

**SPORT**

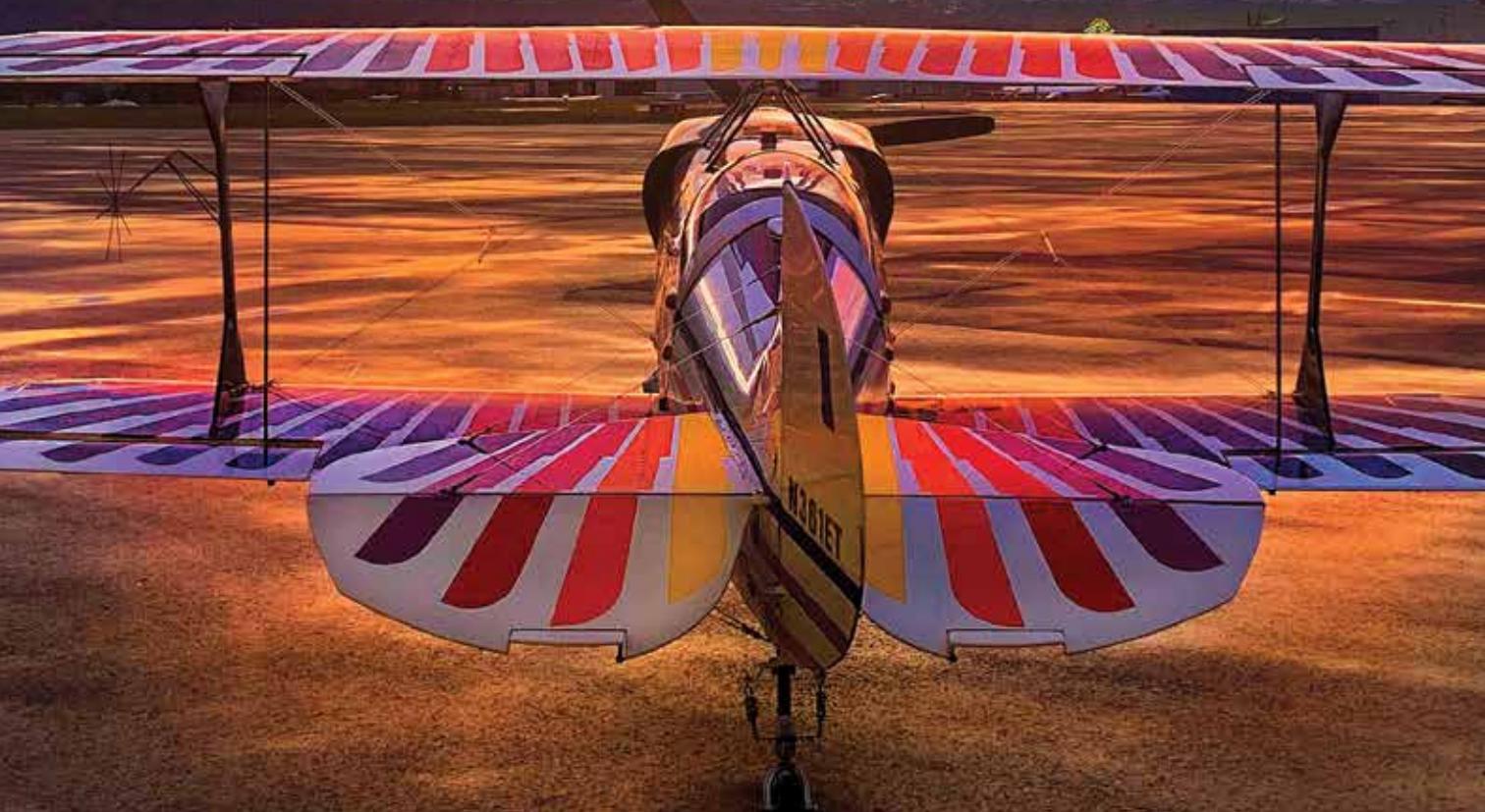
# Aerobatics

OCTOBER 2020

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE INTERNATIONAL AEROBATIC CLUB



# NO LIMITS



- ▶ MY FIRST AEROBATIC COMPETITION  
—AN OUTSIDER'S PERSPECTIVE
- ▶ CORVALLIS CORKSCREW!



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**ON THE COVER:** Scott

Selzer's Christen Super Eagle I, which was originally owned by the late Bill Gordon of the Iron Eagles. Photo by Scott Selzer.

**ABOVE:** Brittanee Lincoln

headed to the box at the Corvallis Corkscrew. Photo by John Hornsby III Photography.

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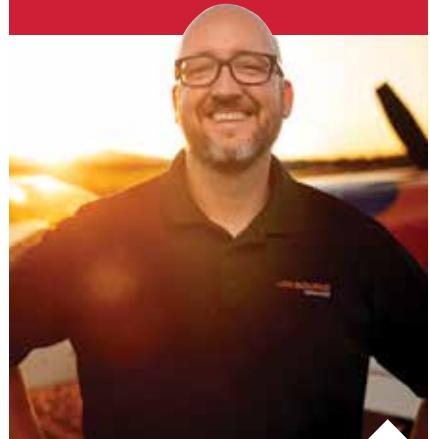
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# A Year of Opportunities

BY JIM BOURKE, IAC 434151

**I'M VERY EXCITED TO REPORT** I've recently enjoyed a rare event in 2020: an aerobatic contest! Yes, these are thankfully still possible — provided the contest director demonstrates that local guidelines can be followed! If you hit a snag, reach out to me and I'll help out as best I can.

You can read all about that contest in our article this month on the Corvallis Corkscrew. Contest Director Travis Forsman did a great job with a slightly depressed turnout due to the continued closure of the Canada/U.S. border. Travis' approach of a "no-frills" event fit the situation well. He decided to hold the awards ceremony in a big hangar in lieu of an expensive banquet, and some corners were cut on the trophies. Everyone had a great time with no complaints about the simpler approach. In fact, I think this event was one of the most enjoyable contests to which I've been, simply because everyone was so happy to be outdoors and sharing some time with each other.

This experience reminded me of how happy and successful people find opportunity where others cannot.

If you can't find your way to a contest this year, it doesn't mean your fun has to wait until 2021. This year, a number of chapters have converted their contests into aerobatic training camps that are much easier to hold in areas with strict social distancing guidelines. A three- to five-day camp is a fantastic way to pick up serious aerobatic skills in a short time or to hone your judging chops. I know how easy it is this year to sit at home and watch TV, believe me, but we may never get a chance like this again to grow as pilots and volunteers without the pressure of a looming competition. Have at it!

If you aren't ready for a camp, you can use your free time to get some initial aerobatic and emergency maneuvers training. There is nothing like 10 hours of dual instruction to prep you for the next level of your aerobatic career. This week, I pulled out my old copy of Rich Stowell's excellent *Stall/Spin Awareness*. While a book is no substitute for formal training, I highly recommend you pick this one up if you can't attend a weeklong instructor-led course.

Since I've had some time to spare with the temporary collapse of the air show industry, I started teaching my girlfriend, Marianne Fox, how to master a tail wheel in a Super Decathlon. After a few flights, she asked if I could help her overcome her fear of spins. Then she asked if I could fly through the Primary sequence with her. She had two hours of aerobatic time one week out from the Corvallis Corkscrew when she decided she wanted to enter in the Primary category. She asked me if I thought that was enough time for her to get ready and if I would be safety pilot for her. I told her all we could do was give it a shot and see what happens. We flew three flights a day every day to get her ready, and she did a fantastic job, scoring just under 70 percent, and most importantly, *no zeros!*

Nothing invigorates us more than sharing what we've learned with an excited newcomer. An added bonus: When you teach, you also learn! For example, one of the things I learned is that I am a lot less tolerant of negative g's when someone else is at the controls! Take the opportunity to teach someone, give someone a ride in an aerobatic airplane, post a video to social media, or write an article for *Sport Aerobatics*. The International Aerobatic Club needs your contribution. We'd all love to learn from you.

Speaking of learning, I've set aside some time this year to learn how to do something new. Tailslides in CIVA Unlimited competitions now can be preceded by snap rolls. Having flown maybe 100 of these (and probably 50 of them successfully), I can attest that it adds a difficult new challenge to this already challenging figure! After a snap roll, an aircraft is usually left drifting in the direction of the snap. The pilot must get rid of that drift before the aircraft's motion ceases, or the slide will score a big fat zero. I have to admit that when I first heard about this change, I thought it was too much, but as I've remarked many times about aerobatics, sometimes what seems impossible one week seems easy the next. I wouldn't exactly say these figures are *easy* yet, but it's definitely getting easier with every iteration. And I am certain my tailslide technique is all the better for the practice. I hope you are all getting some great practice time in as well.

It is always a good time for learning, for mentoring, for practicing, for sharing, and for finding joy in the things you love. I hope you've had an amazing aerobatic summer, and I look forward with you to an exciting aerobatic fall. **IAC**

► Please send your comments, questions, or suggestions to [president@iac.org](mailto:president@iac.org).



## Editor's Note

BY LORRIE PENNER, IAC 431036



**CORRECTION:** In the August issue of *Sport Aerobatics* the photo of Kate Kyer's beautiful Pitts S-2B was supplied by Kate, and photo credit should have gone to © Gary Daniels, [www.Daniels-Creative.com](http://www.Daniels-Creative.com)

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### ▶ LETTER TO THE EDITOR

# IAC Article Gives Clear Advice

BY DAVID VALAER, IAC 439899

**RE: BUDD DAVISSON'S ARTICLE,**  
“So, You Wanna Buy a Pitts?”  
(July/August 2020)

It is always appreciated when a *Sport Aerobatics* article gives clear advice on the topic of buying a Pitts Special. I was able to buy a Pitts S-2C, overhaul the engine, fly it for three years (including at the U.S. National Aerobatic Championships), essentially fly it for free, and was able to come out ahead financially when I sold it. However, I bought the airplane with full knowledge of its shortcomings in the beginning, knew the engine had to be overhauled in advance of the purchase, which included a factory new crankshaft, and was careful to not get “buried” when I did the firewall forward.



David Valaer

Budd's advice is spot on. If a Lycoming (or any engine) sits unflown even one single time for several months the camshaft is probably going to fail within a few hundred hours (or less) due to micro pitting on the cam or lifter bodies, which will require a major overhaul. There is no way to know this unless you pull a cylinder to inspect the cam.

Case in point: I was going to buy a Lycoming-powered airplane with only 300 hours on the engine. It had been hangared in a dry climate but sitting on and off through the years. It flew and ran great with good compressions. I really wanted the airplane, but prior to the purchase we flew it 25 hours, did an oil analysis, and checked the screen closely; all came back with perfect results. The week before I was getting ready to buy it one cylinder had a stuck valve, so they pulled the cylinder to fix the valve. The seller then discovered the cam and lobes had corrosion, and the cam had just started to flatten on one lobe. None of this showed up on the compression, operation, oil analysis, or screen. Bullet dodged. I fortunately didn't purchase an airplane right before a major overhaul would have been due on a 300-hour engine because of micro corrosion on the cam from the neglect of not flying frequently.

Buyer beware on low-time engines that have been sitting. No matter what the seller says or other tests show, there is no way to know if a low-time neglected engine is going to need a major overhaul in the near future unless you pull a cylinder. Thanks for the good advice to the readers, Budd! **IAC**

# 2019 Annual Award Recipients Announced

IAC.org | News Item

BY LORRIE PENNER, IAC 431036

## EACH YEAR, THE INTERNATIONAL AEROBATIC CLUB

nominates outstanding volunteers to be recognized for their contributions to the sport of aerobatics. The award winners are selected by a secret ballot of the IAC board of directors.

In typical years the award recipients were recognized at the IAC annual member meeting at EAA AirVenture Oshkosh. This year, due to the cancellation of AirVenture, the awards will be shipped to the recipients' homes.

Please congratulate the following IAC members for their contributions to the aerobatics community.

## FRANK PRICE CUP: LYNN BOWES

With some 35 years of service to the IAC, Lynn Bowes has filled every volunteer position imaginable. She has an unbeatable can-do attitude and boundless energy to complete every task with a professional approach while fostering lifetime friendships along the way.

2019 found Lynn's plate very full; she served as the IAC secretary, which included duties on the executive committee and the finance committee. She was also an integral part of a working group to update the IAC policies and procedures. Leading up to AirVenture 2019, Lynn contributed her time and editing skills to creating the exhibition banners that hang in the IAC.

Additionally, she worked with the graphic designer, Livy Trabbold, on the IAC posters for AirVenture and the U.S. Nationals. Two other projects came her way that she gladly led: the development and design of the Director Emeritus Awards and the new American Champion Aircraft flight medals. During these efforts she worked with Sara Arnold to guide her through the process of setting up a new award and connecting her to the vendor who assisted with the award design.

2019 was a year of change for the U.S. National Aerobatic Championships, as a search group was formed to select a new home for the championships. Led by Bob Freeman, the review team traveled to three prospective locations to meet with airport authority leaders and chamber of commerce representatives. Lynn's support and contributions to this team led to the selection of Salina, Kansas, as the venue for the 2019 Nationals.

Leading up to the championships, contest director Ron Schreck relied heavily on Lynn's organizational skills and hospitality experience. She had already fostered working relationships with important players at the Salina Airport Authority and the Salina Area Chamber of Commerce during the review team's visits. Lynn even scoped out venues that would later be used for social gatherings and hotel accommodations during Nationals.

Ultimately it was Lynn who made all the arrangements for the Key Volunteer Dinner, the on-site food service, the Medal Banquet, and the final awards banquet. She also developed the Nationals printed program and the awards banquet.

Knowing that the IAC looks to the Nationals as its largest source of revenue each year, Lynn served as one of the sponsor recruiters. Her longtime association with the IAC gave her the opportunity to meet and befriend hundreds of contestants, volunteers, vendors, and enthusiasts. She doggedly pursued potential sponsors and somehow left them happily relieved of large sums of money! The financial success of the Nationals can in large part be traced back to Lynn's efforts.

The Frank Price Award recognizes the person who has contributed the most to the sport of aerobatics. In 2019, Lynn poured her time and attention into many areas of the IAC and made a substantial contribution that positively affected the club and its members.



Lynn Bowes

#### **ROBERT L. HEUER AWARD FOR JUDGING EXCELLENCE: DJ MOLNY**

During the last several years, DJ has assisted with or chief-judged contests at the USAF Academy (Ben Lowell); Fort Morgan, Colorado (HPHF); Lamar, Colorado (Clyde Cable); and Las Vegas, Nevada (2019 West Open). These contests were among the 12 largest regional contests in the United States last year.

In addition, DJ has taught multiple judges schools in 2019 as he did in past years. DJ lives in Colorado and has judged for more than 20 years, beginning in 1998. His mentors were Mike Jones and Clyde Cable. Mike turned over IAC 12's judges school responsibilities to DJ in 2008. DJ teaches three schools each year and has done so for the past 12 years. He is not only an experienced judge, but also has shared his knowledge and brought many others up through the ranks. His impact on the IAC is substantial.

DJ is one of our most prolific judges. Since 2005 he has judged about three contests per year. The chair of the IAC judges program confirmed from IAC website data that DJ has graded 1,073 flights, has a judge quality "rho" of 83 percent, and in 2019 served as a chief judge at two contests. He was also the judges school presenter at Denver; Heber City, Utah; and Aurora, Oregon. DJ helped organize the 2019 contest at the U.S. Air Force Academy.



DJ Molny

In 2019, DJ played a pivotal role in revising the IAC Contest Rule Book as a member of the Rule Book Refactor Working Group. Many of his proposals have been adopted over the years. DJ works to make the rules consistent, clear, and easier to apply without dumbing down the sport from the competitor's perspective. CIVA and the Aresti family adopted his notation change for hesitation rolls ( $M \times N$ ). Each year, DJ also contributes his well-reasoned critiques of IAC rule change proposals.

DJ is very deserving of recognition for his dedication to serving as a chief judge and grading judge, and for his efforts and enthusiasm toward supporting and nurturing new judges.

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**KATHY JAFFE VOLUNTEER AWARD: TERI BRANSTITRE**

Teri has been involved with her local chapter in a leadership position for many years. She has been president of IAC 77 every year since 2014, except in 2019 when she was vice president. She returned as president in 2020.

Although she is not a pilot herself, she has spent a lot of her free time contributing in many ways to the chapter, its contests, and its activities. She is skilled at organizing and getting things done. Her chapter attributes its successes directly to her dedication.

Teri has made many trips outside of her home region in the Pacific Northwest to volunteer with chapters in California, Oregon, and Washington and for the Snowbird Classic in Florida. She has volunteered as a registrar, scorer, boundary judge, and errand runner.

She has volunteered at the U.S. National Aerobatic Championships five times — three times in Sherman/Denison, Texas, once in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, and then in 2019 in Salina, Kansas. In 2018, with the move to Oshkosh, the volunteer team found itself without a scoring director. Although unfamiliar with the international ACRO scoring program, Teri volunteered and stepped up immediately when called. She learned the program over a series of some months and came fully prepared. Her dedication to the chore was herculean in scope; entering scores for nearly 80 pilots in a non-air-conditioned space carved out of the corner of an old house, she labored early in the morning and often late into the night. She was very efficient in posting scores frequently and in a timely fashion.

You will not often see someone so willing to pitch in just for the joy of it. Teri's husband often comes to contests with her and participates as a starter or helps her in her duties. Both of these people are gems. They are happy and helpful and stay focused on running a safe and fun event.

IAC is very grateful to have Teri as part of the organization and is proud to see her receive this recognition for her efforts.

Teri Branstritre


**HAROLD E. NEUMANN AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION AS A CHIEF JUDGE: HECTOR RAMIREZ**

Hector started flying and participating in aerobatics in 1992. Along with his wife, Laurie, he started making yearly pilgrimages to the U.S. National Aerobatic Championships in 1998. They have attended nearly every year, with only a few exceptions.

Hector has contributed on both sides of the fence as a judge and a pilot. He was the U.S. National Intermediate Champion in 2000. He progressed to the Advanced category and was the U.S. National Advanced Champion in 2005 and 2008. Hector qualified to fly on four U.S. Aerobatic Teams — two Advanced and two Unlimited. His performance helped secure a silver team medal in Poland 2006 for the Advanced Team, with an individual bronze in the Free Program. He also helped secure a team gold medal in Pendleton 2008 for the Advanced Team, with a silver medal in the Free Program.



Hector Ramirez

Initially an IAC Chapter 3 (Atlanta) member, in the mid-1990s Hector, along with Laurie, attended their initial judging school, which was instructed by Liza Weaver. Within a couple of years they were both regional judges. Hector became a Nationals judge in 1998 and has served on the Nationals judging line since then.

Hector has served as chief judge at Nationals a number of times in varying categories. Most recently at Nationals, he chief-judged Intermediate in 2016 and 2017, Advanced in 2009, and Unlimited in 2019. Hector had also intended to return as chief judge in Unlimited in 2020.

Locally, Hector and Laurie typically support three to five contests every year in the Southeast, serving in nearly every capacity and having done so for more than 20 years. We don't know how many times Hector has served as chief judge at a regional level, but the best guess is well over 50 times.

Hector possesses a known leadership quality and exhibits fairness on the judges line. He conducts each contest flight in a professional manner and is widely respected for his knowledge of the IAC rules and judging criteria. He is a very worthy recipient of this award.

#### CURTIS PITTS MEMORIAL TROPHY: ANTHONY HORVATH

Tony Horvath is a humble aerobatic airplane builder, supplier, and pilot in Creswell, Oregon. He worked for Steve Wolf from 2004 to 2009. When Steve moved to Florida in 2009, Tony started Specialty Aero. He supplied Wolf Aircraft with parts until 2014 and still builds all the wing kits for the Wolf Pitts. Tony has become invaluable to the competition, air show, and air race communities thanks to his contributions and innovations to the Pitts design, along with the creation of components for many other high-performance aircraft.



Anthony Horvath with Sean D. Tucker.



Tony's development of the Wolf wing kit for the S-1 Pitts has done more to make these legacy airplanes competitive in the upper categories than anything else in the past 20 years. Those who have built one of his kits recognize the love and attention to detail he gives to the project, and Tony always has time to answer any questions his clients have.

Making his living supporting custom aerobatic aircraft, Tony has established himself as the go-to source for aerobatic aircraft rebuilds, custom fabrication, and modifications. Tony is carrying on where Steve Wolf left off when he moved away from building, maintaining, and modifying Pitts aircraft.

Tony produces popular parts for Pitts builders, including performance parts for the Pitts S1-11 and Pitts S-1. He is therefore very important to the Pitts community and grassroots aerobatics. He is also a prolific aircraft builder. His list of aircraft builds and modifications is impressive and includes these complete airplanes: Sean D. Tucker's Oracle Challenger III, Wyche Coleman's Wolf Pitts Samson II, Peter Kohmann's Pitts S-1T, and Pete Diaz's Pitts S-2S.



Anthony Horvath

Tony supports the IAC as a pilot and volunteer and contributes his technical expertise. He works hard, bills fairly, and provides excellent support after the sale. Tony is honest, funny, and intelligent. He is exactly the kind of person the Curtis Pitts Memorial Trophy was designed for, because more than anyone else in the IAC he represents Curtis' innovative spirit!

A large black and white photograph of Marion Cole, a man with short hair, sitting on the ground next to the nose of a Stits Playboy aircraft. He is wearing a grey flight suit with white stripes on the shoulders and a small patch on the chest. The aircraft's engine and propeller are visible behind him. In the foreground, the text "OUR HISTORY IS OUR FUTURE" is written in large, bold, red letters. Below this, in the bottom left corner, is the text "ROLL WITH US! JOIN today www.iac.org/roll-us". In the bottom right corner, there is a logo for the International Aerobatic Club's 50th anniversary, featuring the text "IAC 50™ 1970-2020" and a stylized graphic.

Marion Cole  
IAC 9  
with Stits Playboy

# Mike Goulian Joins the IAC Board of Directors

**THE IAC BOARD OF DIRECTORS** welcomes Michael Goulian. Michael was appointed by EAA to replace Norm DeWitt as the IAC's EAA liaison and approved by the IAC board in a special meeting on August 10.

IAC President Jim Bourke stated, "Michael's experience as a business leader, administrator, air show pilot, and aerobatic competitor will be put to good use as the newest member of the IAC board. I look forward to working with him."

Mike began his career in the competitive world of aerobatics as the youngest pilot ever to compete at the U.S. National Aerobatic Championships at the age of 17. Ten years later, he became one of the youngest pilots, at the age of 27, to win the Unlimited power category at the 1995 U.S. National Aerobatic Championships. Mike was a member of the U.S. Aerobatic Team in 1994, 1996, and 1998.

The board has one remaining open director position that it expects to fill at its next teleconference. **IAC**



Mike continues his air show performances and is currently working with PilotWorkshops.com LLC as an instructor expert.



Mike Goulian

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## HOW I SURVIVED MY FIRST **AEROBATIC COMPETITION**

An outsider's perspective  
BY ARTURO LANDAURE, IAC 438922



**COULD SAY THAT I ENDED UP competing almost by coincidence. When Sasa Marvin, my aerobatic coach, sent my group of Swift MDM-1 glider owners/members an email to ask who was willing to compete in the U.S. National Aerobatic Championships, I never thought it was meant for me to be included. I am**

Peruvian, I live far away (like far, far away from Oshkosh), I hadn't flown the Swift yet, and we had just bought the glider based on an idea of Sasa's that we could compete in the Swift at the U.S. National Aerobatic Championships and maybe a world championship someday.

To compete was always my goal, but it seemed like a dream more than a real target to shoot for. When I read Sasa's email, I remember thinking, "Why not?" Maybe I should have asked: "Can I compete? Was the email for me, too? How many flights do I need so I don't get embarrassed?" Later when I was at Nationals, there was some embarrassment, anyway. In my defense, the incident happened during the practices and didn't have anything to do with my aerobatic flying capabilities.

Based on my level of experience at that time, Sasa said I needed around 30 to 40 flights to be in the Sportsman category. That range didn't sound too bad. I was going to have vacation time coming up during the Nationals, so I felt it was meant to be.

My plan was to arrive at Seminole Lake Gliderport in Clermont, Florida, to train some days before traveling to Oshkosh. I thought doing five to seven flights a day would do the trick to get me ready for the competition or at least prevent me from finishing in last place at Nationals.

Time seemed to drag, and many days went by waiting to train. Both the Miami and Orlando airports were closed because of the bad weather. Damn hurricane! Time for a backup plan. Due to the hurricane circumstances, I had to scrub three-quarters of my intended practice flights. At this point, I was worried my lack of practice and experience would be cause for a disqualification.

In the end, I flew what training flights I could (10 flights out of the 40 planned). After my last training flight, we unrigged the glider, stowed it into the trailer, and then 25 hours later, after traveling nonstop from Florida to Wisconsin, we arrived in Oshkosh: the promised land of aviation, home of the Experimental Aircraft Association, and International Aerobatic Club's headquarters.



Nineteen hours with only "technical" stops.

After our arrival in Oshkosh, we put the glider together. There was some instruction about handling the glider assembly, what items needed to go through a technical inspection, and verifying all documents were on board the glider as required. We confirmed our contest registrations. Then we went to find Gary DeBaun and get the radios for the glider group. Now it was just two days to go before the competition.



Bucket list: Unrig a plane. Check.

Second day of practice was the embarrassing day for me that I mentioned before. We in the flying business know that everyone makes mistakes. Although frustrating, we all try our best to practice tolerance and resilience, which are essential in this business. We need to understand how to overcome our mistakes.

My error occurred during the tow. The chain of events started off with an early release. During the tow, I had trouble during the turns, the towplane pilot reduced his speed in the level turns, and I ended up flying too close to him. Then I saw the towrope slackening and going behind my wing, so I had to release. Because I was now in a lower altitude than desirable after the early release, I tried to descend as fast as possible to make a landing and landed with the glider's retractable gear in the up position. With the stress of positioning myself for a quick landing, I had forgotten to deploy the gear. The Swift has a low undercarriage because of a small wheel base at the center of the glider under the center of gravity. So, the landing profile is already very close to the ground. With the gear up, the landing was rough and was the worst moment for me. After the incident, I walked away with a feeling of discouragement and embarrassment from the runway to the hangar.

While the glider was being repaired, we were fortunate to be able to borrow another glider at the contest. I will always be thankful to everyone in the IAC because they were so cool about the incident. Gary DeBaun and Chris Magon made me feel like it was not a big deal. I will always be grateful for that and love you to the moon and back, guys.

#### THE FIRST CONTEST DAY

I flew my first contest flight in the borrowed glider. The aerobatic box seemed the size of a matchbox from the air. It was my first time in a real aerobatic box. I had read and heard from others that it looked small, but I was very surprised by how small it actually was.

As I came into position, I heard, "Arturo, Box Master, the box is yours," and replied, "Box Master, the box is mine." When I released from tow, the nerves and fear hit me knowing that I was the only one in the air. Below were about 200 pilots who know their stuff, people you admire, people you look up to. What's left for me? Do the best I can.

"Am I aligned to the aerobatic box?" I wondered. "Am I inside the box? Maybe I already passed the judges line." I counted one, two, three, thinking it must be the correct distance, and then I pulled 4g looking at the ground, upside down. I was okay now. Everything was good; I settled down and could see that everything looked aligned. I heard the glider accelerate, experienced some vibration, and I gained the speed necessary to pull 5g now. Position in the box looked good enough in my mind, and I kept working through the sequence until I finished. How did I do? No idea. Repositioning, I turned toward the field and was out of the box, setting up for a landing.



Practice flights at Seminole Lake Gliderport.

At about 4 p.m. that afternoon, I went to the score room to check on the day's results. "Is this your country's flag?" asked Liza Weaver, the Nationals registrar, as we looked through the results sheets. When I said yes, it occurred to me that I am the first Peruvian to compete in the U.S. National Aerobatic Championships. It felt weird to be the first representative of my country.

I asked Sasa, "Is this score any good?" I had scored 68 percent on the first flight. Sasa said, "Yeah, bro, you could win your category." I was stunned. It was only the first day, and I had placed third in Sportsman at the U.S. National Aerobatic Championships!



Sasa and Arturo with glider trailer.

#### THE SECOND DAY

I had the same feeling as the first day, with nerves and the fear of everyone watching me. However, I was trying to internalize Sasa's comments from the day before, and I was a little less nervous, but not much. Once again, I went to check the results in the late afternoon. The score sheets showed I finished in second place with a score of 73 percent, and other pilots' scores had shifted as well. With the two scores calculated, I now sat in first place! What? Was this real? I found myself becoming more nervous and slowly filled with doubt and uncertainty in my ability to keep up this level of flying.



## Results: Sportsman Glider Known and Free 1

US Nationals 2017, Oshkosh, Wisconsin, Sept. 23-29, 2017.

### Consolidated Results

Rank	Pilot	Memb. #	Chapter	Aeroplane	Registration	Known	Free #1	Totals	O/all %
1	Arturo Landraue	438922		Swift S-1	N-113TX	1050.93	1134.61	2185.55	70.50
2	Jon Clegg	439443	0	DG1001	N-501DG	1100.27	1077.37	2177.64	70.25
3	Vincent Sabin	439441	0	DG1001	N-501DG	1079.41	1037.57	2116.98	68.29
4	Laura Radigan	439206	0	Swift S-1	N-113TX	952.06	1141.31	2083.37	67.53
5	Cody Donald	439442		TG-16A	N-1AT	1048.04	910.60	1958.64	63.18
6	Kyle Vonnahmen	437984	0	DG1001	N-501DG	896.76	895.24	1792.00	57.81
7	Garrett Patnode	439445	0	DG1001	N-501DG	728.19	870.20	1598.39	51.56
8	Maeve Daw	439444		DG1001	N-501DG	604.07	536.90	1140.97	36.81

Contest Director: Gary Debaun, Contest Chief Judge: Weston Liu, Scoring Director: Janet Fitzke, Flight Director: Jon Elam.

Judges: Weston Liu, Carole Holyk, Wayne Roberts, Tom Rhodes, Dave Taylor, Bob Harris, Bill Barnard.

Judges Assistants: Krysta Paradis, Gordon Penner, Bill Ludwig, Luke Penner, David Underwood, Mathieu Barbin, Laura Barnard, Mark Maticola.

Jury members: Robert Meyer, Mike Heuer, Bill Gordon, Tom Adams.

Other key staff: Jury Member 5, Peggy Riedinger, Jury Member 6, Doug Sowder, Assistant CD, Bob Harris, Chief Tech Inspect, Chris Magon, Medical Director Hector Ramirez, Editor and Photographer, Evan Peers.



Multiple calculation methods used.  
Aerobatic Contest Results Organiser, ACRO Version 4.2 Build: 06/05/17  
This report created at 18:23 on Monday 25 September 2017

Positions after two flights.

### THE THIRD DAY

After the release from tow, the box was mine. The Swift was back from repair, so I was flying our glider for my third flight. One, two, three figures — I knew I was doing well, and box positioning was good. But like Murphy's law, when everything is too good, you end up making a mistake. You start to think about what could go wrong, and then you do exactly that. I ended a figure on the wrong axis and did not know about repositioning at the time. I discovered later that reading the rulebook before entering competition will give you an advantage. Since I was still headed the wrong direction, I did the next figure on the wrong axis, too. Although I felt it was a perfect hammerhead, the judges gave me a hard zero, and then the next figure also received an HZ. Disaster.

Even with the errors and disruptions along the way, I am glad I decided to go to the U.S. Nationals. For someone from a country like mine, it is a whole different experience, an experience of my life. It was not easy to transition from my own comfort zone, which is with a good reputation as an airline captain, and then go into the unknown to learn new things knowing that you will be exposed to critics and make mistakes. For me, it was a good experience to be out of my comfort zone after all, and it is better to try something new when you are flying for fun.

My U.S. Nationals experience culminated at the awards banquet. I received a Bronze Eagle for my third-place finish, one silver medal for my second flight, and one bronze medal for my first flight. In addition, I received the First-Time Sportsman Award from the hands of Patty Wagstaff. She had given me my first aerobatic course, and I admire her a lot. Not bad for my first time at a national competition. And like Patty once told me, "Not bad for hippies like us." **IACT**



Arturo accepts the Bronze Eagle Trophy from Patty Wagstaff for his third-place finish.

# Corvallis CORKSCREW

BY LORRIE PENNER, IAC 431036

## THE SECOND CONTEST OF THE SEASON

was completed successfully and safely at the annual Corvallis Corkscrew Aerobatics Competition in Corvallis, Oregon, over the weekend of August 7-8. The IAC Chapter 77 contest was also the host of the IAC West Open Championship. Primary through Unlimited competitors enjoyed sunny to partly cloudy days, and all flew three flights for their categories. Out of the 18 competitors, half of the pilots flew Super Decathlons in Primary, Sportsman, and two flew Super D's in Intermediate. Something you don't often see is the lack of a single Pitts Special at the contest. Other airplanes there included two Extras (300 and a 330SC), a Staudacher S-300, a Zivko Edge 540, one Aviat Christen Eagle, and Dave Watson's homebuilt Laser 230.

In Primary, Hannah Neill was only inched out of a first-place finish in the Freestyle by fellow Decathlon driver Bruce Mamont. She won both the Known and the third flight and ended up in the first-place position in points. Marianne Fox flew a Super Decathlon to a third-place finish in her first ever contest.



Intermediate competitors receive their trophies. From left: Mike Eggen, second place; Brittanee Lincoln, first place; and Richard May, third place.





In Sportsman, John Paul Takacs finished first with a comfortable overall score in his beautiful Aviat Christen Eagle. Like Hannah, he was inched out of a first-place finish in the Freestyle, but in John's case, it was by Jerry Marino in his Super Decathlon.

In the Intermediate category, Brittanee Lincoln reigned supreme in all flights as she flew a Laser 230 to victory. Brittanee had put in a considerable amount of time with a serious six-month practice regime mostly in Delano, California, which paid off as she won first place in the Known, Free, and Unknown. It was Brittanee's first Intermediate contest. Last year, she started out flying a Super Decathlon in Primary at the Hammerhead Roundup and progressed to Sportsman after competing three times in Primary. Of the Corvallis contest, Brittanee said, "We had a contest! Everyone was in good spirits. Such a great group of people despite the weird and awkward times we are in. The contest was chill and awesome. I was especially happy to see we had three female competitors, the most at a single contest that I have ever seen."



Mike Eggen's Bellanca Super Decathlon.

The Advanced pilots' scores were tight in the Freestyle with Barrett Hines in his Extra 300 taking first over Chris Combs, flying an Extra 330SC. In the end, Chris won the other two categories and came out on top in total points. Chris also had spent a lot of time at Delano practicing, and his hard work paid off. During the contest, a split in his all-rubber tail wheel was observed. Chris was scheduled to fly soon, and fortunately IAC Chapter 38 member Jake Carter, who is a mechanic, came to the rescue and got his tail wheel changed out for him. Chris was put back in the rotation a couple of spots from his original position and didn't have to miss the flight.

The Unlimited category pitted U.S. Nationals team member Jim Bourke against Dave Watson, recipient of the new Mastery of Flight award. In the Known sequence, Dave zeroed a snap roll, a figure he hasn't had trouble with and has flown many times to near perfection. The competition between the two in the Free and Unknown was tight, but in the end, Jim secured first place in all three flights and was crowned the 2020 IAC West Open Champion.





## SUNNY TO PARTLY CLOUDY

Pilots, volunteers, and spectators enjoyed the Corvallis Corkscrew at the beginning of August.





The Sportsman competitors receive their trophies. From left: Joseph Sullivan, second place; John Paul Takacs, first place; and Jerry Marino, third place.

Jim and Dave also flew the 4-Minute Free. The score between the two was the closest seen by many – only 10 raw points separated the two with Jim clinching first place. Although he doesn't have a smoke system on his Super Decathlon, Dave chose to fly it in the 4-Minute Free against Jim's Extra 330SC. Dave does fly to music, however, and cranks up "Don't Stop Me Now" by Queen. He has a very lively routine that had won him first place in the 4-Minute Free six times at other contests. He was looking forward to Nationals this year as he was going to reprise his Decathlon routine there at the championships. We will be looking for him at the 2021 U.S. National Aerobatic Championships!

The Corvallis contest attracted a decent turnout by the public. There were 25 to 30 people in attendance on the grass who brought blankets and lawn chairs to kick back and watch all the aerobatic activity. In the past few years since the contest started, the locals have gotten used to the event and last year attracted more than double those who showed up this year. This competition and other IAC contests provide an opportunity to share the love of aerobatics with local pilots who often stop to chat with competition pilots to find out how they can get involved or find out where to get aerobatic training.

From all accounts, the contest organizers, led by Travis Forsman and volunteers from IAC 77, put on a great contest. They were wonderfully organized, very inviting, and welcoming to all. Corvallis, in central western Oregon, is a beautiful location for a contest. Home to Oregon State University, it is nestled in the Willamette Valley, which has beautifully groomed neighborhoods and is bordered on the northwest by the foothills of the Oregon Coast Range.

Details from each individual flight at the Corvallis Corkscrew can be found on the IAC contest results pages: <https://IACCDB.IAC.org/contests/713>

PRIMARY			
PILOT	AIRPLANE	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE
Hannah Neill	American Champion 8KCAB Super Decathlon N335DS	1,423.33	75.31%
Bruce Mamont	American Champion 8KCAB Super Decathlon 148PC	1,324.10	70.06%
Marianne Fox	American Champion 8KCAB Super Decathlon N335DS	1,315.50	69.60%

SPORTSMAN			
PILOT	AIRPLANE	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE
John Paul Takacs	Aviat Christen Eagle N23LD	3,505.50	84.06%
Joseph Sullivan	American Champion 8KCAB Super Decathlon N335DS	3,432.50	82.31%
Jerry Marino	American Champion 8KCAB Super Decathlon 594C	3,229.17	77.44%
Steve Vets	American Champion 8KCAB Super Decathlon N335DS	3,050.61	73.16%
Travis Forsman	American Champion 8KCAB Super Decathlon N148PC	3,020.17	72.43%
Jake Carter	Laser 230 230DW	2,289.67	54.91%

INTERMEDIATE			
PILOT	AIRPLANE	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE
Brittanie Lincoln	Laser 230 230DW	4,874.94	82.91%
Mike Eggen	Bellanca Super Decathlon 444PF	4,481.50	76.22%
Richard May	Staudacher S-300 804Q	4,339.00	73.79%
James Potterf	ACA Super Decathlon N148PC	4,185.84	71.19%



### ADVANCED

PILOT	AIRPLANE	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE
Christopher Combs	Extra 330SC 330ZZ	6,834.67	73.97%
Tom Myers	Zivko Edge 540 540AW	6,745.27	73.00%
Barrett Hines	Extra 300 410WB	5,827.83	63.07%

### UNLIMITED

PILOT	AIRPLANE	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE
Jim Bourke	Extra 330SC 331FZ	10,413.17	77.83%
Dave Watson	Laser 230 230DW	9,635.84	72.02%

### 4-MINUTE FREE

PILOT	AIRPLANE	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE
Jim Bourke	Extra 330SC 331FZ	3,425.00	85.62%
Dave Watson	Laser 230 230DW	3,415.00	85.38%

Brittane Lincoln happily bounces through her sequence as Dave Watson looks on.



**ABOVE:** Advanced competitors with their trophies. From left: Chris Combs, first place, and Barrett Hines, third place.



**ABOVE:** Unlimited competitors with their trophies. From left: Jim Bourke, first place, and Dave Watson, second place.



# THE TALE OF TWO LLCS, PART 3

**Final words of advice**  
BY BRUCE MAMONT, IAC 432407



**N THE FULLNESS OF TIME**, two of the members of our group decided for different reasons to move on. When I started the group, the initial significant level of interest implied that we'd always have a market for shares if a member wanted to leave. We have a great airplane that's been well maintained and always hangared at an airport near a major metropolitan area. Before current events infected the prospects to sell a share, I had decided to leave the group and start another LLC. I'd finally been offered a hangar (after 29 months on the waiting list). I was told I would have two months to put an airplane in the hangar or go to the end of the waiting list. I decided I couldn't wait to sell my share to start a new LLC and buy another airplane (a Super Decathlon, of course). I had at least one and possibly two prospective members for the new LLC. I decided to make the leap. Without the cash from the sale of my share, I decided to finance the purchase.

I obtained financing through AOPA and got a commitment from one prospective LLC member. I thought we could make the LLC work with two members and add a third later. To have an airplane in time to train for the summer 2020 contest season, I would have to buy an airplane in the winter. While there were several prospects for a Super Decathlon on my home field in 2017, the nearest in 2020 was 1,000 miles distant. I found one in Florida, about as far away as possible from my home north of Seattle. Within four weeks, I formed a new LLC, arranged for insurance, rented a hangar, secured financing, and closed the purchase. Four days after closing, I was on a flight to pick up our new Super Decathlon. My fellow LLC member decided that he'd prefer limiting the number of members, so it's just the two of us. (Cue song.) We must refinance the loan to add the second member, which we could have avoided by waiting. Each added member requires a refinancing effort (and loan fees). Members own the LLC (which owns the airplane), but the lender has a lien on the airplane, the loan's security. The lender's understandable position is that the LLC effectively sold 50 percent of the airplane to the second member when he joined. The second member needs to guarantee the loan in case I get run over by a bus driven by a virus. The slightly reduced interest rate now available should offset the refinance fee (or be at least enough to make us feel better about it).

Today and probably for the foreseeable future, I own 0.7 Super D's — 20 percent of one and 50 percent of a second. I hope my 20 percent share has been sold by the time you read this article. Ironically, I may be paying for two airplanes when I formed LLCs to afford one.



N148PC is owned by the first group of pilots that Bruce organized, SuperD LLC.

**GB1 GameBird**  
Fly Without Compromise

FAA Certified  
200 knot cruise  
1000nm range  
+/- 10g  
Made in the USA

N171GB

GB1 GameBird

GameComposites.com  
Info@GameComposites.com

A detailed advertisement for the GB1 GameBird aircraft. The top half features a close-up view of the aircraft's nose and cockpit area, showing the registration N171GB. The text "GB1 GameBird" is prominently displayed in large white letters, with "Fly Without Compromise" in smaller text below it. To the right, a list of specifications is presented: "FAA Certified", "200 knot cruise", "1000nm range", "+/- 10g", and "Made in the USA". The bottom half of the ad shows more of the aircraft's fuselage and wing, with the "GB1 GameBird" logo repeated. At the very bottom, the website "GameComposites.com" and email "Info@GameComposites.com" are listed.

I tried to tell a story rather than provide a laundry list of advice, but a list is probably a valuable way to summarize:

- If you can't rent, if there's no local flying club with an aerobatic airplane, and if you can't afford sole ownership, find other people to buy an airplane for you. (Just kidding.) Forming an LLC is one way. There are other methods such as a co-ownership in tenancy or a flying club. AOPA and EAA can provide advice in organizing a group of co-owners or a flying club or setting up an LLC.

- Join AOPA and enhance your membership with Pilot Protective Services. If you're reading this article in *Sport Aerobatics*, you're already an EAA member.



N26BY Super Decathlon is owned by SnohoAcroc LLC, a two-member group.

A photograph showing two people in a cockpit. One person is pointing at a document titled "EAA's Flying Club Manual". The title "Establishing a Non-Profit Flying Club" is overlaid on the bottom left of the image.

### EAA FLYING CLUB RESOURCE CENTER

EAA has long believed that flying clubs are a great way to make aviation more accessible and affordable. Throughout the years, many members have approached EAA

asking for information about establishing a flying club. To help and provide guidance, EAA has developed a Flying Club Resource Center to address the unique requirements of EAA members.

Topics included in the resource center range from "Getting Started" and "Flying Club FAQs" to "Flying Club Tax Exempt Basics," "EAA Finance Solutions," and "EAA Insurance Solutions."

In the "Finance Solutions" section, EAA shows that its aircraft financing as well as engine and avionics overhaul/upgrade financing is through NAFCO. When it comes to aircraft kit and building materials financing, EAA has a team of aviation experts to walk you through the process.

In the "Insurance Solutions" section, EAA has worked with Falcon Insurance Agency in the United States and Nacora Insurance Brokers in Canada to craft specialized insurance for aircraft of all types. Among the specialized insurance coverage is a Flying Club Insurance Plan designed at the best price for every type of flying club.

Visit the EAA Flying Club Resource Center online at [www.EAA.org/eaa/pilots/flying-club](http://www.EAA.org/eaa/pilots/flying-club).

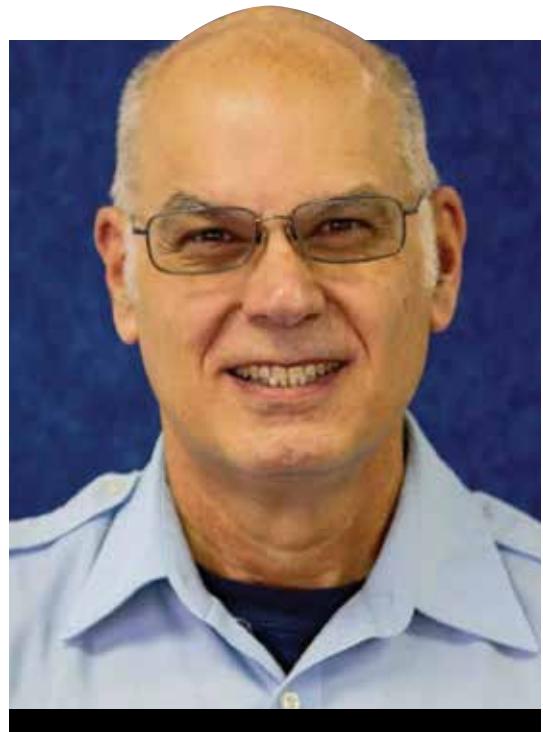
**TODAY AND PROBABLY FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE, I OWN 0.7 SUPER D'S – 20 PERCENT OF ONE AND 50 PERCENT OF A SECOND. I HOPE MY 20 PERCENT SHARE HAS BEEN SOLD BY THE TIME YOU READ THIS ARTICLE. IRONICALLY, I MAY BE PAYING FOR TWO AIRPLANES WHEN I FORMED LLC'S TO AFFORD ONE.**

- If you decide on forming an LLC, your state may have unique requirements. You can find online help on LLC formation, but it won't be aviation-specific. I thought it was worth money to get aviation help through AOPA Legal Services.

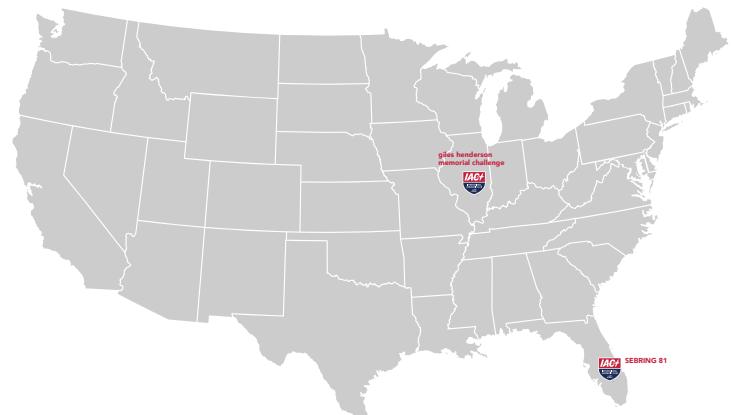
- It might enhance the quality and duration of your sleep to make a small investment (remember, split across a few members, it won't hurt as much) in consulting an accountant to set up your ledger/journal or accounting software. The structure you choose for your group also may have tax implications in your municipality and state and with the feds.

- Financing with multiple LLC members will be time-consuming as the number of members increases. Lenders will and governments may charge loan fees.
- Cash is easier than financing. Prospective members must have their cash immediately available to send to the escrow agent before you make an offer.
- Budget share costs are greater than the purchase price. Your members should be prepared for “assessments” for insurance, ferry flight costs, initial hangar rent, and other surprises. For example, your state might have a use tax (read: sales tax) of more than 10 percent of airplane purchase price. Talk to chapter members to get recommendations for an insurance broker who has experience finding insurers of aerobatic airplanes. Some insurers will charge a premium for contest coverage. Some insurers may make it more expensive and cumbersome to add members to the LLC policy. The right broker will be invaluable. **IAC**

**BRUCE MAMONT** is a retired U.S. Army infantry officer and retired Boeing software development manager. He worked part time at Sunrise Aviation and has been a full-time instructor at Regal Air since 2015. His total time is over 2,800 hours. Bruce is a proud member of IAC Chapter 67 in the Pacific Northwest. He has been flying Super and standard Decathlons for aerobatics.



## 2020 IAC CONTEST SEASON CALENDAR



DATES	HOST CHAPTER	NAME	REGION	LOCATION	AIRPORT
Oct. 24, 2020	61	Giles Henderson Memorial Challenge	Mid-America	Illinois	KSLQ
Nov. 7, 2020	23	Sebring 81	Southeast	Florida	KSEF
Nov. 21, 2020	136	Argentina Spring	International	Argentina	GEZ

# **First 25 Years of the U.S. National Aerobatic Championships**

**IAC 50th anniversary spotlight**

BY LORRIE PENNER, IAC 431036

**FOR OVER 30 YEARS**, the IAC has hosted two championship events: the IAC Championships, held in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, from 1970 to 1999, and the U.S. National Aerobic Championships from 1982 to the present day. Prior to 1982, the U.S. Nationals were organized by the Aerobatic Club of America.

The Nationals were held at Oak Grove Airport in Fort Worth, Texas, from 1967 to 1971. It was M.H. "Pappy" Spinks' idea to give the Nationals its own home, and Oak Grove was also his home base. He was the president of ACA for a time, a renowned aerobatic competitor/promoter, and an aviation manufacturer. Described by fellow aerobatic pilots as a "rough-edged old millionaire," Pappy made a fortune during the Vietnam War, manufacturing skids for Bell Helicopter's Huey at a facility located on the airfield. The Spinks Aircraft Industries building was built in 1968 specifically for the construction of the Spinks Akromaster, designed and flown by Charlie Hillard, who placed third in the 1970 World Aerobatic Championships in the Akromaster.



At the 1968 Nationals; Harold Krier (in cockpit) with U.S. Team members Mike Murphy, Charlie Hillard, Art Scholl, and Bob Herendeen.



Mechanic Dorothy Aiksnoras working on Leo Loudenslager's Stephens Akro at the 1971 U.S. Nationals.

The IAC board of directors made the decision to discontinue the IAC Championships and culminate the contest season with the U.S. National Aerobatic Championships. The Nationals were held in Sherman-Denison, Texas, from 1972 to 2016; in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, in 2017 and 2018; and then were moved to Salina, Kansas, in 2019.

Sunny skies prevailed most of the time, along with a few "light Texas breezes," at the 1971 U.S. National Aerobatic Championships at Oak Grove Airport. Gene Soucy succeeded in defending his title as U.S. National Aerobatic Champion and became the team captain for the 1972 U.S. Aerobatic Team. Gene was a member of the winning U.S. teams in the 1970 and 1972 World Aerobatic Championships.

Between 1964 and 1973, many U.S. team members would grace the top spot at the U.S. Nationals, including Duane Cole, Harold Krier (two-time champ), Bob Herendeen (also won twice), Charlie Hillard (World Aerobatic Champion in 1972), Gene Soucy (three-time champ), and Tom Poberezny.



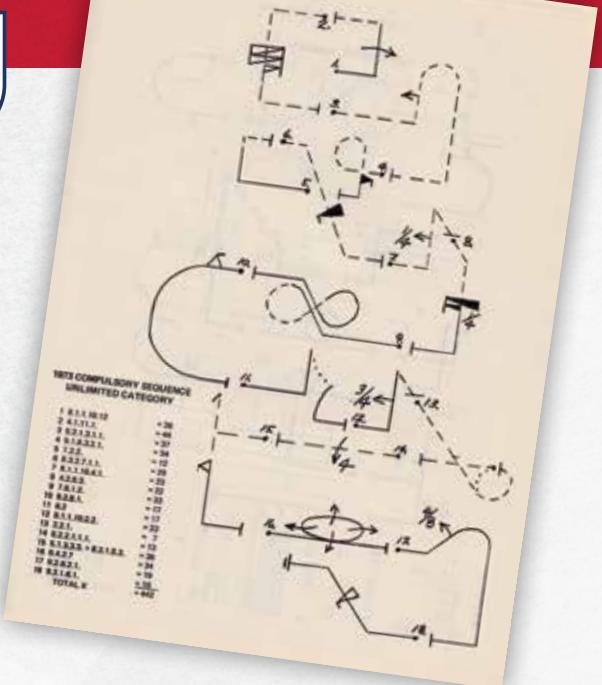
In 1972, the U.S. Nationals were hosted for the first time at the old Perrin Air Force Base, which had changed its name to Grayson County Airport, Sherman, Texas. Finishing in first, second, and third were returning champion Gene Soucy, Tom Poberezny, and Art Scholl.

The Mike Murphy Cup was conceived and donated by Mike Murphy of Ohio. Mike was an aerobatic pioneer and leader in international aerobatics for many years. 1974 was the first year the trophy was presented at the U.S. Nationals annual awards banquet.

In 1982, IAC signed a letter of agreement with the National Aeronautic Association in Washington, which gave it control of the management, administration, promotion, and sanctioning of aerobatics in the United States. The responsibility of running the Nationals moved from the ACA to the IAC.

The Phoenix Aerobic Club, IAC Chapter 69, was selected by the IAC board at its 1982 fall board meeting as the host chapter of the U.S. Nationals. In the first week of October 1983, the championships were held at Falcon Field, Mesa, Arizona.

A number of pilots have gained the title of U.S. National Aerobatic Champion, and some more than once. In the first 25 years of the championships, the following pilots succeeded in winning the title more than once.



The 1973 Unlimited Known Program.

Kermit Weeks won the U.S. National Championship in 1983 and 1985. Kermit was flying his own aerobatic aircraft, Weeks Special. At the 1983 championships, he turned in a stellar performance on the last day of competition during the 4-Minute Free Program. This event pitted the Unlimited field of competitors against seven-time U.S. National Aerobatic Champion Leo Loudenlager. Leo was disqualified during the championship for a hot-box violation. According to accounts from the November 1983 issue of *Sport Aerobatics*, Leo started his turn into the box as Debby Rihn-Harvey was completing her sequence. He was consequently disqualified from the championships and team selection.

Clint McHenry, who later won the World Aerobic Championships in 1988, won the U.S. Nationals three times, in 1986, 1987, and 1989. The win in 1986 was especially sweet, as he finally was able to realize his dream: the title of U.S. National Aerobatic Champion. "Such a prize had repeatedly eluded him over his lengthy and illustrious aerobatic career as an instructor, competitor, U.S. Team member, judge, CIVA delegate, chairman of several IAC committees, and congenial gentleman." This was written by Jean Sorg, editor of *Sport Aerobatics*, in the December 1986 issue. "In 1973 through 1976 saw him place fourth, fifth, and then third, twice, at Nationals in the Unlimited category. Then came the heartbreak of having to take a six-year medical hiatus from any solo flying."

Patty Wagstaff was the first woman to win the U.S. National Aerobatic championship title. She won three times from 1991 through 1993. Patty received the "First Lady of Aerobatics" Betty Skelton trophy six times at the U.S. Nationals, from 1988 through 1994. The award is presented to the top-placing woman in the Power Unlimited category at the U.S. Nationals. **IAC**



Clint McHenry and Bill Thomas at the 1975 U.S. Nationals.



# The New Mastery of Flight Award

BY BRITTANEE LINCOLN, IAC 440740, ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS PROGRAM CO-CHAIR



Dave Watson and Brittanie Lincoln

**WE ARE ROLLING OUT** (pun intended) a new achievement award, Mastery of Flight. When Dave Watson and I became the new co-chairs of the Achievement Awards program, one of our first official duties was to take inventory of all the pins, patches, and decals.

After four hours of sitting on our hangar floor, counting all the different varieties of the bling spread out before us, we realized we had an inventory of pins and decals for Mastery of Flight. Upon inquiry, we learned these were created several years ago for a program that never took off, so we began brainstorming ideas for a new award and what would make an IAC pilot a Master of Flight.

Let me first provide a recap on the current Achievement Awards program, as well as some history. As many of our members may already know, there are currently 19 available achievement awards, 10 in the power category and nine in glider. The awards come in two varieties, Smooth and Stars. In summary, Smooth awards can be achieved during a chapter critique day, or any time an IAC judge is available to score your figures from the ground (other than in competition). The rulebook includes a list of required figures that must be flown for the judge for each of the five categories, Primary through Unlimited (power and glider); the pilot must score a 5.0 or better on each figure. In total there are 10 possible Smooth awards that can be achieved. The IAC Special Achievement Award of ALL FIVE is awarded when a pilot achieves all five Smooth awards, Primary through Unlimited, in their respective category of aircraft, power and/or glider.



Dave Watson earned his Mastery of Flight awards by achieving the ALL TEN in power and the ALL FIVE in glider.

The Stars awards can only be achieved in competition flights. To earn the Stars, the pilot must receive a score of 5.0 or better from each judge on every figure of all flights flown at a contest. There are some exceptions to this rule when more than three judges are scoring.

The Special Achievement Award of ALL TEN for power is achieved when the pilot receives the Stars award across all five competition categories and has achieved the ALL FIVE Power Smooth Award. As there is no Primary level in glider competition, glider pilots are recognized with the ALL NINE Special Achievement when they have achieved the four glider Stars awards and the ALL FIVE Glider Smooth Award. The full details of the achievement awards can be found in the IAC Policy & Procedure 201: Achievement Awards Program.

Since the inception of the Achievement Awards program, there have been changes to competition categories in both the glider and power categories. The power category did not initially include the Primary level (formally known as Basic). During this time frame, several pilots achieved what was the ALL NINE Power Special Achievement. Likewise, there were many years where the Glider category had neither a Primary nor an Advanced level. Glider pilots who earned all Smooth and Stars awards achieved the ALL SEVEN Glider Special Achievement. These legacy Special Achievements are still recognized for those pilots despite the development of additional categories for later and current pilots.

All past and current recipients of every IAC achievement award and the special achievement awards are listed on the IAC awards webpage. To date, in the history of the IAC, no pilot has achieved all 19 awards.

As we sat with sore backs and awards spread across the hangar floor, we began to consider the various achievement awards, both historical and present, to set criteria for the new Mastery of Flight award. The primary driver for Mastery of Flight was to acknowledge pilots who have demonstrated a high level of proficiency in both power and glider aircraft. A secondary objective was to set the criteria such that it could be achieved without any required Unlimited experience, which we believe will make it achievable by more pilots than the ALL FIVE and ALL TEN (ALL NINE Glider). Moreover, the award may also be achieved without requiring the pilot to own an aircraft in the crossover category, since Primary through Intermediate power awards and all nine glider awards may be achieved with a safety pilot on board.

I am sure by now you are anxiously waiting to know the requirements to become a Master of Flight. We worked together with the IAC board to develop lofty yet achievable criteria. Your piloting prowess will be measured across both the glider and power categories. To qualify for the IAC Mastery of Flight, the pilot must achieve:

- 1.** At least 12 of the existing 19 achievement awards;
- 2.** At least three of the achievement awards (Smooth or Stars) in both power and glider categories; and
- 3.** At least one Stars award in the Advanced or Unlimited category (glider or power), and the Unknown flight must have been flown at the contest in which the Stars was achieved.

After the board approved the Mastery of Flight award, we conducted a search of the IAC database to find pilots who have already qualified. Three pilots in the history of the IAC have qualified: Bob O'Dell, the late Ken Hadden, and Dave Watson. We also found there are numerous pilots who have met most of the criteria — you are almost there! We hope that after reading this article, you will be incentivized to fly for your remaining awards and achieve the Mastery of Flight.

During our research of IAC pilots, we learned that not only has Bob O'Dell earned the Mastery of Flight, but also he has earned the most IAC achievement awards in the history of the IAC! He achieved the ALL NINE Power and then went on to complete the ALL TEN Power when Primary (formerly named Basic)

was first introduced. Additionally, he has achieved the ALL SEVEN Glider Special Achievement Award. His 17 total awards, and his ALL FOUR Special Achievements (by the way, he is the only pilot to have achieved all four), stands as a lofty goal that we can all aspire to achieve. We reached out to Bob to inform him that he was the first pilot to achieve the new Mastery of Flight special achievement award. Bob offered these comments:

"It was a pleasure to receive this award. It brings back many great memories gained over the 23 years that I was flying aerobatics, first power and later gliders. Thoughts of the challenges, the beauty, and the comradeship come flooding back. I hope that there are new generations entering and enjoying our sport."

Ken Hadden, the second pilot to earn the award, was the 1997 Unlimited Glider U.S. National Champion. Tragically, we lost Ken in 1997. He represented the United States at several world glider championships and performed in air shows across the United States in an Extra 200. Ken had achieved nine awards in the power category and six in gliders, including the Unlimited Stars award.



Bob O'Dell, the first to achieve the Mastery of Flight award. He achieved ALL TEN in power and ALL SEVEN in glider.

Dave Watson is the third pilot to have earned the Mastery of Flight. Dave has achieved the ALL TEN Achievement Award in power, as well as the ALL FIVE Smooth award in gliders. He has been competing since 1998 and flew his first Unlimited contest in 2004. He continues to fly at the Unlimited level in his Laser 230 and is very involved in the IAC as a national judge, judge instructor, and coach and mentor to many. Dave said, "I am honored to be in such great company with this award, and I hope to achieve the All Four Glider Stars achievement over the coming years."

We are excited to announce this new award. Hopefully, it will spark enthusiasm in both glider and power aerobatic pilots to dip their wing into the other category in the pursuit of becoming a Master of Flight. **IAC**

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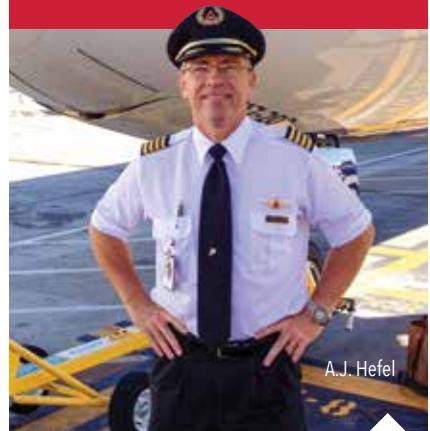
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# A.J. Hefel

**Challenge, life lessons, and sharing the passion of aerobatics**

BY ZINNIA KILKENNY, IAC 437244



A.J. Hefel

## ZK: YOUR FATHER SET FORTH A CHALLENGE, A BUDDING AVIATOR'S DREAM.

AJ: It's true. My dad got me started in learning to fly through a bet. I was always looking for a challenge as a teenager, and he wanted to get back into taking flying lessons, so he bet me I couldn't learn to fly. I took the challenge, and it became a father/son experience learning together. We took lessons at our local airport and got our licenses within months of each other. I was first, which didn't sit well with him for quite a while.

Flying then became my passion, so I decided to make it my career path. After high school, I worked and saved to put myself through college and graduated with a Bachelor of Science in aviation science and all my pilot ratings.

## ZK: SOME REFER TO FLYING AS A SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE.

AJ: It would seem so since my first instructor was my parish priest. Flying for me is also exhilarating. The mastery of flight was something that got my full attention and was always a challenge. It was better than any video game on the market at the time. After I obtained my private pilot certificate, I knew I wanted to learn aerobatics to give me more confidence in aircraft handling. Once I took that first aerobatic lesson, I knew I wanted to learn how to do it better and someday be an aerobatic competitor.



MEET A MEMBER — A.J. HEFEL

## ZK: YOUR NEED FOR SPEED BECAME THE NEED FOR INVERTED FLIGHT.

AJ: After college, and deep in student loan debt, the Air Force came calling for pilots. I applied, was accepted, and went through all the obligatory schools and finished at the top of my pilot training class, where I was awarded an F-16. It was a dream come true to fly one of the most advanced fighters in the world, and I quickly became a 9g junkie. Aerobatic competition would have to wait. After leaving active duty, I became a Kansas Air National Guard F-16 instructor pilot for a few more years until my unit was reassigned to the B-1B bomber. Once I started flying the bomber, the itch for flying aerobatics and pulling g's came back. I first purchased a Bushby Mustang II and started flying some fun aerobatics on my off days, but it wasn't capable of flying true competition aerobatics. It wasn't until 2002 when I purchased my first Laser [that] I was able to start on a path to competition.

## ZK: WHY DID YOU JOIN THE IAC? WHY COMPETITION AEROBATICS?

AJ: I decided it was time to join when I started transitioning from the F-16 to the B-1B. I wanted to get back into general aviation aerobatics, and I thought what a better source to reference for getting back in that arena. *Sport Aerobatics* magazine offered information on aerobatic flight schools, and training as well as aircraft. I considered the IAC a great starting resource.

My first aerobatic lesson in 1976 was with an instructor who was also an IAC competitor. After several lessons, he showed me his sequence cards and talked me through the elements. It sounded challenging and exciting. We were training in a Cessna Aerobat, nowhere capable of flying a reasonable sequence, so contest flying in an Aerobat was unthinkable. I would have to put competition on the back burner. Several years later, I decided it was time to finish one of my life goals and compete. So, I dove in with the total support of my family, which is always important in an individual sport.



A.J. finished at the top of his pilot training class in the U.S. Air Force, where he was awarded an F-16. He quickly became a 9g junkie.

**ZK: WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE YOUR CONTRIBUTION TO THE SPORT TO BE?**

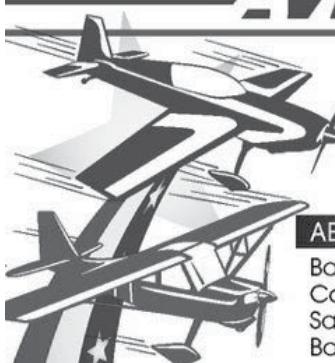
A.J.: My contribution is multifaceted. First, I tried to get more pilots interested in aerobatics and promoting safety by starting a local IAC chapter. I believe pilots will become more capable in aircraft control and gain confidence through safe aerobatic flying.

Second, nurture more pilots to participate in competition. I did that by starting a regional contest in Kansas and making it fun with an emphasis on grassroots, Primary through Intermediate. I believe those levels will grow a small group of dedicated aerobatic competitors who want to challenge themselves in the upper categories and possibly compete on the world stage. Not that I don't respect, admire, and support the upper-level competitors, I do. Still, those individuals are self-driven to succeed and committed to pursuing that level of flying with equipment and training. The majority of the lower categories operate with a limited budget and are there for a fun weekend and a little recognition.

Third, I fought to preserve our aerobatic flying rights. Years ago, I had a long-term aerobatic practice area waiver denied due to an eager FAA environmentalist who thought the use of smoke oil was detrimental to our health. Without any scientific data to support this claim, they took a stand. I reached out to the No. 3 man in the FAA, pointed out the problem, and the waiver was quickly approved.

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AND LISTENING TO THEM TALK  
ABOUT THEIR EXPERIENCES.

► **A.J. HEFEL**

**IAC:** 23752

**Chapter:** 119

**Occupation:** Airline pilot

ZK: YOU'VE SERVED IN EVERY VOLUNTEER POSITION IN THE IAC. WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM HISTORY TO BRING INTO OUR FUTURE?

AJ: The vast majority of our organization is run through the efforts of volunteers. From the top on down, people spend valuable time and resources to play a part. We can't pay them for that, but we can do more to recognize them for their efforts. I believe contest flying requires every competitor to share in the workload, not just flying but also spending time with the volunteers to let them know we appreciate their efforts. Many members don't compete. They enjoy the opportunity to talk about airplanes and flying, or just sitting next to a competitor and listening to them talk about their experiences. I'm not a philosophy major, but I have found that life lessons can come about through interactions with others, listening, learning, and sharing. **IAC**



## ABOUT THAT CG THING

BUDD DAVISSON, IAC 435420

**FIRST A DISCLAIMER:** The story I'm about to tell happened in the mid-'70s, no more than 500 hours into my instructional journey in a Pitts. I was still a newbie in that game. The reason I'm telling you this is so you won't think I'm still as dumb as I once proved myself to be. I've learned a lot since then.

It was a beautiful fall afternoon in New Jersey, and we had recently moved our brand new Pitts Special S-2A to Aeroflex-Andover Airport, an unbelievably beautiful little airport in the far northwest farmlands of the state. On this day a young man called and wanted some inverted spin training, which I was up for. Conditions were perfect with liquid smooth autumn air and a sky so clear you could almost see the curvature of the Earth. A New Jersey rarity. When he showed up, however, I could see from a distance that we were going to have a problem. He was really tall, 6 feet, 3 inches at least. Not big, just tall. I was pretty certain I couldn't fold him up enough to get him in the front pit. This was in an early, short cockpit S-2A (serial No. 2,006!) that wasn't built for tall people and/or long legs. So, I stuffed him in the back, which still took some folding.

We climbed to 10,000 feet, the cool, fat air helping us up. Local elevation was only about 600 feet MSL, so we had plenty of room to correct for mistakes. What we didn't know is that I had already made a mistake. A big one.

We had briefed that we'd do a couple of one-turn outside spins just to get more or less acclimated and then proceed to three turns. So, roll it over, nose

up, power off, stick forward. Rudder went in and the airplane obediently slid sideways, corkscrewed around, and I told him to reverse the controls. He did what he was supposed to do, and the airplane did what it was supposed to do and recovered. He rolled out, and we reclaimed the altitude we had lost.

Then it was time for three turns. Same drill and I picked a river that would mark three turns. We got a clean entry, the river showed up on cue, "Okay, stick back, reverse rudder." Again, he did as he was told, *but the airplane totally ignored his actions!*

The spin didn't even slow down! In a heartbeat I slammed the controls so hard I couldn't tell for sure if he had them against the stops or not. Just as quickly I had a cold sweat from head to toe. I'd never once seen the airplane not come out of an inverted spin in a heartbeat. But this time, it stayed in the freaking spin!

I had the controls full against the spin, and they were having zero effect. I could see no change at all. I did the Beggs thing. Nothing. The stick just wandered around. Then I tried pro-spin and back, pumping the power. Nothing! As we completed what I think was the fifth or sixth turn with me on the controls, I decided the airplane wasn't recoverable so it was time we get out. As in right now! We still had some altitude, but the trees were getting bigger. I was just starting to yell, "Bail out, bail out, bail out," as per our briefing, when the airplane dropped out of the spin in an entirely normal recovery. It was as if nothing unusual had just happened. For an instant some part of me thought the engine had quit because I couldn't hear it over my heartbeat.

I'd be lying if I didn't admit to being a little shaken up. When we landed and were climbing out of the airplane, I noticed I was much more concerned about what had just happened than the student was. He just didn't know. My trusty airplane had let me down. Or I thought it had.

Finally, it dawned on me to ask him how much he weighed, and I

couldn't believe it when he said 260 pounds! He just didn't look that big. And he was in the back seat! He must have been all muscle. I instantly called Curtis Pitts and told him what had happened. He hesitated as he did some math in his head, and then, in his characteristic, slow, super calm drawl, he said, "Well ... I guess we have another data point. We've never spun it that far outside of the envelope."

The CG envelope on a Pitts is relatively narrow and easily affected so many of us are constantly operating right on the ragged edge. For that reason, the check-in form that I now have all students fill out before they show up at my door requests some pertinent information:

- Height
- Pants inseam
- Weight

This CG thing is very real, and I don't need any more surprises! Been there, done that! **IAC**

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