

SPORT

October 2017

Aerobatics

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE of the INTERNATIONAL AEROBATIC CLUB



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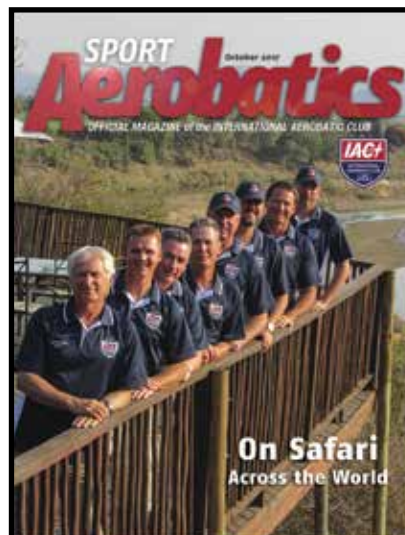
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The 2017 U.S. Unlimited Aerobatic Team overlooking Kruger National Park in South Africa. Photo by Alice Johnson.

SPORT Aerobatics

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE of the INTERNATIONAL AEROBATIC CLUB

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Coming Next Month

A look into the U.S. National Aerobatic Championships held for the first time at the home of EAA and IAC — in Oshkosh, Wisconsin.



EVAN PEERS

SUBMISSIONS: Photos, articles, news, and letters to the editor intended for publication should be e-mailed to editor@iac.org. Please include your IAC number, city, and state/country. Letters should be concise, polite, and to the point. All letters are subject to editing for clarity and length.

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www.iac.org/yellow-pages

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President's Page

The Plates Are Spinning

MIKE HEUER, IAC PRESIDENT, IAC 4



The last three or four months have been a whirlwind of activities in IAC, which have resulted in a tremendous workload for your IAC leadership team and our executive director. It is also our favorite time of year as so many dynamic, rewarding, and fun activities were on our calendar.

EAA AirVenture in Oshkosh was a real success for IAC this year. We now look forward to 2018 and the development of a theme for the event that focuses on aircraft and people in our sport. That decision will be made in the coming weeks and then our attention will turn to the planning for next year. It is a year-round process.

In this issue of the magazine, several of our members have written about some of the activities that were on that calendar this year, aside from AirVenture and the U.S. National Aerobatic Championships. Their accounts of these events make for some very good reading.

I was particularly gratified this year to see the U.S.A. represented for the first time at the 5th FAI World Yak-52 Aerobatic Championships in Russia. As Ross Ferguson recounts in his article, there were thousands of these aircraft built in the former Soviet Union over many years and all are virtually identical. It makes for a perfect “one design” airplane for competition. Much to my surprise, I learned that there were well over 200 of these airplanes registered in the United States. As with the RV community, many are interested in flying activities together, with an emphasis on formation flying. We have done a lot of outreach to the RV community, urging them to join us at IAC competitions, and thanks to the hard work and promotional talents of some of our members, we see more of those airplanes on the ramp at our contests than ever before. I am hopeful that one day, with so many Yak-52s on the register, we will see more of them join us as well. In fact, Evgeny Komarov flew his '52 in the 2015 U.S. Nationals, which was a first for this type.

The Yak-52 is essentially an Intermediate level airplane and at some of the past world championships,

the organizers have mixed in the Intermediate World Championships with the Yak-52s. This was last done in 2014 in South Africa but not at recent championships.

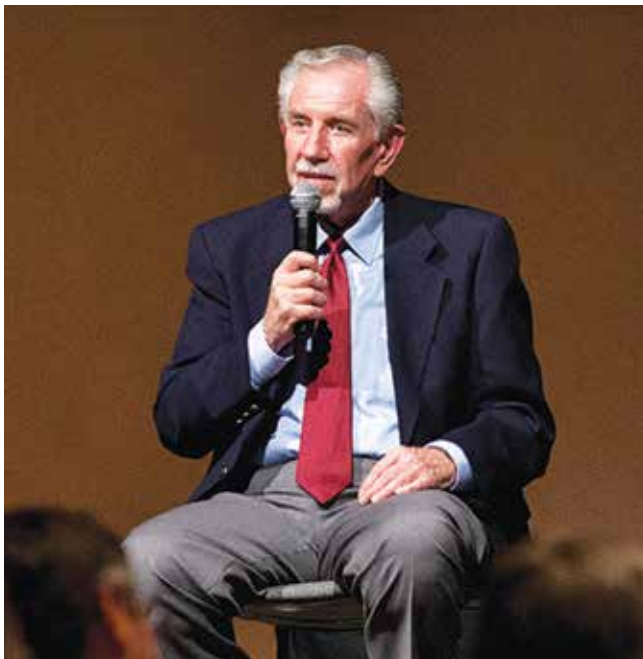
As I read about what is going on in aerobatics around the world in social media, I am always proud to see the IAC multi-category system in use and most often with the IAC's English names for the categories. Martin Albrecht writes about the recent German Nationals held in Gera-Leumnitz in late August and early September. The Germans flew Sportsman through Unlimited with 35 pilots participating. Martin Gräf (IAC 438949) won Sportsman in a Christen Eagle II and it was good to see four of the pilots as current members of IAC. Germany has always had the largest number of IAC members in Europe, followed closely by Norway.

Our congratulations to Martin Albrecht for his sixth win of the German national champion title—the first time in the many decades of German aerobatics. He follows in the footsteps of great German aerobatic pilots like Gerd Fieseler and Manfred Strössenreuther.

Speaking of Norway, Thore Thoresen also writes on the Norwegian Nationals in this issue. Norway uses IAC rules for its contests with great success. Like IAC, they have chosen to stick with traditional flight programs that have been in place for years and that attract the most pilots. We look forward to more contests in Norway and I have offered our assistance to our Norwegian friends if they would like some volunteers from America to help.

It goes without saying that our largest contingent of non-U.S.A. members is in Canada. They fly in IAC-sanctioned contests in the United States and Americans cross the border to fly in theirs. It has been a partnership since our foundation in 1970. I am proud to say that I was Canadian National Advanced Aerobatic Champion early on and before those titles were restricted to Canadian citizens, much as we do here in the U.S.A.

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Frank Christensen to Be Inducted Into Aerobatics Hall of Fame

by Mike Heuer, IAC 4

Frank Christensen, the founder of Christen Industries, will be inducted into the International Aerobatics Hall of Fame on November 9, 2017. The ceremonies will take place in the Founders' Wing of the EAA Aviation Museum, Oshkosh, Wisconsin, starting at 6:00 p.m.

Frank's accomplishments in aviation are numerous and varied. While he was in his last year of college, he founded Tempres Industries, which manufactured miniature tools and machinery to create integrated circuits. He sold the company in 1972, and at the time it had three plants and 600 employees.

He also founded and was president of Christen Industries in Hollister, California. Christen Industries introduced the Christen Eagle II to the sport aviation community in 1977 at Oshkosh. It is a two-place aerobatic biplane powered by a 200-hp Lycoming and has one of the most distinctive paint schemes ever conceived for sport aircraft.

The Eagle was a kitbuilt aircraft, and Frank set the gold standard for homebuilt kits in the future. The airplane came in 26 separate kits, each with its own manual, and these kits could be ordered as the builder progressed and finances permitted.

The kits were so complete that nothing was left to

purchase to build the airplane. Only basic hand tools were required, and the kits even included a razor blade to open the packaging. The Christen Eagle still stands as an example of how to provide kits to homebuilders, some 40 years after its introduction.

In addition to the Eagle, Christen Industries also produced the widely used and well-known Christen inverted oil system. This system was FAA-approved and purchased by Lycoming for use on its "A" series engines (aerobatic models). In addition to the hundreds of homebuilders of aerobatic aircraft who incorporated the system into their aircraft engines, it also became the industry standard.

Christen Industries was also the first sponsor of the famous Eagles Aerobatic Team, which performed at AirVenture for decades. The pilots were Tom Poberezny, Charlie Hillard, and Gene Soucy. The three pilots had flown together as the Red Devils until Frank convinced them to transition into the Eagles and rename their team. The Eagles he built and provided for them were single-seat versions with larger 260-hp Lycomings. The team aircraft are now on display in the EAA Aviation Museum's atrium. (Also on display in the EAA museum is the P-51 now dubbed *Paul I* that used to belong to Frank. He used it for personal transportation in the 1970s.)

Frank also owned the Pitts factory in Afton, Wyoming, for a few years that is now owned by Stu Horn of Aviat. Aviat still makes available the Aviat Eagle as well as the Pitts S-2C and Husky.

Frank is a former competition pilot who won the Advanced category at the U.S. National Aerobatic Championships in Texas in 1969 in a Pitts S-1S built for him by Curtis Pitts.

He also managed the winning 1972 U.S. Aerobatic Team that competed in France and brought home the Aresti Cup and Nesterov Trophy for the first time in U.S. history.

IAC and its officers and directors look forward to celebrating this great honor and welcoming Frank Christensen back to Oshkosh and into the IAC Hall of Fame.

IAC Election Results and New Regional Director Assignments

by Mike Heuer, IAC 4

The IAC annual membership meeting just concluded at EAA AirVenture in Oshkosh, and the results of the 2017 election were announced

by Mike Heuer, IAC president, on behalf of Ballot Certification Chairman D.J. Molny.

A total of 274 votes were cast in the election. The results were as follows:

Vice President - Robert Armstrong (248 votes)*

Treasurer - Bob Hart (250 votes)*

Directors - Tim Just (166 votes)*

- Peggy Riedinger (158 votes) *

- Bruce Ballew (146 votes) *

- Mike Rinker (142 votes) *

- A.J. Hefel (139 votes)

- Jim Bourke (133 votes)

The elected officers and directors are indicated by asterisks, and they assumed office at the conclusion of the annual meeting.

After each IAC election, the president reviews the new board of directors and assigns our various regions to each director. Most remain with the same regions they have represented before, but when a new director is elected or an incumbent drops off the board, this requires some reshuffling.

In this year's election, we now have a new director, Peggy Riedinger. Since Peggy resides and is active in the Northwest, she now has responsibility for the IAC Northwest Region. The region was formerly assigned to Ron Schreck, who now has the South Central Region as his responsibility. Their contact info can be found on the IAC website under the About tab and Leadership page. We encourage the chapters to contact and regularly communicate with your director.



The new IAC officers and directors at AirVenture 2017. Left to right: Lorrie Penner (executive director), Debby Rihn-Harvey, Gerry Molitor, Mike Heuer, Robert Armstrong, Peggy Riedinger, Tim Just, Ron Schreck, and Bob Hart.

IAC Pavilion Benches

by A.J. Hefel, IAC 23752

The idea for new benches sprang into my head at the IAC board of director's meeting in November. As we were discussing the IAC Pavilion projects it occurred



These wonderful benches were very well used during AirVenture and U.S. Nationals.

to me that seating around the pavilion has always been an issue. I approached Lynn Bowes that evening and made my pitch for new benches. I thought I could ask chapters to see if they would want to contribute by making a donation to help with funding, so as not to use the small fund allocated for pavilion projects. I suggested we could give recognition to those who donate by placing a plaque on the bench.

After I got home from that meeting, I got to work contacting chapters with the idea. There was some interest so Lynn and I started searching for suitable benches. That took a considerable amount of time as we wanted something sturdy, affordable, yet aesthetically pleasing. This past spring, we finally found a bench style that we both agreed upon and met our criteria.

Once I got the funding, Lynn worked the rest of the logistical issues of ordering, delivery, and placement.

I want to recognize Chapters 24 (Lone Star Aerobatic Club, Dallas, Texas) and 119 (Wichita, Kansas) for their contributions. For my personal contribution, I wish to recognize my deceased father, Raymond G. Hefel I, to whom I owe my life and my love for aviation.

I hope this will start a trend for other chapters to follow. My hope is it will help the IAC Pavilion become not just a place for buying merchandise or viewing historical items, but rather one where people can meet and enjoy fellowship, aviation, and aerobatics. Please contact me or Lorrie Penner if you wish to contribute toward more benches.

Lindy Awards 2017

Every year at EAA AirVenture Oshkosh, hundreds of aircraft arrive to be entered into competition for the highly sought-after Lindy Awards. Named after legendary aviator Charles Lindbergh, the Lindy Awards are given out to only the best of the best.

Aircraft can be entered into one of six categories: homebuilts, warbirds, vintage, ultralights, seaplanes, and rotorcraft. Aircraft can be entered in only one category per year.

Lindy Award judging takes into account how an aircraft looks, of course, but the degree of craftsmanship involved plays an important role as well. Award-winning aircraft don't just look pretty, they are carefully built, restored, and/or maintained by owners who take great pride in them.

Although aerobatics is not a category of its own, aerobatic aircraft do still place well, especially in the aerobatic subcategory in homebuilts. The IAC aerobatic aircraft parking area featured several of this year's winners.

Congratulations to:

Homebuilt: Paul Poberezny Founder's Award for Best Classic Homebuilt

Harvey Swift, IAC 437651
Clinton, Arkansas
Pitts S-1C, N593A

Homebuilt: Reserve Grand Champion Kitbuilt — Silver Lindy

John Garred, IAC 1386
Whiting, Iowa
Pitts Model 12, N171JG

Homebuilt: Plans Champion — Bronze Lindy

Matt Flamini, IAC 437478
Yorkville, Illinois
Pitts S-1S, N7TS

Homebuilt: Best Aerobatic — Plaque

Curtis Cumberland
Woodbine, Maryland
Pitts S-1C, N834T

Homebuilt: Plans Outstanding Workmanship — Plaque

Harold Strittmatter
Georgetown, Texas
Acrosport II, N416H



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Reserve Grand Champion: John Garred's Pitts Model 12.

From other areas of the AirVenture grounds, there were many aircraft shown by IAC members, or of aerobatic interest:

Homebuilt: Grand Champion Plansbuilt — Gold Lindy

Bruce Paylor
Guelph, Ontario
Bücker Jungmann, C-FEBU

Homebuilt: Reserve Grand Champion Plansbuilt — Silver Lindy

James Kidd
Poplar Grove, Illinois
Skybolt, N330HP

Vintage: Customized Aircraft — Large Plaque

Frank Winkler, IAC 438545
Dallas, Texas
1941 Waco UPF-7, N32094

Vintage: Bronze Age (1937-1941) Outstanding Closed-Cockpit Monoplane — Small Plaque

Lowell Baker, IAC 6314
Effingham, Illinois
1941 Taylorcraft BC12-65, N29654

Vintage: Bronze Age (1937-1941) Champion — Bronze Lindy

Jeffrey Gaulrapp, IAC 436222
Coal Valley, Illinois
1941 Waco UPF-7, N32133

Homebuilt: Kit Champion — Bronze Lindy

Darrell Anderson, IAC 438326
Great Falls, Montana
RV-4, N144DV



EVAN PEERS

Paul Poberezny Founder's Award: Harvey Swift with his Pitts S-1C.

Homebuilt: Kit Champion — Bronze Lindy

Scott Elhardt, IAC 438135
Minneapolis, Minnesota
RV-8, N32SE

Seaplanes: Bronze Lindy

J. Slingsby, IAC 12611
Rapid City, South Dakota
Cessna 185, N2577Q

Classic: Class I (0-85 hp) — Bronze Lindy

Shane Vande Voort, IAC 433607
Pella, Iowa
1946 Aeronca 7AC, N82940

For a complete list of all 2017 Lindy Award winners, visit www.AirVenture.org, click the "AirVenture News" link, then click on "2017 Lindy Award Winners Announced."

MT-Propeller Alert Service Bulletin No. 30 R2

MT-Propeller wants to inform its valued customers that our ASB 30 R2, originally issued in November 2014, is still active. MT propellers manufactured/overhauled or repaired between November 2013 until October 2014 are affected for a lag screw replacement.

Many propellers have already been upgraded in the last three years; however, there are still some propellers or blades in service with a need to be upgraded. The best time to do the prop upgrade is when the aircraft is already in maintenance for scheduled work to avoid unnecessary downtime.

MT-Propeller wants to provide all customers the best quality support, to have trouble-free and safe operations with its systems. The upgrade will be done under warranty. In ASB 30 R2, the affected propeller and blade serial numbers are listed. Please contact MT-Propeller at techsupport@mt-propeller.com to confirm if your propeller is already upgraded or needs an upgrade.

GameBird GB1 Achieves FAA Certification

Game Composites has received FAA type certification validation for the GB1 GameBird.

The GameBird is fully certified and underwent an intense test program, making it the most thoroughly tested and safest aerobatic airplane available today. The GameBird is a two-seater, and an optional single-seat canopy is available. The GameBird features a more than 1,000 nm range at 200 knots. The acrotank holds 25 gallons.

Production models will be equipped with a Garmin



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avionics suite, consisting of the G3X Touch display for both panels, a GTX 345 transponder, and a GTR 225 VHF radio.

Game Composites has signed an agency agreement with Top Gun Voltige, Francois Dubreuil, in France, and Seaview Aerobatics, Patrick Davidson, in South Africa. The first orders are signed, production has started, and the first GameBirds are expected to be delivered in the first quarter of 2018.

The GameBird is produced in Bentonville, Arkansas. For more information, visit www.GameComposites.com.

Mamistov Reigns Supreme at FAI World Aerobatic Championships by FAI – World Air Sports Federation



Mikhail Mamistov

Russia's Mikhail Mamistov has been crowned FAI World Aerobatic Champion for a third time. The legendary aerobatics pilot won the FAI gold medal at the 29th FAI World Aerobatic Championships in Malelane, South Africa, after a hard-fought competition that lasted a week, from September 9-17, 2017.

He came out on top ahead of two strong French pilots:

Francois Rallet was in second place, with French teammate Olivier Masurel in third. The top three pilots were all flying the EXTRA 330SC.

Mamistov was leading the competition when he went into his final flight and wasn't entirely happy when he'd finished. "I did not expect the strong crosswind," he said, "and I had to correct a lot of maneuvers, but it was not too bad." In the end, he had done enough to take the win.

The weather sometimes made things difficult for the pilots over the week. "It has been a very interesting competition," Mamistov said. "It has been hot weather, with poor visibility – interesting conditions for competing."

Some 36 pilots from 11 nations took part in the competition, which saw four complete

aerobatic runs, or programs. Just missing out on the podium was Alexandre Orlowski (FRA), who won the first two programs and was leading the competition. However, he slipped back to fourth place overall after the second two flights. Also experiencing disappointment was Spain's Cástor Fantoba, who went from second overall after three programs, to finishing seventh following a low-scoring fourth program.

Mamistov is no stranger to the podium in international Aerobatics competition. He has been FAI World Aerobatic Champion twice before – this is his third time – having won in 2001 and 2011. He has also been FAI European Aerobatic Champion five times, in 2004, 2006, 2008, 2012 and 2016.

In the team results, France took home top honors. Francois Rallet, Olivier Masurel, and Alexandre Orlowski all took home FAI gold medals. Russia was second, with the USA in third.

In the separate, one-day Freestyle World Championship competition, Rob Holland (USA) took gold, with Olivier Masurel (FRA) and Castor Fantoba (ESP) in silver and bronze.

To see all the results from the 29th FAI World Aerobatic Championships, visit www.WAC2017.co.za.

IAC

President's Page continued from page 1

In the months ahead, we will report on the U.S. Nationals and the World Aerobatic Championships, which were both held in September. The WAC attracted only 36 pilots this year, no doubt due to its remote location, and it was the smallest championships since 1962. To our team's credit, all eight pilots selected for the U.S. Unlimited Aerobatic Team made the trip. Thanks to friends in France and South Africa, all of the pilots flew borrowed airplanes and for the first time since the first WAC in 1960, no American aircraft were shipped. With the EXTRA 330SC so commonly used by Unlimited pilots, this is a feat that would not have been possible a couple of decades ago. Sadly, there were no women pilots in the WAC, also for the first time since 1962. Much work remains to be done in attracting women to aerobatics.

More news next month ...

IAC

Please send your comments, questions, or suggestions to president@iac.org.



29th World Aerobatic Championships

On Safari with Team USA

SAFARI PHOTOS BY PEGGY RIEDINGER

The U.S. team finished flying a grueling yet rewarding flight program at the 29th World Aerobatic Championships in South Africa, and immediately boarded flights to Oshkosh to fly in the U.S. National Aerobatic Championships the next week. En route, some of the team shared their experiences of travel with the team, on world competition, and on the rewards that rise amongst the challenges.

The Challenge and the Reward

by Mike Ciliberti

What stood out at WAC 2017? — I would have to say the uniqueness of the venue and surrounding area. Seeing elephants and giraffes at a contest is a little different.

What surprised me? — Due to the remoteness of the location, I think we were a little concerned about the logistics, but the South Africans did a great job making sure all the bases were covered.

What challenged me? — We arrived in late August and five of us ended up getting the superbug that has been going around in SA. Keeping up with a training program while ill was definitely a challenge. In hindsight, laying off the training while not feeling well would have been appropriate. Ultimately, I feel I may have over-trained, ended up not feeling well, and had to cease flying after two rounds. This was very discouraging, but better to learn from my mistakes to do better the next time. I just wish I could have done more to help the team.

WAC in a borrowed airplane — While it's always better to be in your own plane, the aircraft we rented from Gilles (the French team mechanic) was a very nice capable 'SC. Any time the airplane broke, Gilles had it flying within an hour due to the extensive spares he brought to support the planes. Given the location and distance from parts support had we brought our own planes, I think renting from someone with extensive spares was the smart move.

Personal and team standings — I am comfortable with my performance through the first two flights, and greatly disappointed I had to withdraw (for myself and for any help I could have given the team — sorry, gentlemen). Live and learn. I am dedicated to coming back better! As for team standings, I am proud of all the guys for all the

work they put in and what they accomplished! I think if we want to compete on a level playing field with the French and Russians in Unlimited, it will be important to work within the CIVA format and rules during our team selection process. They are setting the bar very high, and staying current with that type of competition flying is essential if we want to keep up.

by Craig Gifford

What stood out for me? — First, of course, the venue and the hosts. Like every aerobatic contest, there were long days at the airport, and honestly the airport wasn't particularly exciting. But the host country did a fantastic job of ensuring that what we needed as pilots was there, convenient, and functional. And in the few moments when flying wasn't the focus, the scenery and wildlife took the stage — pretty incredible.

Second, the team camaraderie. This is why I do this. In the U.S., aerobatics is an individual sport. In world competition, it's a team sport. You want to do well, but more importantly, you want your team members to do well, and you'll do anything to support them in doing so. Everyone was there for at least a week to practice, and almost all were at the airport that whole week. And during the competition, every single team member was there at the airport for every other's



flights. Long days at the airport, maybe on a day you weren't even flying, just so you could give your teammate encouragement and support. Not to mention breakfast and dinner together and many late nights designing Free Unknowns sequences. No egos, just the bond that forms to get you through the stress and intensity.

Surprises? — Favorable aircraft availability. Though originally we anticipated sending three or four of our airplanes, in the end, we all wound up renting airplanes over there. Principally, because the shipping time would have had a serious impact on our ability to train in the U.S. before the contest. Several team members used rental French aircraft, while others used the personal aircraft of several South African team members. All

the aircraft were airworthy and able to complete all the competition flights without adding stress. In particular, the South African aircraft were in impeccable condition, and the South Africans couldn't have been more helpful and welcoming in letting us use them (many thanks, Nigel, Barrie, and Mark!).

Challenges! — The box orientation proved difficult to me! With mountains surrounding and little in the way of landmarks, timing and box markers were all there was. And sometimes it's hard to spot the right marker at 400 degrees per second going up! Next time.

Team USA — Finally, the team was supported along the way by many people, but the work of Alice Johnson, our team manager, ensured we could focus on flying. Alice volunteered for this role when the team was in need, learned a ton as she went, and did a fantastic job. Not only at the contest, but also at the training camps we held during the summer. We all tremendously appreciated everything she did for us. Same is true for Steve Johnson, who not only supported Alice, but became the team videographer — many, many long days in the hot sun, videoing every single practice and competition flight. And finally, our coach, Claude Bessiere, for improving our flying throughout the course of the year. All were such an important part of our team.

In the end, it was a great experience, with a great bunch of people. As challenging as the

training and logistics can be, I look forward to doing this each time and can't wait for the next opportunity.

by Bob Freeman

It's been a personal goal for me for a long time to put my name on that relatively small list of pilots who have flown for the U.S. Unlimited aerobatic team over the years of WAC. There are some great names on that list, and I'm proud to have finally put my name on it. I am also very proud of my teammates. Our team went a very long way to represent U.S. aerobatics on this trip, and it was challenging. Everyone on our team flew a rented or borrowed aircraft. While there are many similarities to our own planes, there are many differences. I was surprised to find how distracting it was to switch to altitude in meters and airspeed in kph and to deal with a microscopic sequence

card. Nothing difficult, just a distraction when shooting for target speeds and gate altitudes. Slight differences in stick response were important to try to adjust to. Again manageable.

Half of our team ended up getting sick with a flu bug upon arrival, and with the high temps and illness, physical condition and dehydration was something else to contend with. The temps were very hot, and the horizon was frequently very hazy, with no clear orientation guides and a distracting highway that runs about 20 degrees off the x-axis through the front center



of the box. Interestingly, traffic was not stopped during the event, which would never pass muster in the U.S. The best pilots handled

the heat, orientation, and wind challenges the best.

The box was turned and judge positions moved frequently

through a flight of 36 pilots. We were all facing the same issues, and how we handled them was a deciding factor in the outcome. The Unknown sequences were very challenging, even for the top-most tier, with even the best pilots getting HZs. Coco commented that the number of zeros from the top-tier pilots (all countries) was much higher than normal, indicating the surprising difficulty. The conditions and the sequences definitely identified the best and most consistent pilots over the course of the week. I was hoping to finish better than I did, having hung in at around 13th overall for three flights, but the last flight got away from me when I handled the wind poorly. Unfortunately, there was an insurance snafu on the a/c that I rented, which prevented it from being used for the 4-Minute Free program. I had planned to fly that program but it was not to be.

The team and flying experience was one aspect of this trip. The other was that the visit to South Africa was fantastic, as we got to spend some time on “photo safari” in the Kruger National Park. We stayed at the Pestana Kruger, and it was a great experience. If it weren’t so expensive to get here and for 30 hours of travel time, I’d love to come back and explore it further. Had I not been on this team, I’d likely never have seen this part of the world. My thanks to our hosts, my teammates, our manager Alice Johnson and videographer Steve, our coach Coco Bessiere, our friends, supporters, and our sponsors. This has been a great adventure, and despite the outcome, I think of one of my favorite quotes: “Far better it is to dare mighty things, to win glorious triumphs even though checkered by failure, than to rank with those poor spirits who neither enjoy nor suffer much because they live in the gray twilight that knows neither victory nor defeat.” — Theodore Roosevelt

IAC



The Way it Looks

by Jim Bourke, IAC 434151

I had arrived in Africa early to get lots of practice flights in, but it did not work out that way at all. I was very sick, truly bedridden for several days. I finally went to the doctor and was diagnosed with a chest infection in addition to the virus. By contest time, I felt I was well enough to fly, but not comfortable.

In South Africa, there are 11 languages spoken there, but English is apparently the unifying tongue. I did sometimes have trouble with understanding people through their accent. We were in an area with a lot of people who spoke Zulu. I had a lot of fun with some of them who loved hearing my accent. One of them kept pointing at things, asking me to name them. When I said “water” he giggled uncontrollably. He said we sounded very cool with our accents, but also funny — like someone trying to pretend he is a character in a movie. Others tried teaching me Zulu or Afrikaans.

The contest started with the Free Free Known. I was very happy with my flight when I landed but sad once I saw the scores. I was given two penalties for flying too low. I was surprised because I could not remember going below 500 feet, but there was no protest possible so I had to move on. I believe I was the only person at the contest to receive a majority low call. So maybe I was lower than I realized. This turned out to be my best scoring flight of the contest, not considering the penalty.

The Unknowns were rough. I was not prepared at all for some of the figures we flew, but I made it through all the sequences without any zeros. I’m happy I didn’t zero, but in order to do that I flew very safely, which is not a good way to get high scores at the WAC. You really need to bring in a lot of energy to a figure to score above a 7.5. I look back on my flights and I’m

pleased with how I managed them. I uploaded videos to YouTube so other people could see what kind of flying it takes to get scores in the 60 to 70 percent range.

One thing to understand about the WAC is that there is a lot of sitting around. The judges have breaks promised to them after so many flights. The judges line must move if the wind changes to favor another direction. There is a lunch break, there are warm-up pilots, and there are weather delays. It seems at times like the contest is never going to happen. Then suddenly you are told to get ready, so you get to the airplane, suit up, and hit the box at 250 mph to pull vertical and hit a snap roll. It is not like a regional where you fly enough to stay sharp. At the WAC, you rely on a deeper muscle memory because you might have been sitting for two or three days before your flight.

I had been planning to ship my own aircraft there, but with the Nationals starting immediately after the WAC, I had to choose whether to have my plane at the Nationals or the WAC. I decided to keep my plane in the U.S. and lease an airplane in South Africa. I rented a plane from Gilles Lucazeau. He brought several planes and lots of spare parts. The best part about this arrangement was Gilles himself. We had some airplane issues, such as the left brake, which entirely fell off the plane during two of my landings, leaving me unable to taxi back. But each time this happened, Gilles was there to quickly get us back in the air. I can’t imagine flying the contest without his help. What would I have done for service if I had brought my own plane? That said, it was not ideal to fly an unfamiliar airplane. His plane in some ways flies better than mine. But it just isn’t the same. It rolls differently and the elevator feels different. It was a hard

adjustment that I still hadn’t fully made by the end of the contest. I need more practice time with the airplane if I’ll use this approach again.

The French were way ahead of us and I don’t think beating them was a realistic goal this year. The team is too young, with only Rob Holland having a realistic shot of finishing in the top 10. If we get some of the team members to return for another shot, we might have a chance. While we probably couldn’t have reached first place, we had a shot at second. The moment when we realized we were headed for third was emotional for all of us. I could see it in everyone’s faces. We came together and did what we could but it wasn’t enough.

I found the judging to be fair. I did see the judges miss a couple of hard zeros, which is always hard to understand, but overall they got it right. I would say it is about the same level of quality as what we see at our nationals. Still, flying for WAC judges is very different from flying for IAC judges. The sequences are obviously much, much harder, but also the judges expect each figure to be beautifully presented. A figure can be perfect technically, but if it is flown in the back of the box the score will be 7.0.

How can we take pilots from team selection to the WAC one year later and get them ready in that short amount of time? There is too much to learn in one year. Just to learn the 30 or so figures we flew would take months of practice, and then you have to add in the work you need to do on presentation. If we want to win at this level, pilots must invest several years in their development. I’ve been flying Unlimited for a couple of years, but at the WAC I felt like I was starting over. It’s like moving up in category again. I’m glad for the challenge, but also humbled.

IAC



Judging the World (Level)

by Marty Flournoy, USA CIVA Judge, IAC 23687

At this year's WAC in a remote locale, a number of European countries were not able to make the trip; however, the competitors who did come were well prepared and trained well. Under the new CIVA guidelines allowing three Unknown flights, each participating country is allowed to put its most complicated figure into the sequence soup. What comes out of this becomes a combination of very high K figures with lots of negative g pushing and complicated multiple reversing rolls, snaps, and spins, all in an attempt to catch unsuspecting pilots and teams in a moment of indecision or brain freeze that can change ranking position in a split second.

From the judges' perspective, this year featured some of the more difficult flying we've seen to judge accurately. After the Known flights that have been practiced for months and critiqued to near perfection, it quickly changes in the first Unknown.

As we go into flight two, the first Unknown, on the judging line the figure quality begins to show up with small errors of figure shapes or position. As figures progress to more complicated, the judges begin to see errors of more significance as pilots — who might never have practiced or trained for a particular series of double rolls flown on the bottom of a push over outside loop — begin their attempts. At a minimum, this format does challenge pilots to come with all of their creative and physical skills to fly these complex and difficult figures, almost back to back within just a few minutes.

One of the USA's team members described the flights like this: "Imagine playing a round of professional golf, having less than two seconds between shots as you are transported to the next shot

in the blink of an eye for your next swing." At that moment it all comes down to the disciplined training over many years and being prepared physically, to be mentally focused yet remain creative to see the figure in your mind and have that awareness of timing to make it happen. Unlike golf, our pilots don't get any practice between rounds or a caddy to assist in the flurry of the moment.

The judging line this year had representation from many countries, judges who have participated in many former European, national, and world championships. With few exceptions, the scores reflect an accurate representation of ranking of pilots. Along the way, it required many video reviews and conferences officiated by chief judge Nick Buckenham to resolve questions and differences of opinion on what happened in that blink of an eye, all that it takes a pilot to fly a figure properly, or maybe not so.

Congratulations to our Team USA for the hard work and dedication that reflected in some great flying and sportsmanship we can all be proud of here at home. **IAC**





REITLIN

Rob Holland

In Malelane, South Africa, Rob achieved what nobody has done before – winning his fourth consecutive World 4-Minute Freestyle gold. Congratulations, Rob! Photo by FAI/Marcus King.



LOST in the Box

The World Advanced Glider Aerobatic Championships 2017

BY MALLORY LYNCH, IAC 437512



We never imagined, five years ago, when Guy Acheson called me and asked if I wanted to help coordinate an Acrofest at the Williams Soaring Center (WSC) in California that we would someday be flying in a World Glider Aerobatic Championships. Yet, here we stood, with our fellow team members James Alaggio and Eric Lentz-Gauthier on a beautiful grass airfield in Toruń, Poland (regrets that fellow pilots Jason Stephens and Lukas von Atzigen could not attend). James joined the team a year ago and had been practicing in Hawaii's magic air. Eric, our team coach and manager, had been training in Italy and competing in the World Games in Poland. Guy and I, thanks to the support of

**Seven minutes
of glory
or disappointment,
four times
in 10 days.**

the WSC, coached each other the best we could in Williams. This would be the first time the U.S. team was together for more than a day or two.

The setting is almost surreal. The oldest airport in Poland, it has the perfect blend of the past and present. Surrounded by forests with miles of walking trails, dotted with built-in bunkers and older buildings, and modernized with a 4,000-foot runway, it is the perfect representation of Toruń (a must visit). The Aeroklub Pomorski operates there, and it superbly managed the competition. Deluged by 58 pilots and numerous crew members, it remained helpful and friendly throughout. Special thanks from the U.S. Advanced Team members because they

leased us their MDM-1 Fox, helped us get our Polish license, and checked us out to fly in that area. The tow pilots often toured over “old town” as we climbed to contest altitude, and that alone was worth the trip.

Seven minutes of glory or disappointment, four times in 10 days. Yet, as Eric reminded us newbies, this is not a sprint, it is an endurance race. All-day-long waits, heat, thunderstorms, and the sun. Thousands of dollars, endlessly long airline trips or drives, jet lag, registering, renting, qualifying, and hours of practice. And it comes down to 30 minutes of absolutely intense flying to determine where you rank next to the best glider aerobatic pilots in the world. And then it is over, and really, few people know or even care. As with the seriousness and silliness of our lives, the suffering seems guaranteed, but the joy we must seek and create. We did just that. What an adventure. Again, thanks, or better said, THANKS.

Team USA came in sixth overall, and we stood briefly on the podium. Individually, we were 24th, 25th, and 29th out of 35 in the Advanced, and 11th (of 23) in the Unlimited. The Advanced team made a lot of beginner’s mistakes, and we learned a tremendous amount that will apply to next year (I can’t believe I just wrote that ... next year?). Most importantly, we met some great pilots, not just in skill, but cooperation and friendliness. Sharing with these people, and the people of Toruń, made each day not only enjoyable, but also very special. The camaraderie of all these countries competing together, the kindness offered, gives me hope that someday unity might somehow exist on this earth.

Asked when I got back, would I do it again knowing what I know now? Yes, I would, and I am honored and grateful that I had this opportunity.

IAC



PAWEŁ BIARDA

The 2017 U.S. Glider Aerobatic Team: (Left to right) James Alaggio, Guy Acheson, Eric Lentz-Gauthier, and Mallory Lynch.



Group shot of award winners. Team USA took sixth overall.



Mallory Lynch enjoying a moment before flight.

The Fifth FAI World Yak-52 Aerobatic Championships

A WAC for the rest of us!

BY ROSS FERGUSON, IAC 436792

Wouldn't it be great if there were a one-design world aerobatic championship where you could compete on a level playing field without spending a fortune? Like many aerobatic pilots in the United States, I was surprised to find out that there is a one-design FAI world aerobatic championship for the venerable Yak-52. In fact, my wife, Marian, and I owned our two Yak-52s for almost two years when our friend and fellow IAC Yak-55 pilot Eric Lentz-Gauthier suggested, "You've got the airplane; why don't you go to the Yak-52 world championship?"

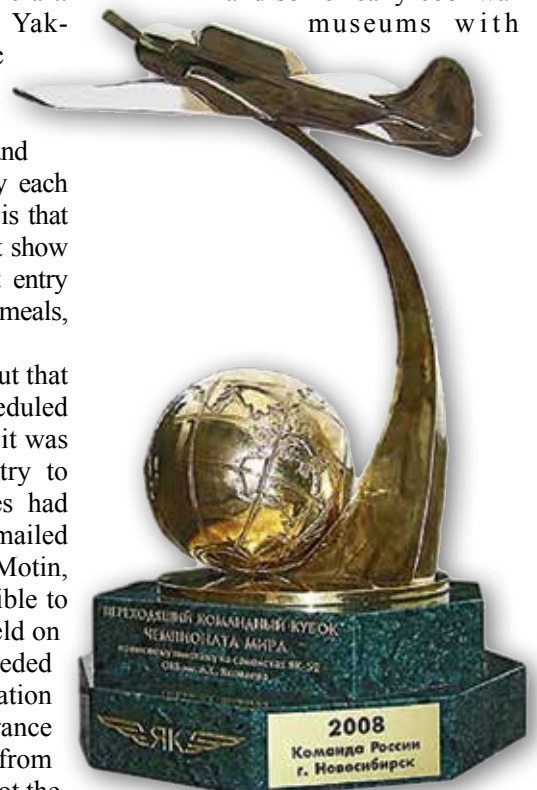
The first world aerobatic championship for the Yak-52 was held in 2008 in Novosibirsk, Russia. This year the fifth FAI World Yak-52 Aerobatic Championships returned to Russia and was held in Tula, just south of Moscow. The original idea for the Yak-52 WAC was to make a one-design class that is more affordable and allows for world competitors to "arrive and drive," meaning they don't have to ship their own aircraft to the contest. When you arrive at the contest your aircraft is randomly assigned, allowing the competitors to focus on the contest and their flying. Many aerobatic aircraft designs are incrementally refined in each year of production, making a one-design

format quite difficult. Fortunately, the Yak-52 design was frozen early on, and all of the nearly 2,000 aircraft that have been produced are virtually identical, making it an ideal candidate for a one-design class.

The Fédération Aéronautique Internationale (FAI) currently sanctions three world aerobatic championships for powered aircraft: Unlimited, Advanced, and Yak-52. The Yak-52 world aerobatic championship, informally referred to as the YAK WAC, is held every two to three years and is hosted by a different country each time. The beauty of the contest is that since it is a one-design, you just show up and fly. In fact, the contest entry fee covers the cost of the hotel, meals, airplane rental, and fuel!

Earlier this year, we found out that the 2017 championship was scheduled to be held in Russia. Although it was short notice, we decided to try to enter. The deadline for entries had officially passed, but we e-mailed the contest director, Dmitry Motin, and found out it was still possible to sign up. Since the event was held on an active military base, we needed to provide our pilot information well in advance to get clearance onto the base. Thanks to help from Mike Heuer and Tim Just, we got the

required FAI license with no trouble. We renewed our passports, got our travel visas (more challenging than it sounds), and had some cool Team USA logo wear designed by our friend Margo Chase, then stuffed it all in a bag and we were off to Russia! Our first stop was Moscow, where we saw Red Square, the Kremlin, and some really cool war museums with





Marian Harris after a satisfying flight.

lots of nice aircraft. After a couple of days in Moscow we headed south to Tula, which happens to be famous for producing Kalashnikov rifles and gingerbread cookies, but more importantly, Tula is the location of the historic Klokovo airfield where the contest was held. During World War II, the Klokovo airfield, built in the 1930s, was where the famous Free French Normandie-Niemen squadron operated a training base for the Yak-1 and later the Yak-3. The historic building of the squadron headquarters has survived to this day and is currently used as the headquarters of the Russian aviation regiment.

Due to schedule and weather constraints, and initial communication challenges, practice and prep time was very limited. Our teammate Brian, who arrived in Tula several days after us, took on the role of team manager, collaborating with the manager of our neighboring North American and IAC member, Team Canada, to help keep track of flight orders, briefings, equipment sharing, and support.

During the competition, there was an exhibition of Soviet,

American, and German armored vehicles. The eight-day competition concluded with a dramatic air show, a mock WWII dogfight and ground attack re-enactment complete with spectacular pyrotechnics, a parachute demonstration, and a concert organized by the Federation

of Aerobatics Sports of Tula Region with the support of the Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation, the governor of the Tula region, the committee of International and Non-Olympic Sports of Russia, and the Federation of Aerobatics Sports of Russia.



Marian and Ross spending time with friends in Moscow.



Russian line dancing? We'll stick to aerobatics!

Throughout the event, the weather created complications for the competition, but on the final day the weather cleared up enough to complete the second Free Known for a total of three flights: the Free Known and two Free Unknowns. As a result, the contest was scored based on three of the four planned flights.

A lot of people asked us how the contest differed from what we are familiar with here in the United States. The biggest difference for us was probably the scope of the event. For example, there were thousands of spectators who were present at the opening and closing ceremonies. Local media crews covered the event and even took the time to interview our own Team USA pilot, Marian Harris. Judges and officials were brought in from all over the world just for one contest. In most cases they are the same judges you see at the Unlimited WAC, so the quality of the judging is second to none. Another difference was that although the official contest language was English,

communication could present some challenges. Luckily, our online speed course in Russian helped, and many people were fairly fluent in English. In addition, the contest had several volunteers who were local language students and served as interpreters during the event.

The hosts of the event really went all out to make sure it was a success for the competitors and for the thousands of local spectators. On rainy days or when the ceiling was forecast to be below 950 meters, we went out on various excursions to see the local sights. The Tula Kremlin, the newly constructed Tula arms museum, the WWII aviation memorial, and the estate of the famous writer Leo Tolstoy were among the short excursions that were organized during our two-week stay.

Although we were skeptical about the FAI-CIVA process for the Free Known and Free Unknowns, we found the process to be both fun and challenging, and it fostered some inter-country strategizing and

collaboration. This was our first exposure to a CIVA event and was quite a learning experience. We made a point to read the rules before the event, but you can only learn from actually doing it. The CIVA process does differ quite a bit from what we are familiar with at local IAC contests. Instead of the Known, Free, and Unknown, CIVA has the Free Known and three Free Unknowns. The Free Known is made up of five compulsory figures and five free figures you pick yourself. This is the only sequence you get to practice before the event. Similar to IAC Unknowns, the three Free Unknown sequences are designed and flown without any opportunity to practice.

The three Free Unknowns are really where it gets interesting. Each country submits a figure the day prior, which creates a collection of figures that each team then uses to build a Free Unknown sequence. Once all of the sequences are built and submitted you can choose to fly any one of them. After flying the sequence the whole

process starts over for the next Free Unknown, but this time with a slightly higher K value for the submitted figures. The CIVA process turned out to be a lot of fun and added a new strategic dimension to the contest. You definitely have to be careful how you manage your time because you need to strategically select figures and design a sequence before you get to start doing walkthroughs and preparing for the flight the following day.

We were really impressed by the level of skill demonstrated by the competitors. Many of the Yak-52 competitors also compete at the Advanced and Unlimited world competitions. It was very inspiring to see the capability of the Yak-52 demonstrated to its full potential by some of the best aerobatic pilots in the world.

Overall we think the YAK WAC is a really great one-design format for competing affordably on a world scale. The airplanes are pretty much all the same, so it levels the playing

field from a pilot's standpoint. We learned later that it also levels the playing field from the judges' standpoint. As we all know, pilots' names are removed from the scoring sheets in order to attempt to reduce human bias in the judging process. However, in Unlimited WAC and Advanced WAC it is impossible for the judges to not know who is flying because of the different aircraft types and team paint schemes, which are unique to different countries. In the YAK WAC we all share the airplanes. My particular Yak-52 was flown by two different Russian competitors, a Canadian, a Spaniard, and an American. At the closing banquet one of the contest judges mentioned how the contest is unique among world aerobatic championships because you really have no way of knowing for sure whom you are judging.

There were almost 2,000 Yak-52s produced in the 1980s and 1990s. For around \$50,000, the Yak-52 is a great two-place aerobatic trainer that can

take a competitor all the way from dual primary aerobatic instruction to a world aerobatic championship without breaking the bank. The airplane is built like a Russian tank. It is certified for +7g/-5g, has a fully inverted fuel and oil system and a very reliable 360-hp radial engine, and is certified to perform all maneuvers in the *Aresti Aerobatic Catalogue*. Most importantly, it is a really fun airplane to fly. With more than 230 Yak-52s registered in the United States, we are looking forward to more U.S. aerobatic pilots joining us to compete in the next YAK WAC in two to three years.

Just like in IAC contests in the United States, by the end of the event we found that we had made a lot of good friends and had a great time flying. The final competition results by team were Russia in first place, Belarus in second, Spain in third, and the United States in fourth, followed by Canada and Australia. But if there was an award for the team who learned the most, we would have won gold! **IAC**



Norwegian Aerobatic N

by Thore Thoresen, IAC 27622



Come late August, it's time again for our Norwegian Aerobatic Nationals. Competition has seen a steady growth here in Norway over the past years, both in the number of pilots and in the quality of the flying. We have aerobatic instruction programs focusing on competition, as well as several training camps during the flying season, something that surely boosts the positive trend. This year saw a record number of participants, with 25 entries. Considering Norway is a country of about 5 million people, we think this is pretty good! We compete using IAC rules, and fly in the Primary, Sportsman, Intermediate,

and Advanced categories. A nice development this year was a number of new, first-time pilots in Primary and Sportsman, as well as several pilots moving up to Advanced. We also got a few new airplanes imported this year. Norway has one of the largest number of IAC members outside the United States, and we just recently formed IAC Chapter 132.

The competition was held at Fagernes airport in Norway's central mountain region. The field elevation is close to 3,000 feet, but temperatures in the 60s keep the density altitude reasonable. This is a regional airport, but commercial traffic is pretty much nonexistent.

With a flat mountain plateau surrounding the field and a well-defined horizon, it's a great place to host a contest. The very nice terminal facilities were put at our disposal the whole weekend. The weather forecast was great, and it turned out that way. Thursday was spent laying out the box and getting everyone training flights. The beautiful weather on Friday and Saturday gave us ample time to fly two Knowns for Primary and Sportsman as well as Known, Free, and Unknown for Intermediate and Advanced. Unknowns were picked by the chief judge from the IAC sequence archive, a great resource.

Everything ran in a very smooth

ationals 2017



fashion thanks to a skilled and dedicated organization. Our judges are mostly recruited from the RC aerobatic community, which also has been very successful. This year we had two longtime judges as well a newcomer. Score analysis showed very consistent judging. Our scoring director is also proficient and provided up-to-date results throughout the contest. As an experiment this year, we ran the scores through the CIVA Fair Play System. We did, however, see some anomalies we couldn't reasonably explain, so we decided to stick to raw scores. Three judges are probably too few to get reliable results.

When all was said and done on Saturday afternoon, we had seen some great flying in lovely weather. Cold beers were emptied at the balcony of our mountain resort hotel, and a great dinner and party was enjoyed by all. A lot of exciting things are happening here, so next year should be even better!

For complete results, visit www.Hasle.com/NM2017/.

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The 2017 Canadian National Aerobatic Championships

KATIE SANDERSON

BY LARRY ERNEWEIN, IAC 12058

We almost didn't have a contest! The weather gods challenged us during the week preceding our pilgrimage to the Saugeen Municipal Airport for Aerobatics Canada Chapter 3's annual event.

The plan was to get there Thursday to set up the box markers (that outline — on the ground — the 1,000 meter cube in which we must do our flying), then get the paperwork and other things ready for the contestants who usually arrive on Friday. Bill Ludwig, Hella Comat, and Andy Ernewein (all flying Pitts S-1s) were able to fly into CYHS before the rain and low clouds showed up. Along with airport manager Dave Kennedy they were able to get the markers out but got pretty wet in the process.

Francois Marquis came from Montreal with a tailwind (!) in his beautiful new (to him) CAP 232. I fought with a bad magneto on Thursday, then fought the Friday morning weather in my open-

cockpit Bücker Jungmann and arrived before the clouds and rain again shut down arrivals. Late afternoon the weather improved enough for our Unlimited American friends Hugo Ritzenthaler (Pitts S-1) and Klaus Mueller (Yak-55) to land, and as the evening progressed Ryan Chapman and Scott McMaster showed up with their DR-107s. Kelly Fawcett and Hans Juergensen flew Sportsman in Ryan's One Design, and Andrea Kuciak flew Scott's One Design in Intermediate. Chris Pulley and Desmond Lightbody brought their Pittses — an S-1 and an S-2 — and first-time competitor Hugh Reynolds showed up in a Decathlon. After registration and inspection the pilots usually want to practice in the box. Low ceilings prevented this, and Friday night saw all 12 aircraft safely put to bed in the large hangar that Rob Olds once more allowed us to use.

The forecast for Saturday was poor, but the silver lining to this was

that the usually scheduled Saturday 0700 briefing was delayed to 0800, meaning we could stay up later and party, which we did at Walkerton's wonderful Best Western hotel (our sort-of official host).

A clear sky and unlimited visibility greeted us in the morning, and immediate thoughts of "Gee, we really blew this!" went through everyone's mind. But by the time we got to the airport low clouds and rain had re-dampened our spirits. And things stayed that way until 1500 when it appeared we might be able to get airborne around dinnertime. So the briefing was done at 1630, aircraft were moved to the flightline, judges stations were set up, and by 1800 our starter, Pat Rebetoy (whose other job is president of Aerobatics Canada), was launching flights into the box. The Known was flown by Advanced, Sportsman, and Intermediate pilots. Darkness and hunger prevented the Unlimited machines from getting into the box, and the Saturday night

banquet was held in the airport restaurant — now under new management and called Tilly's. Food and service were simply fantastic, both for the banquet and for feeding all our people during the entire contest.

During the banquet, Contest Director Ryan Chapman and Chief Judge Sandy Langworthy had to discuss the fact that Sunday morning we would have a problem: There was only enough time for one complete program — either the Free or the Unknown. Many contestants had to leave by 1500. Should we distribute the Unknowns and ask the Unlimited pilots to fly their Known in the morning, then their Unknown after lunch, or do we fly the Free program? The Unlimited guys decided for us — flying both would be too much stress and perhaps affect safety. So the Unlimited Known started the day, and then the Free was flown by all categories.

Though the public is not specifically invited to aerobatic competitions, many people do arrive to see what's going on. Itinerant aircraft continued to fly in and out of Saugeen airport during the contest, and one of those planes was flown by our friend, and sponsor, Bill Davidson of National Aviation Insurance Brokers. He left several bright yellow T-shirts that quickly disappeared!

We finished at 1300, then put several members and volunteers to work taking down the box markers and judging stations. Everyone then had lunch — except Elaine Ernewein, who was busy on the computer inputting the scores. The highest-scoring Canadian competitor in each category is the Canadian national champion:

Unlimited 1st Place - Klaus Mueller (American)

2nd Place - Scott McMaster

3rd Place - Hugo Ritzenthaler (American)

Advanced 1st Place - Andy Ernewein

2nd Place - Hella Comat

Intermediate 1st Place - Bill Ludwig

2nd Place - Ryan Chapman

3rd Place - Francois Marquis

Sportsman 1st Place - Larry Ernewein

2nd Place - Chris Pulley

3rd Place - Hugh Reynolds

It takes a lot of volunteers to make a contest happen. These folks, and perhaps a few others whose names we can't recall, generously gave us their time and energy over the weekend: Carole Holyk (judge and Canada's CIVA delegate), Adam MacCabe (technical inspector and Chapter 3 president), Traci MacCabe (Chapter 3 treasurer), Katie Sanderson (photographer), Mark Skikavich, Meghan MacNeil, Matt and Dennis Costello, Anna Pangrazzi, Phil Englishman, Bob Reynolds, Bill Comat, and Francois Bougie.

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57th German National Aerobatic Championships

COURTESY MARTIN ALBRECHT

This year our German aerobatic competition was held in Gera, located in central Germany, at the end of August. Eight pilots competed in Sportsman, seven in Intermediate, 13 in Advanced, and eight came out for Unlimited. In Germany a total of 100-plus aerobatic pilots are organized to compete in the different categories and can qualify to compete in the Nationals.

With the weather being best for the first three days, with pure sunshine, the competition started strong with flying from 9 a.m. until 7 p.m. That was a lot of work for our judges, working hard getting all the scores together. With Jürgen and Silvia Leukefeld running the competition, we had the best team to have the scores out as fast as possible since, as we all know, this is what all pilots are looking for after the flight.

With these good conditions, the Sportsman category could complete three flights, making Martin Gräf with a Christen Eagle the winner in this category, followed by Michael Storek in a Zlin 526 AFS and Christian Scholz with an EXTRA 200. The competition was very close in Sportsman, with first and third places separated by only four points overall, or by 0.091 percent.

Intermediate also completed three flights, making Oliver Bax the overall winner in this category, followed by Johann Britsch and Eckart Grote.

The Advanced category competed in a FreeQ and also two Unknowns, making Markus Feyerabend the overall winner. Markus came over from Unlimited glider aerobatics, and for the past two years he has competed in powered aerobatics, working his way up very successfully.



Second place was taken by Bernhard Diehl, followed by Heintje Wyczisk.

The first flight in Unlimited started the Monday morning competition for the judges and pilots. Four competition flights were completed in Unlimited. In the FreeQ, Hein Sauels took the win in this program, followed by his wife, Heike Sauels, and Martin Albrecht coming in third. With the first Unknown performed, Rene John made the first place, followed very closely by Martin Albrecht in second place and Theo Hankers in third place flying a Laser 200. With this first Unknown flown, Martin was already in overall first place. After the Unknown 2 and 3 programs, Martin took the win in both, cleanly earning him the overall win in the Classic competition. Rene John and Heike Sauels followed in second and third places.

The weather worsened, and the competition was then on a hold from Thursday afternoon until Saturday afternoon, when the Unlimited category was able to begin competition in the 4-Minute Freestyle. This program was also won by Martin Albrecht,

followed by Theo Hankers in the Laser and Heinrich Sauels. Martin was crowned German National Aerobatic Champion in both Classic and Freestyle for 2017.

The German National Aerobatic Championships were first held in 1928 in Düsseldorf. Back then Gerhard Fieseler won the title, the famous designer of the Fieseler Storch. Beside Fieseler, who went on to take the title five times, Klaus Schrodtt also took the Unlimited German National Aerobatic Champion title five times. Klaus Schrodtt is Martin's and the German Unlimited Team's trainer and is a world-known competitor, winning four world and European aerobatic competitions, and was one of the first Red Bull Air Race pilots ever qualified for the racing motor sport.

Martin, after catching up to these five-time German champions last year in 2016, and therefore already considered one of the best pilots in Germany, made this year a historic occasion, taking a fantastic sixth title. Martin has become the only pilot in 90 years of German aerobatics to achieve this level.

More results can be seen at www.German-Aerobatics.com. **IAC**

2017

REGIONAL AEROBATIC CONTEST CALENDAR

WESTERN

10/12-10/14 | BORREGO AKROFEST
Borrego Valley | L08 | CA

11/02-11/04 | THE TEQUILA CUP
Marana Regional | AVQ | AZ

CENTRAL

10/06-10/08 | THE CLYDE CABLE ROCKY MOUNTAIN AEROBATIC CONTEST
Lamar Municipal | LAA | CO

10/12-10/14 | HILL COUNTRY HAMMERFEST
Llano Municipal | AQO | TX

NEW DATE 11/09-11/11 | GULF COAST REGIONAL AEROBATIC CONTEST
Jackson County | 26R | TX

EASTERN

10/14 | KEENE FALL CLASSIC - 1 DAY/1 FLIGHT CONTEST
Dilland-Hopkins | EEN | NH

10/19-10/21 | MASON DIXON CLASH
Farmville Regional | FVX | VA

CANCELED 10/19-10/21 | BEN GLATTSTEIN INTERNATIONAL ADVENTURE CLASSIC
Keystone Airpark | 42J | FL

10/28-11/04 | EAST COAST CHAMPIONSHIPS, SEBRING
Sebring Regional | SEF | FL



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CLINT MCHENRY IN EXTRA 230. DON'T MISS THE EXTRA AIRCRAFT EXHIBITION IN THE IAC PAVILLION AT AIRVENTURE, JULY 24-26, OSHKOSH, WI
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by GARY DeBAUN, IAC 4145

Scott McDonald

IAC #	438073
Nickname	McFly
Occupation	Director of Operations at Sky Combat Ace
Chapter affiliation	Vice President of IAC 777
Age	31



GD: Scott, first question as usual — how did you get started in aviation and aerobatics?

SM: I first encountered aviation when Al and Mike Schiffer, who were crop dusters and family friends, took me flying as a kid and introduced me to their world. From there my first job was washing airplanes, mowing runways, and eventually loading ag planes. Through school I never truly considered aviation as a career choice, and it took me a few years of college to find my calling. Once I had my CFI, I took Greg Koontz's aerobatic course in Alabama, and I fell in love with aerobatic flight.

GD: I see you studied aviation flight training at Lansing Community College. Was it your goal to become a professional flight instructor, or were there other reasons?

SM: Once I finally decided that I wanted to pursue aviation as a career, I knew that becoming a flight instructor would further my options in the industry. My time as a flight instructor has taught me a lot. Lately I try to find at least three ways to teach a subject so that I can become an effective educator for my flight students.

GD: You are currently working for Sky Combat Ace in Las Vegas. So, what's that like? How does it relate to your acro ambitions?

SM: Sky Combat Ace has been an amazing opportunity to fly high-performance Unlimited category aircraft and further my aerobatic abilities. We offer aerobatic instruction and dogfighting packages in the EXTRA 330 series and my Super Decathlon, which makes for a lot of fun flying.

GD: When and where was your first contest? How did it go?

SM: My first competition was last October at the Borrego Akrofest in California; it was an awesome experience. The first flight went well, minus the fact I wasn't reading my card and left out a roll, which brought that dreaded HZ. Second flight I calmed down and flew my card, which got me a first-place clinker at 80 percent. Overall I finished in the middle of the Sportsman group, but had fun and learned a lot from my new IAC friends. Chapter 36 and the Borrego residents host great competitions, so if you get the chance, put it on your list.

GD: What is your current acro ride? Any changes in the future?

SM: Currently I fly my 2003 8KCAB Super Decathlon, which is a great all-around aircraft and excellent aerobatic and unusual attitude trainer. Hopefully the future holds an Unlimited category aircraft such as a GameBird GB1 or EXTRA.

GD: What is your favorite figure to fly?

SM: In low-performance aircraft I love hammerheads! High performance it's a tie between inverted spins and tumbles. The spins offer a unique perspective, and the lomcevak can be very challenging to perfect.

GD: As a member of the newly formed Las Vegas Chapter 777, how do you see your chapter contributing to the IAC?

SM: Since our chapter has been renewed, we have saved our local aerobatic box from destruction and hope to host our own aerobatic competition in the



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next few years. Our president Tommy Suell and I have also been trying to use social media to bring more attention to the aerobatic community.

GD: You flew Ron Hansen's beautiful Eagle to Oshkosh this year; tell us a little about that experience.

SM: Ron is a good friend that I met through IAC competitions, and I was lucky enough to fly his Eagle into AirVenture for the 40th anniversary. Flying to and from Oshkosh was quite the adventure, coming in at about 21 hours round trip. While I was there I was able to participate in two air-to-air shoots, which produced some pretty incredible photographs.

GD: Who in the sport has been an inspiration to you?

SM: Many air show performers have inspired me to fly at a higher level, but Greg Koontz has become a great friend and resource to me over the years. Rob Holland has proven to be an innovator in the sport; his advanced maneuvers in the 4-Minute Free have shown the community that there are still maneuvers left to be discovered.

GD: Do you have any interests outside of flying?

SM: When I'm not flying, my wife, Shannon, and I love to go off-roading and camping with our dogs in our Jeep.

IAC

STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, AND CIRCULATION (Required by 39 U.S.C. 3685). 1. Title of Publication: Sport Aerobatics. 2. Publication No.: 0953-560. 3. Filing Date: 9/8/17. 4. Issue Frequency: Monthly. 5. No. of Issues Published Annually: 12. 6. Annual Subscription Price: \$18.00 in U.S. 7. Known Office of Publication: EAA, 3000 Poberezny Road, P.O. Box 3086, Oshkosh, WI 54903-3086. Contact Person: Randy Halberg, Telephone: 920-426-6572. 8. Headquarters or General Business Office of the Publisher: Same address as above. 9. Publisher: Jack Pelton, EAA, 3000 Poberezny Road, P.O. Box 3086, Oshkosh, WI 54903-3086. Editor: Evan Peers, c/o EAA, 3000 Poberezny Road, P.O. Box 3086, Oshkosh, WI 54903-3086. Managing Editor: None. 10. Owner: International Aerobatic Club, 3000 Poberezny Road, P.O. Box 3086, Oshkosh, WI 54903-3086. 11. Known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding 1 percent or more of total amounts of bonds, mortgages, or other securities: None. 12. Tax Status: Has Not Changed During Preceding 12 Months. 13. Publication Title: Sport Aerobatics. 14. Issue date for circulation data below: October 2017. 15. Extent and Nature of Circulation (Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months/ No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date): a. Total No. of Copies Printed (4839/4425) b. Paid Circulation (By Mail and Outside the Mail): 1. Mailed Outside-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541 (Include paid distribution above nominal rate, advertiser's proof copies, and exchange copies) (4018/3623). 2. Mailed In-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541 (Include paid distribution above nominal rate, advertiser's proof copies, and exchange copies) (0/0). 3. Paid Distribution Outside the Mails Including Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Paid Distribution Outside USPS (432/412). 4. Paid Distribution by Other Classes of Mail through the USPS (e.g., First-Class Mail) (18/18). c. Total Paid Distribution (Sum of 15b (1), (2), (3), and (4)) (4467/4053). d. Free or Nominal Rate Distribution (By Mail and Outside the Mail): 1. Free or Nominal Rate Outside-County Copies Included on PS Form 3541 (0/0). 2. Free or Nominal Rate In-County Copies Included on PS Form 3541 (0/0). 3. Free or Nominal Rate Copies Mailed at Other Classes Through the USPS (e.g. First-Class Mail) (0/0). 4. Free or Nominal Rate Distribution Outside the Mail (Carriers or other means) (0/0). e. Total Free or Nominal Rate Distribution (Sum of 15d (1), (2), (3), and (4)) (0/0). f. Total Distribution (Sum of 15c and 15e) (4467/4053). g. Copies Not Distributed (See Instructions to Publishers #4 (page 3)) (372/372). h. Total (Sum of 15f and g) (4839/4425). i. Percent Paid (15c divided by 15f times 100) (100/100). 16. Publication of Statement of Ownership: Publication required. Will be printed in the October 2017 issue of this publication. 17. I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions (including fines and imprisonment) and/or civil sanctions (including civil penalties). Manager: Lorrie Penner, 9/8/17. PS Form 3526, July 2014.

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