



**PRESS RELEASE**  
For immediate release

## **Martin Sonka wins 2018 Red Bull Air Race World Championship**

Fort Worth, USA, 19 November 2018 – **The FAI congratulates Martin Sonka on his win at the 2018 Red Bull Air Race World Championship in Fort Worth, Texas, over the weekend of 17-18 November 2018.**

The pressure could not have been higher for the Czech pilot, who was last to fly and had to win the race to win the overall Championship.

“This race was incredible. It couldn’t end up better than this,” he said afterwards. “It was a beautiful race with everything in it.”

Sonka was one of the favourites to win, but as he entered the final round of the 2018 Red Bull Air Race in Texas the points spread meant any one of three pilots could win and take the World Championship title.

Matt Hall (AUS) and Michael Goulian (USA) were both in with a chance. But with Goulian knocked out early in the day, it came down to a battle between Hall and Sonka in the last race of the day.

Hall flew a perfect round, clean and fast, and had the crowd cheering as he scored a fast track time of 53.100 seconds.

Minutes later Sonka flew through the chequered-flag start gates to start his round. Two perfect laps followed.

Seconds later he flew back through the start/finish gate to win the race and the title – just 0.204 seconds faster than Australian Hall.

“That was a perfect race,” he said moments after he had jumped out of his cockpit in the hangar zone at Fort Worth’s Texas Motor Speedway.

FAI President of Honour Frits Brink was on hand to present the 2018 Red Bull Air Race World Championship trophy to Sonka. Medals and champagne swiftly followed as the 2018 Red Bull Air Race season drew to a close.

Martin Sonka is a former Czech Air Force fighter pilot with a strong background in Aerobatics, particularly Freestyle Aerobatics. He has been flying the Red Bull Air Race for five seasons, and placed second in 2017.

Aged 40, he has been flying since he was a teenager, learning to fly gliders and parachute jumping at the age of 17.

Sonka’s Aerobatics career started with gliders and then powered aircraft.

Since joining the Czech Aerobatic Team in 2005 he has won numerous honours including FAI European overall Vice Champion in the Unlimited category, two-time FAI World Freestyle Vice Champion, two-time FAI European Freestyle Champion, and six Unlimited and six Freestyle Championship wins at Czech Nationals.

## Results

1. Martin Sonka (CZE)
2. Matt Hall (AUS)
3. Michael Goulian (USA)

## Notes to editors

More about the Red Bull Air Race

[www.redbullairrace](http://www.redbullairrace)

More about the FAI and the Red Bull Air Race

[www.fai.org/redbullairrace](http://www.fai.org/redbullairrace)

Photographs available to download

[www.flickr.com/photos/airsports\\_fai/albums/72157703630269124](http://www.flickr.com/photos/airsports_fai/albums/72157703630269124)

## 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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For more details, please contact the FAI:

Faustine Carrera  
Communication Manager  
0041 21 345 10 70  
[communication@fai.org](mailto:communication@fai.org)

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