

Jury report on the 2008 FAI European Free Flight Championships

Classes F1A, F1B, F1C for seniors

Pazardzhik, Bulgaria, Aug.31 - Sep.7, 2008

Contest information

Three bulletins were distributed to NACs in time and were displayed on the well prepared championship website containing the majority of the necessary information.

One technical meeting was organized for team managers, officials and the jury. The meeting was rather short and efficient. Another meeting was held for the timekeepers in Bulgarian language.

Entry

The final entry was a total of 220 competitors from 30 countries, with increased number of individuals and countries in F1B and F1C classes, compared to 2006. The respective numbers in the three classes were as follows:

F1A – 82 competitors from 28 countries

F1B – 80 competitors from 28 countries

F1C – 58 competitors from 24 countries.

Accommodation and food

Accommodation was organized in three and two star hotels and a camp site on the field. In the hotels we had the breakfast and dinner, lunch was at the field between the fourth and sixth rounds. The accommodation at the hotels and the food was good.

Flying site

The flying site was the old airfield of Chernogorovo, 15 km to the North from the city of Pazardzhik. The grass area was 2x0,5 km with about 2 km open space around – mainly used for agricultural purposes –, the place used for Sofia Cup and Bulgaria Cup.

Motorized vehicles were allowed for retrieving of the models on the “roads” at the sides of the flying area.

Competition

The weather conditions were good, sunny, warm and dry, with large strong thermals, no wind to medium (in the afternoon rounds) wind, but the direction was not optimal. Therefore the retrieving was not easy, because the models landed mainly in agricultural terrain and some finders wanted money for giving back the models they collected. The basic wind direction was nearly the same. The starting line was replaced one time only on the glider day. The best conditions were at the F1C contest day, but there were not so many competitor in the fly-off as expected. The visibility was good in all days to have reliable timekeeping.

The **F1A** competitors had the best chance for finding thermals and their models to stay in the thermals. The higher max in the first round was reached by 63 from 82 competitors and 16 of 28 teams had full score. In the second to seventh rounds the number of maxes was even higher up to 75 in round 4 and 5. The total ratio of maxes was 85.5 % in 574 flights. Finally, 36 competitors (43.9 %) maxed out and took part in the 5 min. fly-off. Still 24 entered into the last 7 min fly-off, where nobody maxed and very close results decided the individual rankings. Four teams maxed out, so the sum of the individual ranking numbers decided the medal places.

The **F1B** day was similar, but more flight failed to max in the first round in nearly no wind conditions, a lot were just a few seconds below the max, 54 from 80 competitors maxed. The number of maxes increased in the consequent rounds up to 71 in round 4, but stayed all day below the F1A performance. The total ratio of maxes was 80.5 % in 560 flights. The 5 min fly-off was flown with 27 participants (33.8 %) and only 9 stepped further to the 7 min fly-off round where – unusually in this class in good conditions – nobody maxed. A funny, suddenly appeared breeze disturbed the flyers just after the 10 min round time started. Some models got bad air after very good climb and were pushed to lower places. The team positions were nearly clear already after the seventh round, because only one team had full score, but the tie on the third place had to be resolved later by the sum of the individual places.

The **F1C** contest started in no wind, 45 of 58 competitors maxed. Later in low wind the number of maxes increased, but the fifth round killed the populous fly-off with only 34 maxes, all together 75.1 % of the 406 flights were max. The weather was tricky, the fast climbing models could easily get out of the otherwise large and strong thermals and stayed in the downwind if the circle was too tight. The so called travelling models after a good climb were more successful not just in the first round, but also later in the stronger thermal activity. Finally, contrary to the good weather only 10 competitors (17.4 %) reached the fly-off. Six of the ten flyer maxed in the 5 min round and entered to the last, 7 min round where only one maxed and won with a large margin of 70 seconds. It could be seen that in some cases the reliability of the control or the mechanical solution of the folder and flapper models were still not enough. The team positions were clear already after the seventh round, because again only one team had full score.

Protests

There were no protests filed before or during the championships. This resulted – mainly – from the good cooperation between the organizers and the FAI jury.

There were two rather simple verbal claims caused by the lack of experience and knowledge of rules. Both were resolved by the jury also verbally. Surprisingly an additional, somehow “dirty” verbal claim was expressed between the two F1C fly-off rounds by a well known competitor, but it was possible to clear the situation in a few minutes and the claim was rejected.

Jury

The FAI Jury was formed by Pierre Chaussebourg from France, Sotir Lazarkov from Bulgaria and as president Andras Ree from Hungary.

Ceremonies

The opening ceremony was organized at the centre square of Pazardhik on the usual traditional way. Some previously not presented trophies were symbolically presented to the winners, a dancing group made a show, the Bulgarian and FAI anthems were played and the FAI jury president officially opened the event. The organization was a bit improvisational.

The prize giving ceremony was at the same place also on the usual way, the handling of the winners' flag was again improvisational. The dancing group gave a show again then the FAI jury president closed the championship. The lowered FAI flag was not handed over to the representative of the next organizer, Turkey, because their team already left home.

The banquet was in the main hotel included also a tombola in which goods connected to aeromodelling were drawn.

Others

A pre-recorded computer controlled program was prepared to help the Contest Director with automatic announcements, count downs, start and finish the rounds. Thanking the good weather the program was working well. A green flag was up during the rounds, a red one in the breaks (the changes were sometimes delayed on the first two days).

After initial organizational problems, caused by some lack of experience, for the third contest day the championship was running smoothly. It was the general opinion the spreading of information was the weak point, some of them were missing or were late.

Conclusions

The 2008 F1 European Championships was a successful event in all of the three classes. Thanks to the hard working organizers – led by Valentin Savov and Sotir Lazarkov –, timekeepers, helpers, family members, local ones and from abroad as well. Thanks to them for the work and efforts made for the free flight aeromodelling community.

The jury discussed with the organizers how to improve in the future.

On behalf of the FAI Jury

Andras Ree
President