

REPORT BY THE FAI JURY ON THE 2008 COMBINED ASIA OCEANIA CONTINENTAL CHAMPIONSHIP FOR CLASS F3A (RADIO-CONTROL AEROBATICS)

Overview

This championship was organised mainly by the Thunder Tiger Corporation and executed by the Chinese Taipei Aeromodelling Association from 20th to 26th October 2008, on the disused civil airport of Shui Nan in the city of Taichung. Twenty six participants from eight nations competed for top honours, even if the event has no perpetual trophies yet.

Pre-contest information

Adequate information was distributed via several bulletins. Initial correspondence from the organizers was very difficult, but improved when English-speaking communicators were appointed. Most aspects regarding the championship, lodging, travelling, costs, rules, and procedures were covered.

Accommodation, transport, and catering

Taichung is the Chinese Taipei's second largest city and some participants were collected and transported to Taichung from Taipei at no cost. Most competitors, staff, and officials were housed in the 5-star Evergreen Laurel Hotel, about 25 minutes from the competition site. The organizers had arranged transport for judges and jury members by bus while teams were able to hire vehicles to suit their needs. The accommodation was of a very high standard. Breakfast and lunch was supplied at the flying site, in the form of pre-packed boxes. Evening meals were taken at the hotel, and rotated in several of the banqueting halls. The quality was exceptional.

Practice fields and competition site

There were two practice fields available to competitors and the official competition site was available before the start of the championship. The runway surface was ideal for the needs of the competitors, with different morning and afternoon flight lines to avoid flying into the sun. Tents were provided to shelter the teams, competition staff, and officials from the sweltering heat. The spectators had free access to most of the facilities, and on occasion had to be prevented from crossing the active runway, since it was ordinarily used as a public area. The manoeuvring area and markers were set out by the jury and a few judges, since the organizing staff appeared unclear on their responsibilities, and the language difficulties hampered effective communication. Although the airport offered ample space, all operations were contained to a manageable area.

Model aircraft processing and official practice

Model aircraft processing took place on Monday 20th October in a tent at the competition site. No significant problems were experienced, although the host team chose an Olympic abbreviation code that is not shown in the Sporting Code. Once the processing officials were shown the procedure, no specific problems were encountered. Official practice was conducted without problems, although the competitors were not given opportunity to check their equipment against the official measuring apparatus. All competing model aircraft were checked during the competition for conformation to the specifications, and the model aircraft of the top five finishers were re-checked.

Organisation and execution

The championship was conducted in a friendly atmosphere, with the competitors being amazingly tolerant of the initial problems with score-keeping. The contest director was tasked heavily, and although he had support staff, many of them were not experienced or knowledgeable to handle the tasks which he could have delegated to them. Competitors were called in good time to occupy the ready boxes and for their flights. Frequencies were strictly controlled with no incidents. Line-directing, timekeeping and sound measuring was done satisfactorily, but after the first round, the sound measuring checks had to be abandoned due to inconsistent readings from the Sound Level Meter. Score tabulation was initially a problem. Although the scoring software was made available long before the championship, it was not tested and verified to be working correctly. Incorrect scores were displayed, and the jury instructed the CD to remove the display of all erroneous scores until such times as the problem had been identified and corrected. The standard of flying was high, with a diversity of model aircraft, equipment, and flying styles. Each day's flying was preceded by a warm-up flight for the judges, by a non-competitor.

Communication

The contest director was in close contact with the flight line official, and was available at all times to answer queries from team managers, contestants, supporters, and officials. Translators had to be used in many instances and it was beneficial to have one jury member being able to speak and understand Mandarin Chinese.

Conduct of jury and judges

No protests were lodged, and there were no informal queries. The jury members were well versed in the Sporting Code requirements and worked well together, being on-site and available at all times. Regular random checks of the scoring operation were undertaken, to ensure that the set-up was done correctly at each stage of the competition. Several spot checks proved accurate each time.

Five judges were used in the competition. A judges' briefing, with visual aids, was conducted prior to the start of the championship. Warm-up flights were performed for the judges on each of the competition days, and again prior to the semi-finals, and finals. A judges' analysis of performance was done after each round of flying, and interpretation by the jury showed that most of the judges performed well.

Award ceremonies, functions, closing banquet

The opening ceremony was combined with a formal sit-down dinner, with many speeches in Chinese and English. A delegation from Mongolia attended as observers. The participating nations' flags were displayed, together with the FAI flag, and the FAI and Chinese Taipei anthems played for the opening.

There was no on-field awards ceremony, as this was combined with the banquet, on Saturday 26th October. Several trophies, mementoes, and FAI diplomas and continental championship medals were awarded to individual winners, teams, and officials. No perpetual trophies exist for this event, and the F3A sub-committee will continue its endeavours to find donors.

Conclusion

It is the opinion of the FAI Jury that the 2008 FAI/F3A CAOCC was satisfactorily organised and run, even if there were a few inconsistencies along the way. The only deviation from the Sporting Code was the sound measuring procedure that was waived after the first round, since erroneous readings would have unnecessarily disqualified competitors. The Philippines has expressed an interest for the next CAOCC event.

The CTAMA, its volunteer members, and the Thunder Tiger staff members connected with the 2008 CAOCC are to be congratulated on a successful championship.

The FAI Jury: Bob SKINNER
(South Africa, chairman)

Sandy PIMENOFF
(Finland)

CHAN Tze Law
(Singapore)