

Paragliding World Cup: Format Proposal for 2010 and Beyond

Content

1. Introduction	1
2. In short: What remains, what is new?	1
3. The Tour format	2
3.1. Events	2
3.2. Continental tours	2
3.3. World Tour	3
4. A competitor's career	3
5. Scoring	3
6. Ranking	4
6.1. Individual events	4
6.2. Tours	4
7. Selection	4
7.1. Seeded pilots	4
7.2. Wild cards	9
7.3. Qualification	9
8. Selection procedure	9
8.1. Initial selection	9
8.2. Selection period	11
9. Final remarks	12

1. Introduction

The Paragliding World Cup Association (PWCA) changed its competition and tour format radically in 2009. At the end of 2009, it became clear that while many of the changes were highly appreciated by the PWCA's members, some more fine tuning is needed to re-gain the high status the World Cup events previously had with pilots, media, sponsors and the general public.

This document describes the adjustments, as developed during this year's Super Final in Poggio Bustone, Italy, by pilots and PWCA committee members from Slovenia, France, Switzerland and many other countries. Our goal is to provide the committee with a workable solution which can be implemented as early as 2010.

2. In short: What remains, what is new?

The idea of regional tours remains. Also, the idea of final events remains. But the regional tours gain in value by adding a Tour Final to each of them.

Additionally, the three Tour Finals together form a Tour in itself, the World Tour, which determines the Paragliding World Cup Champions.

The Super Final remains, being the last event of the World Tour. The "Super" label is mainly for the media: duration and organisation is equal to any other event.

Scoring and ranking is done according to what the PWCA committee has already decided: Based on a new formula developed specifically for the World Cup, including discards for tours. The question of discards during individual events is still open and remains to be decided on.

Selection will change slightly, in order to allow the good pilots to compete in those events they want to compete in, but still allow new talents to gain access to the World Cup events.

3. The Tour format

3.1. Events

At the core of the PWC, we have the individual event:



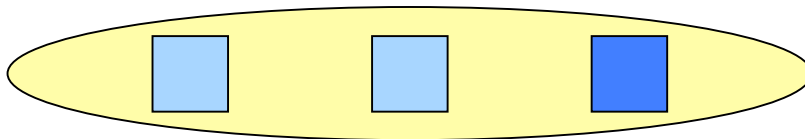
Each PWC event has a distinct name: “PWC <city>, <country> <year>” (for example “PWC Dublin, Ireland 2011”).

Each PWC event lasts for one week, Saturday to Saturday. First Saturday is an official training day, and final registration takes place that day. Sunday to Saturday, a maximum of seven competition tasks is flown.

Each event holds a maximum of 125 spots, of which 10% are reserved for female pilots.

3.2. Continental tours

Given the current distribution of world class pilots over the globe, we create three global regions: America (North and South), Asia (including Australia) and Europe (including Africa). In each region, two to four events are held each season, forming the region’s Tour:



The last event in each Tour is called the Tour Final:



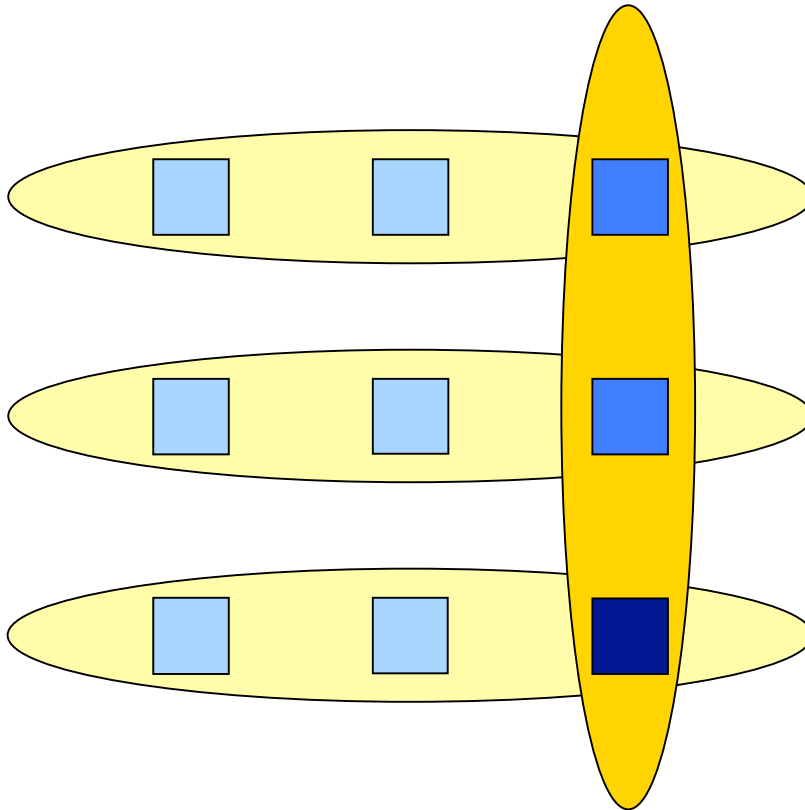
Like regular events, each Tour Final has a distinct name: “PWC <continental> Tour Final <year>, <city>, <country>” (for example “PWC American Tour Final 2011, San Francisco, USA”)

This gives us the following continental Tours:

1. PWC American Tour, determining the PWC American Champions (overall and female)
2. PWC Asian Tour, determining the PWC Asian Champions (overall and female)
3. PWC European Tour, determining the PWC European Champions (overall and female)

3.3. *World Tour*

The three final events of the three continental Tours form a Tour in itself: The PWC World Tour, which determines the PWC World Champions (overall and female):



The last event in a season is called the Super Final



The Super Final has a distinct name: “PWC Super Final <year>, <city>, <country>” (for example “PWC Super Final 2011, Tokyo, Japan”).

4. A competitor’s career

With this format, a pilot can chose to compete at four levels:

1. Individual PWC events (as many as he likes and is selected for)
2. A continental tour (two to four events)
3. The World Tour (three events)
4. For the hard core competitors: A continental tour and the World Tour (four to six events)

This, together with the selection procedure outlined below, gives a clear career path to any aspiring competitor, lowering the entry barrier and allowing new talent to ease into the PWC.

5. Scoring

Scoring of all PWC events is done using the formula which is currently under development by the PWCA.

6. Ranking

6.1. Individual events

Discards are less important than in 2009, since most good pilots will be selected for the World Tour by the PWCA letter system.

- Argument for discards: Pilots can fly in the same fast style in all events
- Argument against discards: Complicated to understand.

6.2. Tours

Both in the continental tours and in the world tour, the same system is applied as in the overall rankings until 2008: Only the 2 best out of every 3 scores count towards the tour results.

7. Selection

To enter any PWC event, a pilot needs to be selected by the PWCA. The field of 125 pilots (113 male, 12 female) is composed of

1. Seeded pilots
2. Pilots who receive invitations through wild cards
3. Other qualified pilots

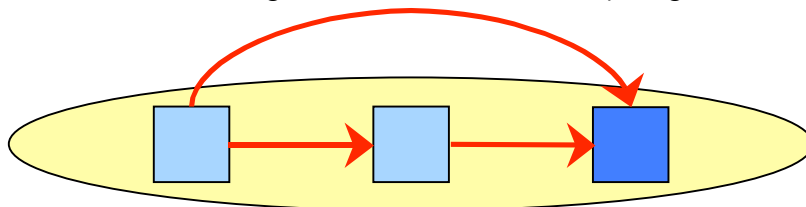
To ensure that pilots from a region can compete in their respective continental tour, a minimum of 50 male and 5 female spots are reserved for regional pilots.

7.1. Seeded pilots

Seeding pilots ensures that pilots with a chance of winning a continental tour or the World Tour are able to compete in all events within that tour. The basic idea is that the top $x+y$ male and top y female pilots ($x+y$) of PWC events, of PWC continental tours, and of the PWC World Tour, are directly selected for certain events, regardless of their qualification.

7.1.1. Within a tour

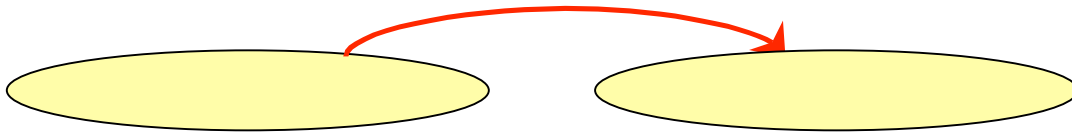
Let's first look at single tour of three events (2 regular, 1 final):



The best $x+y$ of the first event are seeded in the tour's second event, and in the tour's final event. The best $x+y$ of the second event are also seeded in the tour's final. Additionally, the best $x+y$ of the overall ranking after the second event are also seeded for the tour's final.

For this, we propose the best 10 male and 2 female pilots.

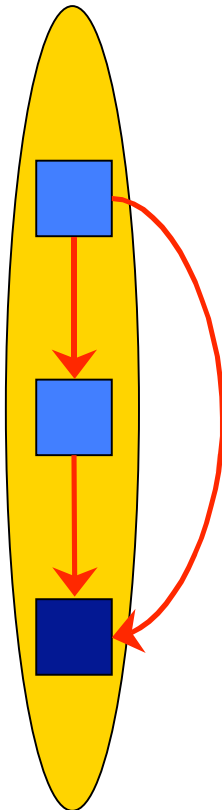
7.1.2. Tours from one year to the next



The best x+y of a specific tour (e.g. European) are seeded in all events of that tour in the following year.

For this, we propose the best 10 male and 2 female pilots.

7.1.3. Within the World Tour

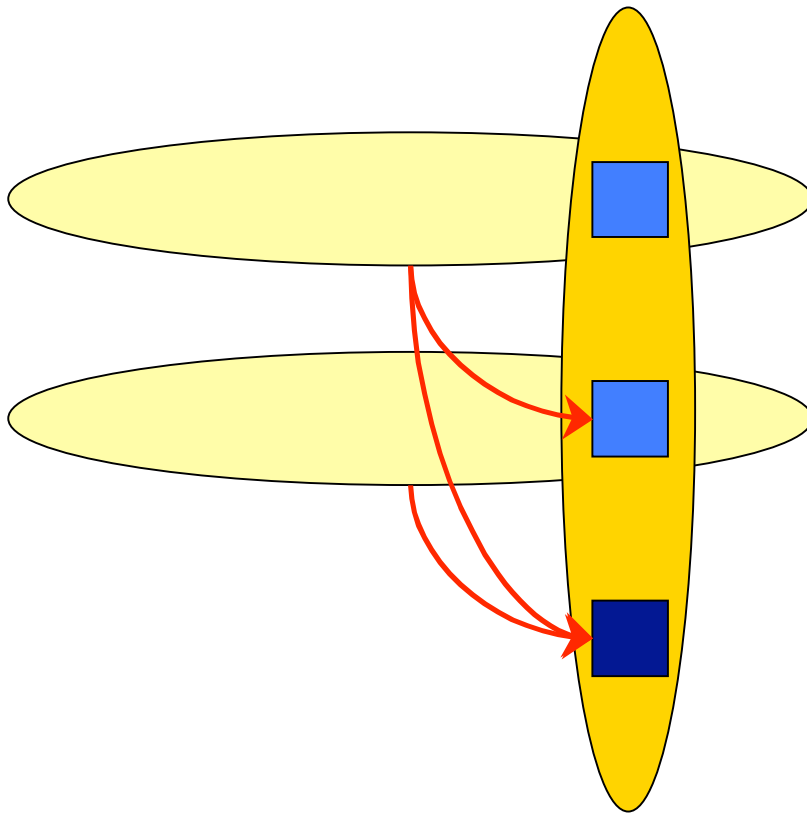


The best x+y of the first final are seeded in the World Tour's second final, and in the World Tour's Super Final event. The best x+y of the second final are also seeded in the World Tour's Super Final.

Additionally, the best x+y of the overall ranking after the second final are also seeded for the World Tour's Super Final.

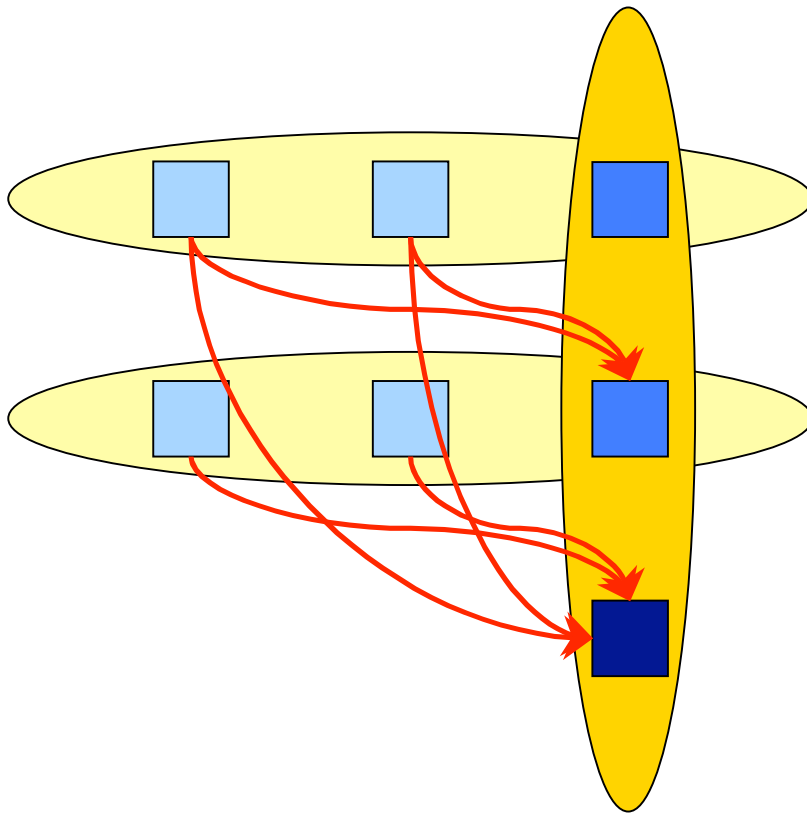
For this, we propose the best 10 male and 2 female pilots.

7.1.4. From continental tours to World Tour



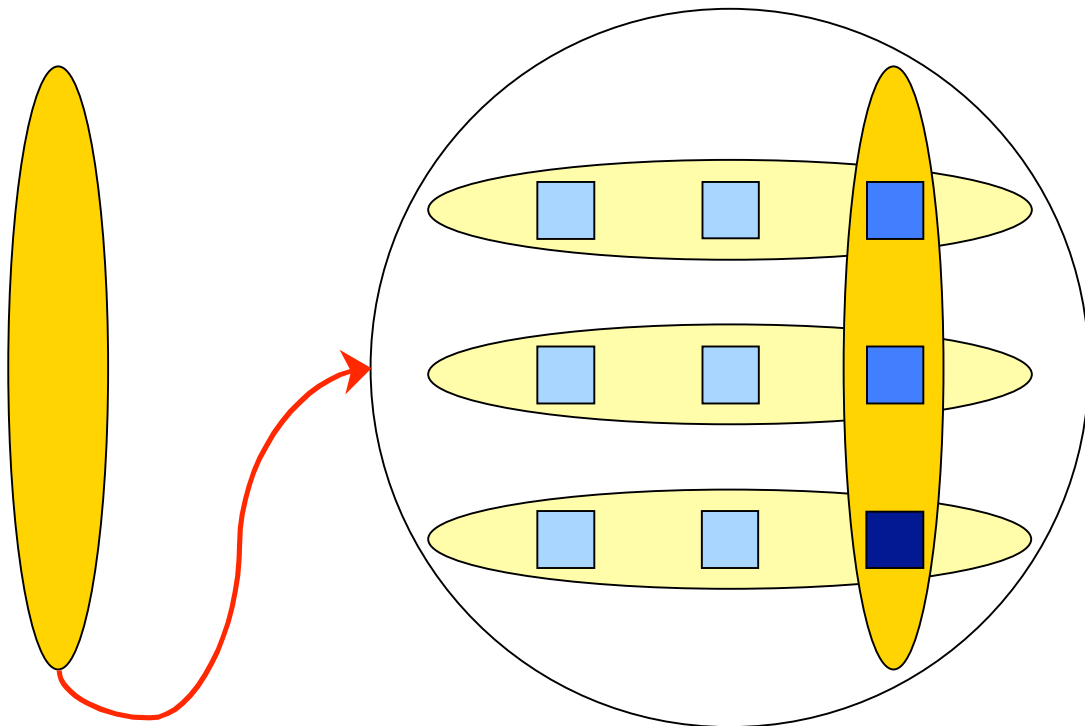
The best x+y of the first continental tour are seeded in the World Tour's second final, and in the World Tour's Super Final event. The best x+y of the second continental tour are also seeded in the World Tour's Super Final. For this, we propose the best 5 male and 1 female pilots.

7.1.5. From PWC events to World Tour



If not already seeded through one of the paths above, the best x+y of any PWC event are seeded for all the remaining finals in the same season. For this, we propose the best 5 male and 1 female pilots.

7.1.6. World Tour from one year to the next



The best x+y of one year's World Tour are seeded for all the events in the following year.

For this, we propose the best 30 male and 3 female pilots.

7.1.7. Theoretical number of seeded pilots

Based on the proposals made above, the following number of pilots can theoretically be seeded per event in a season with three tours of three events each:

First PWC event of a tour: 45 (40+5)

Second PWC event of a tour: 57 (50+7)

First continental final: 93 (80+13)

Second continental final: 111 (95+16)

Super Final: 129 (110+19)

This is a theoretical maximum: Many pilots will use up several seeding spots each. For instance, a pilot who wins the first event, places in the top 10 of the first final, and therefore comes 5th in that tour will already account for three seeding spots. So the number of seeded pilots will in fact be much lower than the maximums given above. With time and experience, the number of pilots seeded in each category can be adjusted as needed by the PWCA committee.

7.1.8. Legends, heroes

On top of the seeding rules given above, any pilot, male or female, who has ever in the history of paragliding won the title of PWC Champion or FAI World Champion will be considered a seeded pilot for all future PWC events. Since the number of pilots in this category who is still actively competing is very small, this rule can be applied without taking up many spots.

7.1.9. Remark

An important change with respect to 2009: All PWC events are treated equally in terms of seeding; they all determine the same number of pilots who will be seeded for future events, regardless of their “event quality”. This is done for simplicity’s sake (to determine an event’s quality is very complicated), and because the number of pilots seeded based on an individual event’s results is relatively small compared to 2009.

7.2. Wild cards

For any PWC event, including finals and Super Final, the local organizer can invite up to five pilots (any gender) by issuing them a wild card.

For any PWC event, including finals and Super Final, the PWCA committee can invite up to three pilots (any gender) by issuing them a wild card.

7.3. Qualification

In each PWC event, including finals and Super Final, the PWCA selects pilots for all remaining spots (not taken by seeded or invited pilots) based on their two best competition results from the previous season. In every PWCA selective competition, pilots can obtain a qualification letter (A, B, C, ...) according to the level of the competition and the pilot’s final rank. Pilots qualify based on a comparison of two letters (see Qualification Letter Table in the 2009 PWCA Competition Rules).

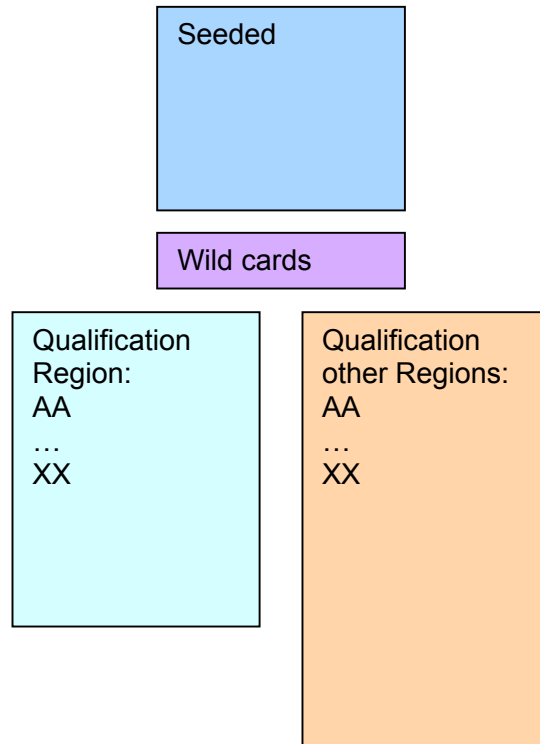
In the case of a tie, precedence is given to pilots from the region where the event is taking place (American pilots in the American Tour, Asian pilots in the Asian Tour, and European pilots in the European tour). In the case of a second tie, the precedence is given to the pilots who have not participated in any Paragliding World Cup events before. In the case of a third tie, precedence is given to the youngest pilot.

The remainder of Appendix A1 (“How to enter a World Cup”) of the 2009 PWCA Competition Rules (from “Additional Rules” on page 30 to the end of page 34) will remain as is. Maybe change the rule on qualification letter upgrades during the season, since that is mostly covered already through the seeding described above.

8. Selection procedure

8.1. Initial selection

1. 8 weeks before an event, all pilots are ranked: Seeded pilots at the top, followed by invited pilots. Then the remaining pilots are first divided in two groups: Pilots from the region where the event takes place, and all the others. These two groups are separately ranked based on their qualification letters.



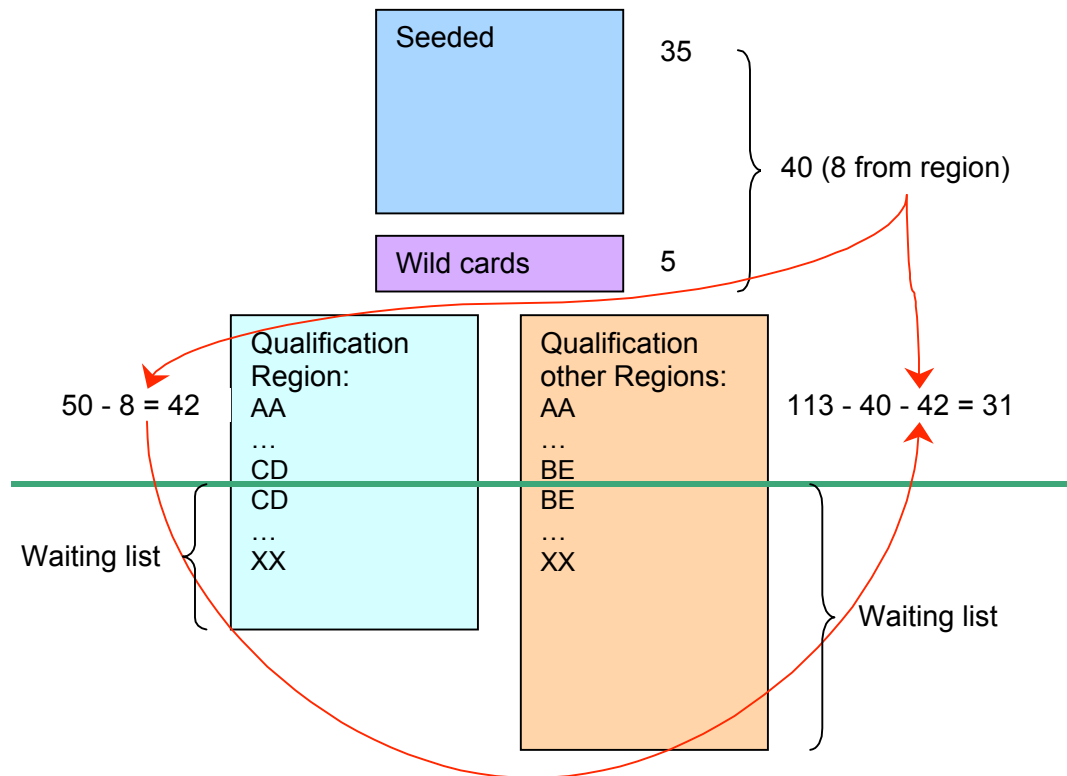
This is done for both male and female pilots.

2. Count the number of pilots from the event's region which are seeded or receive a wild card. 50 minus that number (5 minus that number for female pilots) determines the number of qualified pilots from the event's region that are initially selected. The other pilots in the region's qualification list are placed on the waiting list.

For example, for an event in Asia, 35 male pilots are seeded, and 5 wildcards are issued. Of these 40 pilots, 8 are Asian. $50 - 8 = 42$: The top 42 pilots of the region's qualification list are selected; all others are on the waiting list.

3. From the other regions' qualification list, select enough pilots to fill the competition, but not further down the list than the last selected letter combination in the region's qualification list.

For example, if the 42nd pilot on the Asian qualification list has the letter combination CD, no pilots with the combination CE or worse must be selected from the other regions' qualification list; even if that means that the competition is not fully booked at this time.



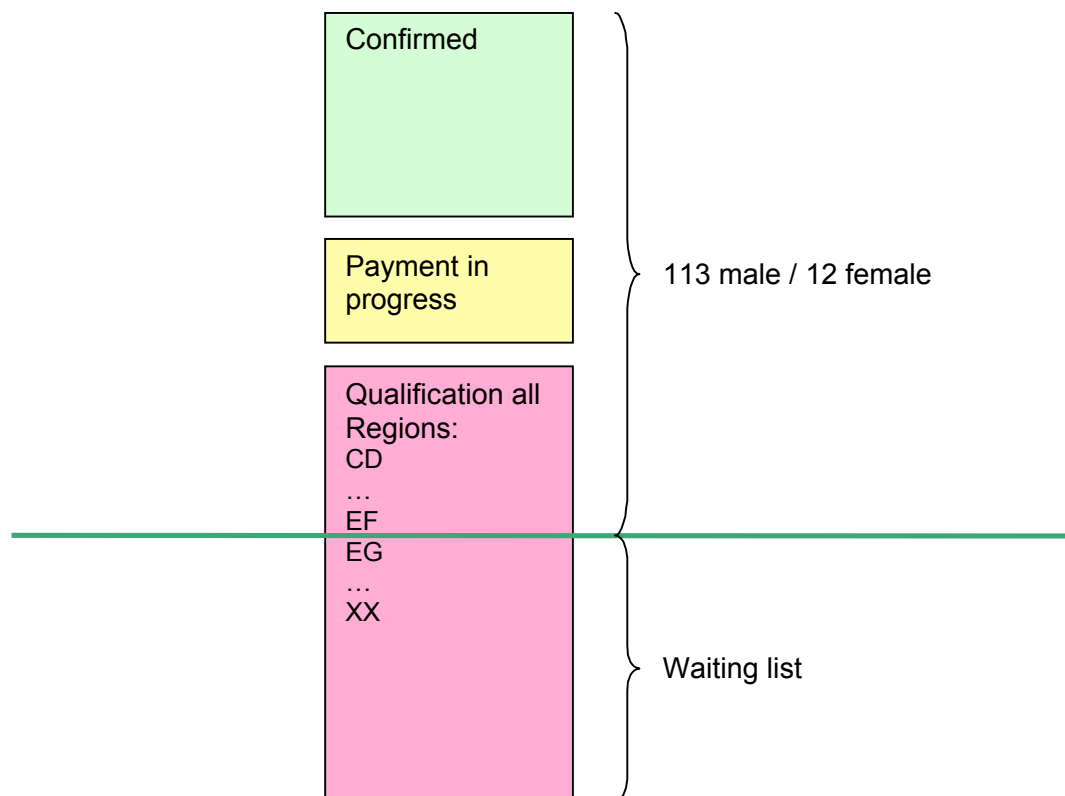
The other pilots in the other regions' qualification list are placed on the waiting list.

4. If the receivers of wild cards are not yet known at the time the selection process for an event starts, the number of initially selected participants is lowered accordingly.
5. If one or more PWC events take place during the selection period, which have an influence on the list of seeded pilots, then the number of initially selected participants is also lowered by the number of seeding spots coming out of these competitions, until the seeded pilots are known.
6. All initially selected pilots are informed of their selection, and have 5 days to confirm their participation.

8.2. Selection period

1. Pilots confirm or cancel their participation. Pilots who do not respond to the selection Email within 5 days are considered as having cancelled their participation.
2. For every pilot from the event's region who cancels his or her participation, the top pilot on the region's qualification waiting list is selected.
3. For every pilot from another than the event's region who cancels his or her participation, the top pilot on the region's qualification waiting list is selected, as long as his letter combination is better or equal to that of the lowest ranked selected pilot from the event region's qualification list.
4. As soon as 50 male (5 female) pilots from the event's region have confirmed their participation – but at the latest at the beginning of week 5 in the selection process – the two qualification lists are merged. From then on the competition

is filled to its maximum of contestants, no further regional preferences exist.



5. The process of selecting pilots from the waiting list, receiving their confirmation or cancellation, and re-selecting further pilots from the waiting list continues until
 - a. The maximum number of pilots permitted in the event (113+12) has confirmed their participation, or
 - b. The waiting list is empty, or
 - c. The event starts

9. Final remarks

We are fully aware that implementing the adjustments proposed in this paper takes time and requires a significant amount of work – especially in the selection process, where the current software must be completely redone. But we believe that now is a good time to do it: As the meetings during the Super Final in Poggio Bustone have shown a lot of energy and emotions are around, probably even more amongst those pilots who were not able to participate in the Super Final. So let's put this energy to work, involve the people, in accordance with the PWC motto "from pilots for pilots".

Also, given the current calendar for 2010, we have almost half a year to do the work necessary, to implement the adjustments, change the tools, and work towards making the PWC 2010 a great experience for the best pilots from all over the world.

This document will be distributed over various channels, mostly in the Internet, to collect feedback and gather support from more PWC pilots. If you should have any questions or comments regarding its content, and don't know where to go, please send an Email to pwc@yourstruly.ch – we will take it from there.

Future PWC Format

17.9.2009

Events and Selections

	<p>Tour 1 Asia and Australia</p> <p>min. 21 Days between Events</p> <p>Event 1</p> <p>Selektion: min. 50+5 from Tour 1 Area 1a) Previous year Tours: 10+2 1b) Previous year World Tour: 30+3 2) NA 3) Wildcards 4) Previous year letter system</p> <p>min. 21 Days between Events</p> <p>Event 2</p> <p>Selektion: min. 50+5 from Tour 1 Area 1a) Previous year Tour 1: 10+2 1b) Previous year World Tour: 30+3 2a) Previous Event(s) T1: 10+2 2b) Tour 1 overall Ranking: 10+2 3) Wildcards 4) Previous year letter system</p> <p>min. 21 Days between Events</p>	<p>Tour 2 Europe and Africa</p> <p>min. 21 Days between Events</p> <p>Event 1</p> <p>Selektion: min. 50+5 from Tour 2 Area 1a) Previous year Tour 2: 10+2 1b) Previous year World Tour: 30+3 2) NA 3) Wildcards 4) Previous year letter system</p> <p>min. 21 Days between Events</p> <p>Event 2</p> <p>Selektion: min. 50+5 from Tour 2 Area 1a) Previous year Tour 2: 10+2 1b) Previous year World Tour: 30+3 2a) Previous Event(s) T2: 10+2 2b) Tour 2 overall Ranking: 10+2 3) Wildcards 4) Previous year letter system</p> <p>min. 21 Days</p>	<p>Tour 3 North- and Southamerica</p> <p>min. 21 Days between Events</p> <p>Event 1</p> <p>Selektion: min. 50+5 from Tour 3 Area 1a) Previous year Tours 3: 10+2 1b) Previous year World Tour: 30+3 2) NA 3) Wildcards 4) Previous year letter system</p> <p>min. 21 Days between Events</p> <p>Event 2</p> <p>Selektion: min. 50+5 from Tour 3 Area 1a) Previous year Tour 3: 10+2 1b) Previous year World Tour: 30+3 2a) Previous Event(s) T3: 10+2 2b) Tour 3 overall Ranking: 10+2 3) Wildcards 4) Previous year letter system</p> <p>min. 21 Days</p>
World Tour	<p>Tour 1 Final and first World-Tour Event</p> <p>Selektion: min. 50+5 from Tour 1 Area 1a) Previous year Tour 1: 10+2 1b) Previous year World Tour: 30+3 2a) Previous Event(s) T1: 10+2 2b) Tour 1 overall Ranking: 10+2 2c) Events from other Tours: 5+1 3) Wildcards 4) Previous year letter system</p>	<p>Tour 2 Final and 2nd World Tour Event</p> <p>Selektion: min. 50+5 from Tour 2 Area 1a) Previous year Tour 2: 10+2 1b) Previous year World Tour: 30+3 2a) Previous Event(s) T2 and previous World Tour Event: 10+2 2b) Tour 2 overall Ranking: 10+2 2c) Events from other Tours: 5+1 3) Wildcards 4) Previous year letter system</p>	<p>Tour 3 Final and World Tour Final (Superfinal)</p> <p>Selektion: min. 50+5 from Tour 3 Area 1a) Previous year Tours: 10+2 1b) Previous year World Tour: 30+3 2a) Previous Event(s) T3 and previous World Tour Events: 10+2 2b) Tour 3 and World Tour overall Ranking: 10+2 2c) Events from other Tours: 5+1 3) Wildcards 4) Previous year letter system</p>

Possibility 1 2010 Events:

<p>Event 1 Happo, Japan (22.-29.5.)</p>	<p>Event 1 Drama, Greece (19-26.6.)</p>	<p>Event 1 Pocos de Caldas, Brazil (3.-10.4.)</p>
<p>Event 2 Linzhou, China (2.-9.6.)</p>	<p>Event 2 San Potito, Italy (3.-10.7.)</p>	<p>Tour 3 Final and first World Tour Event Chelan, USA (7.-24.7.)</p>
	<p>Tour 2 Final and 2nd World Tour Event Serra da Estrella, Portugal (7.-14.8.)</p>	
<p>Tour 1 Final and World Tour Final (Superfinal) Denizli, Turkey (23-30.9.)</p>		

Possibility 2 2010 Events:

<p>Tour 1 Final and first World-Tour Event Happo, Japan (22.-29.5.)</p>	<p>Event 1 Drama, Greece (19-26.6.)</p>	<p>Event 1 Pocos de Caldas, Brazil (3.-10.4.)</p>
	<p>Event 2 San Potito, Italy (3.-10.7.)</p>	<p>Tour 3 Final and 2nd World Tour Event Chelan, USA (7.-24.7.)</p>
	<p>Event 3 Serra da Estrella, Portugal (7.-14.8.)</p>	
	<p>Tour 2 Final and World Tour Final (Superfinal) Denizli, Turkey (23-30.9.)</p>	
<p>Event 1 2011 Linzhou, China (2.-9.6.)</p>		