

2º Desafío Isla de la Palma.



islabonita



The Finals
1-9 December, 2007



www.flylapalma.com



Press - the Finals

The 2nd Island of La Palma Challenge is preparing the deciding final week, scheduled for 1-9 December 2007; but many interesting things have occurred along the way since the Challenge began, 11 months ago.

On 1 December 2006, the 2nd Challenge was launched amid clamorous praise of the success of the 1st Challenge: local government officials of La Palma emphasised the important place paragliding now occupies in the leisure activities which the island - a nature reserve - has to offer lovers of nature and adventure.

That same day, Belgian pilot Thierry Moureau opened the ranking with a 17km flight on a DHV1-2 glider; in fact, December was an exciting month, with many good flights and foreign visitors to the island.



On 24 January, resident French pilot Yves Jouanisson - winner of one of the prizes in the 1st Challenge - made the first great flight of the year with 29,33Km. With his characteristic determination, Yves promised that this year he would try to get a head's start on his rivals for the Finals and win his category (up to DHV2), a distinct possibility if he maintains his current form, which has given him first place in the ranking.

At the beginning of March a group of pilots from Tenerife came on an expedition with the aim of flying all over the island. Gregorio "Goyo" González Oliva, Canary League Champion, flew south for 31,74Km and marked up the longest flight of the year; his celebrations lasted only 58 minutes, however, as he watched Antonio Pérez Aserrador land just 400m ahead of him, making a new year's best of 32,18Km. Despite this Goyo finished the 1st round 4th in the overall ranking thanks to another 2 great flights and is looking forward to competing against other great rivals in the Final.

At the end of March, pilots of the Gin Gliders competition team arrived on La Palma to do some qualifying flights, as well as a photoshoot of the new range of Gin gliders against the wonderful backdrop of La Palma's beautiful landscapes. Unfortunately, the weather was adverse, which meant Frenchman Charles Cazaux, holder of the Island distance record since 2005 and runner-up of the 1st Challenge, had to make do with a couple of 20km flights and a couple of short ones. Teammates Max Jeanpierre and Klaudia Bulgakow didn't fare much better, averaging 10Km on their 3 best flights.

In April, the Canary Paragliding League visited La Palma and for the first time flew tasks using the unique format created for the Final week of the La Palma Challenge: waypoints in a closed circuit which can be flown as many times as possible within the time limit. Jean Marc Malhonda, a veteran of the 1st Challenge, obtained the best results and made the most of his visit to squeeze out a flight of 27,8Km.



Without a doubt May belonged to the Valic brothers. The famous Slovenians, unofficial distance world record-holders (426Km), got off the plane in Santa Cruz de la Palma and went directly to take-off; that same day they both flew 2 flights of between 25 and 35Km. A couple of days later they practically flew the island from tip to tip, and Urban, the younger, broke the local record with 38,8Km, while Aljaz "only" managed 35,27Km. Thus the Valic brothers shot up the ranking and are serious candidates to carry off the big prizes of the 2nd Challenge.

At the same time a group of journalists of the specialist press from various countries (Cross Country, USHGA, Aerial, Parapente Mag, Ojovolador) visited the Island and checked out the great atmosphere as well as the variety of wonderful landscapes on La Palma, in addition to enjoying some great flying.

Summer went by with visits from many pilots attracted by the Challenge. Although not all dare to compete against the big guns, they did discover the pleasure of flying in the gentle island climate.



The last leg of the Spanish League, held in La Palma at the beginning of November, was the perfect opportunity for some of the best Spanish pilots to attempt distance flights just before Round 1 finished on 10 November and qualify for the Finals. Iván Colas, reigning Spanish Champion, topped it off in fine style by winning the Spanish League and the very next day set a new Island distance record of 39,8Km. Motivated by his 3rd place in the Challenge ranking, Iván, along with other top Spanish pilots, hopes to live up to expectations in the Finals in December, where 50 pilots will compete for the top places and prize money in the 2nd Island of La Palma Challenge.



Statistics:

At the close of Round 1, after almost a year of competition, the figures speak for themselves:

- over 1.100 visitors drawn to La Palma by the Challenge
- over 3,000 flights in all, including training and official flights
- over 10,000 Km flown on the island
- over 30,000 visits to the flylapalma.com website
- 98 pilots from 13 countries have registered

Total prize money is 24,000€, the highest sum for any paragliding competition in the world.

Among pilots registered for the 2nd edition of the Challenge are:

- 2007 World Champion
- 2007 PWC Champion
- 2007 PWC Runner-up
- Paragliding World Record Holders
- Spanish Champion
- former World Champions
- former European Champions
- Spanish National Paragliding Team members
- Paramotor World Champions



Highlights of the 2nd Challenge so far:

- Yves Jouanisson made the first long flight of the year in January: 29,33Km
- new best flight of 32,18Km by Antonio Pérez
- Charles Cazaux' 38,7Km Island record, which had stood since 2005, was beaten by Slovenian record-holder Urban Valic with a flight of 38,8Km
- Iván Colás establishes a new record of 39,8Km for the "beautiful Isle" in November, a hard act to follow



Photos:

http://www.flylapalma.com/press/album_01/index.htm



Provisional Ranking at the end of Round 1

These are the top 10 at the close of Round 1 of the Challenge, to which the results of the Final week will be added:

Open Category:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Average of best 3 flights</u>
➤ Urban Valic	33.65 Km
➤ Aljaz Valic	31.71 Km
➤ Iván Colás	26.81 Km
➤ Gregorio Gonzalez Oliva	25.76 Km
➤ Yves Jouanisson	23.61 Km
➤ Moreau Thierry	21.96 Km
➤ Christophe Lombard	19.64 Km
➤ Tony Perez Aserrador	18.43 Km
➤ Jean-claude Hanoteau	17.81 Km
➤ Charles Cazaux	16.91 Km

DHV Class 2 Category

<u>Name</u>	<u>Average of best 3 flights</u>
1. Yves Jouanisson	23.61 Km
2. Moreau Thierry	21.96 Km
3. Christophe Lombard	19.64 Km

DHV Class 1-2 Category

<u>Name</u>	<u>Average of best 3 flights</u>
1. Moreau Thierry	21.96 Km
2. Alfonso Díaz Malagón	15.08 Km
3. Nicholas Greece	11.62 Km



Prizes:

The Prizes to be awarded in each Category are as follows:

OPEN

Winner	: 8,000€
2nd	: 4,000€
3rd	: 2,000€
4th	: 1,000€
5th	: 800€
6th	: 600€

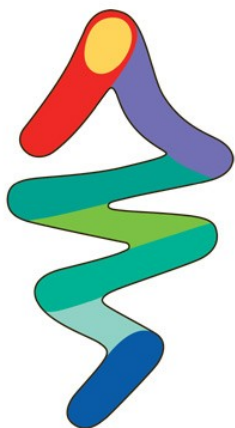
Category DHV2 and category DHV1/2

Winners	: 1,000€
2nd	: 700€
3rd	: 500€
4th	: 400€
5th	: 300€
6th	: 100€

In addition, the following special prizes will be awarded:

Longest valid flight with any glider (Open)	: 600€
Longest valid flight with DHV Class 2 glider	: 400€
Longest valid flight with DHV Class 1 or 1/ 2 glider	: 400€
Greatest number of flights longer than 15Km	: 600€
Trophy for each of the top 3 National Teams	
Trophy for each of the top 3 Teams	

Sponsors:



islabonita



LOS LLANOS
DE ARIDANE

Collaborators:



FURTHER INFORMATION:

You can follow the event with the latest updates on the official website, where you can also find live news as tasks are flown during the final week:

www.flylapalma.com

Organization:

Javier López

email: info@flylapalma.com

Press Office:

email: press@flylapalma.com

Broadcasting

Alfonso Diaz

email: audiovisuales@flylapalma.com

La Palma Tourist Board:

Nieves Martín

email: nieves@lapalmaturismo.com

Av. Marítima, 34

38700 Santa Cruz de La Palma (Canarias)

Tel. +34 922 423 340

Fax. +34 922 423 347