GERBAUD Gilbert	Nimbus 4D	72	11	823	11	823	1	383	8	1206	13	722	11	1928	3	976	6	2904	16	328	11	3232	12	671	10	3903	5	948	10	4851	
12	CH	BINDER Hans	Nimbus 3T	73	8	844	8	844	15	324	12	1168	15	524	14	1892	18	443	15	2135	6	960	14	3095	11	708	13	3801	4	958	12	4759	
13	GB	JONES Philip Ralph	Nimbus 3DT	954	9	836	9	836	14	335	10	1171	4	84	4	2019	15	472	13	2491	11	914	9	3405	15	456	11	3861	13	884	13	4745	
14	A	HAGGENMUELLER Reinhard	Nimbus 4 D	HA	16	851	16	851	17	241	16	892	16	859	17	1325	14	680	16	2005	7	954	15	2959	9	772	14	3731	17	843	14	4574	
15	AUS	RENNER Ingo	ASH 26	26	13	815	13	815	9	341	13	1156	3	859	6	2015	13	682	11	2697	14	499	12	3196	14	504	15	3700	14	874	14	4574	
16	GB	MAY Robin	ASH 25	13	17	168	17	168	12	36	17	502	1	1000	16	1502	17	447	17	1949	12	898	16	2847	16	320	16	3167	12	899	16	4066	
17	USA	MOZER Eric	ASH 25	1	6	875	6	875	12	336	7	1211	14	584	13	1795	12	769	12	2564	18	192	17	2756	17	232	17	2988	9	919	17	3907	
18	B	BOURGARD Paul	Nimbus 3	GB	18	0	18	0	18	202	18	602	18	381	18	583	16	458	18	1041	15	471	18	1512	18	191	18	2218	12	567	18	2785	

1997 World Gilding Championships

Standard Class

St. Auban, France

					Day One 30-Jun			Day Two 1-Jul			Day Three 5-Jul			Day Four 6-Jul			Day Five 7-Jul			Day Six 8-Jul			Day Seven 9-Jul			Day Eight 11-Jul			Day Nine 12-Jul																													
					Distance: 212.19 km						Distance: 273.51 km						Distance: 301.35 km						Distance: 404.38 km						Distance: 368.61 km						Distance: 395.58 km						Distance: 448.46 km						Distance: 276.00 km						Distance: 318.15 km					
Pos	Only	Contestant	Plane	Cntr	Day	Pos	Score	Cum	Cum	Day	Pos	Score	Cum	Cum	Day	Pos	Score	Cum	Cum	Day	Pos	Score	Cum	Cum	Day	Pos	Score	Cum	Cum	Day	Pos	Score	Cum	Cum	Day	Pos	Score	Cum	Cum	Day	Pos	Score	Cum	Cum														
1	F	CAILLARD Jean-Marc	LS Ba	EF	17	594	17	594		15	683	10	1277		4	828	1	2105		8	938	1	3043		3	928	1	3971		5	973	1	4544		19	792	1	5736		5	763	1	6489		6	771	1	7270										
2	F	BARROIS Jean-Denis	LS Ba	ER	17	594	17	594		17	682	12	1276		4	828	7	2005		9	937	3	2942		4	927	2	3669		5	973	2	4842		14	731	2	6365		9	738	2	7154		9	722	2	7544										
3	F	LOPTAUX Jean-Claude	LS B	EU	17	594	17	594		18	681	13	1275		3	738	6	2013		17	799	7	2812		5	926	3	3738		3	977	3	4715		17	794	3	5569		6	762	3	6271		3	785	3	7056										
4	A	HARTMANN Peter	LS B	PE	5	643	5	643		9	713	3	1356		8	605	3	2051		10	916	2	2967		21	961	4	3628		19	668	5	4496		1	954	5	5450		3	781	5	6231		2	795	4	7026										
5	NL	SELEN Baer	LS B	SB	11	618	11	618		2	770	2	1388		10	693	2	2081		27	790	4	2871		13	732	5	3603		8	941	4	4544		2	943	4	5487		9	757	4	6244		5	773	5	7019										
6	GB	DAVIS Andrew John	LS B	KM	12	617	12	617		4	729	5	1346		9	694	5	2040		16	805	5	2845		23	651	9	3496		2	992	6	4488		9	881	8	5389		13	733	8	6102		1	818	6	6920										
7	NL	BORGSMANN Erik	Discus A		28	530	28	530		19	667	22	1197		5	720	11	1917		11	886	8	2803		20	664	10	3467		1	1000	8	4467		6	903	7	5370		12	751	7	6121		15	738	7	6899										
8	I	AVANZINI Luciano	LS Ba	3A	23	559	23	559		31	526	26	1085		14	656	17	1741		17	799	20	2540		6	918	12	3458		20	861	12	4319		17	794	10	5113		1	821	9	5934		18	723	8	6657										
9	SK	KOZAR Jozef	Discus b	LZ	26	548	26	548		4	729	10	1277		25	499	14	1776		3	968	11	2744		11	832	7	3576		36	553	17	4129		7	893	12	5022		15	738	10	6365		9	722	10	7544										
10	A	HAEMMERLE Heinz	LS B	ZL	17	594	17	594		25	616	19	1210		8	709	10	1919		26	791	13	2710		33	432	21	3142		21	830	19	3972		3	937	15	4909		4	778	11	5687		8	771	11	6436										
11	USA	JACOBS Douglas	LS Ba	DJ	6	640	6	640		1	771	1	1411		23	549	9	1960		21	796	10	2756		9	838	6	3594		11	884	7	4478		5	908	6	5386		11	752	6	6138		36	296	11	6454										
12	GB	WELLS Martin	LS B	32	10	821	10	821		14	685	8	1306		12	671	8	1977		30	789	9	2786		18	678	13	3444		10	905	10	4349		16	808	9	5157		27	468	12	5625		30	627	12	6252										
13	D	WEISS Herbert	LS Ba	3Y	33	478	33	478		3	733	18	1211		29	442	27	1653		27	790	25	2443		1	1000	14	3443		32	707	16	4150		4	922	11	5072		34	429	13	5021		14	771	13	6242										
14	USA	WALKER Joe	Discus a	JW	35	290	35	290		6	728	31	1018		11	690	21	1708		33	744	24	2452		16	714	19	3166		28	749	22	3915		11	834	16	4749		16	708	14	5457		17	735	14	6192										
15	AUS	TAYLOR Bruce	LS Ba	WB	34	408	34	408		36	402	36	810		34	304	39	1114		2	996	34	2110		10	836	25	2948		23	821	26	3767		15	814	20	4581		7	761	18	5342		3	785	15	6127										
16	I	COSTA Corrado	LS B	LB	24	555	24	555		22	655	19	1210		16	650	13	1880		21	796	15	2656		7	914	8	3570		22	822	9	4392		28	597	13	4989		35	413	16	5402		22	672	16	6074										
17	DK	TERNHOLT Lars	LS B	3M	29	527	29	527		11	689	17	1216		29	442	26	1658		7	941	18	2599		35	347	25	2946		14	878	23	3824		22	771	19	4595		8	758	17	5354		20	705	17	6059										
18	J	IKHAWA Makoto	LS Ba	10	12	617	12	617		35	420	30	1037		16	650	23	1687		35	646	28	2333		15	715	22	3048		12	881	21	3929		23	746	17	4675		17	665	19	5340		21	702	18	6042										
19	SK	KUBOVICK Vilam	Discus cs	LZ	21	576	21	576		34	441	32	1017		33	311	35	1328		17	799	33	2127		14	716	29	2843		29	744	30	3587		10	867	22	4454		2	807	20	5261		14	739	19	6040										
20	A	ACHLEITNER Guido Jun.	ASW 24	24	3	662	3	662		13	686	4	1348		7	699	4	2047		20	796	5	2845		38	197	23	3042		27	770	24	3812		14	816	18	4628		18	604	21	5232		23	668	20	5900										
21	AUS	BUCHANAN John	LS Ba	ALB	16	599	16	599		20	661	14	1260		34	304	28	1564		21	796	27	2360		29	520	28	2880		33	702	31	3582		21	790	25	4372		9	757	22	5129		11	750	21	5879										
22	D	TRIEBEL Claus	LS B	SP	37	245	37	245		10	708	33	953		2	758	20	1711		5	959	14	2670		35	347	24	3017		31	711	27	3728		24	690	25	4418		27	468	24	4886		12	741	22	5627										
23	A	KUOTTONEN Curt-Olle	LS B	A	18	548	18	548		24	626	23	1174		27	302	31	1476		21	796	29	2272		22	693	28	3069		12	829	21	4498		24	513	23	5011		32	598	30	6350															
24	GB	SPRECKLEY Brian	LS B	S	15	600	15	600		8	717	7	1377		52	12	1867		30	789	15	2656		12	733	15	3393		19	668	14	4255		30	2	2825		19	481	26	4836		10	598	24	5594												
25	FIN	OTTINEN Markku	Discus A	MK	22	563	22	563		32	510	28	1073		18	644	19	1717		37	412	32	2129		19	668	31	2927		9	975	25	3772		26	892	24	4254		19	586	25	4842		19	578	25	5564										
26	CH	ROSSIER Gabriel	LS 7	GR	38	213	38	213		33	499	39	712		15	652	34	1364		1	1000	26	2364		8	848	18	3217		13	879	18	4091		8	892	14	4983		32	435	15	5418		38	52	5470											
27	NZ	VAN DYK Tony	LS B	T0	2	669	2	669		28	552	16	1221		28	447	24	1668		6	956	17	2624		25	636	17	3260		7	947	15	4207		30	29	4207		20	565	28	4772		31	599	27	5371											
28	NZ	COUTYS John	Discus	EH	1	694	1	694		37	352	25	1086		19	640	18	1726		27	790	21	2516		2	943	11	3459		16	874	11	4333		30	26	4207		38	295	29	4628		24	660	28	5288											
29	CH	GAUMANN Markus	Discus b	ZT	30	514	30	514		34	415	15	1235		24	530	15	1765		4	966	12	2731		24	646	16	3577		9	920	13	4297		30	2	4297		21	533	27	4830		35	330	29	5160											
30	CAN	BONNIERE Dominique	ASW 24	CH	8	623	8	623		39	720	35	903		38	264	37	1167		34	741	37	1908		26	801	34	2509		15	876	33	3385		25	684	30	4069		32	435	30	4504		27	639	30	5143										
31	N	SORBYE Erlend	Discus bT	PS	14	606	14	606		25	683	9	1289		27	471	16	1790		13	806	19	2566		27	589	20	3155		26	780	20	3935		30	2	3935		30	436	33	4373		16	737	31	5010											
32	B	JAIME Jose	Discus	XV	36	280	36	280		23	635	34	915		20	623	29	1538		39	356	38	1894		32	492	38	2326		24	795	35	3121		13	823	32	3944		25	497	31	4441		25	665	32	5096										
33	FIN	PANKKA Asko	Discus A	A2	7	638	7	638		11	689	6	1327		40	0	36	1327		13	806	31	2133		17	691	30	2824		35	604	32	3428		27	623	31	4051		37	372	32	4423		29	631	33	5054										
34	CH	INABENIT Edward	Discus b	IE	31	503	31	503		21	660	24	1163		34	304	32	1467		21	796	30	2263		32	497	32	2720		17	870	29	3590		30	34	3590		21	533	34	4123		28	632	34	4754											
35	N	RAUDSANDMOEN Geir	LS B	BR	25	550	25	550		30	531	27	1081		29	442	30	1523		36	485	35	2008																																			