

REPORT BY THE FAI JURY ON THE FAI WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

FOR CLASS F3A (Radio-Control Aerobatics). Sauce Viejo, Santa Fe, Argentina. November 2007.

Overview

The first R/C Aerobatic world championships on the South American continent, the 25th anniversary, was a successful and enjoyable event. It was organised and executed by the Argentinean Aeromodelling Federation (FAA), from 8th to 18th November 2007, in collaboration with Club Aeromodelistas Newbery, the largest club in Argentina. The ideal facilities and layout of the civil airport at Sauce Viejo afforded excellent flying opportunity for 82 competitors from 32 nations. Although the location was 400km from the entry port of Buenos Aires, this posed no major problems. The number of participants was significantly lower than previous events in Europe, and several teams did not participate.

Pre-event information

Several hard copy bulletins as well as the website, conveyed general and specific information to participating nations. All aspects of the championship, lodging, transportation, costs, rules, local rules, and procedures were covered. Some teams queried the lack of availability of rental vans, but other arrangements were possible. Considerable effort was made to ease the temporary importation of the model aircraft and equipment. A few participants were affected with late arrival of model aircraft, an aspect not under the control of the organizers. Several of the teams had difficulty in transferring funds, since intermediary banks were involved in the process. At the time of registration, at least four teams were required to settle outstanding amounts. The organizers contracted a professional event management company to handle some of the events, functions, transportation, sponsorship, etc. but due to lack of experience, several small items were either not done, or overlooked.

Accommodation, food

Competitors and supporters/helpers were accommodated in the city of Santa Fe and surrounding towns, within easy driving distance of the competition site. Participants were able to choose between various accommodation options. Judges were accommodated in a modest hotel, and transportation was provided on a regular basis. The accommodation in the various hotels was of an acceptable standard and at reasonable cost. Day-time meals for participants, staff and officials were provided at two on-site restaurants.

Practice fields and competition site

Ten practice sites were made available to competitors within reasonable driving distances.

Two flight areas, both facing due South, were arranged on taxiways perpendicular to the main runway, to avoid flying into the sun. Simultaneous flying on two flight lines was possible, due to a requested frequency separation. Not all teams adhered to this request, and as a result, team members were separated on different flight lines. The two sites were adequately separated in distance, and were easily accessible via tar roads. The manoeuvring areas on both sites were clearly and correctly marked. The organisers provided shelter for competitors at each site, and interested spectators had access from a safe vantage point that did not interfere with the smooth running of the event. Crowd control was not always effective and non-accredited spectators were allowed to enter out-of-bounds areas. Both flying sites had a good working layout (judging seats, shade, transmitter impound, frequency scanning, ready boxes, and sound measuring areas). Publicity prior to the event ensured a steady stream of spectators. The local newspaper (*El Litoral*) was signed up as one of the sponsors, and ran regular articles before and during the event.

Model aircraft processing and official practice

Model aircraft processing took place in a large aircraft hangar, primarily on Friday 9th November, with a few more model aircraft being processed on Saturday 10th November. Processing was professionally handled, with two stations in operation, with identical equipment. All procedures were correctly conducted and equipment was of good quality, certified, and calibrated. A few teams arrived late for processing, and some still without the proper documentation. One jury member remarked that model aircraft enthusiasts are not avid readers. Official practice was conducted at the same time, and intermittent light rain caused five teams to miss official practice on Friday, but they were given opportunity on Saturday.

Organisation and execution

The championship was conducted in a very friendly, yet professional way. The contest director was also the event director, and four complete teams were assembled to handle each line and each session of flying. There was no public address system, but competitors were advised in good time to occupy the ready boxes for their flights. Those using electric propulsion devices had their equipment tested for voltage prior to each flight and the model aircraft weighed after each flight. There were no weather delays. A few scheduled commercial flights arrived and departed daily, with no significant disruption to the programme. Frequency monitoring was done at each site, using professional software that was able to record and store data for later analysis. Not a single incident of interference was reported, and a few competitors were using the 2.4GHz technology.

Line directing, timekeeping and sound measuring was done efficiently. Score tabulation was expertly done using the GNAMI TBL-programme, with raw scores appearing within 20 minutes of the conclusion of flights. Flight results were pinned to the inside of two marquees. There was unfortunately no daily bulletin, and no central notice board to convey competition standings and general notices. The standard of flying was high, in spite of the strong wind conditions on all of the competition days. There was a diversity of model aircraft, equipment, and flying styles. Three bi-planes and about 40% electric-powered model aircraft were entered, of which two used contra-rotating propellers. There was only one crash during the competition rounds, equipment failure being suspected. Continuous random checking during the competition for conformation to the specifications, took place.

