

JURY REPORT ON 2022 F1A F1B F1C EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP FREE FLIGHT

FAI Jury

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Dates

August 16 to 20, 2022

Location

Prilep, North Macedonia

Information

Bulletin 1 was issued in January, Bulletin 2 during June and Bulletin 3 on August 2.

Participation

In F1A there were 79 competitors including the defending champion from 2018 and 26 teams. F1B had 69 competitors including the Junior Champion from 2018 and 24 teams. In F1C there were 33 competitors from 15 teams.

Ukraine participated with 3 flyers in F1A and 4 in F1B and in F1C. For their entry had been a consideration of waiving any late payment penalties, but in the event, payment was not received. Despite this, the organisers allowed Ukraine to participate. This information was announced to the Jury after the event.

Accommodation

Teams were accommodated in hotels in Prilep. Lunches were provided on the field during the competition days.

Flying site

The flying site was situated 14km south of Prilep. It was a large area of rough open land with crops further away. There were two alternative launch areas, the same one was used for all the Championship flying. An area had been cleared down to short grass to allow glider towing although this area was less than is usually used by F1A flyers. The alternative had a smaller cleared area with some weeds left and this would not have been feasible for glider towing.

There was a hill about 1km from the starting line and during the preceding World Cup event this had created a problem with some models lost from sight behind the hill, but the hill was no problem during the Championships.

Weather

The preceding World Cup event had some wind and rain, but the Championships had dry sunny weather with light winds. The F1A day had temperature reaching about 33C, rising to a higher peak on each of the following days and reaching 39C on the final F1C day. During the afternoon of the day after the F1C competition there was a thunderstorm and heavy rain in Prilep, but that had stopped before the outdoor awards ceremony.

Model Processing

Model processing had been carried out as scheduled on August 16. Unfortunately, the organisers chose to ignore the Sporting Code procedure for free flight models and instead of making one mark or sticker on the FAI Sticker they applied 4 stickers to different parts of the model. At least, it appeared that in general the timekeepers were not examining these small stickers and were accepting the proper identification codes on each model.

Random checks were carried out on models during each competition day as required.

The processing of the winning models was carried out in a rather rudimentary fashion. This was done outdoors, areas of curved wing planforms were approximated in a very simple manner, and F1C motor capacities were not checked.

Competition

After complaints that a megaphone could not be heard along the line during the World Cup, it had been announced that a siren would be used for start and finish of rounds. However, this was not as expected and the megaphone was used throughout the championships. In the light winds it proved to be adequate.

The F1A competition ran smoothly and resulted in 19 people with full scores going to a flyoff. The flyoffs were announced as being after 18.00 with light being adequate for flying up to about 19.15. The Jury considered that a flyoff for 6 minutes at 18.00 would be easy because of considerable lift being present at that time and proposed missing that and having a flight to 8 minute maximum at 19.00. At a meeting of the involved team managers there were requests to have a 6-minute flyoff and so this was set for 18.00. Then there were complaints from one team who had been told by the organisers that there would be a meeting at 18.30. A compromise was reached to accommodate them by moving the start time from 18.00 to 18.15 with the second flyoff at 19.10. All 19 of the competitors achieved the 6-minute maximum and then 11 achieved the 8-minute maximum at 19.10. The final flyoff was to a 10-minute maximum at 6.00 on the next day. In good conditions this was won by defending champion Per Findahl.

After the F1A flyoff, the F1B event started on time at 7.00. This ran smoothly and 21 full scores were recorded. After the demonstration of the 6-minute flyoff for F1A, the F1B team managers readily accepted the suggestion of going directly to 8 minute maximum at 19.00. This resulted in 12 progressing to the final flyoff the next morning at 6.00 and again this had good conditions and determined the final results.

Similarly, F1C proceeded during the day and resulted in 15 full scores. The evening 8-minute flyoff had the maximum achieved by only two flyers. The third-place model was processed that evening the remaining two flyers returned at 6.00 to decide the allocation of the silver and gold medals. Briere launched first followed by Shemesh and when the latter's model landed first it was obvious that Briere had won, with the stopwatches confirming a margin of 30 seconds.

Timekeeping

Most of the timekeepers were young people who had been recruited for the task. They had received some training, but some of them could be seen not to be paying adequate attention to the model they were timing nor using binoculars early enough (if at all). Very few used tripods. There was only one registered foreign timekeeper. During the event there were very few complaints about timekeeping, but a message has been received since the event complaining about timekeeper inadequacies.

Opening and Closing Ceremony

These were both held in the open air in the town centre.

For the opening ceremony the teams were gathered together on the opposite side of the road and kept waiting for 20 minutes before marching across the road behind their flags to stand in front of the stage. First there

was a prize giving for the World Cup event, then the opening ceremony including speeches by the mayor and the CIAM President before the event was declared open.

The closing ceremony had the teams gather around the stage but there was long wait. Zdravko Todoroski had not yet arrived with the FAI medals and diploma. It was then reported that somebody had drunk fuel from one of the unmarked drink bottles used to distribute fuel and had been taken to hospital accompanied by Todoroski. Eventually he arrived, the medals were sorted and the ceremony could begin about an hour late. It was now much darker than ideal for lighting an outdoor event, but the installed lights proved adequate. In addition to the FAI awards, the organisers had provided trophies for the individual events and one trophy for each team and challenge positions. The FAI Trophies for F1B and F1C Individual events could not be presented because they had not been returned by Russia.

The closing ceremony was followed by the banquet in a restaurant across the road with a first course supplied on the table and a main course served by waiters. There was continuous music that hampered conversation.

Protests

No protests were made.

Observations

(1) The contest director undertook many tasks in the approach to the event and then took on too many tasks during the competition, including:

- a) sounding the signals for the start and finish of the rounds and additional announcements such as time remaining, although a head of start line was nominated in the bulletin
- b) entering scores on the computer and printing results sheets, although a head of IT had been named in the bulletin
- c) coordinating other aspects of the field organisation

For a competition of the size of the European Championships some of these routine tasks should have been delegated to leave the contest director to take a more supervisory and overview position.

This is not a personal criticism but a concern for personal work load and the need to avoid delays when there is a conflict of tasks

(2) The presentation of results during the event was inadequate. A single computer print was displayed on the noticeboard, which was too small for more than 3 people to read at once and it was issued a long time after the rounds. For example, the first display was often posted during round 3 or 4.

In addition, there were mistakes which it seemed were not possible to be corrected because the software was supplied by an outside source. These included showing the wrong nationalities for some competitors, not indicating the defending champions but showing them as flyers for their nationalities and including them in the team scores, and including all team members in the scores instead of taking the best 3. To avoid this problem for team results, Ian Kaynes processed the Individual results to produce the correct team scores for display on the following day and for inclusion in the results. It was noted that one week after the event the organisers web site still displaying results which included most of these errors.

(3) The fuel for use by F1C flyers at the championship was supplied without labels and in green soft drinks bottles, of the same brand that was distributed with the lunches on the field. This was a significant safety hazard and would be against health and safety regulations in many countries. In many ways it is a surprise that the bottles were not confused on the flying field but fuel was drunk by somebody after the event, which resulted in the delay to the awards ceremony. It is recommended that references in the Sporting Code to the supply of fuel should also state the obvious that the containers must be distinct and clearly marked with the name of the contents and marked not to be consumed.

Conclusion

The Jury wish to thank the organiser Zdravko Todoroski, the Air Sports Association Prilep and the NAC Vozduhoplovna Federacija Na Makedonija for the successful European Championships.