

## Valladolid World Cup F2C

In recent years there has been a World Cup competition held on behalf of the UK at an overseas venue tagged onto an event held by the host nation for 2024 this was to be Valladolid in Spain. The team of Chris Barker and Neil Tricker were the sole representatives of GBR in F2C. For the outbound journey Chris decided that it would be advantageous to take a shuttle flight to Heathrow from Manchester as there weren't any direct flights to Madrid from Manchester using BA. This turned out to be a poor decision as the flight from Manchester was delayed leaving very little time to get to the connecting flight, but we made it just in time and were on our way! Such a shame that our baggage wasn't so lucky having failed to be cross loaded onto the onward flight. The model box did, however. This resulted in a 3-hour delay at Madrid whilst we waited for the baggage to arrive on the following flight. We had booked a hire car, and this process was faultless thankfully.

The drive of a couple of hundred kilometres to Valladolid was straightforward and we found the hotel and underground parking quite easily. Hotel Paris is a small, basic establishment that was very clean and whose staff were exceptionally helpful and polite. With no catering facilities within the hotel, we had to eat out at one of the many restaurants and bars around the square adjacent to the accommodation.

The competition started on the Thursday, so this meant that we had all day on the Wednesday to practice and get a setting. The flying site is located about 8 Km to the NW of the city and is a very nice site with plenty of work benches available for participants. The surface of the circle is pretty good but does have some flaws in it due to the great range of temperatures that they experience over the year but more of this later. It was clear from the outset that we would be struggling for airspeed as the area is about 2400ft above sea level. Our propellers were not right for that altitude so some trial-and-error testing was needed. The session was, however, curtailed by rain so it was back to town for a late lunch.

Thursday was a bright warm day with light winds but not a great deal of sunshine. For B/T it was back to the flying site to continue practice. We found that our propellers had too much pitch and not enough diameter to work in the ambient conditions so a rummage through the prop box to find that elusive prop that's been in there for ages but never used. We did find one and settled for about 19secs for 10 laps setting and hoped that good pit work from Neil would keep us in the game.

It has to be said that this was probably the most relaxed competition we had competed in for a very long time with the racing beginning at 14:00 each day. Round one was a disaster for us! The model started well but as soon as Neil released it the wheel dug into a surface crack which caused the model to run in, balloon up into the air and impact the ground heavily damaging it beyond repair. So, for round 2 the first spare model was required but the setting was awful resulting in a poor 4:37.1. Round 3 was on Friday. This was a much better attempt but 3:46.2 was nowhere near good enough. At the other end of the results sheet i.e. the top! The final was an all-Spanish affair with Alonso/Inglesias emerging as winners.