

FAI JURY REPORT ON THE 2012 F2 CONTROL LINE WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

For Seniors & Juniors

Pazardzhik, Bulgaria 25th August – 1st September 2012

1. Contest Information

Three bulletins were published and emailed to the appropriate NACs. The Organisers also set up a website for information purposes. The bulletins were also available for download from this website.

There was an information board outside the administration office located at the top office building near to the F2A circle with some information placed on small boards at F2A, B, C & D circles. The distribution of information improved as the Championships progressed but deteriorated somewhat on the last two days.

The first short Team Managers' meeting on Saturday 25th August had to be held outside near the F2D circle. This was principally to inform and check the processing & official practice for the next day; to ensure that all Team Managers knew where the official and practise circles were located; to deal with any urgent problems or queries. Mr Bruno Delor had generously spent time generating the processing & official practice schedules.

The second Team Managers' meeting was held on Sunday 26th August after the Opening Ceremony. This dealt with the usual practice of the Heads of the F2B, F2C and F2D Panels of Judges informing, and taking questions from, the Team Managers. In the absence of any official for F2A, the FAI Jury President briefed the Team Managers.

There were three or four complaints from Team Managers, with others nodding agreement, at the state of the F2B grass circle (see item 4. Flying Site). A number of ideas were put forward by Team Managers on how to compensate for the bad surface but it was ultimately accepted by them that the Judges, aware of the problem with the surface, would take this into account for take-off and landing.

2. General

A World Cup in all four classes was held over the two days immediately prior to the Championships. Whilst this is an income generator for organisers, gives a chance to resolve any obvious problems and permits training of competition officials, it takes a toll on the judges and, indeed, the other officials. Running a World Cup in the days immediately before a Championship without a free day between the two is not recommended.

The administration office initially lacked enough printers and printer consumables but this was eventually put right (by the Wednesday, two days before the Championship finished). However, there was a great tendency for the Event Director to only print off papers in response to single requests. When information was finally printed in volume it was often not collected by Team Managers. Whether they did not know it was available or decided not to check with the administration is unknown.

As seems inevitable with F2 Championships the Event Director was burdened with a huge workload. The FAI Jury President had stressed on a number of occasions prior to the Championships that the Event Director must have a competent deputy, authorised to make decisions when the Event Director was otherwise engaged or absent from the administration office dealing with other Championship matters. Mr Sotir Lazarkov, the Organiser and Event Director was outstandingly good at multi-tasking but nonetheless, there were inevitably response delays to queries and problems.

There were some open sided marquees and benches and tables for the competitors to work on their models.

A bicycle pool had been provided by the Organisers for officials and this was very useful.

3. FAI Jury

The FAI Jury comprised Mr Karlis Plocins LAT, Mr Bohumil Votypka CZE, and Mrs Jo Halman GBR (President). A specific room had not been allocated for the FAI Jury to attend to protests, although a small room was often available at the back of the administration office. However, as the site was so spread out, the FAI Jury attended to protests al fresco but ensured that their deliberations were not overheard. Refreshment facilities for the FAI Jury in the administration office were sparse although bottled water was always available.

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The most frustrating aspect for the FAI Jury was the lack of easy communication between the Jury members and the Event Director and the individual Contest Directors. In a meeting in Bulgaria in June, the FAI Jury President had stressed the importance of the FAI Jury being allocated mobile telephones. She further emphasised this on arrival in Bulgaria and every day until she was told that mobile telephones were not an option. Transceivers were eventually given to the FAI Jury, Contest Directors and the Event Director but (a) charging facilities were scarce or absent, and so the transceivers had limited use and (b) the frequencies were strangely allocated which again meant limited use. Given the high number of protests at this Championship, the lack of simple communication between the FAI Jury members greatly increased the difficulty for the FAI Jury carrying out its duties.

4. Flying Site

Other than the F2A circle, the rest of the flying site was newly built and was not finished to anywhere near the standard required. F2C had a hard “doughnut” circle; F2B had one hard “doughnut” circle and one grass circle. The actual F2D flying circle was grass. (See the F2D paragraphs below for details.)

The F2B, F2C & F2D circles were laid out one after the other in the order C-B-D and there was a track alongside made of hardcore for pedestrians and cars. This was difficult and tiring to walk on and it is to be hoped that it will be surfaced with asphalt in due course. F2A was a little more than half a kilometre from the F2C circle and the F2D circle was some 115 metres further on from there.

The areas surrounding the F2B & F2C circles were patchy grass and soft sandy soil. The area around the F2D circle was mainly only the sandy soil.

F2A Circle

The through road to the rest of the park that ran by the F2A circle had been cordoned off and it made splendid line check and model park areas

The cracks in the surface of the circle and the sloping and uneven pilot's circle, both identified in the June visit, had been adequately repaired.

Because the tall trees on the edge of the circle where the TransiTrace timing sensors had to be sited affected the sensors as the sun moved around, the sensors had to be moved once or twice each day. This meant a short delay in the competition that would have been insignificant if there had been an access door in the fence on that side of the circle. It is recommended that this is rectified for the future.

Special mention must be made of the splendid pylon constructed specially for these Championships by Mr Dimitar Garabetov aided by his son, Kiril. This was the very best F2A pylon ever supplied by an organiser and sets the standard for all new F2A pylons. It is hoped to make the engineering drawings freely available on the CIAM website in due course.

F2B Circles

The “doughnut” hard circle was very good and regularly swept. If the inner areas are properly grassed rather than the grass/weed mixture that was evident for the Championships and a more permanent line check area established, then this will be a splendid circle.

However the F2B grass circle was very poor. There was only one area, some five metres in length, suitable for take-off and landing. (See also item 1. Contest Information, paragraph 4.) Other than this small area, the circle had large dips, some holes and the remaining areas were bumpy. It is regretted that this circle was sub-standard.

During the three months prior to the Championships, the FAI Jury President had been assured that there was back-up F2B site at a football stadium on the north-west side of town. The photographs of this stadium showed an excellent site, well up to the specification required.

However, on arrival at Pazardzhik for the World Cup prior to the World Championships the organiser said that the stadium, although available, could not be used after all as it was not permitted to put stakes or marking on the pitch. This meant that there was no alternative but for the poor grass circle to be used.

The F2B circles were located between the F2C & F2D circles and the judges felt they were distracted and discomforted by the noise from both these competitions. Netting had been erected between the F2D and F2B circles in case of F2D fly-aways.

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F2C Circle

The F2C circle had been built to specification and when the inner part of the doughnut is properly grassed then it will be a splendid circle.

F2D Circles

At the June 2012 visit, the FAI Jury President had emphasised to the organisers that the bare earth of the official F2D circle had to be covered in grass: preferably by turf being laid as there did not seem to be enough time for seed to grow sufficiently.

She demanded that a suitable back-up F2D site had to be secured and was shown a field close by that would, with a little work such as closely mowing the grass, be suitable as either the F2D training or the back-up official site.

However, by the time of the Championship, the field had not been properly prepared and could only be used as a training site. This meant that there was no alternative to using the allocated area on the main site.

It then transpired that the F2D area had been a rubbish dump and that when the organisers had begun excavating for the circles, they found huge amounts of rubbish and not been able to remove all of it. The area was grassless with rubbish, rocks and holes. The soft sandy soil, unanchored by grass or vegetation, meant that the slightest wind or footsteps stirred it up and blew it about. The very high winds considerably aggravated this and, together with the state of the ground, made it most unpleasant to be in the vicinity of F2D...

The official circle was close to the trees and the line check was on a pegged section of tarpaulin laid directly on the bare sandy soil under the trees. Although the trees afforded shade in the hot, sunny conditions, the state of the ground meant that walking around was quite hazardous

5. Transport

I understand that the organisers collected officials and some Team Managers and team members from the airports. The F2B Judges and the FAI Jury were initially collected from their hotel in the morning by organising staff but this was soon replaced by collection by taxi. To begin with, this did not work well, with taxies either being late or not turning up at all putting great pressure on the Head Judges and the FAI Jury. However it was rectified by Mr Lazarkov and worked adequately thereafter. Mr Lazarkov provided transport with various drivers to ferry the FAI Jury back and forth from the administration office to the F2C & F2D circles when protests were handed in. This worked reasonably well although there were occasional delays that impacted on the speed with which the FAI Jury could attend to protests.

6. Accommodation & Food

Accommodation was in a number of hotels in Pazardzhik with camping at the flying site. The FAI Jury was accommodated with some of the F2B judges in a small family owned hotel. The staff was very helpful. It is always useful if the FAI Jury, the Judges and possibly even the main officials for all four classes can be accommodated in one hotel. However, this year they were split up over a number of hotels.

Official lunches were served in a marquee near the F2B circle which was some distance from the administration office. Reports from team members was that the official lunches were expensive for what was provided.

There were two café/restaurants in the park offering freshly cooked food but service was very, very slow and it was not always practical to use them. This same problem was found in the restaurants in town and in some of the hotels where meals for four/six people could take up to two hours before the food arrived at table haphazardly. This is not adequate for the competitors when they have to work on models or engines in the evening or for those who need to retire to bed at a reasonable time to make their early flight slots the next day.

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7. Weather

Whilst it was generally very hot, there were unseasonable high winds that greatly affected F2B & F2D. F2D suffered further with immense amounts of dust being blown about. (See also item 4. Flying Site, F2D.) At the F2A line-check area the wind was so strong one day that a barrier fell over and destroyed the French junior's best model which was very distressing for her and the French team.

On Monday 25th August, a major storm front with lashing rain, thunder and lightening, came through at 11.15 and all flying ceased until it had passed and there was no further evidence of lightening. Flying resumed at 16.15.

Detailed weather reports were issued reasonably frequently by the organisers.

8. Opening Ceremony

The opening ceremony was held in the town square. The teams walked in a rather strange order the short distance from the assembly point to the square and lined up along the perimeter to listen to the welcoming speeches and the formal opening of the Championships. Afterwards, there was a splendid and entertaining display of traditional Bulgarian dancing by young boys and girls in national costume.

9. Processing (Official & In-Competition)

The official processing day was initially disorganised and chaotic. Processing for a four class championship has to be conducted simultaneously but this does, of course, require very many instruments and many skilled and unskilled personnel. Both these requirements can be difficult to fulfil. In this particular Championships, most of the necessary equipment was not available for the first processing slot and many of the officials were absent. Thus, processing in all the classes started later than planned although F2B got underway quite quickly. The teams arrived on time.

Official Processing really must be set up early and be ready for the scheduled first slot.

No models or engines were found to be in contravention of the rules.

None of the aircraft checked during in-competition processing were found to be in contravention of the rules

10. Entry

There were 238 entries, excluding the dedicated F2D mechanics, from a total of 43 countries (Armenia competed under the FAI flag in F2A, F2C & F2D) with 24 juniors from 12 countries. The entry breakdown was:

F2A - 45 in total: 39 seniors from 18 countries & 6 juniors
F2B - 62 in total: 56 seniors from 26 countries & 6 juniors
F2C - 49 in total: 45 seniors from 18 countries & 4 juniors
F2D - 82 in total: 70 seniors from 20 countries & 12 juniors

There were two senior and two junior Defending Champions: junior in F2A, none in F2B; senior in F2C and both senior and junior in F2D.

11. Competition

F2A

The F2A Contest Director had to be replaced at very short notice by Mr Asen Tanev who did a remarkable job under difficult circumstances. The running of the competition got smoother as the days progressed.

One replacement attempt was necessary because of a single failure of both TransiTrace systems.

F2B

In F2B there seemed to be a lack of communication between the organisers and the Head Judge, Mr Serge Delabarde prior to the Championship. On arrival he quickly realised that the infrastructure of F2B had to be organized including score sheets and their calculations.

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Although the F2B officials were extremely helpful they were inexperienced and Mr Delabarde had to take over responsibility for the F2B competition.

The competition went smoothly with each group starting at the scheduled time. The extraordinarily high wind made flying difficult and it was a joy to see the dedication and skill displayed by the F2B fliers in these high winds.

The distance from the main office did not allow display of the round results as quickly as would have been preferred.

F2C

The expertise of Mr Bruno Delor was crucial in giving a great deal of important support and help to the organiser which was necessary to avoid running a below standard World Championship.

It is to be noted that the noise of F2C is now a major problem with a level of noise in the Panel of Judges tower that is almost unbearable.

The competition itself was very good with no real incidents during the flights. The competitors displayed a very high level of performance.

F2D

It is usual to try to have very few flights on the final day with a target to finish the competition by noon. This allows some flexibility for unexpected problems and gives some hours to prepare and check the full F2D results. The delays earlier in the week and the number of protests made this target impossible and the F2D final was run at 19.00 (when the prize-giving was due to start). After this the results had to be calculated, checked and printed.

Many of the problems might have been avoided if the organisation and preparation had been done before, or at the latest, on the first day of the competition.

Despite the state of the F2D area, and the high number of F2D protests, the competitors competed to a high level of skill and showed great determination to have a good World Championship.

12. Results

Round results were issued reasonably timely through the Championships.

F2D had taken longer than anticipated to finish on the last day because of the large number of protests and the final results were very rushed. It transpired later that the F2D Panel of Judges had not been able to check them properly.

There was not time to print the full results prior to the prize-giving which was immediately followed by the banquet. The full results were only signed off by the FAI Jury near midnight that night and the mistake in the F2D placings was not identified at that time. The mistake concerned the ranking in the lower placings and when it had been identified and corrected the FAI Jury President issued a revised set of F2D results to the FAI and the organisers.

13. Protests & Complaints

There were 15 protests of which 3 were upheld and 12 were denied. The breakdown of protests by class was: F2A: 1; F2B: 0; F2C: 3; F2D: 12. This was an unprecedented number of F2D protests and the FAI Jury felt that it was indicative of the almost impossible conditions in which F2D had to fly.

Additionally one F2D team presented two further protests against the FAI Jury ruling on previous protests. The FAI Jury explained that (i) it could not accept protests against FAI Jury decisions and (ii) that the next step could only be that the team's NAC could submit a protest to the FAI accompanied by the current fee of 2,000 Euro.

The class and outcome for each protest was displayed on the main notice board as required.

14. Prize Giving & Closing Ceremony

The prize-giving had been scheduled for early evening in the town square to be followed by the closing ceremony and then the banquet.

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The late finishing of the competition hugely delayed the prize-giving which itself was delayed because the organisers had not found it possible to prepare all the medals, diplomas and trophies at the location. We are all indebted to Mr Bruno Delor who took charge of the organisation of this so that the prize-giving could get under way at last.

15. Banquet

The banquet was held in one of the bigger hotels in the town centre within walking distance of the prize-giving. The tables were laid out in two rooms and on the hotel veranda. The food was good but as restaurant meals throughout the Championships had been, it was very, very slow in being served.

16. Comments

Off-site open-air venues for prize-giving are not to be recommended. If the prize-giving cannot take place on the flying site then the only other alternative is to take place at the banquet. Although this is not in strict accordance with the Sporting Code, it is quite common given the logistics of an Aeromodelling championship. For a four class championships such as F2, it is often the only option.

Competitors in each of the four classes displayed a high level of performance and exhibited fair and sporting behaviour and they must be thanked for their enthusiastic participation, especially in the case of F2D in the far-from-desirable conditions. Further, the team managers, families and supporters for must also be thanked for their huge support of, and encouragement to, the competitors.

I should personally like to thank my two FAI Jury colleagues, Mr Plocins and Mr Votypka for their unstinting hard work, devotion to duty and invaluable contribution to Jury discussions and adjudications. Finally thanks are due personally to Mr Sotir Lazarkov for the Herculean efforts he made to have the site built in the first place and to him and his staff for the work and effort they made for the 2012 F2 World Championships.

17. Recommendations

17.1 Venue:

- a F2A: that an access gate is made in the safety fence close to the location of the timing devices.
- b F2B: That the grass circle has the holes filled in; the area properly levelled and the grass improved and that a permanent, level line check is made.
- c F2C: That the "doughnut" earth inner circle is properly grassed over.
- d F2D: that all the rubbish and detritus is removed from the site and the area levelled and properly grassed.
- e General: that the access road to the F2B, C & D circles is asphalted.

17.2 Event Director: The Event Director needs to have a competent deputy able to share the workload, answer queries and make decisions.

17.3 Official Processing: To investigate alternative methods/procedures to the current official processing day for F2 Championships.

17.4 Bids to Plenary: That each Championship bid should be checked by the Subcommittee Chairman before the bid is permitted to go forward to the Plenary agenda. The check should cover the following points: site & site facilities, equipment (including processing instruments) and organiser capabilities.

Mrs Jo Halman
FAI Jury President
For and on behalf of the FAI Jury
2012 F2 World Championships