

## Wingsuit Performance Competition

### COMPLAINT TO THE CHIEF JUDGE

On Sunday, October 6th, following the equipment inspection conducted in accordance with Section 5.7.3 of the Wingsuit Competition Rules, Chief Judge Mike Pennock informed us that the Wingsuit used by Luca Luigi Maria SALA, member of the Italian National Wingsuit Team, was not allowed to compete due to the presence of alleged "add-ons."

Referring to Section 5 of the "Wingsuit Flying Competition Rules", particularly Section 5.2.2, it is stated that "No 'add-ons' are allowed." However, no specific definition of what constitutes an "add-on" is provided, neither in the "Competition Rules – Wingsuit Flying" nor in the "FAI Sporting Code General Section." Despite this lack of clarity, the judges have made a subjective evaluation of the wingsuits, and we believe the ruling in this case is inconsistent.

As the Italian Head of Delegation for Italy, I, Sandro Gargini, hereby submits this formal COMPLAINT against the judges' decision based on the following points:

1. Contradiction with Sporting Code Rules:

The repeated use of the phrase "not grounds for protest" in the Wingsuit Performance Competition Rules seems, in our view, to contradict the spirit of the FAI Sporting Rules, both in the General Section and in Section 5. These rules encourage the right to protest in cases of disputes, and limiting this right goes against the foundational principles of fair competition. The only items that shall "not be ground for protest" are those listed in the FAI Sporting Code section 5 point 5.3 (5) which is clearly contradicted in Wingsuit Competition Rules Section 3.2.2

2. Inconsistent Interpretation of "Add-ons":

Another key reason for this protest is the lack of clarity and consistency in determining what constitutes an "add-on." We believe it is problematic for a term such as "add-ons" to be so inconsistently applied, especially when it significantly impacts an athlete's eligibility.

In light of these points, we respectfully submit this protest to the Jury for review. We believe that the decision to disallow Luca Sala's wingsuit is unjustified and inconsistent with the rules and past precedents. We kindly ask for a reconsideration of the matter in the spirit of fair competition.

In regards to point 2. It has come to our attention that all wingsuits approved for this competition include removable or replaceable components, such as ARM FOAMS (semi-rigid parts that increase arm stiffness) and CARBON PEDALS (rigid carbon parts that increase stiffness in the soles). These parts are typically removed during transport to prevent damage and reattached before use. This practice seems to have been accepted by the panel for other competitors.

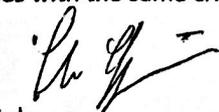
The wingsuit in question, the Phoenix-Fly VAMPIRE R, features the same removable components as the approved wingsuits. Furthermore, the parts identified by the judges as "add-ons" are clearly documented as integral to the wingsuit's structure, as detailed in the manual provided by the CEO of Phoenix-Fly. This documentation was sent to the judging panel via email and also presented in printed form during the evaluation of Mr. Sala's wingsuit.

Given these facts, we respectfully request a reconsideration of the decision. The ruling contradicts the established rules and practices for evaluating wingsuits in this competition. Denying Mr. Sala the use of his wingsuit, which complies with the same criteria as the approved suits, unfairly penalizes him and our team.

Sincerely,  
Gargini SANDRO  
Head of Delegation – Italy

PRESENTED AT:

COMPLAINT RECEIVED AT:



16.20



2024



## CJ Wingsuit response to the complaint by Italy

On the 6<sup>th</sup> of October, in compliance with article 5.7.3. of the Wingsuit Flying competition rules, all Wingsuit competitors had their equipment and Wingsuits inspected.

At 14:05 it was determined by the panel of Judges that the Wingsuit which Luca Sala from Italy presented for inspection, did not pass the article 3.2.2. equipment check.

At 16:20 the head of delegation for Italy, submitted a complaint in writing to the meet director, which was handed over to the CJ for Wingsuit.

The complaint is based on the following 2 points.

1. Contradiction with Sporting Codes Rules.
2. Inconsistent interpretation of "Add-ons"

Ad 1 and 2: All used rules and documents, have been voted on and accepted at the Planery and cannot be disputed.

As an answer to the request to reconsider the decision.

1. The same panel of Judges inspected all equipment for all Wingsuit Flying competitors.
2. Identical procedures were used for all competitors.

The panel of Judges stand by the evaluation and decision, made during the inspection.

We offer the opportunity to Luca Sala, to present a different Wingsuit, 30 minutes before the first Wingsuit Performance competition load takes off, to allow Luca Sala, to take part in the competition.

Mike Pennock

Chief Judge Wingsuit Flying - FAI 1809



A large, handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to be "Mike Pennock".

17.58

6/10/2024

**FAI World Championship 2024 – Beaufort, USA  
Wingsuit Performance Competition**

**Formal Protest Against Judges' Decision Regarding Wingsuit Equipment – Luca Luigi Maria SALA (Italy)**

Dear Jury Members,

As the Head of Delegation for the Italian National Wingsuit Team, I, Sandro Gargini, am submitting this formal protest regarding the disqualification of the wingsuit used by Luca Luigi Maria Sala. The disqualification was based on the ruling of the judging panel, which claimed the presence of alleged "add-ons" in violation of Article 3.2.2 of the Wingsuit Flying Competition Rules.

**1. The Concept of "No Ground for Protest" Contradicts FAI Sporting Rules**

First and foremost, we wish to draw attention to the fact that the repeated statement that certain decisions, such as the judges' ruling on equipment, are "not grounds for protest" is in direct contradiction with the principles outlined in the FAI Sporting Code. The FAI Sporting Code, particularly in the General Section and Section 5, emphasizes the right of competitors and delegations to protest decisions they believe to be unfair or inconsistent. Limiting this right undermines the spirit of fair competition and transparency that the FAI is built upon.

Article 5.3(5) of the FAI Sporting Code explicitly lists the items that shall "not be grounds for protest," and the equipment decisions made under Article 3.2.2 are not included in this list. Therefore, the ruling in this instance is subject to legitimate protest, and we respectfully assert that the decision of the judges in this case must be open to review.

**2. Inconsistent Judging Criteria for "Add-ons"**

The ruling by the panel of judges demonstrates an arbitrary and inconsistent interpretation of what constitutes an "add-on." During the equipment inspection process, wingsuits from various competitors were evaluated under different criteria, despite many of them possessing identical or similar characteristics to those of Mr. Sala's wingsuit.

For instance, wingsuits approved for competition by the panel included removable components such as ARM FOAMS (semi-rigid parts that increase arm stiffness) and CARBON PEDALS (rigid carbon parts that enhance stiffness in the soles). These components, while removable and replaceable, were deemed acceptable for other competitors. Yet, in the case of Mr. Sala's Phoenix-Fly VAMPIRE R wingsuit, similar components were considered "add-ons," leading to his exclusion from the competition. This inconsistent application of the rules has unfairly singled out Mr. Sala and calls into question the objectivity of the judging process.

**3. The Wingsuit was Not Modified or Altered**

It is essential to highlight that Mr. Sala's wingsuit was purchased directly from Phoenix-Fly as a fully integrated, unmodified product. No unauthorized alterations or external elements were added to the wingsuit that could be interpreted as "add-ons." The components identified by the judges as such are integral to the wingsuit's structure and function, as confirmed by the manufacturer's manual, which was submitted to the panel both digitally and in printed form during the equipment evaluation.

The decision to exclude Mr. Sala's wingsuit, which complies with the manufacturer's original specifications and is consistent with the equipment used by other competitors, is not only arbitrary but also unjust.

**4. Response to the Chief Judge's Statement Regarding Rules**

While we understand that the Chief Judge, Mike Pennock, has noted that "all used rules and documents have been voted on and accepted at the Plenary," we must emphasize that any interpretation of these rules must remain consistent with the FAI Sporting Code. Should there be an ongoing issue regarding the interpretation and application of these rules, particularly where the decision directly impacts the fairness of

competition, we reserve the right to seek a further review by the FAI General Air Sport Commission (CASI). While we hope this situation can be resolved at the current level, it is important to remind all parties that CASI serves as the ultimate body responsible for addressing such disputes and ensuring the integrity of FAI regulations.

#### 5. Request for Reconsideration Based on Fairness and Consistency

Given these points, we formally request that the Jury reconsider the decision to disqualify Mr. Sala's wingsuit. The current ruling is based on an inconsistent and unfair interpretation of the rules regarding "add-ons." We ask that the wingsuit in question be re-evaluated under the same criteria used for the wingsuits of other competitors, in the interest of ensuring fair and equal treatment for all athletes.

In conclusion, we believe that the decision to exclude Mr. Sala's wingsuit contradicts the principles of the FAI Sporting Code and goes against the spirit of fair competition. We respectfully urge the Jury to review this case and reinstate Mr. Sala's eligibility to compete.

Sincerely,

Sandro Gargini

Head of Delegation – Italy



PRESENTED AT: 06:43 PM

RECEIVED AT: