



PRESS RELEASE
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France dominates at the 2nd FAI World Indoor Skydiving Championships

Laval, Canada, 23 October 2017 - **France walked away with a clutch of gold medals at the 2nd FAI World Indoor Skydiving Championships on Sunday 22 October 2017, after putting in solid performances across a range of disciplines at the three-day competition in Laval, Canada.**

More than 200 competitors from 23 countries converged on the SkyVenture wind tunnel near Montreal to compete in eight different classes of Indoor Skydiving.

France took gold in four of those disciplines, including: Women's 4-Way Formation Skydiving (FS); Juniors 4-Way Formation Skydiving; Vertical Formation Skydiving; and the Dynamic 4-Way.

They were beaten into silver-medal position however, in the hotly contested Open category of 4-Way Formation Skydiving, as rivals Belgium took gold.

In Freestyle, Singapore's Kyrah Poh won gold in the Juniors, while Russia's Leonid Volkov cruised to victory in the Open category.

The eighth gold medal of the competition went to Poland in the Dynamic 2-Way.

The day started with the Open category of the 4-Way Formation Skydiving. Belgium simply had to hang on to their lead built up over the past two days, and they did so solidly. "The team worked very hard. We are really satisfied with the outcome," team member Andy Grauwels said afterwards. "We are really good friends, and that showed in the tunnel, so we are really, really happy."

The Women were up next, and here a win was almost a certainty for France because they were so far ahead in the points. In the end, they executed a serious, clean and professional round and pulled even further ahead, scoring five more points than the United Kingdom in second. Czech Republic was third.

The tempo changed a little with the Juniors 4-Way Formation Skydiving. Here again, France was sitting comfortably ahead. Flying in suits of red, white and blue like the French flag, their performance was polished. A victory rotation with all the team members in the tunnel added a fun note. Watching closely, their team coach Marin was clearly pleased. "Teaching kids is very fun. It's pretty easy actually – they take to it so easily." His team at the World Championships was aged between 13 and 15.

With the Formation Skydiving complete it was time for the Artistic Events to step forward – and step forward they did. The Junior Freestyle competitors were up first, and here the ranking did not change. Favourite to win Kyrah Poh from Singapore did just that – securing her gold medal victory ahead of 13-year-old Kaleigh Wittenburg who took second. Poland's Andrzej Soltys was in third.

"I thought that was really good," Kyrah Poh said immediately afterwards. "I tried my best to do it perfectly and I think I was close." She added that she flies every day at home in Singapore, and had "really enjoyed" the competition in Canada.

In the Open Freestyle, there was little doubt over who would win. Russia's Leonid Volkov brought the crowd to their feet and earned the applause of all his peers. He said afterwards: "I feel relaxed now! I feel the world is good."

The next competition saw France take gold in the Vertical Formation Skydiving. Here, teams of four compete against each other, and France's precision and speed paid off.

With the Freestyle and Formation Skydiving competitions concluded, attention moved to the finals of the Dynamic flying. In these contests, athletes in pairs and fours 'battle' an opposite pair or four. Whichever team wins, progresses to the next round. They fly a Freestyle round to music, and a Speed round with penalties.

Both competitions supplied surprises. In the Dynamic 2-Way the pair from Singapore had been leading the competition and were favourite to win. However, matched against Poland in the final, a time penalty in Singapore's last round, and a powerful Freestyle round from Poland saw Singapore drop into silver medal position.

"We trained really hard the whole year," team member Joshua Ruiz-Velasco said. "We won the World Cup last year, and we promised we would come here with harder, faster and better routines. And we did it. We're very happy!"

France's final medal of the day came in the Dynamic 4-Way. Again, this came down to the wire. France and Czech Republic were judged evenly matched, and so a sudden-death Speed round was called. That provided high tension, with judges discussing a possible time penalty for several minutes as the athletes and crowd waited to hear the outcome. When it came down in France's favour – they were 0.75 seconds faster than the Czech Republic – the crowd erupted.

After three packed days of competition at the 2nd World Indoor Skydiving Championships, the final results table for the 2nd FAI World Indoor Skydiving Championships looks like this:

Formation Skydiving 4-Way, Open

1. Belgium, 327
2. France, 320
3. USA, 302

Formation Skydiving 4-Way, Female

1. France, 298
2. UK, 248
3. Czech Republic, 225

Formation Skydiving 4-Way, Juniors

1. France, 230
2. Canada, 208
3. Czech Republic, 181

Indoor Freestyle, Junior

1. Kyrah Poh, Singapore, 64.1
2. Kaleigh Wittenburg, USA, 63.2
3. Andrzej Soltyk, Poland, 62.5

Indoor Freestyle, Open

1. Leonid Volkov, Russia, 64.9
2. Maja Kuczyńska, Poland, 62.7
3. Jakub Harrer, Czech Republic, 61.8

Vertical Formation Skydiving, Open

1. France, 315
2. USA, 309
3. Poland, 245

Dynamic 2-Way

1. Poland
2. Singapore
3. France

Dynamic 4-Way

1. France
2. Czech Republic
3. Switzerland

Medals Table

France: 4 Gold, 1 Silver, 1 Bronze
Poland: 1 Gold, 1 Silver, 2 Bronze
Singapore: 1 Gold, 1 Silver
Belgium: 1 Gold
Russia: 1 Gold
USA: 2 Silver, 1 Bronze
UK: 1 Silver
Canada: 1 Silver
Czech Republic: 1 Silver, 3 Bronze
Switzerland: 1 Bronze

Notes

Competition website: www.wisc2017.com

Results: www.wisc2017.com/scores

Livestream video archive: www.wisc2017.com/livestream

Day 1 report: www.fai.org/news/2nd-world-indoor-skydiving-championships-day-one

Day 2 report: www.fai.org/news/2nd-world-indoor-skydiving-championships-day-two

Photos

High resolution rights-free photographs are available for download and editorial use via the FAI's Flickr site

Competition photos: www.flickr.com/photos/airsports_fai/albums/72157687301366761

Gold medal winners: www.flickr.com/photos/airsports_fai/albums/72157686462945422

About FAI

FAI, the World Air Sports Federation (www.fai.org), is the world governing body for air sports and for certifying world aviation and space records. The FAI was founded in 1905 and is a non-governmental and non-profit-making organisation recognised by the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

FAI activities include Aerobatics, Aeromodelling, Airships, Amateur-Built and Experimental Aircraft, Balloons, Drones, Gliding, Hang Gliding, Helicopters, Manpowered Flying, Microlights, Parachuting, Paragliding, Paramotors, Power Flying and all other Aeronautic and Astronautic sporting activities.

For more details, please contact the FAI:

Faustine Carrera
Communication Manager
0041 21 345 10 70
communication@fai.org

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