

2023 FAI F3CN World Championships for Model Helicopters for Seniors and Juniors 5th to 9th August 2023, Muncie/Indiana, USA

Jury Report

The 2023 FAI F3CN World Championships for Model Helicopters was organised by the Academy of Model Aeronautics (AMA) in association with the International Radio Controlled Helicopter Association (IRCHA).

Venue

The competition took place at the International Aeromodeling Center in Muncie, Indiana, USA. The terrain was large enough to provide two flightlines at a distance of over 500m. Three of five training fields were accommodated there. Two additional training fields were placed very close to the AMA area. All airfields consisted of grass surfaces and were very well prepared.

The team manager meetings and the F3 Helicopter Subcommittee Meeting took place in the office building on the airfield. The model processing was placed at the entrance of the AMA area in a room beside the museum. Sufficient parking for pilots and visitors was available during the competition.

Participation

In class F3C 19 pilots including two juniors participated. One of the juniors was also female but it was clarified by the team manager that this female junior will only participate in the junior's classification. In class F3N 12 pilots participated with only one junior. In total, pilots from 11 nations were represented.

Due to the following reasons the number of participants was as low as never before:

- Many European teams did not register because of the high costs for a trip to USA. Because of the political situation in the world prices for nearly everything increased and made the participation for a lot of pilots not financially.
- The organisation of the competition was from time to time confusing. Deadlines for the preliminary and final entry were changed by the organiser. And necessary documents like the Bulletins were not published just in time. So, teams did not feel informed and therefore they did not register. Without any information regarding the Championships teams needed to wait for planning their trip to USA. And as long as they wait for booking the flights as more will the prices for the ticket increase.

Registration / Model Processing

Sufficient time was available for the registration of the pilots and the officials as well as for the model processing. Since the FAI licenses were already checked in advance by the organizer and the jury president, the registration only checked the presence of the pilots. The model processing went without incident. All models met the specifications and were labeled accordingly with stickers. Because of the knowledgeable staff, the registration of the pilots and the officials and the model processing was completed quickly.

The French F3C judge Roger Lacome arrived with a delay of one day after the Opening Ceremony due to a cancellation of his flight to USA. He missed the registration, the judge's meeting, the official

training and the Opening Ceremony. Before the first round of F3C two calibration flights took place which allow Roger to exchange with other judges.

Official Practice

The schedule for the official training was announced in advance on the website. Since each nation adhered to the schedule, the official training could be carried out without any difficulty. One pilot from South Korea withdraw his participation some days before the start of the World Championships. And two pilots from the team of China did not get a visa just in time and had to withdraw their registration. The schedule for the official training was not changed, so three times a ten minutes break was included. Parallel to the official training meetings were held under the direction of the jury president for the F3C and F3N judges. These were used to clarify the latest details.

Organisation

The two flightlines for F3C and F3N were well prepared and oriented almost directly north so that the sun did not bother the judges nor pilots. The score tabulation took place in a bureau trailer containing the computers and office equipment and was placed at the F3C flightline. Score sheets of the F3N competition were picked up and taken to the F3C flightline to be evaluated.

Preparation tents with enough space were set up for the pilots and spectators. Seating for spectators was available in sufficient quantity. A safety fence was missing at both flightlines.

Comfortable chairs were made available for the judges. Drinks for the officials were sufficiently available. Also on both flightlines expert flightline directors and timekeepers were used.

The F3N finals were flown on the F3C flightline. So, there was no need for spectators to change the flightline for watching the finals in both classes.

According to the Sporting Code five judges were used for F3C. In class F3N only three judges were available at the flightline. Due to the low participation and the associated low entry fees the organizer was not able to cover the costs for two more F3N judges. While this was in accordance with the rules, it didn't make sense as none of the scores were discarded and this put increased pressure on the judges.

The organizer conducted three team manager meetings. One before the preliminary rounds, one before the F3C semifinal and F3N final rounds and one before the F3C finals. In the determination of the starting order particular attention was paid to the two pilots who competed in both classes. If necessary, the positions in the start order were moved manually. It should be noted that the evaluation software was initially unable to handle the processing of the starting order. Also, the starting order initially did not contain a starting time. Thanks to the competent programmer, the additional requirement could be implemented promptly.

The teammanagers were also informed about new rules in the Sporting Code which were effective since June, 1st 2023. Of course there was also enough time to answer all questions of the teammanagers.

For the first time the new F3C semifinal schedule was used. The new schedule is effective since 2020 but was not used yet due the pandemic in 2020 and 2021 and the cancelled European Championships in 2022. This schedule includes four preliminary rounds, two semifinal rounds and two final rounds. In F3N there were four preliminary rounds and three finals. At this World Championships it was noticeable that some pilots exceeded the time limit of 8 minutes for the F3C F schedule and thus received a zero scoring for the last manoeuvre. This fact should be taken into account for the development of future schedules.

Due to the good organization, all rounds could be carried out without appreciable time delays, but with sufficient breaks for the judges. The results were published online just in time after each flight at the F3C flightline. F3N pilots had to wait up to 45 minutes after their flight until the results were online due the transportation of the score sheets from the F3N flightline to the bureau trailer at the

F3C flightline. Fortunately there were no protests. Because these must be submitted no later than 60 minutes after the occurrence. With a waiting time of up to 45 minutes, this could have been tight. With free Wi-Fi available on both airfields, the pilots were always well informed. A copy of the score sheets was given to each pilot.

At the beginning of the competitions not everybody knows how to find the results online. Only after several inquiries to the organizer was the link to the relevant website on the F3C flightline announced. It took some time before this information was also passed on to the F3N flightline. One of the three jury members, Cliff Hiatt, was permanently available at the F3C flightline. The second jury member, Kim Jensen, stayed at the F3N flightline. The jury president was available wherever he was needed.

Weather

The weather was half of the time sunny or slightly cloudy and half of the time rainy and windy during the competition. There were only a few short breaks due to rain showers at different rounds. Occasionally wind gusts occurred that reached short-term speeds up to 8 m/s. However, the high wind speeds never reached the maximum indicated in the rule book, so there were no cancellations of any flights.

Accommodation and Food

A list of hotels for the teams was published in Bulletin 1. All teams made the hotel bookings on their own. The hotel of the officials was located 20 minutes driving by car from the competition area. This hotel served a daily breakfast. For dinner of the officials, each judge and jury member received sufficient cash, so that they could eat at their own discretion. The food at the flightline was prepared by a foodtruck owner and was placed at the F3C flightline. So, all officials of the F3N flightline needed to go to the F3C flightline for lunch.

Safety

There was no serious safety problem during the World Championships. No helicopter crashed.

Opening and Closing Ceremony

The Opening Ceremony took place beside the F3N flightline and the Closing Ceremony took place on the F3C flightline.

At the Opening Ceremony all teams were presented by calling the names of each team member. After the parade of nations, the executive director of the AMA, Chad Budreau, spoke to the guests. The World Championships were opened by the chairman of the F3 Helicopter Subcommittee and jury president.

After the last final flight, the results were verified by the jury and declared correct. The subsequent awards ceremony was again initiated by a few greetings of the executive director of the AMA followed by a short speech of the jury president. The handing over of the FAI medals was done by the jury president, the chairman of the F3 Helicopter Subcommittee. He also handed over the FAI trophies for the F3C World Champion individual and the FAI trophy for the F3C Team World Champion. Additional trophies for all winners placed first to third were not available. The handing over of the diplomas took place during the banquet.

The World Championships were officially closed by the chairman of the F3 Helicopter Subcommittee.

In the evening, the closing banquet took place in very comfortable business center in Muncie. All participants were able to attend.

Protests

There was no protest submitted during the championships.

Technical Meeting

Since 6 of the 13 members of the F3 Helicopter Subcommittee were present, a technical meeting took place in the evening of the first day of the competition, in which all 6 members present took part. Two members who were not present sent a representative. In 60 minutes various topics were addressed. The cooperation of the members was excellent, so this meeting was a complete success.

Conclusion

In the opinion of the FAI Jury, the 2023 FAI F3CN World Championships was very successful and carried out in a friendly atmosphere. The organisers are to be commended for an excellent event. Only the organization in the run-up to the World Championships needed some optimization.



Stefan Wolf (GER)
President



Cliff Hiatt (USA)
Member



Kim Jensen (DEN)
Member