

F3A World News

Tuesday, 26 July, 2011



WELCOME!

Text and photos by Jim Quinn.

AIRPLANES, a universal language. Several years ago the then President of the National Society of Radio Control Aerobatics, Derek Koopowitz, had a dream of hosting the F3A World Championship in the United States. The last time we hosted the World Championship was in 1999 in Florida.

The United States hosts the World Championship about every 10 years. Enough time had passed that he thought it was time to petition for another one in the United States. That dream is now a reality.

Obviously, the World Championship is all about the pilots, but the story really begins with a host of support staff. The first stop for a pilot is processing. Each model must be carefully weighed and measured to comply with the 5,000-gram, 2-meter limit on the aircraft's size and weight.

Once they pass this test, each removable airplane part gets a sticker of verification. Joe Lachowski assists Gerhard Mayr putting stickers on a plane he designed himself.



Even before that, however, the pilot must receive his credentials. Four lovely ladies shared in welcoming each pilot to the AMA's International Aeromodeling Center: Margaret Guerin, Dana Bouchard, Lois Mock, and Colleen Pierce.





After that, eight others on the processing team took over for weight and measure. Finally each airplane was taken outside the processing center to check fail-safe features. Earl Haury's processing team included Ron Van Putte, John Fuqua, Dave Lockhart, Ron Lockhart, Andre Bouchard, Joe Lachowski, and Bob Kane.

So now, let's get flying! Wrong ... there other stuff to attend to before we actually take to the sky. The judges are another obvious group. The judging panel comes from around the world representing 21 countries. There are 20 judges with one alternate on-site along with a Judging Jury of three additional members making it a total of 24 in the entire judging complement. The jury is headed by Michael Ramel, Germany, with Bob Skinner, South Africa, and Jim Eichenberg, Canada, on staff.



By country in alphabetical order the judges are: Jorge OLIVELLA, Argentina; Henry HUTCHINSON, Australia; Jean-Yves CASTERMANS, Belgium; Harry ELLS, Canada; Praphon TECHAVIPARK, Thailand; Esa EIROLA, Finland; Peter UHLIG, Germany; Harunobu (Ken) HIROSE, Japan; Noel BARRETT, Ireland; Gianluigi GIANNONI, Italy; Sigmund BECK, Liechtenstein; Bob ROMIJN, Netherlands; Tom Eric SORENSEN, Norway; Emanuel FERNANDES, Portugal; Dmitry CHAPLYGIN, Russia; Christo RUST, South Africa; Richard CHEONG, Singapore; Robert AILLES, United Kingdom; Dale ARNOLD, United States; Paris CHRISTODOULIDES, Cyprus; and the on-site alternate, Benkt-Eric SODERSTROM, Sweden.



Airplanes are a universal language here at the F3A World Championship, but an even more basic language is that of love. Three years ago at the Italian National Championship, Alex Heindel from Norway met Jeannette and fell in love. Last year they were back in Italy to fly, yes, but even more to get married. On Sunday, July 24, Jeannette and Alex celebrated their first anniversary. No, they were not in Italy; they were here at Muncie for this first anniversary celebration. We all wish them a most happy anniversary.



The team from France had just finished processing when the team from Germany was arriving. Another universal language, that of basic friendship, was obvious from the smiles and well-wishes exchanged between these two teams.



The team from Israel arrived early for an extra day of practice at our aeromodelling center. Ohad Zarko, Isaac Najary, and Shlomo Chester took a few minutes off from practicing to talk about being in a place that is “like heaven,” to quote Shlomo. The Aeromodelling Club of Israel is in the process of building an RC runway, but these three pilots were awed at the spaciousness of the AMA site.



Our current World Champion, Christophe Paysant-LeRoux, echoed those same sentiments about the site. In his words it is, “incredible, perfect for RC competition.”

How can someone be the World Champion in 1999, 2001, 2003, 2005, and 2009? One obvious answer is dedication. Christophe said he began preparations for this year’s World Championship right after the European Championship a year ago! For the last several months he has been flying eight flights a day alternating between the P and F sequences. ➔

F3A Day 1 and Opening Ceremonies

AS A NEW day dawns at the AMA's International Aeromodeling Center, yesterday's lengthy judges' meeting is now a memory. The preparation for the judges, however, is not over.

After more than four hours inside yesterday, they moved outside this morning to one of the runways available to us here at the Aeromodeling Center. Don Szczur and A.C. Glenn have their airplanes ready for demo air work, while Joseph Szczur stands ready to call the maneuvers.



After a flight of P-11 is finished, Michael Ramel gathers all the judges together so they can compare notes on their impressions of the flight in general. Then the judges share scores for each maneuver so they can "calibrate" their eyes so everyone is on the same page.

After several more hours of "calibration" the judges were extremely well prepared to begin work on Tuesday when the actual flying commences.

There is just one more consideration that deserves mention. The judges cannot look away from the airplanes as they fly through each sequence, so they use a "judge's assistant" to record the scores for each maneuver. Many of our international judges solved the language problem by bringing their own personal judge's assistant. For some it is a wife, a girlfriend, or a significant other. A special thanks goes out to this great group of women who support our judges so well.



Thanks to all their dedication and preparation, our judges are ready to give the fairest assessment to each flight of our competitors when flying starts tomorrow.



So let's introduce some of the teams who will be flying their best to be declared world champions for the next two years.

Great Britain



Belgium



New Zealand



Austria



France



Canada



And from France, our reigning individual and team champions. We will try to introduce more teams each day.

Along with being competitors, the contestants are also fans as demonstrated by the autographs collected on the back of one of our contestants.



The highlight of the day was the opening ceremonies, beginning with each team marching in proudly carrying their country's flag as their national anthem was played. They came in alphabetically beginning with Argentina, and ending with Venezuela.



Seeing them all standing in a semi-circle was really a sight that no picture could do justice. You really had to be present to catch the full flavor of this awesome sight.



Greg Hahn started the ceremonies by introducing each team. He continued his job as Master of Ceremonies by introducing several dignitaries. The opening ceremonies ended as Michael Ramel proclaimed that the 2011 RC Precision Aerobatics were now opened for competition.



Two of our team members were very attentive to the ceremonies while also making the moment more personal.



It was a long day, so why not end it with a wonderful dinner? Jacques Paysant-LeRoux and Wolfgang Matt look like they are enjoying the dinner selection. →

