



Photo: Neil Gabriel

As you know from reading Angela's article, the Europeans were held in Magdeburg, Germany this year. Set in this historical town there was plenty to do when you weren't flying, whether it was swimming, sight-seeing or even summer tobogganing. However, fortunately, for the first half of the competition we were flying constantly, mornings and evenings. Unfortunately it meant we had no time to do many other activities.

This year, the event director, Markus Haggeneay, decided not to have observers, but to only use loggers instead. The loggers had their advantages and disadvantages. The useful thing was the crew didn't have to rush from goal to goal with the observer to watch the pilot drop the marker. However, the bad thing about the loggers is that in tasks like Maximum Distance or Angle, or even if you didn't drop your marker in the Scoring Area, you were marked on a track point that the logger took every five seconds. And as many of you know a lot can happen in five seconds, so many of the pilots - and especially the British pilots - were a bit frustrated with the tasks where you were marked on the logger.

The Opening Ceremony on Thursday was held at the Millennium Tower, the tallest wooden tower in the world. With many long, ongoing speeches many of the younger team members of the British team found it quite boring, especially

Stephanie Bareford, aged 16, explains why the competing pilots should bring their families along

because half of it wasn't in English. After everyone's speeches we all then got the time to look around the Millennium Tower which is all about the history of human science and research. Some people hiked up to the very top to see the view over Magdeburg.

They started the competition on the Friday evening with a Fly-In and a Hesitation Waltz. Unfortunately, the winds were not as calm as they had forecast and they did not shift around as much as they had forecast either. This meant unfortunately that most pilots did not get into the scoring area, and some pilots did not even take off because the winds were getting quite strong. However, it was a good start for British pilot, Mike Howard, who won the first task. For the pilots who didn't take off, it wasn't a good start to the competition.

As the competition went on, the British pilots worked their way up through the ranking, with David Bareford managing to get to second place at one point. The morning flights tended to have

four tasks and the evening flights tended to have only two.

Unfortunately, with low pressure forecast for Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday it looked like the pilots would only get five flights.

Luckily, the low pressure held off for Monday and they squeezed in two more flights. That was then the end of flying for the Europeans.

With Tuesday forecast for rain most of the day, pilots and crew now found the time to do some activities. With a huge swimming pool just a few hundred yards away from the competition centre, Mike Howard took all seven children from the British teams to the swimming pool.

When the last flight planned for Wednesday morning was cancelled everybody knew it was the end of the Europeans and who had won.

Francois Messines of France had won the Europeans for the first time, with former European champion Uwe Schneider coming in second and Markus Pieper coming in third, both from Germany. With a very memorable closing ceremony and the entire British team cheering as loud as they could for every British pilot called, Francois Messines was crowned European champion.

Earlier in the competition he had said to David Bareford: "I am trying your tactic this time. I'm bringing all the family along."

It looks like Francois' tactic worked!