

The 2022 F4 RC Scale World Championships

The 2022 F4 rc scale World Championships was hosted by Norway during the week of 23rd to 30th July and the BMFA put up two teams of three competitors, covering the F4c and F4h events. Team members were:

David Knott, Steve Jackson and Richard Crapp as the F4(c) team

Dave Tilbury, John Carpenter and Dave Knott (again) in F4(h)

(Dave Knott was selected for both events because he had two models of the Hawker Hurricane which met the selection criteria.)

Graham Kennedy was Team Manager and Geoff Brown was his Assistant.

The disparate home locations of the individuals meant that a certain amount of pairing up was required to get all the individuals plus models to the competition site at Tonsberg in southern Norway. Thus it was that messrs Jackson and Kennedy (the northern group) travelled together in Steve's car towing his campervan with a large model box on top, travelling via ferry from Harwich. The southern group, comprising Richard Crapp, John Carpenter and Dave Tilbury travelled in Richard's car plus large caravan with models cushioned inside, travelling via Dover/ Calais and a three day trip to the northern tip of Denmark and another ferry to Norway. Amazingly the two parties arrived safely within a few hours of each other. Dave Knott plus wife and model travelled by road via the channel tunnel and thence to Norway overland through Sweden, arriving a day later. Geoff Brown travelled in splendid isolation by air. I won't bore you with the details of these journeys beyond mentioning that there was a savage heat wave at the time, and whilst comfort could be maintained inside the vehicles due to air conditioning, any stops for 'refreshment' were very uncomfortable and hence rather short.

Once settled in the campsite the models were assembled in a large hanger which had been subdivided into areas for each nation with metal barriers. It was not long thereafter that various national flags and bunting began to appear. Flight testing took place on the Friday and the event formally got under way on the Saturday with a short opening ceremony and welcoming by our hosts.

In order to provide a broader spectrum of views on these world championships it was decided (by me) that competitors should have the opportunity to provide their own 'mini' reports on their experiences, so the rest of this discourse reflects that approach.

John Carpenter

The journey to Norway as a member of the southern group was, for me actually quite civilised as I mainly sat in the back of the car and read a book while Dave and Richard drove and navigated respectively. Nevertheless we were all a bit tired on arrival and arranging to get there with a couple of days in hand proved to have been a sensible precaution. The campsite on the airfield was well prepared with mains electricity, toilets and a couple of food vendors available. The flying site too was well presented and proved entirely adequate for the purpose. The weather on the first competition day was difficult with a blustery wind

close to the limits so I decided to decline to take my first round flight since it would be unlikely to score well in that wind and there was a distinct possibility of damage. Fortunately the competition has three rounds, the best two results contributing to the final result so I had not actually lost anything by my tactical decision. The next day and indeed for the rest of the week the weather was dry, warm and with light winds which tended to vary in direction as the day progressed.

I have to say the flight judging came in for a certain amount of criticism over variability of scores between the five judges but it must also be said that this seems to occur at all championships and that judging is an arduous and thankless task. Attempts were made to improve the situation for the third round, which soothed a few ruffled feathers.

My overall impression of the models present is that the trend for larger models with larger, mainly petrol engines has continued. The quality of most has also been maintained. There were, however several crashes which came as a bit of a surprise. Our own Dave Knott fell victim when his larger F4c Hurricane started its landing approach and then refused to respond to the radio and ploughed into nearby crops, to the detriment of its undercarriage. Dave was able to repair the mangled bits and was allowed to repeat the manoeuvre he had lost but this time the Laser V twin lost a cylinder and a despite desperate attempt to complete a circuit to get back to the runway the aircraft crashed into the crops and was beyond repair for the rest of the competition.

Even a cursory examination of the top models shows that we still have work to do to get in amongst them. The top pilots and their models set a high standard. Further down the lists one or two models were rather mundane. This spread in quality has not changed since the last championships.

Overall, despite one or two little concerns (what happened to weighing models as some looked very close to the maximum 15Kg and 'builder of the model' rule might have been ignored in one or two cases) the whole championships were a delight from start to finish. This championship was in essence a 'cut down' version when compared to previous years due in the main to the problems arising from the dreaded covid. There was much less formality throughout and as a result the atmosphere was much more relaxed and convivial. Long may it continue in this vein and our hosts are to be congratulated on a world championship well and truly carried out.

Steve Jackson

The logistics of transporting a large R/C scale model, all necessary support equipment and personnel to Norway are not for the faint-hearted, especially as there is no direct passenger ferry service between our two countries, this means that there is little alternative to a very long drive. Graham Kennedy, our Team Manager and myself travelled together to reduce the not insubstantial cost, fitting Graham in the car required that I house the nine foot long Avro fuselage in a transport box strapped to the top of the folding camper which would be our home for the duration of the championships.

The Jarlsberg Aerosport centre proved to be the ideal venue for a World Championship, the Centre houses a light aircraft club, a parachute centre and a model club. The main 'full size' runway is of a good length, is more than wide enough for most purposes and is in very good condition, it runs North to South with campsite and hangers on the western side. Beyond the hangers and further to

the west is the model club's own tarmac runway, smaller of course than the main runway, but certainly enough to be the envy of most UK model clubs! The model runway is separated from the main runway by a corn field and could not be clearly seen when on the main runway flight line, a factor, it is believed, in the unfortunate problems experienced by Dave Knott later in the week. The main runway had closely mown grass strips either side which were supposed to facilitate those who preferred grass for take-off and landing however, the strip on the western side was obstructed by Judges and the eastern one was a little too narrow with standing corn forming a boundary just waiting to catch a wing tip! Some bold pilots did use this facility successfully, though at least one poor soul was seen to pirouette into the corn! The western side of the runway also had an area to permit landing for those whose flights took place when the wind was across the runway, this could be confusing and did lead to more than one competitor being 'zeroed' for overflying a 'no fly' zone and it did not go unnoticed that some of the judges were not make the effort to turn fully around to observe landings and take-offs made from this area.

As a first time World Champs competitor I found the whole experience thoroughly enjoyable, the camaraderie between countries was generally good (with the odd inevitable falling out), the camp site atmosphere certainly helped in this as did the Welcome evening, Nations Night and the Closing Ceremony/barbeque which provided good chance to all get together, let our hair down and forge friendships. If there were complaints about the overall running of the event I don't think anyone could have been justifiably critical of the venue, or the social events.

Rules were not always enforced as rigidly as I had expected, as an example several competitors whose models failed to start were allowed to fly later in the round with a suitably reduced start time. I have no complaints about this as I benefited personally when I got in the start box in round two to find my engine had come lose on the previous flight! The argument against this is that some may use 'gamesmanship' and have an engine 'not start' when flight conditions are unfavourable. A fair point, but I did not witness any incidences of this. There were lots of complaints about the inconsistency of flight judging and, whilst these had my support, it is no mean feat to sit out in the sun judging from 8AM until 6PM with only an hour's break, inconsistent or not, the judges earned my respect, not sure that I could 'hack' it.

Static Judging will no doubt always be a cause of controversy, especially in relation to the pilot's declaration of authenticity. It did seem pretty certain that some 'porky pies' were being told here, but it does remain very difficult to challenge the competitors' word without firm evidence. Most annoying for those who have been honest in this respect, but the solutions to this are 'above my pay grade'. Even so, I am not sure that judges/organisers 'pushed' hard enough to challenge some claims.

Both UK teams performed well on the whole, Dave Knott was particularly unfortunate, his first flight in F4H was certainly nothing like his usual standard of flying, most likely a result of not having fully recovered from his arduous journey and the unfortunate events surrounding his second flight in F4C, which I am sure will be reported on by others, were seemingly beyond his control and put an end to his hope of reaching the levels his static and first round score predicted.

I think we have shown that we have the expertise to compete on a par with the second quartile of the international Scale Scene, but there is quite a gap between our performances and those of the three, or four at the top. I do not think the other GB team members will be offended if I say that, with perhaps one exception, we have all reached a time of life at which our performances are unlikely to get better and that the competition for team places was hardly 'fierce', especially in F4C, we do not have a wide field to select from. There may be controversy regarding how much the younger offspring of established scale competitors are actually contributing to the construction of their models, but at least the countries in question have youth up and coming. We have some excellent pilots competing in our domestic competition, but most have yet to produce self-built

models of the standards witnesses at the World Champs. Whilst, the Flying Only competitions that dominate our domestic scene do help to keep R/C Outdoor Scale alive, I do not believe that they do enough to reward/promote scale building and that they may even be counterproductive in this.

Richard Crapp

Of the 80 or so models I thought some were outstanding and unique.

Next to our compound in the hanger was the Italians team of two models.

The superb polished plating on the Ryan was 0.2mm thick on the Fuselage. 0.1mm on the wings. The Cowl and spats were Aluminium powder vacuum evaporated then a fine coat of clear from his uncle's paint shop in Athens.

The model that drew gasps of admiration was the Bücker Jungmann, 1.131E

by Andreas Luthi of Switzerland. Andreas last model, with which he has been world champion 8 times, is the Bucker Jungmeister at 3.3 scale It has the Roto 84 twin engine which weighs over three kg His new model at 1;28 is considerably bigger so to get it under the 15 kg limit he has gone to a Fiela/Valach of 70cc but weighs 800 gm less

The detail was perfect and just right with a little subtle weathering. Flying was all faultless precision and showed the wisdom of building just a bit bigger for the illusion of low airspeed.

Dave Tilbury

What a fantastic experience I've just had competing with my 1:4 scale Fokker Dvii at my first F4H World Championships in Norway. Over the duration of the competition, I met and made friends with fellow modellers from all over the world. The level of craftsmanship and flying precision excelled my expectations. This was the ultimate in scale, I felt very humble to be a part of it and to be part of the British Scale team. Having now returned I can't wait to make a start on my new project, the degree of craftsmanship is extremely high and will be a challenge but one I hope to achieve in due course.

Final results were:

F4(c)

1st Andreus Luthi. Switzerland. Bucker Jungmann1.13

2nd David Law. Australia. Pitts special

3rd Marc Levy. France. Fouga Magister. CM-170

F4(h)

1st Alexis Levy. France. DalotelDM-165

2nd Martin Erhard. Germany. Piper PA22 Colt

3rd Jiri Brand Chech Aero Ae-145

How did the UK team do?

F4(c)

Steve Jackson. Avro 504K. 11th

. Dave Knott. Hurricane.12th.

Richard Crapp. Stampe SV4e 27th

Team position 6th

F4(h)

Dave Knott. Hurricane. 11th.

John Carpenter. Howard Pete. 21st.

Dave Tilbury. Fokker D7. 22nd.

Team position 7th

Photographs + captions



David Law (Australia)Pitts Special suffered from damage in transit. The transit crate was left out in the sun in Dubai for some hours and the canopy began to melt. Still managed second place in F4c.



Fascinating Grumman F3F-2 by David Kopal (CZE) is started. That undercarriage is a work of art. Functioned perfectly too. Engine is a Titan ZG 74. The people in the background are the judges.



The winner, Andreas Luthi (Switzerland) prepares his Bucker Jungmann 1,13 for its winning flight.



A peek under the hood of the winning Bucker Jungman. Engine is Fiala70cc petrol four stroke. Note the sponge pads arranged to keep the cowl from direct contact with the front engine mount bulkhead.



Dave knott (UK) prepares for the ill fated flight that ended his chances in F4c



Dave Knott deeply involved in repairs to the mangled undercarriage on his Hurricane. Amazingly he got it all back together and working for another attempt. Sadly the later crash was more substantial and repairs will take time at home.



The UK team plus models outside the judging (and evening fun) tent.



SAAB Supporter T-17 of Paul Munsberg (Denmark) . Sadly a crash victim, cause so far unknown. Powered by a Tartan 44.



Ryan S-C by Argyris Giannetakis (Greece). Metal area covered in Itho plate plus exotic paint system on the cowl and undercarriage spats. Note also the character full pilot. He is animatronic with moving arms and head. Also his eyes, which is a bit eerie.



Spectacular DH 115 Vampire from Rito Senn (Switzerland). 1.4 scale powered by a Jetcat P180NX Fourth in F4c. There was a total of three jets in the competition and all did well.



Detail of the T28 Nomad by Jan Doubrava (CZE) powered by DLE 60. A beautifully detailed model.



Dave Tilbury's Fokker DV11. Powered by Laser 180. Note the subtle weathering and the scale propeller. Flew well.



The Howard Pete stands ready in the UK team enclave alongside Richard Crapp's Stampe. Dave Tilbury's Fokker DV11 tailplane in the foreground.



Richard Crapp's Stampe SV4e takes off in the first round. The engine stopped after only two manoeuvres and caused an emergency landing. The carburettor of the Roto 85 engine was adjusted and subsequent rounds saw no further drama from it.



Dave Jackson's Avro 504K cruises by with its Laser 360 purring away. Finished eleventh.