12-21-2022

The 2022 F1D World Championship Team Report

By Dmytro “Dima” Silin

Event and Venue

The 2022 World Championship took place on December 12-15 in Salt Mine, Slănic - Prahova, Romania. The venue is a Category 4 site with maximum height of 56 meters. Quite a few World and European Championships were held at this site since 1980s. The mine is known for its height and stable, but cold air. High flight times are only possible in the mine when the full height of it is utilized. A high performing model must be stiff and capable of fast climbs. Interestingly, a Variable Pitch Propeller won’t provide any advantage in the mine due to its extreme height.

Team

Canadian F1D team was on the podium last time in 1996 when Jack Mcgillivray, Mike Thomas, and Ed Liem took home silver medals. Out team was also second in 1988 and 1990. Jack Mcgillivray also took individual bronze in 1988. This year our senior team consisted of Vladimir Linardic, Arend Borst, and myself. Dima and Vlad both started building indoor models in 1992. Arend started F1D in 2018. He was F3J World Champion in 2002. In 2019 we had a team trial were Arend, me, and Ed Liem were the only contenders. The 2020 WCh was delayed twice and finally cancelled. Ed couldn’t attend this year event, so we decided to replace him with Vlad. Vlad flew with us during trials but did not formally enter. His performance, however, was solid. We decided that he would be a great substitute for Ed.

Preparations

All the formal preparations went rather smoothly. Ed transferred money to Romanian Federation for entry fees and hotel. He also ordered team jackets and hats and made us team stickers! I asked as a team manager and submitted all the required documents for the team.

Our team was ready two years ago. When postponed 2020 WCh got cancelled in December of 2021, we went to practice in the Salt Mine anyway. Vlad had 26.5 minutes flight, I had 25.5, and Arend got 23+. With another year for practice and improvement we were hoping to put up 150 minutes total for the team. That is two best flights of 25+ minutes for each. During 2022 Vlad came to the mine three more times and repeatedly performed 26+ minute flights. Before the WCh there was traditional Otto Hints Memorial Cup. Vlad and Arend used it as additional two days of practice. I entered officially and placed 9th out 32.

Results

Overall, we placed 5th at a team with 140 minutes total, just less than a minute short from 4th place. This is the highest Canada have been since 1996. Vlad came 13th with 48.5 minutes for two flights, I was 14th with 48, and Arend was 20th 43.5. Last time we were in the mine, WCh-2016, I had only 34.5 minutes and Vlad had 37 minutes. We both improved our single flight duration by 5+ minutes! Two national records were set for Cat 4 sites – first I flew 22:59 at Otto Hints Cup, then Vlad did 25:24 in Round 1 of WCh.

Lessons learned

Overall, we were quite happy with our performance. Vlad and myself – no changes to the models for the next cycle. Rather, focus on fine trimming and quality of flying and steering during the official rounds. Arend – need stiffer models that can handle steep and fast climb. Our projection for team podium wasn’t correct. The 140 minutes total would have placed us on the podium in 2016. This is not the case now. Everyone improved since the last WCh. The models are the same, but flight times increased on average by a minute or so. The 25 minutes won’t be enough anymore. Now we can hope for team medals only with 26+ minutes flights for each of us. Individual medals start at 27.5+.

Travel

We all arrived in Romania separately. The organizers provided buses at the airport and people who met us. Everything went just fine. Coming back was very troubling however. All three of us had connection in Frankfurt. Vlad – to Zagreb, Arend and myself to Toronto. The flight from Bucharest got delayed. Vlad barely made his connection, but Arend and me were too late. After a few hours in lines, we had to leave the airport, find hotel to stay and try again to rebook in the morning. With the way lines were going I realized that I would miss a flight again. So, I had to but another ticket for $2700 myself and finally made it home. Arend spent 6 hours in lines and barely made it to the direct Vancouver flight because it was two hours late.

What’s next?

The 2024 World Championship will be in the Salt Mine again. We plan to attend several Cat 4 venues before that. We are planning team trials for the next summer at Kibbie Dome, Moscow ID, USA. This 40-meter site was home for 1996 WCh and, by the rumors, might be the venue for 2026 WCh. All of us are planning to attend Kibbie and practice high site flying. Arend and Ed also have a chance to attend Airship Hangar at Tillamook, OR. Vlad will be coming to Salt Mine regularly. I will come to Kibbie and also to Van Dover memorial at Johnson City TN. Minidome of Eastern Tennessee University was a site for 1988 and 1990 World Championships. It is also a candidate for 2026. Our American friends from AMA are deciding which one to include in their bid.