

JURY REPORT ON 2019 F1A F1B F1C WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP FREE FLIGHT

FAI Jury

Ian Keynes GBR President
Chuck Etherington USA Member
Cenny Breeman BEL Member
Roger Morrell NZL Alternate member

The planned jury had been Keynes, Etherington and Shigeru Kanegawa of Japan. However, a severe typhoon struck Japan at the time Shigeru was scheduled to fly to USA for the Championships. Many flights were cancelled and when they resumed were very expensive and would have resulted in arrival after the Championships had started.

The nominated reserve, Cenny Breeman, was touring western USA at the time and agreed to join the jury at the championships. After attending the opening ceremony Cenny became ill and was taken to hospital. Roger Morrell was recruited to replace Cenny and served on the jury for the timekeepers briefing, the team managers meeting and the F1A competition.

Cenny returned to the field during the F1A competition and resumed his jury position for the F1B and F1C competitions. I thank Cenny and Roger for their help standing in for the missing Shigeru.

Dates

October 17 to 22, 2019

Location

Lost Hills, California, USA

Information

Three bulletins were produced and distributed before the event. There were additional communications with team managers and commendable information and discussion with the Jury President. During the event results were available online during the competitions and Roger Morrell posted news and information on his online/email news publication SEN.

Participation

F1A 38 countries, 103 competitors including the defending champion

F1B 34 countries, 97 competitors including the defending champion

F1C 23 countries, 57 competitors, with the defending champion flying as a member of his national team.

Accommodation

Competitors found their own accommodation in motels in the area.

Flying site

Lost Hills is very well known as a premium free flight site, with major World Cup events in February and October each year attract many foreign competitors. It is semi-desert and in October it is very dry and dusty. There is a large central area belonging to the free flight association and further expanses open for free flight retrieval. It is bordered on two sides by almond orchards and, while models can be retrieved from the orchards, competition starting areas were usually arranged to minimise landing in the orchards. The access

tracks on the site had been prepared to a very high standard by grading by the local excavation company, who also kept them regularly watered to minimise dust from traffic.

Three starting lines had been surveyed and marked in advance in the positions likely to be needed for the usual weather patterns.

Weather

The weather was generally ideal for free flight. It was dry and mainly sunny with temperatures each day reaching just under 30C. Wind was light and in directions that suited the established starting lines. The wind became stronger at the end of the F1C rounds and the start of the flyoff was delayed until it had dropped slightly, in order to avoid problems with visibility from dust raised by the wind.

Competition

All competitions ran very smoothly. The first competition was for F1A and at the end of rounds it soon became apparent that the schedule of 55 minute rounds followed by a 5 minute gap gave inadequate time for moving cards from one end of the 370m line to the other, particularly if a flight had been made at the end of the round, reducing the effective gap to little more than a minute. Timekeepers at the affected poles were instructed that, if required, they could start timing in advance of the arrival of the flight cards.

33 competitors reached the F1A flyoff, the first round of which was flown at 16.30 followed by a second round at 17.30. This left 3 competitors tied and the next flyoff was at 7.20 the following day. Due to a failure of communication two jury members went to the wrong starting line. However, both Breeman and Morrell were at the flyoff, but no jury action was required.

The F1B competition ran smoothly and 41 competitors reached the flyoff. Like F1A, two flyoffs were held in the evening and, remarkably the same number were tied for a 3-person flyoff the following morning. This was attended by the full jury. It was held at the starting line near to the orchard with low level wind away from the orchard, but in flight the models were taken over the orchard. This had little influence on the result as all models disappeared over the trees in similar positions.

The F1C competition proceeded without any problems. 23 flyers reached the flyoff. All was prepared for a start at 16.30 but the wind was about 6 m/s and there was concern that it was picking up dust which would reduce visibility. The start was delayed to 17.30 when the flyoff was flown in good conditions. It left 14 people tied to participate in the flyoff next morning. This was held in very good conditions with very light drift taking models away from the orchard and visible to the timekeepers without needing binoculars.

The winning models were successfully processed after each final flyoff. Random processing had checked more than 20% on each day. One F1B competitor was found to have an underweight model and was disqualified.

Announcements of time in the round and the start and finish signals were clear and audible over the whole line and were to the same consistent standard for the whole competition.

The results were posted online during each competition and could be accessed on personal devices. They were also displayed on a monitor, but this display was in the car park 600m from the line and was difficult to read in the sun. A more physical scoreboard close to the flight line would have been useful.

Timekeeping

The timekeepers had been well briefed in advance. They performed very well and there were no timekeeping problems presented to the jury. For some of the flyoffs, teams were requested to provide additional people to add to the timekeeping pool and this allowed the full complement of 3 timekeepers for each flyoff flight.

Opening and Closing Ceremony

These were held in the sports stadium at Lost Hills. For the opening ceremony teams gathered behind school children holding name boards for their country and a local school band played. The teams were announced, there were some brief speeches and the championships were opened.

For the closing ceremony teams and spectators were seated in the stands facing a large podium. The presentations went smoothly apart from a number of problems playing the anthems for the winners.

The Daumerie Cup, a heavy glass vase trophy awarded for F1A team, arrived in the USA with the glass broken. It included a note from customs inspection authorities detailing how to claim for damage during inspection. The victorious Russian team took the damaged trophy and the French Federation (consignees as the 2017 winners) are to investigate compensation..

After the closing ceremony buses were provided to take those who had bought tickets to the banquet in Bakersfield. This was at country music venue with ample seating and very good food and drinks. A live band played for most of the time. A few intermissions would have been useful to allow conversations.

Protests

There were no protests or complaints.

One competitor was disqualified for an under-weight model found during random processing.

One team was warned against driving a golf cart in circles under a model and there were no further infringements of the local rule banning such activity.

Observations

In future championships the schedule should allow a break longer than 5 minutes between rounds to facilitate movement of cards from one end of the line to the other.

Conclusion

The Championships were directed by a small team of hard working people including:-

Charlie Jones - Contest Director

Brian Van Nest - Head of timekeepers

Ed Carroll – Head of processing

Bill Booth and Mike McKeever – Field operations

Colleen Pierce (AMA) and John Lorbiecki (NFFS)

The Jury thanks them for implementing a very successful championships.