



Race Director's report
25.08.15

The following report is based on visual observation of the accident, scrutineers and other official statements and post-accident scrutineering.

The crash, involving Jezij Chmelevskij happened on 22-nd of august, at Haapsalu, Kilti airfield. At 11:51 they were staging along side with Estonian dragster driver Reino Poom.

Reino was on the right lane, Jezij Chmelevskij on the left one. Reino got away first and was already almost at 1000ft when Jezij took off. All four tires spinned at starting line. He found some grip before 60ft blocks and started to pick up speed rapidly. Jezij's car was going a little bit sideways on every gear shift. Just before 1320 feet speed trap his car moved to right, the driver over-corrected and got the car totally sideways. He took out the 1320 speed and finish timing system blocks sliding through them with its backside. The car passed the sensors at 262 km/h and continued to slide sideways and towards the left side of the airfield runway. The grass and dirt next to the runway sent the car to a multiple barrel-roll and probably he did some rolls over the nose as well.

First rescue team arrived to the accident site about 20 seconds after the car had become stationary. The Safety Safari members managed to get the driver out of the car quickly and started working on him. Local Safety marshal called in an additional ambulance from Haapsalu (5km away). After the driver was stabilized, he was handed over to the local Ambulance crew, who took the patient to Läänemaa Hospital for additional treatment. The ambulance crew first reported broken wrists and a concussion as patients first diagnosis. Later on the hospital found also shoulder blade fracture and pulmonary contusion. On site rescue operation, including stabilizing the patient took about 35 minutes. Crash site and track was inspected immediately after the accident to find any fluids or abnormalities. The accident area was cleared of the debris shortly after the driver was taken to the hospital.

As far as the car, doors and most of the body panels had been ripped off. Only the main frame and the roof was still on. When rescue teams arrived, the fire extinguisher system was still working. Braking chute was closed and still in the its container. Safety pin was removed by the crew before start. The remaining wheels on the rear axle were jammed so that made the later pulling or pushing of the wreck really hard. Even the racers team, that arrived some time later, could not get the car out of gear, though the gear linkage on the inside of the car was intact. Fuel tank and basically all smaller components than the engine itself, under the bonnet were ripped off during rolling. Rally roll cage that the car had, was bent and squashed in every roof corner. Though, It did its job - the welds and pipes held together fine and thanks to that, the cage did not collapse. Belts, helmet and HANS system both had a valid homologation and both were used correctly, as they were supposed to be used. Unfortunately there is nothing left of the cars suspension or the power transfer axles to investigate more. The car was of course pre-race scrutineered and passed the checks. Since it was the first run for this car for many years to run on Estonian soil, the scrutineers did not know, what is the safety limit for this car. The first run would have decided whether this cars would be sent home or let him continue racing. Unfortunately, the first and run ended up with a bad crash.

Cause of the accident

As there is no official investigation opened, these are only observations on what might have happened. Based on the witnesses reports and a video, the driver lost control over the car. When it started to go sideways, he simply over-corrected and crashed at high speed. This happens often and it is a common thing in drag racing. The track was checked before and right after the crash by the crew several times. No one of the track officials noticed anything that could have sent this car to an accident like this. The only minus side of the track was the fact that it did not have any guard walls. That of course would not have prevented the accident, but the consequences would have been different.

The second possible cause of the incident comes from the post-accident inspection of the crash site. (Note picture number 1. and 2.)

On image nr. 1 You can see two track marks when he was completely sideways and dragging on the concrete towards the grass. The arrow points at a fresh metallic scrape mark which was totally parallel to the tire mark. It could indicate that something might have come loose from one of the cars axles. Same scraping mark is visible on the image nr. 2. Once again this is just another observation and as written earlier in this report, there is not much left of the cars suspension to come to any fundamental conclusions.

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