

FAI World Championships for Soaring Model Aircraft (class F3J)

Johannesburg, South Africa

5th to 12th August 2012

This FAI World Championship for Soaring Model Aircraft was organised under the leadership of the Aero Club of South Africa by the Model Glider Association of South Africa.

Venue

The competition took place on the estate of lawn farm near Delmas. The field was flat and allowed launching in all four perpendicular directions. The flying was not limited at any side of the flying field. The surface was a short cut grass which was dry at this time but still being superior. The organiser built up the infrastructure consisting of big tents and shads for each team.

The only disadvantage of this field was a rather long distance (40 km) from hotels. The organiser arranged busses for transporting of participants to the airfield.

Participation

The Championships were entered by 58 senior competitors from 22 countries and 21 junior competitors from 9 countries.

Organisation

The World Championships were well organised. Head of the organising team was Mrs. Michelle Godrom, Sporting Contest Director was Mr. Serdar Sualp (TUR). All people in the organising staff were qualified and experienced. The number of timekeepers allowed smooth running of the competition flying.

For practicing of timekeepers and pilots a two day international open competition SOS Children's Villages Open F3J was held before the championships.

The organiser offered locals from the farm for hire as tow-man. As could be expected some teams were not satisfied with the power of these helpers.

Accommodation and catering

The official hotel was the Kopanong Hotel and Conference centre. Other hotels within 5 km distance were available. There was no possibility to camp on the field.

Breakfast and dinner was served in hotels. Hot lunch was served in a tent on the airfield. It was also possible to buy refreshment on the field. All food was good and ample.

Weather

The weather was very unusual in comparison with previous World and continental championships. On the southern hemisphere there is wintertime in August. The participant had the opportunity to experience snow, which otherwise appeared at Johannesburg last time 53 years ago. Three flurries on Monday prepared very hard conditions for some pilots. Few models were lost due to immediate worsening of visibility. The cold weather was difficult for pilots, but even more difficult for timekeepers who had to stay daylong in the cold wind.

During the rest of the week the weather was more acceptable, sometimes sunny, a little bit warmer.

Safety

The safety area including launch corridor, all tents and shades was clearly marked. Therefore no serious safety problems were observed during the competitions.

Processing

For all model gliders entering the championships the nose radius and the correct marking were checked. No problems appeared during the processing.

Opening and closing ceremony

The opening and prize giving ceremonies were run in a dignified manner on the airfield. In addition to FAI medals and diplomas the organiser provided nice souvenirs to best pilots and teams.

The official program also included an informal Africa-in-a-Day experience including a drive through the Rhino and Lion Nature Reserve and the social evening with dinner at the Carnivores Restaurant near Muldersdrift.

International Jury

Members of the International Jury were: Tomas Bartovsky (CZE) - president, Patrik Michnac (SVK) - member and Lionel Brink (RSA) - member.

The organiser provided the jury with polar fleece jackets, warm caps and scarves, the equipment necessary at the cold weather.

Protests

There were 3 protests submitted during the championships.

1. German pilot insisted on being included in a reflly group, in spite of his name being announced for reflly by mistake.
2. Italian pilot tried to achieve removing his penalty which he received for longer tow line.
3. Norwegian pilot declared that the new working time appointed to the pilot in his group was not correct.

All protests were thoroughly dealt with by the jury and all were declined.

Inquiry

For discovering the general feeling about the future of this class the Jury prepared a questionnaire with three questions. All pilots and team managers gave their answers.

Conclusion

In the opinion of the FAI Jury, this was a very successful World Championship carried out in a friendly atmosphere. The organisers are to be commended for an excellent event.

Johannesburg 12th August 2012

Tomas Bartovský
Jury president