

The 2021 FAI Southwest Regionals Model Airplane Championships

The first America's Cup contest of 2021, the FAI SWR, was held on January 16 and 17 in Eloy, Arizona.

The weather was perfect, mostly all blue skies. The temperature in the mornings was 35°F (2°C) but then warmed up to about 73°F (23°C) both days. The wind speed on both days was 3 mph (1.3 m/s) to 10 mph (4.4 m/s). The wind direction was out of the SSE during the first 3 rounds, then changing direction, coming out of the NNW after noon to the fly-offs.

The Covid-19 pandemic caused the entry numbers to be down by 30% compared to previous years. We still had 25 competitors flying in the 8 FAI events. The contestants were from AZ, CA, CO, KS, NV, TN, TX, UT and WA. We had 5 ladies flying FAI events, Julie Parker (F1Q, F1S), Janna Van Nest (F1S), Myra Morris (F1S), Jasminka Pecenkovic (F1A) and Skylar Donnelly (F1B, F1S) - she is a FAI Junior and she will be on the USA Team for the Junior World Championships in France in August of this year.

On Saturday F1Q was won by Jack Murphy with Julie Parker in 2nd place and Rich Wegener in 3rd. Combined F1C/P had only 2 entries with Faust Parker (F1C) beating Mike Fedor (F1P) by 9 seconds. F1A had 9 flying. After 5 rounds there were 6 maxed out. 4 made the 6-minute fly-off. Jim Parker, Jim Farmer, Risto Puhakka and Peter Brocks then attempted the 8-minute flight in which Risto dropped. For the 8 minute flight the windspeed had increased a bit. All 3 that made it had long retrievals. Peter Brocks' mechanical M&K long wing copy dt'ed at 7:46 and landed at 8:08 and flew 1.8 miles (2.9km). But then, at about 4:40 pm, in the 3rd, 10 minute F1A fly-off round Jim Parker won 1st place, with Jim Farmer in 2nd and Peter in 3rd place. F1B had 3 flyers. Jerry Fitch won F1B by being the only one maxing-out and Walt Ghio dropping the last round by 10 seconds for 2nd place. Our Junior, Skylar Donnelly, did well by maxing the first 3 rounds.

On Sunday we flew F1G, F1H, F1J and F1S in 5 rounds. F1G had 7 flyers with 4 in the fly-off. Don DeLoach won the F1G Bear trophy by winning the 2nd fly-off round with Walt Ghio in 2nd and Brian Van Nest in 3rd place. In F1H we had only 2 participants. Here Jim Parker won the F1H Bear maxing in the fly-off round with Mike Fedor coming in 2nd. 4 participated in F1J. Only Faust Parker maxed out winning the F1J Bear. Mike Fedor was 2nd in F1J and Mike McKeever came into 3rd place. In F1S, the small electric event, we had 10 flying and 8 maxed out in the 5 rounds. The F1S fly-off went for two rounds trying first to make 2 minutes and then 3 minutes on a 5 second motor run. Myra Morris was the only one making the 3 minutes to win the F1S Bear trophy. Jack Murphy was 2nd and Robert Donnelly 3rd.

A big thank you to all participants and to Rich Lyon and my wife Brigitte who all made this contest a memorable, happy event.

Peter Brocks, CD