

Grudziadz (Poland), 25th August 2023
6th FAI Junior World Hot Air Balloon Championship

**REPORT OF THE JURY HEARING OF PROTEST FROM COMPETITOR
#41 DANIEL GREGORY**

Attendance

Jury President: John Grubbström

Jury Member: Paolo Oggioni

Jury Member: Sandor Hidas

Competitor: Daniel Gregory

Assistant to Competitor: Huw Jones

Event Director: Eugenius Komar

The Jury President started the hearing asking everyone to introduce themselves and then asked if there was any conflict of interest. Seeing none the meeting was opened.

Then the Jury President asked the pilot if he wished to withdraw the protest. The pilot declined withdrawal.

The Jury President invited the protestor to present his protest.

Huw Jones, competitors crew chief, presented his argumentation of the protest. The argumentation was based on change of the coordinates of task 23, which was sent by WhatsApp prior to end of launch period. The protestor argues that he does not monitor the WhatsApp group as he is too busy preparing his flight and also his crew is not monitoring. A question from a Juror "*if the task was cancelled would it be different*" the answer was "*yes, in this case we probably would have seen the message*". The protestor continued asserting "*I do not believe is possible for pilots to monitor the WhatsApp channel constantly for changes to task data in a safe manner*" and "*I do not believe the approach of reviewing the WhatsApp log to see when a message status is updated to 'read' is sufficient*".

On the paper version of the protest the Jury did not receive a clear request of cancellation of task, rescoring of task or any other action. At a specific question to the protestor the answer was "*yes, we would prefer the task be cancelled*".

After the hearing of the competitor the Event Director was then invited to present his statement.

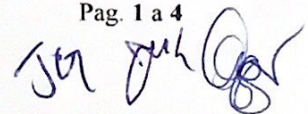
The Event Director made a short statement similar to the answer of the complaint.

The protestor and the event director were invited to summarize their respective positions and to make their final statement.

The Jury then retired for the deliberations and to reach their decision.

The Jury reviewed the relevant rules and documents referred to the protest.

The protest refers to the COH chapter 2.4.3. (Adequate time to study the task), 2.4.10. (recall procedure) and to rule 12.1.2. "*A competitor arriving at an expected goal that was rebuilt or moved, should aim for the closest replaced goal within 100 m. If the goal has ceased to exist and no similar goal is seen within 100 m, the competitor should aim for the coordinates. These coordinates will also be taken to calculate/measure any other related tasks of that flight.*"



The goal declared in the task data sheet was re-positioned with new coordinates communicated to the pilots at their individual launch sites through WhatsApp 13 minutes before the start of launch period. Subsequently during the flight, a new message was sent and the goal with the same coordinates was reset to 500 ft AMSL which is at 254 feet or 77m change which is not in conflict with rule 12.1.2. and should be considered as moved within 100 meters.

These changes were acknowledged by the pilot.

The protest also claims that the inflight information was received at different stages of flight for the competitors and that those who took off early did not have time to adjust. In this case the inflight change mentioned above, the variation of altitude to 500ft AMSL, is not significant enough to have a major impact to fairness. Pilot 41 had sufficient time from receiving the information to arriving to the goal where he made his logger mark 618ft AMSL.

The Jury's opinion is that the altitude change of the target was communicated as described in the General Briefing notes and therefore considers the new goal as a valid goal.

The Jury concludes that the Event Director has not contradicted rule 12.1.2.

We do acknowledge that the increasing use of high tech means of communication is very challenging for us all and can be improved.

The Jury will suggest to the CIA Rules WG to review the use of technology for communication purposes in the rules in general and to this case scenario in particular. The Jury also suggests that a clear statement in the rules of how to, or not to, do supplementary briefings or communication of task variation with pilots at ILP's is considered and the future AXMER reflect these changes

The Jury concludes that there is no significant reasons to cancel the task.

The protest is rejected. The Jury decision is unanimous.

The protest fee is retained.

FAI JURY

Jury President:

John Grubbström

Signature

Jury Member:

Sandor Hidas

Signature

Jury Member:

Paolo Oggioni

Signature

JB
Jm

List of appendixes:

Appendix A – competitors protest

Appendix B – Map competitors flight track, waypoints, and time stamp of ED's communications

Appendix C – Competitors complaint

Appendix D – ED's answer to complaint

Appendix E – General Briefing notes

Appendix F – Task sheet

Appendix G – WhatsApp communications (four pages)