

3rd F3J World Championships, 2002.

FAI JURY REPORT.

FAI JURY: Sandy Pimenoff CIAM President
 Tomas Bartovsky CIAM/F3BJ Technical Subcommittee Chairman
 Nick Neve UK Delegate

DATES: From 04/08/2002 to 10/08/2002.

ORGANISERS: The Finnish Aeronautical Association and The Lappeenranta Flying Club.

PARTICIPATION:

25 Countries participated in the senior event, all with teams of three, plus the current world champion, a total of 76 pilots. In the junior event 14 countries participated, 8 of which had teams of three, plus 6 with a single junior, making a total of 30 pilots. Thus a grand total of 106 pilots took part.

LOCATION: Lappeenranta, Finland.

ACCOMMODATION:

Two locations were offered. A Hotel, the Hotel Sokos Lappee (EUR 80/double room including breakfast) and a campsite (EUR 41/cabin for 4) with a youth hostel (EUR 66/ double room). Both were of high standard and offered good value for money. Lunch (EUR 8) was available on the field.

FLYING SITE:

The commercial airfield of Lappeenranta was the flying field. This had a single runway (6/24) covered in bitumen with grass verges. The verges were lined by fir and birch trees along the entire length. Competitors were allocated space in a hangar in case of rain. Other buildings were used by the organisers and for lunch. The combination of the warm weather, a crosswind, the vast bitumen runway, airport buildings and the edge of the trees, produced a continuous stream of thermals throughout the event which resulted in very close scores. Only the duration of the launch and the accuracy of the landings separated the top competitors.

The smooth flow of the event was interrupted on a number of times by the arrival and departure of full-size aircraft, despite the organisers having taken steps to minimise the occurrence.

THE COMPETITION:

The field organisation was very smooth with the officials clearly knowing their duties and performing them well. Of particular note was the public address system and the method of broadcasting the starting signals, with individual speakers for each launch position. The organiser provided pre-positioned stakes 150 metres from the launch line. This meant that just prior to launch and in the initial release phase, when the lines were stretched, the safety corridor was used.

In practice this did not cause any problems. The use of pre-positioned stakes (only one set) meant that it took up to 30 minutes for the organisers to change the launch direction when the wind direction shifted.

Somewhat less satisfactory was the Team Managers briefing, where the Contest Director outlined his intended approach to running the contest and in particular his own interpretation of the reflight rule. This caused problems later in the event because of the lack of any statements in writing, poor acoustics in the briefing hangar and inadequate real-time translation into other languages.

SCORING:

The German computer program, written by Karl Hinsch, who was also a competitor, was used. It performed perfectly and scores were posted on a scoreboard in front of the hangar group by group and round by round. A few minor data entry errors were quickly corrected.

As a general comment, it must be stated that scores should be displayed on the board in larger type so that they can be viewed by several people simultaneously.

PROTESTS:

There were four protests. Two were withdrawn after informal discussion with the Jury, one was upheld and one dismissed. A fee of EUR 40 was retained. Details of the protests were forwarded to the FAI under separate cover. The Jury had to spend a lengthy period of time, including an overnight session, defining their interpretation of rule 5.6.4 (Reflights) and published their interpretation as an advisory note to assist the Contest Director. This rule requires further work in the CIAM/F3J Subcommittee.

OPENING AND CLOSING CEREMONIES:

The town band provided a colourful background to a well organised opening ceremony in front of the hangar, attended by all the competing nations, the organisers and local dignitaries, three of which made short speeches of welcome. The FAI flag was hoisted followed by the flag of the host nation and the European Union and anthems were played.

The closing ceremony was held in the Old Town centre, Lappeenranta amidst a folk music festival in a public street. A lack of flagpoles suitable for hoisting flags, some confusion over the anthem of the Czech Republic and a slightly bewildered public audience detracted from a ceremony which otherwise had all the required ingredients of trophies, medals and certificates.

JURY OBSERVATIONS:

This class has matured to the extent that little now separates the top 30 competitors. Measures to make the task more difficult to achieve and the need to revise the scoring to give a greater separation of the scores (for example by no longer having a discard round) need to be considered by the CIAM/F3J Subcommittee.

CONCLUSION:

This Championship will be remembered for the excellent weather, the closeness of the results and the field organisation. The organisers, The Finnish Aeronautical Association and the Lappeenranta Flying Club are to be congratulated. There was a sporting atmosphere throughout and in particular it was encouraging to see the strong junior participation, a most positive feature of this class.