

## Four steps to the Junior World Championships

### Young competitors need support

Young competitors are possibly the most enriching aspect of our international competitions, besides being living proof that our sport has a future. CIAM (FAI Aeromodelling Commission) allows the participation of juniors in all competition categories. For many girls and boys, however, getting there involves a long and difficult journey.

technical skills now rarely feature on school curriculums and that's why it is important for future aeromodellers to learn how to build a simple model aeroplane themselves. In parallel, there should be a few short theory sessions. The importance of attention to detail and accuracy will become immediately obvious during subsequent trial flights. Our regional association makes wood assembly kits available to local clubs at no cost.



*How to build a simple model aeroplane themselves*



### Step 1: Aeromodelling for children

We provide free small hand-launch aeroplanes for our local clubs which are then used at indoor events, exhibitions and flying demonstrations. We recommend these smallest of models made of plastic foams for children up to 7 years of age. The little models are assembled, glued and sometimes colourfully decorated at the event, followed, of course, by a final distance competition.



### Step 2: Technical support and trial flights

Sadly, most of today's youths are fixated on screens and games. Craftsmanship and

### Step 3: Introduction to RC flying

This step also takes place within our local clubs, where two slightly different approaches have proven to be successful: Working together with the young people, simple motorised gliders – usually constructed from plastic foam – are fitted with motors and RC systems, flown in and then used as training and novice models with the aid of electronic dual controls. This relatively expensive option is mostly funded by parents and associations can help with grants or by purchasing materials at lower cost. The other, also proven, option involves an organiser providing models and is limited to training using dual controls.



*Training and novice models with the aid of electronic dual controls*



### Step 4: Introduction to competitive flying

Our experience has shown that this step goes beyond what a local club can offer. That is why our regional association has held a workshop with eleven



young people where we fitted RC systems to novice models for F5J competitions and flew them in. Participants had to come with a certain amount of experience and skills, i.e. the ability to launch and land a model by themselves, charge batteries etc. Models were set up and flown in under the instruction of experienced RC electric flyers followed by several joint coaching sessions at different locations. All eleven workshop participants took part in the F5J Swiss Championships and two took part in the 2018 European Championships in Bulgaria. Another effort was made to promote aerobatics, with a three-day workshop where small RC aerobatics models were made ready to fly. Again, final set-up work and coaching were essential.



**The very important coaching**



**workshop with young people where we fitted RC systems to novice models**

## A preliminary conclusion

These two workshops have shown that many young aeromodellers are quite skilful when it comes to controlling RC models. That is the good news. Unfortunately, only a very few are capable of independently fitting a pre-built model with motor and RC control system. The manual skills required for handling delicate model aircraft are very much lacking. For this reason, getting a young person involved in competitive aeromodelling will require either a lot of support from within their family or an organisation that offers structured coaching and ongoing sponsorship. Cost and returns must not be the dominant criterion.



### CIAM Flyer 2-2019

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