



PRESS RELEASE
For immediate release

FAI World Drone Racing Championships: One week to go

Lausanne, Switzerland, 25 October 2018 – **More than 250 pilots, team managers and assistants are heading to Shenzhen, China for the start of the 1st FAI World Drone Racing Championships.**

Some 128 of the world's best drone racing pilots from 34 separate countries will make the journey to Shenzhen, "the Heart of the drone economy", for the four-day competition that runs from 1-4 November 2018.

FAI Jury President Bruno Delor said: "At the final count we have 34 national teams with a total of 128 competitors. That includes 43 juniors and 12 women."

Travelling with them he said, "will be a further 132 registered team managers, helpers and official supporters."

The drone racing pilots and their crews are heading to Shenzhen, a city near Hong Kong that is often labelled "China's Silicon Valley", to compete against each other for prestigious team and individual FAI medals in what will be the first ever FAI World Drone Racing Championships.

Host nation the People's Republic of China will be fielding the biggest team, with eight competitors, including three Wildcard competitors.

National teams can consist of:

- A team manager
- Three competitors, plus one junior (under-18) and one female, taking the maximum number of competitors to five
- Helpers (one per competitor)
- Supporters.

As organiser, China is entitled to field three wildcard competitors.

Several countries are fielding a full team of five. Spain, Germany, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, Poland, Russia, Chinese Taipei and the USA all have teams of four men plus one woman.

In Drone Racing, which is a relatively new sport sanctioned under the FAI umbrella of air sports but one that has seen phenomenal growth, up to six drone-racers at a time race battery-powered drones around a race track. Races last two or three minutes each and the fastest pilot wins.

FAI Global Technical Partner Noosphere is running the event management system, registering participants, then managing the website and online results.

Played out over several heats over four days the competition will culminate in a final race that sees the final FAI World Drone Racing Champion crowned.

Up for grabs is a prize pot of several thousand US dollars as well as the prestigious FAI medals.

While the final outcome is impossible to predict, some key pilots have been showing their form in this year's FAI Drone Racing World Cup circuit.

Fourteen-year-old Killian Rousseau (FRA) won the 2018 Drone Racing World Cup series, claiming the top spot after seeing off no fewer than 668 other competitors from 41 different countries over a series of competitions.

His team mate Thomas Grout (FRA) also finished in the top 10. Both pilots are Juniors and are expected to perform well in China, which would mean good news for France.

In the Seniors, Poland's Jan Wielgosz finished second in the World Cup and will be heading to China with medal ambitions. Just 18, he will be competing as a Senior for the first time.

In the Women's competition, Thailand's Wanraya Wannapong will be returning to the scene of a previous phenomenal victory – in May she won the China Drone Racing Open in Shenzhen. Held as a test event for the World Championships, she wowed everyone when she held her nerve all the way through to the final race – especially as she was just 11 years old at the time.

In drone racing Juniors often win the overall medals, leaving the Seniors in their wake.

With all to play for competition will be intense and the action spectacular.

WHERE TO WATCH

Follow the race online on the dedicated competition website (faidroneworld2018.aero) and the FAI social media channels – from 1-4 November 2018.

Check out the live stream at these times:

Saturday 3 Nov 2018: 3pm-7.20pm local time / 8am-12.20pm Central European Time

Sunday 4 Nov 2018 (semi-finals and finals): 5pm-7.30pm local time / 10am-12.30pm Central European Time

Watch the live stream at: www.facebook.com/drones.fai or www.youtube.com/airsportschannel

Editor's notes

FAI logo: bit.ly/FAI_logo

FAI World Drone Racing Championships:

- Logo: bit.ly/droneschps2018-logo
- Website: www.faidroneworld2018.aero
- Test event pictures: bit.ly/2mEAZvY

FAI media channels dedicated to Drones

- www.facebook.com/drones.fai
- www.twitter.com/drones_fai
- www.instagram.com/drones.fai

About FAI

FAI, the World Air Sports Federation, is the world governing body for air sports and for certifying world aviation and space records. The FAI was founded in 1905 and is a non-governmental and non-profit-making organisation recognised by the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

FAI activities include Aerobatics, Aeromodelling, Airships, Amateur-Built and Experimental Aircraft, Balloons, Drones, Gliding, Hang Gliding, Helicopters, Manpowered Flying, Microlights, Parachuting, Paragliding, Paramotors, Power Flying and all other Aeronautic activities and Space records.

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