



F3A World Championship

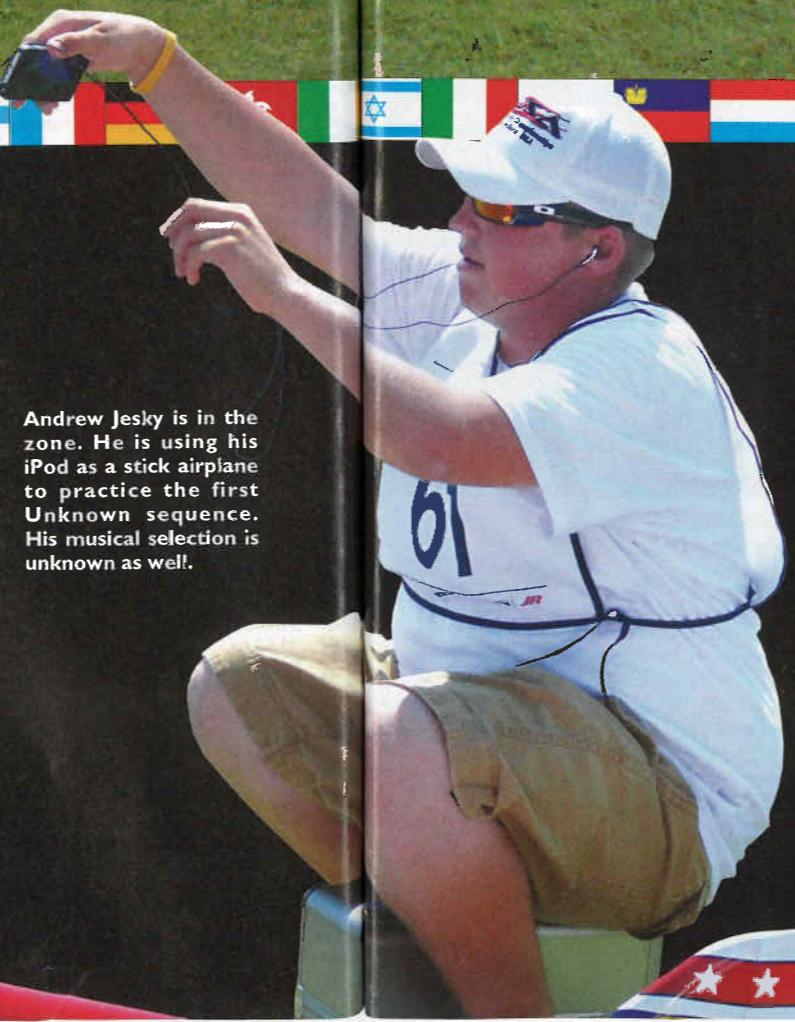
by Jim Quinn



This sight takes your breath away.



Junior World Champion, Marco Mazzucchelli, poses with his helper Andrea Villa.



Andrew Jesky is in the zone. He is using his iPod as a stick airplane to practice the first Unknown sequence. His musical selection is unknown as well.

AMA hosts pilots from 31 countries

HISTORY WAS MADE at AMA's International Aeromodeling Center on August 1, 2011. A historic sixth win for one competitor and a first-time-ever first place for another made the F3A World Championship spectacular.

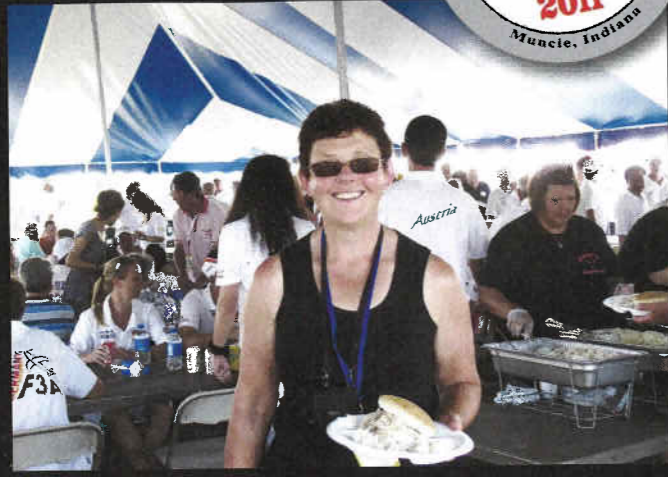
The historic sixth win came when Christophe Paysant-LeRoux of France was crowned F3A World Champion. Christophe won the event in 1999, 2001, 2003, 2005, 2009, and is the current F3A World Champion.

The first-time-ever win goes to Marco Mazzucchelli of Italy, who was crowned Junior World Champion. A Junior World Champion must be less than 19 years old and at least four countries must be represented at a World Championship for a Junior competitor to be so named.

AMA salutes and congratulates these two deserving RC pilots.



Below: A judge's assistant, Rosemary Ellis, looks delighted with an all-American barbecue.



With this year's win, Christophe Paysant-LeRoux became a six-time World Champion.



Right: The Jury members were (L-R) Bob Skinner, Michael Ramel, and Jim Eichenberg. The Jury prepares the judges, answers all technical questions, and resolves protests.



Team USA's Albert Glenn, team manager, and pilots Andrew Jesky, Chip Hyde, and Brett Wickizer celebrate as World Team Champions.



The top 10 finalists took a moment for a group picture.



Carlos Hueb, from Brazil, reaches into the bucket, hoping for a white marble and no technical inspection.



Photos by the author

Our Canadian friends went all the way with national pride. Check out the bottom of their airplane.



Below: Saturday was a free day for the pilots, but the judges were back in the classroom for a refresher course on the F-11 sequence.



Eighty-one pilots from 31 countries have invested years of preparation in anticipation of the 2011 F3A World Championship. Beyond the pilots, there were 20 judges from around the world.

Judges do not take their eyes off the airplane during a competition flight; writing scores down becomes the responsibility of judges' assistants. To help with language clarity, many judges brought assistants with them.

There were three jury members: Michael Ramel from Germany, Bob Skinner from South Africa, and Jim Eichenberg from Canada. Jury members prepare the judges, answer all technical questions, and resolve all protests.

Dave Guerin, event director for the previous seven US National Championships, was the choice as event director for the F3A World Championship. Dave selected Tom Miller as assistant event director and secured the assistance of more than 20 highly qualified individuals to do everything from processing contestants and airplanes, to sound checks, random technical inspections, tabulating scores, keeping the flightlines running smoothly on two separate sites, and much more.

Many teams arrived early so they could familiarize themselves with the runways at AMA's International Aeromodeling Center (IAC). Some of the teams that arrived early chose to practice at other RC sites before the contest began.

Countless factors warrant an early arrival. The atmosphere might be different here than in a competitor's home country and the glow fuel secured here in the US might burn differently than what the pilots are accustomed to.

By Saturday, July 23, most teams had arrived and some had their airplanes processed early. Each aircraft had to be weighed, measured, and checked for fail-safe operations before it would be allowed to fly in the F3A World Championship.

After an airplane passed all the tests, stickers were applied to each removable part of each airplane. Only stickered parts could be used during the competition, and only airplanes registered to that individual pilot could be flown. There was no swapping of parts or airplanes between pilots.

Along with pilot and airplane processing, there was much activity for the judges. Michael Ramel was president of the jury. It was his responsibility to properly prepare the 20 judges.

Each judge needed to be knowledgeable about the sequences to be flown and had to be consistent with the other judges in scoring maneuvers. The 20 judges spent countless hours of classroom preparation, as well as actually judging flights flown by demonstration pilots.

After each flight, judges gave their opinion on a maneuver and a score was given. By the end of Monday's flight training, the judges were well-prepared for competition flights.



Above: Ron Lockhart and Andre Bouchard check Gerhard Mayr's airplane for the 2-meter maximum wingspan.

Twenty judges assembled from around the world and worked tirelessly to ensure judging was consistent.



Right: Congratulations go to Christophe Paysant-LeRoux (center), from France, in first place; Tetsuo Onda (left), from Japan, in second place; and Andrew Jesky (right), from the US, in third place.

Below: At the end of the Opening Ceremonies, Michael Ramel officially opened the 2011 F3A World Championship.



2011 FAI F3A World Championship RESULTS

SENIOR CHAMPIONS

1. Christophe Paysant-LeRoux, France
2. Tetsuo Onda, Japan
3. Andrew Jesky, United States

JUNIOR CHAMPIONS

1. Marco Mazzucchelli, Italy
2. Robin Trumpp, Germany
3. Philip Rannetshauer, Germany

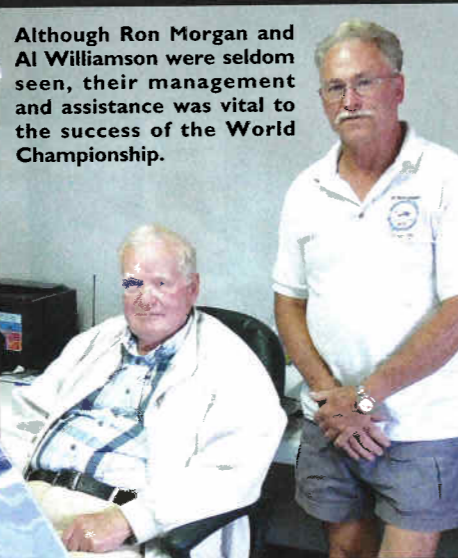
TEAM CHAMPIONS

1. United States
2. Japan
3. France

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Although Ron Morgan and Al Williamson were seldom seen, their management and assistance was vital to the success of the World Championship.



Greg Hahn, AMA's Technical Director, was the Master of Ceremonies for the opening ceremony. On Monday afternoon at 5 p.m., Greg announced each country by name. As they were announced, teams proudly carried their country's flag onto the parade grounds while their national anthems played. It was moving to see the 31 teams in a semicircle.

Words of welcome were delivered by the AMA Executive Vice President Mark Smith and Muncie, Indiana's, mayor, Sharon McShurley, and Michael Ramel officially opened the 2011 F3A World Championship. The opening ceremonies ended with a delightful all-American country barbecue.

On Tuesday morning, July 26, the first round of competition flying began. For the next four days, each pilot flew one round per day of the preliminary sequence (P-11). During these four days, airplanes were given a sound test before each flight.

After each flight the pilot drew a marble from a bucket. The bucket had five marbles; four white and one black marble. If the

black marble was drawn, a full technical inspection would be conducted on that pilot's airplane. If a white marble was drawn, the pilot was free to leave the flightline and prepare for his next flight. All of the electric-powered airplanes, however, were weighed after each flight.

There were highs and lows at the World Championship. The team from Norway was no exception. On Sunday, July 24, Alexander Heindel and his wife, Jeanette, celebrated their first wedding anniversary. Congratulations! Team Norway's low came on Tuesday, the first day of flying.

Alex's teammate, Henning Jurkjend's motor didn't sound exactly right during the sound check before his flight. When Henning throttled up for his first flight, his speed control failed, shorting out the motor and battery pack.

Henning's airplane was damaged beyond repair, and sadly, it was his only processed airplane for the contest. Henning had traveled from the arctic circle to fly in the World Championship and he was grounded because of an electrical problem.

As is true for all contests, some adjustments were made on the fly. When the early morning sun was an issue for Benoit Paysant-LeRoux, his father, Jacques, was quick to come to his aid. Using some duct tape, a tent pole, and the top from a Styrofoam ice chest, Jacques constructed a shade to block the sun from Benoit's eyes.

The weather is always a concern during contests. Although there were threats of major storms throughout the week, none actually materialized during flying hours. On the other hand, the heat was intense.

One of the jury members, Jim Eichenberg, had a thermometer and recorded the asphalt temperature under the judges' feet at a high of 151° F! One of the judges had blisters on his feet; another's footwear stuck to the pavement. The only thing hotter than the asphalt at AMA's IAC was the flying.

Unlike other contests, a World Championship is the only place you can meet and converse with previous World Champions. Wolfgang Matt of Lichtenstein, Gilichi Naruke of Japan, Chip Hyde of the

US, and France's Christophe Paysant-LeRoux, the current reigning World Champion, were all in attendance.

World Championship contests bring people together from around the world. Teams bring souvenirs of their country to share with new-found friends in the host country. The team from Columbia brought friendship bracelets in the colors of their national flag to share.

A World Championship also brings out the best in national pride. Some members of the Canadian team stayed in AMA's campground and proudly displayed Canada's flag at their campsite—as well as on the bottom of their airplanes.

Saturday, July 30, was reserved as a rain date if needed. Because the weather had cooperated, Saturday turned out to be a free day of practice for the semifinal pilots. The judges, on the other hand, were back in the classroom to review the finals sequence (F-11). Michael Ramel again led the classroom discussion, and the judges went outside for more demonstration flights, discussions of each maneuver, and an analysis of scores.

After a morning of instruction, the judges were treated to an afternoon tour of the National Museum of the US Air Force at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, located in Dayton, Ohio. They also took some time to enjoy the Jet World Masters, being conducted at Wright-Patterson.

After four rounds, the number of pilots was reduced to 30 for the semifinals. These 30 pilots would fly two flights on Sunday. The sequence changed as well. For the semifinals, the 30 remaining pilots will fly F-11, the finals sequence. The best F-11 sequence and the average of the three best P-11 sequences would give us the 10 finalists for the last day of flying on Monday, August 1.

On Sunday evening, the 10 finalist pilots met to select two Unknown sequences. These sequences have never been seen before. Pilots go around the room taking turns to select maneuver after maneuver. The F3A Sporting Code dictates rules for selecting maneuvers.

Only stick airplane practice flights are permitted; the pilots are not allowed to practice these two Unknown sequences in any other manner—even on a simulator.

Monday morning would have 40 more flights. These flights would be flown in front of all 20 judges. The 10 judges in the middle would judge centered maneuvers. The five on each end would judge turn-around maneuvers only.

Monday morning, August 1, was a perfect day for flying. After two rounds of F-11 and two rounds of Unknowns, a new World Champion would be named. The best F-11 and the best Unknown flight for each pilot would determine the winner. After 40 flights, scores were normalized to a maximum of 1,000 per round.

Andrew Jesky, of Team USA, was in third place. Out of a possible 2,000 points, Andrew was less than 49 points behind first place. Christophe Paysant-LeRoux, from France, won round one of F-11 for 1,000 points. Tetsuo Onda, from Japan, won round two, the first Unknown round, for 1,000 points. Tetsuo Onda also won round three, the second round of F-11, for another 1,000 points. Round four, the second Unknown round, was won by Christophe Paysant-LeRoux, giving him an additional 1,000 points. Both pilots scored the maximum 2,000 points, resulting in a tie for first place.

The jury had to go to the FAI Sporting Code, Section 5.1.9, which states, "In the case of a tie, the semifinal score will be used to determine the classification." The semifinal results showed Tetsuo Onda with a score of 1,964.34. Christophe Paysant-LeRoux had a score of 2,000, making him the reigning World Champion for an unprecedented sixth time.

Greg Hahn emceed the closing ceremonies. Michael Ramel crowned the new World Champion, Christophe Paysant-LeRoux, as well as the Junior World Champion, Marco Mazzucchelli. Michael Ramel also named Team USA as the first-place team. Led by team manager Albert Glenn, pilots Andrew Jesky, Chip Hyde, and Brett Wickizer comprised Team USA.

Dave Guerin and his entire crew put forth a superior effort and it was a job well done. Ron Morgan, competition director, and Al Williamson, RC manager, can look back on an event that many international competitors described as "like coming to heaven." Many commented that "this is an incredible flying site."

Greg Hahn had one final duty to fulfill in his capacity as AMA's Technical Director. He emceed the Monday evening banquet at the Horizon Convention Center. Dinner was served, speeches were made, more awards were made, and farewells were exchanged. Many of these pilots will see each other from time to time throughout the next two years, but it won't be until 2013, in South Africa, when such incredible talent will assemble once again for another World Championship.

Every competitor, support crew, staff member, and fan should be proud of himself or herself. All were part of an incredible piece of RC history. **MA**

Sources:

F3A World Championship
www.modelaircraft.org/events/f3awc2011.aspx

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