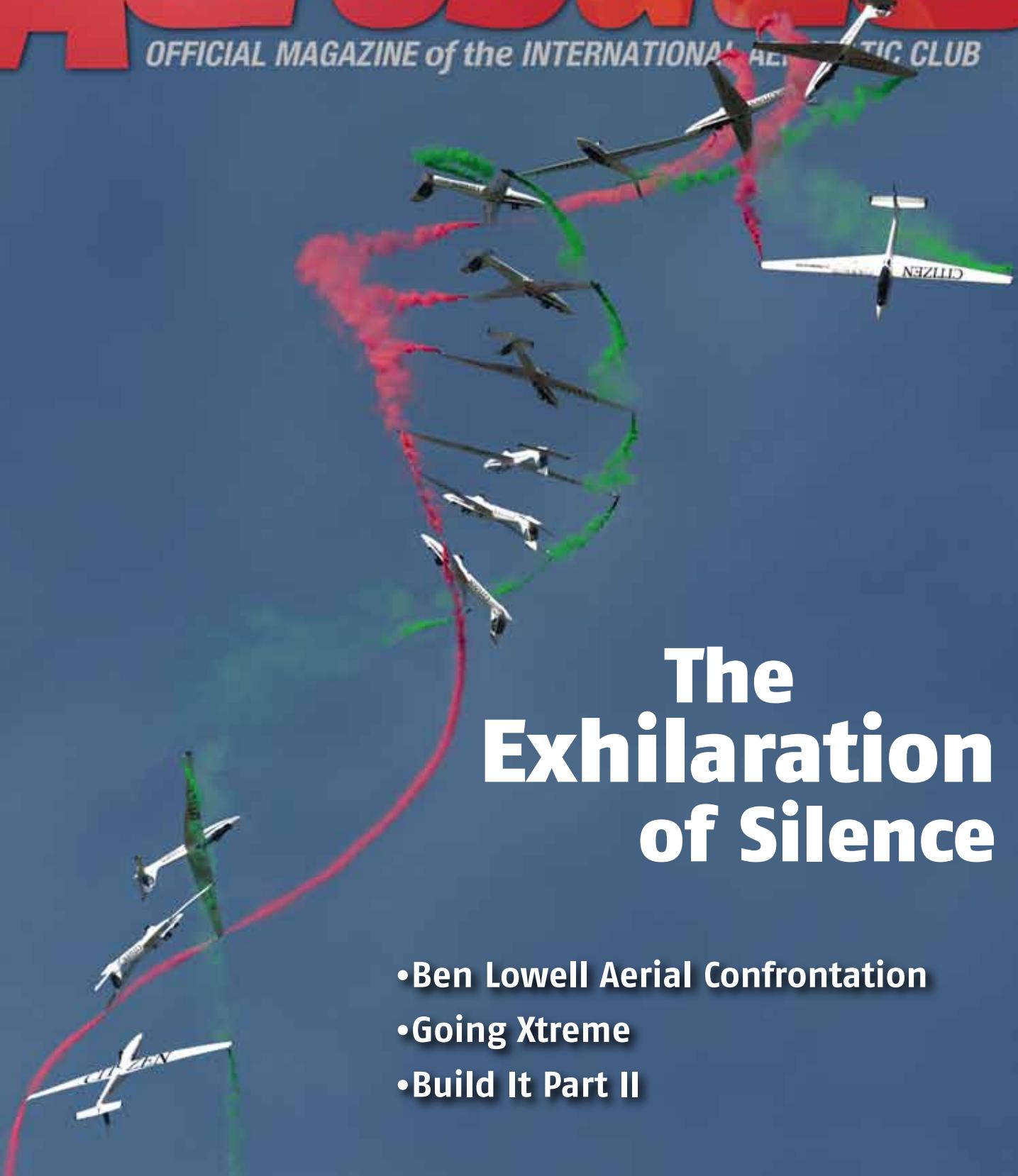


SPORT

Aerobatics

July 2014

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE of the INTERNATIONAL AEROBATIC CLUB



The Exhilaration of Silence

- Ben Lowell Aerial Confrontation
- Going Xtreme
- Build It Part II



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OSHKOSH 2014

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Hanging momentarily in space, the hush of dead silence was breathtaking as we approached the top of the "helicopter," his name for a series of upward positive snap rolls . . .

—Dave Watson

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THE COVER

Luca Bertossio performs beautiful silent aerobatics that exhilarate the senses. Photo by Stefano Caporelli

PUBLISHER: Doug Sowder
IAC MANAGER: Trish Deimer-Steineke
EDITOR: Reggie Paultk
EDITOR IN CHIEF: J. Mac McClellan
SENIOR ART DIRECTOR: Olivia P. Trabbold

CONTRIBUTING AUTHORS:

Gary DeBaun	Reggie Paultk
Greg Koontz	Allen Silver
Douglas Lovell	Beth Stanton
David Moll	Dave Watson
DJ Molny	

IAC CORRESPONDENCE

International Aerobatic Club, P.O. Box 3086
Oshkosh, WI 54903-3086
Tel: 920.426.6574 • Fax: 920.426.6579
E-mail: reggie.paultk@gmail.com

ADVERTISING

Vice President of Business Development:
Dave Chaimson dchaimson@eaa.org

Advertising Manager:
Sue Anderson sanderson@eaa.org

Business Relationship Manager:
Larry Phillip lphillip@eaa.org

MAILING: Change of address, lost or damaged magazines, back issues.

EAA-IAC Membership Services
Tel: 800.843.3612 Fax: 920.426.6761
E-mail: membership@eaa.org

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REGGIE PAULK
COMMENTARY / EDITOR'S LOG

AirVenture 2014

The simple thrills

I THINK THE FIRST ISSUE OF

Sport Aerobatics I worked on was the September '08 issue. I'd just attended AirVenture for my first time and was star struck by the sheer magnitude of the event. A chance phone call a week prior had me on an airplane headed out to Oshkosh for a trial by fire to see if I could hack the job as editor of the magazine—I was excited and terrified.

AirVenture 2014 will mark my seventh visit to Wisconsin, and the third time I've camped in my teardrop trailer on the outskirts of the grounds.

AirVenture 2014 will mark my seventh visit to Wisconsin, and the third time I've camped in my teardrop trailer on the outskirts of the grounds. Compared to commuting to a hotel in Fond du Lac, my bicycle feels like a winged chariot after a day spent at the Vicki Cruse Pavilion with the aerobatic enthusiasts of the IAC. Camping out at Oshkosh is a necessity if you want a fuller experience of the gathering. The only thing better would be if I were camped out under the wing of an airplane—any airplane!

For me, Oshkosh is the mile-

stone of my year with the IAC—it's where I began my journey with the organization, and it's a place I look forward to going to rekindle friendships that lie dormant for most of the year while I'm freezing in the high mountains of Colorado. The Nationals and Worlds lie not far off, and Oshkosh marks the end of a busy season for the IAC.

This month's issue contains some interesting stories. Two years ago, Greg Koontz gave us his initial impression of the newly released Xtreme Decathlon. He comes back with a more thorough review after having put quite a few more hours on the Hobbs meter. If you've seen Greg fly a Super Decathlon in one of his air show routines, you know he can put the airplane through its paces. The Xtreme doesn't appear to disappoint. Dave Watson gives us a glimpse into the silent world of glider aerobatics, with a focus on the niche of glider air show aerobatics and low-level waivers. Beth Stanton continues on her journey toward building a popular chapter by inviting interesting people to share their stories at her chapter's monthly meetings. Doug Lovell gives us a great recap of the Ben Lowell Aerial Confrontation, while DJ Molny brags about his chapter's aerobatic box in Colorado, challenging others to do the same.

I certainly hope you're enjoying your summer as much as I am, and I look forward to seeing you in August!

IAC

Please submit news, comments, articles, or suggestions to: reggie.paultk@gmail.com

EAA AIRVENTURE OSHKOSH 2014



NOTICE OF ELECTION

Monday, May 12 through Tuesday, July 29

The IAC Board of Directors invites members to vote in the 2014 Election for Club Officers and Directors. Balloting opens on Monday, May 12 at 9:00 a.m. CDT and closes on Tuesday, July 29 at 5:00 p.m. CDT. Ballots must be received before closing to be counted.

We encourage members to vote securely online at www.iac.org/2014-board-election. Voting via the IAC website requires logging in using a member-specific username and password. Our Webmaster(webmaster@iac.org) can provide any assistance needed.

Members unable to vote online may use the enclosed paper ballot instead.

A member may not vote in this election in person at the annual meeting; it must be done via ballot.

A Presidential-appointed Ballot Certification Committee will tabulate the election results and announce the election outcome at the annual meeting of members on Friday, August 1, 2014.

By Order of the Board of Directors,
Lynne Stoltenberg
IAC Ballot Certification Committee Chair



NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING

Friday, August 1, 2014

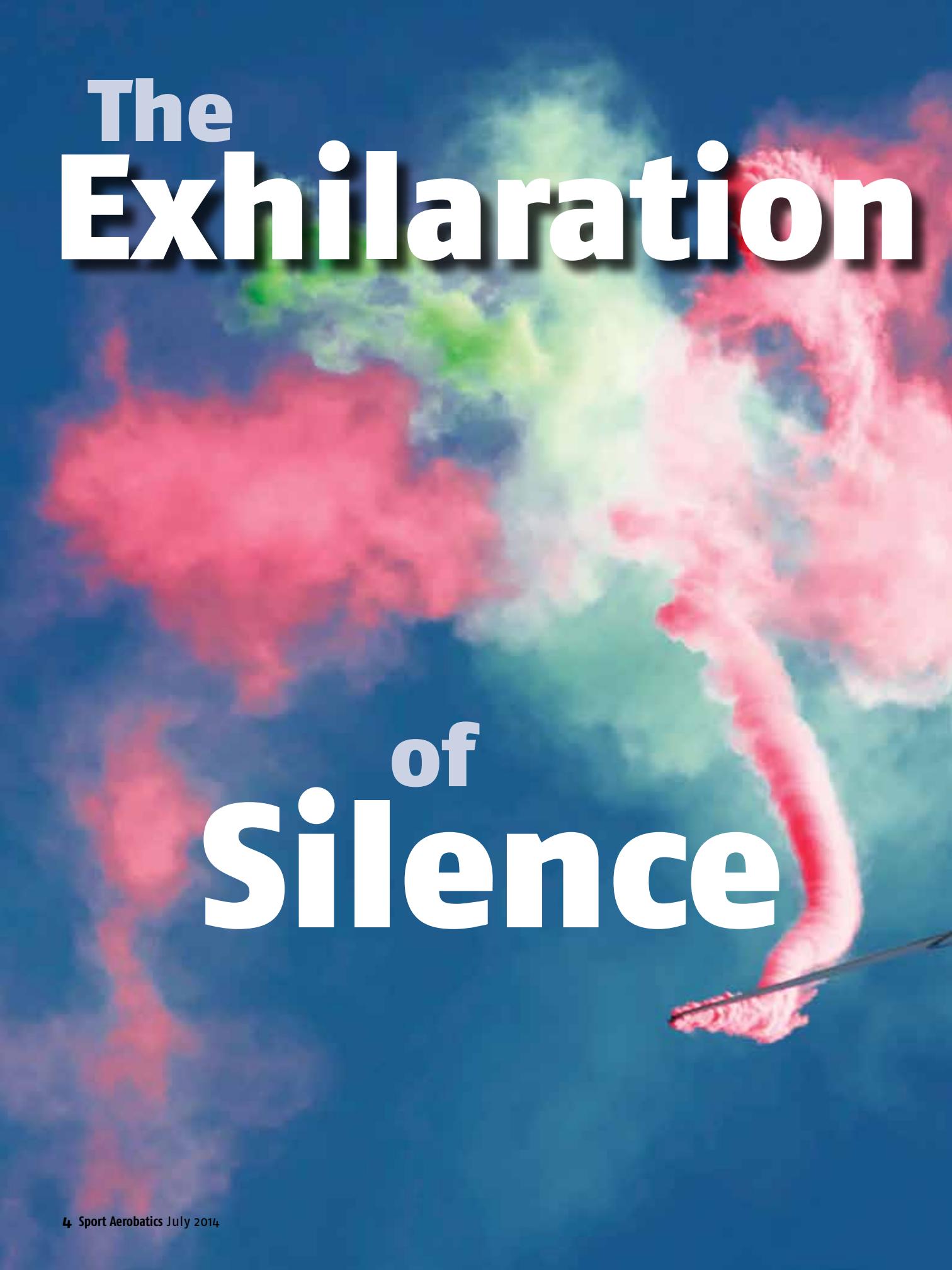
The International Aerobatic Club will hold its annual meeting of members on Friday, August 1, 2014 in Nature Center Event Tent #1 on the EAA AirVenture Oshkosh convention grounds in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. Doors will open at 6:00 p.m. The meeting will begin promptly at 6:30.

The meeting agenda is:

- **Receive the President's Report**
- **Receive the Treasurer's Report**
- **Conduct old business**
- **Conduct new business**
- **Receive the results of elections for President, Secretary and three Directors**

There will be ample opportunity to socialize with fellow IAC members. Complimentary food and drink will be served.

The Exhilaration of Silence

A dramatic aerial photograph of four aircraft performing a formation maneuver, leaving behind thick, swirling smoke trails in red, green, blue, and white against a dark sky. The smoke trails intersect and swirl, creating a sense of motion and precision.



Overload for the senses

BY DAVE WATSON



From the author's viewpoint of the ACE interview of Luca (left) and Sean D. Tucker (right).

Hanging momentarily in space, the hush of dead silence was breathtaking as we approached the top of the “helicopter,” his name for a series of upward positive snap rolls that was elegantly transitioning into an inverted accelerated spin before me. The world spinning around my nose, the exhilaration of speed, and then the momentary expression of freedom from gravity are customary for me, but the silence . . . that was a new experience, registering an overload for my senses. Perhaps my sense of sound was somewhat heightened in that two of my three tail slides in last weekend’s contest ended up dead-prop, so under normal circumstance in this silence I would have been scrambling to restart the engine, but no need for that here. Instead, I internally asked for someone to pinch me; this must be a dream. I was instantly hooked!

Let me back up 27 hours.

The e-mail for help came to Beth Stanton, our chapter president, who just happened to be sitting across the table from me. We were enjoying lunch and enjoying listening to the aircraft taking off nearby, having just finished an aerobatic practice session together. The e-mail from Drew Pearce, that had been forwarded to her by a local flight school, indicated that the Williams Soaring Center (two hours north of us) was frantic to find an aerobatic practice box it could use for getting one of its students an aerobatic competency evaluation (ACE) check-out—the center was hoping to find something for the next day! Since I am the waiver holder for both our practice boxes, she called, Drew introduced us, and then he handed the phone to me.

Of course we could let them use our box! After all, how many noise complaints could we ex-

pect from a glider? We determined that the pilot was already an IAC member, and we got him activated as a new member to our chapter, paid via his Visa. I then made the necessary arrangements to open our box. Lockheed was good enough to let me activate the box with less than the customary 48 hours’ notice, so they were in business, the legal stuff taken care of in less than 30 minutes. I let Drew know the good news and then he told me Sean D. Tucker would be the ACE evaluator and I should call him with the details. Okay! Now, then, an hour ago, I was having a burger and fries and decompressing from an aerobatic flight, and now I needed to call Sean Tucker to give him details on use of our chapter box? What’s wrong with this picture? I’m dreaming, right? Since one of the conditions of our waiver is to have a chapter offi-



Sean mirrors Luca's motions as he hand-walks his program.

cer on-site, I volunteered to take one for the team, and I would join them to watch some glider aerobatics and hang out with a legend. What an inconvenience—NOT!

It all came together in less than a day. The Williams' support team with its pilot and his coach, pulling the MDM-1 Fox glider in its trailer, the Pawnee towplane, Sean in the Oracle Challenger, and I all converged within minutes of each other at New Jerusalem airstrip in the middle of the California central valley. After introductions all around, Sean began with his oral examination, and he allowed us to listen in. What an experience this is; here I am sitting next to legendary

Sean D. Tucker and none other than Advanced World Glider Champion Luca Bertossio. This is not how my Thursdays usually unfold!

Listening in to this conversation was refreshing and a great learning experience. Every one of Sean's questions was intended to assure him that Luca understood all details of safety that must be ingrained in the performers' minds and actions. From the nature of the questions, it was clear that to Sean, SAFETY was job one, two, and three, showmanship a distant requirement. But when Sean did offer him advice on showmanship, Luca listened, and listened intently—as did I!

Then after his “interrogation” of Luca, they hand-walked through Luca's program talking about every detail of the maneuvers. Sean watched and questioned Luca as he hand-walked his performance on the tarmac. Sean followed every one of Luca's moves and asked many questions as they went through the program. I listened and watched, and I was amazed to hear Luca provide the details of how many g's that he would be pulling in his maneuvers. Plus 6 to 7g's here and there, minus 4 to 5g's here and there. As a 10-year veteran of Advanced and Unlimited power competition, I experience these load factors routinely,



The author, Dave Watson, with Luca in the elegant MDM-1 Fox.

but I never imagined that without all those screaming ponies on the nose, gliders would need, nor want, to pull so hard, thereby scrubbing so much energy with induced drag, when the potential energy of your altitude must be sacrificed to get it back!

After the walk-through Sean seemed content, and it was time for Luca to fly. Winds on the ground were 16 gusting to 21 knots. Luca asked for a warm-up flight at half his normal altitude so he could feel out the winds. I think this actually scored him bonus points, showing Sean that safety was important to him, too. His practice and his following performance flights were spec-

tacular. Sean was having difficulty following Luca's hand-written Aresti program while watching his flight, so I volunteered to call it for him so he could concentrate on watching the flying. A moment or so later, Luca's figures were now being flown right-to-left instead of left-to-right as shown; I instinctively wanted to zero him, but then no, shame on me, that's a hard zero (HZ), isn't it? But then it registered: Dave, relax—it's an air show—and as Sean assured me, "It doesn't matter!" Sean and I continued to watch in awe from center box as Luca gracefully danced the Fox before us. Sean uttered to me a few times, "This man has talent." Indeed, at

only 24 years of age, this man is a master of his machine. I cannot put to words any better than Luca did himself how beautiful it was to watch. I found this quote of his that encompasses his spirit and is manifested in his graceful yet powerful flying.

"For me, the glider is a symbol of freedom and flight . . . the pure lines remind me of a white marble sculpture, but its elegance recalls the softness and precision of a ballerina. The glider used in aerobatics is a means for dreaming of absolute freedom, the union between me and absolute perfection. Each line or angle or arc painted in the sky should be without inaccuracies or errors. It is then and

only then that we don't see the glider flying, but rather painting the sky with its sharp white wings."

Luca Bertossio

Reprinted from Snap&Roll.com
August 23, 2012

After his flights he and Sean debriefed, and Drew came over to me and said that he would love to give me a ride in the glider for all my help, but if Luca weren't too tired, perhaps I'd like to fly with him. Can you say Christmas in May! Luca cheerfully agreed, and he and I talked about what I wanted to do in the flight as well as what I wanted him to do. This would be my first flight in a glider, and I was going to be content if I could do some elementary figures like rolls, loops, and of course I wanted to fly the graceful hammerhead, which they briefed me in glider is not as easy as it would seem. Without the thrust of the engine, the sailplane's tail generally cannot sling itself up and

over. I needed to cheat with a slip on the way up so that when I unloaded for the hammerhead the released side pressure would help to snap the tail up and over. I thought to myself that would be hard to do cleanly. With my little Laser I cheat a lot, but it is easy to hide that with only 24 feet of wing. Having 46 feet of wingspan, any error in that cheat would be seen by everyone in the whole area code. We agreed that after I flew these few figures, he would show me what 400 hours of experience in acro-gliders could do for you. I was all in!

Just the rollout, takeoff, and climb was worth the price of admission. Luca masterfully shadowing the Pawnee at every move, a perfect dance of unity as the two pilots without communication anticipated and moved with each other, the view ever widening, and without a headset deadening your hearing you can hear everything. The only sounds were that of my heartbeat

Can you say Christmas in May!

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...I had to dead stick my Pitts in and an old timer said "Nice save. Someone taught you well." Yes they did. Thanks, Budd. -Craig H.

My insurance company covered me, a low-time, low-tailwheel-time pilot in a single-hole Pitts largely because I went to Budd for my training. -Tom P

... the engine failed at low altitude and the accident investigators said that my fundamentals saved me. Thanks my friend. -Maynard H.

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Sean Tucker and Luca Bertossio with their aircraft parked behind them on the runway.

and the low sound of the air on the skin of the sailplane whistling as it was coming in the vent next to me. I momentarily closed the vent to quiet the air noise, but temperature in this little greenhouse immediately went up; the low whistle of the air was a constant reminder that I was in an airplane, otherwise the serenity was unlike any other flight I had taken. I felt more like I was in a simulator. Luca and I spoke little as we climbed. I was just enjoying the ride, a spectator to his graceful maneuvers; he, I assumed, was focused on the towplane. As we approached 6,000 feet, he readied me to take the controls; we were ready for drop-off.

Not previously briefed, the first thing he asked me to do was to "pitch

to stall," my first inclination was to spin. After all, is not a stall just the first element in a spin? But then, silently within, I recalled my primary flight lessons, and I had a flashback of stall recovery techniques that did not involve violent rotations onto heading and then straight down-lines. The stall break was crisp and anticipatable; I thought that this was a very nice airfoil. To save valuable altitude, I opted not to spin, and I just pushed the nose over; my left hand feeling useless with nothing to do in this throttle-less machine. I then did some rolls, point rolls, a loop, and then a hammerhead. The difference in powered and non-powered flight becoming evident in just a few minutes of flight, my feet somewhat bored not having to

react to P-factor or gyroscopic precession. But in that roll, the adverse yaw woke my feet.

The flat bottom wing and long lever arm of drag-inducing ailerons of a glider way out there requires attention to detail, forward stick in the second knife-edge, and lots of top rudder during the rollout, or it will severely dish out—like the ones I flew—ugly, very ugly. I was embarrassed. My hammerhead came out pretty good; Luca had to tell me when to kick because I was just really enjoying that view down the long wing standing vertical against the horizon, the pivot seems to take forever, but that too was beautiful to watch in the deepening silence as airspeed (and the subtle sounds) decayed but did not drop to zero. Then

it was time to cash in my E-ticket. Luca took over the controls to show me a good time. With his first snap on a vertical up, he said to me, "You can hear a good snap." And yes indeed, without the screaming engine, you indeed can hear the abrupt separation of the air from the airfoil. A distinctive pop or snap, perhaps this is the origin of the name of the maneuver. I always thought "snap" referred to the consequence to the nose ribs or longerons from doing this violent roll. He then proceeded to demonstrate to me the grace and power of some "tumbling" maneuvers. Outside snapping then transitioning into an inverted flat spin; at the peak height of the maneuver our airspeed was zero, and the rush to my senses of the absolute silence was indeed breathtaking. He showed me several other beautiful maneuvers including a fantastic tail slide (also dead silent at the top), but altitude was lost too soon—I wanted this to last for hours! But

eventually gravity and drag win out over the exquisitely slippery Fox, and time was running out. A downwind, then base to final, some spoilers to kill our speed, and we were down smoothly with grace.

After the flight, Luca said to me, "I enjoyed that flight so much more than the previous one." Without the encumbrance of being critiqued under the microscope of an ACE evaluator, he was able to just enjoy the grace and serenity of flying; I was thrilled to have been along for his release. It was a beautiful moment, now deeply ingrained in my memory. We disassembled and packed up the plane (My god! I am sure glad that I didn't know that only three pins hold this whole thing together 30 minutes ago!) and said our goodbyes, with promises all around to continue to fly with each other, powered and non-powered.

Six months ago when I volunteered to take the responsibility for

the renewal and ownership of our chapter's practice boxes, I thought to myself, "What am I getting into here?" But we were without these boxes during a lapse a few years ago, and it hurt our chapter and the quality of my flying for the 15 months we were without a place to critique each other. So I went into the renewal process thinking "no risks, no rewards" and I was happy to carry that responsibility and work with the FAA for the renewals over the past three months; it was a very positive and good learning experience for me. In fact, this new J box had just been renewed two weeks prior to this day; timing is everything! The experiences of this day were the greatest reward that I could imagine for such a simple task. I'd like to thank Sean D. Tucker, Drew and his team from the Williams Soaring Center and, of course, Luca Bertossio for a wonderful day and the new friendships and experiences it garnered. **IAC**

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Ben Lowell Aerial Confrontation

Getting along with old gold

BY DOUGLAS LOVELL

PHOTOS JONATHAN APFELBAUM

It is Thursday afternoon before the Ben Lowell Aerial Confrontation at Lamar, Colorado. A few early arrivals have finished practice—Mike Forney's S-1T, Marc Connolly's S-1D, Chris Leach's S-1S, and DJ Molny's Giles 200. We push them into the edges of an old hangar, with a floor of rough asphalt covered by a generous layer of dirt. A dusty, derelict Czech L-29 Delfin fighter trainer is tucked away in a back corner.

On the open, semi-arid, high plains of eastern Colorado we can see forever. A storm has been brewing for some time out to the west. Although prevailing winds on the ground are from the east, somehow, incredibly, the storm has been moving closer. It is not clear why, but the line guy, Chris, wants to put the fuel trucks inside the front of the hangar, which has no door.

Inside the terminal there is preparation and setup going for the con-

test. Ron Duren has never before been registrar and possibly once before entered some scores. Somehow Chris Leach, the contest director, who has never before been contest director, has talked Ron into doing both registrar and scorekeeper. DJ Molny is at the computer printing Knowns for the clipboards. Betty Stewart is helping Ron figure out how to keep track of who is registered, paid, inspected, and how to get clipboards assembled.



A beautiful Sbach parked on the ramp.



DJ Molny and Doug Lovell.



Doedo and Pat judging.



Michael Forney landing his Pitts.



Yak 55 flown by Dennis Whitmer.

Pretty soon someone says maybe we'd like to leave before the rain arrives. There is general agreement. Five minutes later, all are assembled. Chris has wrangled keys to a 20-year-old gold Dodge minivan courtesy of the FBO. Outside, heavy drops start to darken the pavement. The air has cooled substantially. Spunky wind gusts rip at our sleeves and give stinging velocity to the drops. I volunteer to sprint for the van and drive it up. We toss our bags, pile in, and blast off.

Going out the driveway, the rain gets heavy. The wipers smear the dusty windshield into muddy streaks. Strips of rubber peel away.

They slap at the windshield ineffectually as the blades move back and forth.

DJ laughs and suggests we donate new blades for use on the van. Tumbleweeds blow across our path, and trees loom up at the coming intersection through the smeared windshield and wind-whipped rain. The sky has darkened substantially.

It is a T-intersection at the main road into town. I press the brake pedal and not much happens. The low coolant light comes on, which seems irrelevant. I put down the brake pedal a little harder. Somehow the old gold van squeezes to a stop.

We turn onto the main road into town. It is two lanes of bumpy unmarked pavement that has been scraped in preparation for new pavement. The storm is behind, bearing down on us. It has only been a few minutes since the rain started, but now it has gale force. Dirt, sticks, branches, leaves—anything that's loose blows along in front of the storm. A roll cloud has formed along the ground behind to the left.

I say, "Let's see if we can outrun the storm." Betty, sitting right seat, decides to put on her seat belt. We arrive at the Days Inn Lamar in time to grab our gear out of

the back of old gold without getting drenched.

Next morning, Friday, we find three storm chaser vehicles in the parking lot. They all have weather equipment on their roofs. One has plexiglass panels bolted to a frame of PVC pipes over the side and rear windows. The windshield is shielded by a wire mesh overhanging panel. Apparently, Toto, we're close enough to Kansas.

At the airport, we find DJ's plane where we left it, near the front of the hangar, only it is covered with dirt. It looks like the old fighter in the back corner, as if it has been sitting there for years gathering dust. Line guy Chris gives us a hose and remarks that Lamar recorded the highest wind velocities in the state the night before—73 mph gusts.

So we count our blessings and wash the plane. The planes more shielded by the fuel trucks fared better. After the wash, I get a practice and pretty soon everyone is practicing. More planes arrive for the contest and begin to join in the fun.

At the Saturday morning briefing we have competitors for Primary through Advanced. Chad Olinger, a successful crop duster from Western Texas, brought his newly acquired Staudacher to fly Primary. New to the club, he didn't have everything needed for his plane. Paul Thomson has put him in his Super Decathlon, will ride with him as safety, and fly for patch in order to provide competition.

I had prepared to fly Sportsman, having not flown a competition in four years; however, there was only one Intermediate competitor. Betty Stewart and a few of the Sportsman pilots encourage me to move up. The pilot who arrived to fly Intermediate, Steve Bergevin, graciously allows me to use his Free program. It will be Giles versus Giles—me flying DJ's single-place 200, Steve his two-place 202.

Advanced will be DJ Molny versus Mike Forney, who flies a Pitts

S-1T. We have seven competitors in Sportsman—four Pitts, two Super-D's, and Dennis Whitmer in his white and red Yak-55, beautifully dressed up in traditional Russian markings.

Mike Forney will chief Primary and Sportsman and accomplishes the briefing along with Paul Thomson, who will chief Intermediate and Advanced. Betty Stewart, Dick Bevington, and IAC Chapter 12 Treasurer Pat Fogarty have joined, not to fly, but to judge, and will judge all categories of the contest. It is really sweet to have non-flying judges.

An RV-4 arrives as we are assembling the line. It is Patric Coggin who will fly as another first-time competitor in Primary. He is quickly checked, registered, and briefed. We now have a competition in Primary, but Paul will fly back to back with Chad anyway, just for fun.

Everyone gets two flights on Saturday. Paul Thomson flies a Free in Sportsman. Intermediate and Advanced fly their Free programs. Steve Bergevin needs to depart early, so we begin the Intermediate Unknown for him. He flies it more or less back to back with his Free, with a few competitors in between as he holds, rewinds, and studies the sequence card a bit.

This procedure he might regret because there is a push humpty off the Y-axis in both his Free and the Unknown. Difference is the humpty in his Free turns a quarter roll downwind at the exit. The humpty in the Unknown turns a quarter roll upwind at the exit. You can see where this is going and guess what Steve accomplished. He didn't know what hit him, thought he had a great flight, and went home happy. Anyone who has flown Intermediate has done it. You know all about it.

We're a little slow turning around the judge line at lunch time, and the three judges come looking for their sandwiches. Rounding them up to go back out, Dick Bevington climbs

into the first bench seat of old gold and looks over DJ's shoulder as DJ starts down the taxiway. He asks, in a general way, if we are walking back to the terminal after. DJ asks what he means, and Dick says that the gas gauge is indicating empty. Says DJ, "Well it said full this morning." "Ah well," says Dick, "gauge must be broken." Of course, Dick is really mocking us. As a former fighter pilot and airline captain, he knows better than to rationalize an empty fuel gauge with the most optimistic explanation.

Now I'm not telling stories, and I won't go out of school. I can't make too many revelations, but somehow, Sunday morning, the old gold FBO Dodge minivan has a full tank and brand spanking new, red 2-gallon gas can courtesy of IAC Chapter 12.

Third flights and Unknowns flown Sunday, CD Chris and Dan Peters handed out beautiful engraved steel plaques to the winners. We packed up and went our separate ways—lots of fun flying and adventure behind us.

Chad in the Decathlon won Primary in Paul Thomson's Decathlon. Paul won Sportsman.

A whole lot of Sportsman pilots are looking forward to the day that Paul finishes building his Giles 200 and moves up to Intermediate. Best first-time Sportsman went to competitor Clayton Coss. I pulled Intermediate out of the bag by flying the Unknown without zeros.

Advanced was a close battle. Mike and DJ traded places on the Known and Free program individual flight results. Each zeroed one figure on the Unknown. In the end, DJ had the most points.

Thanks to Chris Leach, Ron Duren, DJ Molny, Betty Stewart, Dan Peters, and all of Chapter 12 for organizing a fun contest at Lamar. The Ben Lowell was the first regional contest ever to use a new feature of the JaSPer scoring program that posts results online flight by flight during the contest. Thanks to Bwana Bob Buckley for that! **IAC**

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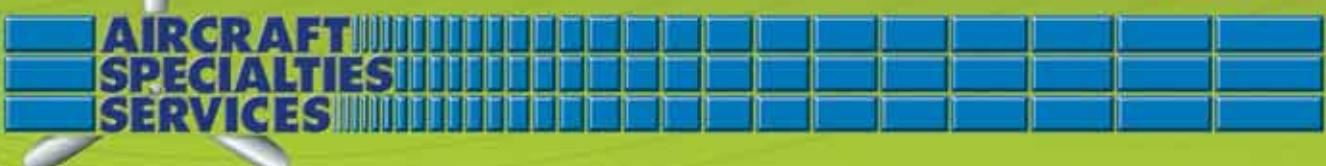
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Options . . .

BY GREG KOONTZ



Airplanes are airplanes. Most have engines, rudders, ailerons, and elevators. They stay aloft by taking advantage of Bernoulli's principle. The airscrew (propeller) converts rotary motion from the engine to provide propulsive force. Airplanes will take you up and let you down. So why are there so many types? Let's look to the automobile for some insight.

There are automobiles for nearly every purpose. Many cars are multi-purpose vehicles but most probably do one job better than the rest. For example, you don't see a lot of people in Indy cars running to the "wallymart" or driving dump trucks to pick up the kids from school. Similarly, you don't find many MX2s out on a family vacation or Cessna 182s in the sportsman category.

Many families today have two automobiles, such as a minivan and a pickup truck. That should cover most bases, one would think. But not many of us have an Extra for the weekends and fly the Bonanza on family trips, at least not at my house. If a person has the forthwith to own an airplane it is usually going to be one good one. For a lot of us that means a good all-around airplane is the best choice.

For the aerobatic nut, that leaves few options. There is likely going to be a compromise somewhere; probably two seats instead of four, enclosed instead of open cockpit, or flying under a bubble canopy. But for the aerobatic nut, that compromise can't leave much out in the way of aerobatics. I mean, some things are not negotiable. Things like roll rate, inverted systems, sticks, and horsepower are

synonymous with aerobatics. We'll give up some seats and luggage space but not our Hooker Harness!

It was all of the above that made the Decathlon line the most popular aerobatic/sport plane ever built. Launched as the son of the Citabria and great-grandson of the Aeronca Champ, the Decathlon was a winner from the start. I was one of those aerobatic nuts before I was a pilot so it is no surprise that my first task as a new private pilot was to get a checkout in a Citabria. When they made the first Decathlon I was soon flying shows in it, and when the Super Decathlon came along, well, it was true love.

Like any sky-loving pilot, you give me more power and I'll show my appreciation by wanting more power. It's a sickness. So from the day American Champion first sponsored me I began a campaign to get more horsepower. Of course, I wanted more roll, too. Lycoming was nice enough to invent the AEIO-390, and American Champion one day decided to mate the two together.

The new Xtreme Decathlon has had more than a year in service now and is slowly reaching the hands of more and more operators. I flew my first one in the 2013 Sun 'n Fun International Fly-in & Expo after just a few days of practice. It was immediately obvious that this is a really different airplane.

Changing to the 210-hp Lycoming was just a start. You add that much weight and something's got to give. If Decathlons have an Achilles heel it's the useful load. It would take a clean sheet of paper to redesign enough to up the gross weight, so ACA was faced with the task of going the other way, lower-



RUSSELL MUNSON

ing the empty weight.

The first target was the ailerons. To save some weight, they adopted Curtis Pitts-style symmetrical ailerons so they could drop the gap seals and spades. By pure luck, it yielded more roll rate, and I was not complaining! Symmetrical ailerons of this type use their over-bulging shape to create a low pressure on the opposite side from their deflection. This pulls the aileron into its deflection and therefore eliminates the need for spades to do that job. They also operate inside a curved "pocket" so the gaps are already small. This dropped 30 pounds of spades and seals.

Next MT Propellers jumped in and designed a wide-chord propeller blade. The idea was to get all 210 hp with as little weight as possible. The wide blades are to provide higher thrust with the shortest blades without going to a three-blade design. This yielded less weight and a lower drag coefficient as a bonus.

Weight loss was an obsession so a four-to-one exhaust was used with minimal muffler/heat shroud, a move that also yielded horsepower. For the rest of the plane weight was lost with a bit less insulation and carbon fiber floors among other small changes.

The diet was a complete success. My 2013 Xtreme Decathlon was 15 pounds less than my 2012 Super Decathlon. The new Super Decathlons are getting the new ailerons and carbon fiber parts and are weighing in up to 60 pounds less than ever before.

So let's get to the question everyone is asking me . . . What's the difference between an Xtreme and the new light Super?

First thing you notice is going to be energy. The Xtreme's acceleration is really noticeable. That wide-chord prop is busy biting air and the 210 hp allows big bites. Takeoff is shorter and the climb is much better than a 16 percent increase in horsepower might lead you to

believe. Rate of climb is at least 1,600 fpm, nearly double that of the old Supers and still a lot better than the new light ones.

Cruise is another subject. If you do some math and figure out the same horsepower for both airplanes they'll go about the same speed at the same fuel consumption. Good to know if you were worried that the Xtreme was doomed to cost more in fuel. But go with 75 percent of max in each and it will give you a little more speed in the Xtreme for a noticeable amount of fuel increase. Where the Xtreme really shines is up high (at least high for this type of plane). The Xtreme is at its best cruising up at 8,500 to 9,500 feet, while the Super likes 5,500. Fly it that way and the numbers get much better.

Now let's consider how it flies. For both the Super and Xtreme the new ailerons bring the planes closer to the modern era of aerobatic designs. Now we are talking break-out pressures and stick-centering forces. The Decathlons gave up a small amount of control lightness when they shed their spades. The return was a better rate of roll and very crisp and accurate stops. Points of a point roll stop like they're hitting something, same thought I get when I fly the Extra or MX. It is still a mortal rate of roll and will never rival even a Pitts, but for the sport pilot who wants nice aerobatics and a nice ride for doing other things it is great to have these ailerons.

Energy is our friend. The Super seems to love operating between 120 and 150, it's crest of the drag/power curve and brings the airplane back to that entry speed with no loss of altitude for all the basic loops, hammers, etc. One-hundred and fifty miles per hour will just buy you a half vertical with a return to the same altitude and speed on a good day. The Xtreme takes that range up a notch, and if you do what I keep doing and accidentally fly it like a Super, you'll soon

find yourself getting higher or too fast, take your choice. Both planes will cost you some energy reserves to get a three-quarter vertical roll, and only the Xtreme will get a full vertical. Plan on a whopping 190 to get a dependable full roll, and it will cost a bit of altitude to get there. I stick to everything the plane can do up to 160 mph and find I can do everything the Sportsman will ever want and, with exception of snaps, about all the Intermediate usually has in it. It is a good thing that 160 is all you need because the only down side of the new ailerons is they do get noticeably heavy after that speed.

The Xtreme takes a big advantage over the Super in Sportsman. Team up a better rate of roll and more energy and the Xtreme can now breeze through some of those aggravating sequences they throw in about every other year. Consider the last two maneuvers in this year's Sportsman Known. The old

Super can do the Immelmann to a slow roll, but it is a push to accelerate enough to look good in the roll. Rolling anywhere near 100 or less is not pretty. The new light Supers can do it much better. The Xtreme has the acceleration and ability to roll slower to knock this combo out of the park.

I think the old Super Decathlon handles well considering the class airplane it really is, that is, sport/aerobatics versus only-good-for-aerobatics like some. The new light Supers feel great with the roll rate and are always moving faster and feeling ready to rumble. The Xtreme, while packed full of energy, has a little more weight to move up front. Just as you would expect, you pay for that bigger powerplant with a little more pull required on the stick. This is where I find the quick sliding trim a savior.

After a year of flying both the new Super and the new Xtreme I am very pleased with both. If I

were to make a choice between them I'd have to look at my purpose for owning one. The average Joe is still going to love the new light Super D. It has more performance and ability than most sport pilots ever attempt to tap, and in keeping to the Decathlon legacy, it is a comfortable ride to that \$100 hamburger. If I were running a flight school I would prefer the Super. I'll teach a student everything needed and the purchase price makes it easier for my business to turn a profit.

If I want to compete, do air shows, fly higher elevations, or just have a bigger thrill, I'll choose the Xtreme. Bigger is usually better in these circumstances, and the Xtreme provides it all very well. The Super can get me out of a 1,200-foot strip at gross weight with no sweat. The Xtreme can do much better. I wouldn't hesitate to let it double as my backcountry adventure plane.

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Part II: Connecting the dots

"You can't connect the dots looking forward; you can only connect them looking backwards. So you have to trust that the dots will somehow connect in your future. You have to trust in something—your gut, destiny, life, karma, whatever. This approach has never let me down, and it has made all the difference in my life."

—Steve Jobs

IAC 38's first chapter meeting of 2014 was a smashing success. Wayne Handley would be a tough act to follow. My goal was to escalate the momentum. I had a guest speaker in mind for our next meeting, but was a little hesitant to ask him. I'll explain why in a minute.

After flying with Wayne a bunch of times at Pine Mountain Lake, California, and having so much fun, I decided to insinuate myself upon that community by joining the Pine Mountain Lake Aviation Association. I call this place the "clubhouse for grownups," and I use the term "grownups" quite loosely. It seems like these guys spend the majority of their time zooming around on golf carts, having pre-parties, parties, and after-parties. They breathe, eat, and sleep airplanes. It's my kind of place. They welcomed me with open arms.

A Literal Leap of Faith

"Sometimes your only available transportation is a leap of faith."

—Margaret Shepard

On a warm August evening in 2012, I was at Pine Mountain chatting with resident Dr. Marle Hewitt and was floored to discover that he was the project manager and senior flight test engineer of the Red Bull Stratos Mission. Red Bull had assembled an international team of engineers, scientists, sky divers, pilots, and aeromedical specialists seeking to advance scientific discoveries in aerospace and transcend human limits. By sky-diving from the stratosphere.

Marle, a retired Navy commander, decorated pilot and test pilot, chairman of the U.S. Naval Academy's Aerospace Engineering Department, and engineer



Dr. Marle Hewitt

for facilities including NASA Dryden, had been working part-time, then full-time, on this project for seven years. The technical challenges, setbacks, and risks of this ground-breaking endeavor were seemingly insurmountable. An army of cynics said they were crazy.

Three months later, Felix Baumgartner jumped from 128,100 feet, setting five records including the fastest sky dive (837 mph) and the first time a human had gone supersonic without the help of an airplane (Mach 1.27). Eight million people watched Felix's jump on live television on October 14, 2012.

That day was the morning after the Borrego Springs



Great turnout for IAC's Chapter meeting—92 attended.

contest, and a dozen of us huddled around an iPad at the airport and watched breathlessly. Shortly afterward, we flew home, skirting the restricted area of Edwards Air Force Base. This day was also the 65th anniversary of Chuck Yeager breaking the sound barrier. He had retraced history earlier that very morning, flying in a U.S. Air Force F-15 at 10:24 a.m. over this same patch of Mojave Desert. What a spectacular day for all things in the sky!

It would be positively epic to have Marle speak at our next chapter meeting and give us the inside scoop on the Red Bull Stratos Mission, I decided. He had already presented to a handful of groups. I knew, however, that he was burned out after the herculean project. He was tired of talking about it and had moved on. What the hell, I thought. I'll ask him anyway. All he can say is no.

I guess time heals all wounds, because when I asked him, his exact words were, "Yes, I'd love to participate! Just sign me up anytime."

Leveraging Star Power

It occurred to me that this topic would be of interest not just to aerobatic pilots, but all pilots and aviation enthusiasts. I learned to fly at Modesto Aviation, KMOD, and have been treasurer of the Modesto Airport Pilots Association for the past three years. I got to thinking that I should invite my Modesto friends to this event. As long as I was at it, I figured I should also ask our buddies at the Tracy Airport Association, where IAC 38 has our aerobatic practice area.

Then the gerbil really started running faster in

the wheel . . .

Since I now fly out of KLVK in Livermore, and there are three flight schools there, let's invite them as well . . . and wait, there's Livermore Valley Airmen's Association . . . and the EAA chapters in both Livermore and Tracy . . . and CalPilots . . .

I was on a roll. I e-mailed Vicky Benzing, our regional director, and told her what we were up to. I wanted her to help us spread the word. Now I was thinking to broaden our reach to flight schools, CFIs, students, and aviation associations in the San Francisco Bay Area. The Patriots Jet Team is just over the hill from Livermore in Byron. I invited them, too.

This was turning into an event connecting disparate groups of pilots. It would be the perfect opportunity to explain the mission of the IAC, spread the word, and recruit new members.

The meeting announcement was sent to several hundred people. I did not ask for RSVPs, so I had no idea how many would come. We would need the hangar, not the smaller classroom at Attitude Aviation for a potential crowd. The prior month we maxed out all the available chairs and ramp space at Attitude.

So began a grand logistical effort. We borrowed chairs and had a sound system donated. We coordinated with the tower to direct transient traffic and organized a shuttle. Name badges for guests, refreshments, and membership materials were arranged.

Inspire and Recruit

At our last meeting, we had set up a table off to the



Randy Howell, founder and owner of the Patriots Jet Team speaks at Chapter 38's meeting.

side with IAC membership information. With everyone milling about, it was easily overlooked. This time, I decided to put on each chair a packet with:

- IAC brochure
- IAC 38 join/renew form
- IAC3 8 president business card (that I just had designed)
- IAC 38 logo sticker

Trish Deimer-Steineke sent me a bunch of posters, brochures, and magazines. These I would set up on a manned membership table front and center in the hangar.

A dozen folks had been enlisted to help set up two hours prior to the meeting. I wanted us calm, cool, and collected and ready to greet our guests, since pilots always show up early. We were so efficient; we were done in about an hour. Good thing, because Marle's presentation would not run on my computer. In the scramble to procure a computer with updated applications, Evan Peers of Air Space Media saved the day by lending us his laptop. Lesson learned (update Microsoft Office!) and disaster was averted.

To be honest, I wasn't sure if I was more concerned if 50 or 150 people would show up. To go through all this effort and have it be a bust would be disheartening. On the other hand, if a mob showed and we did not have enough seating, it would look like amateur hour. I somehow just knew that we would get the perfect number. We set up for 100. Ninety-two came. It was a thrill to look out over the sea of pilots gathered together from all over Northern California. We all ap-



Beth Stanton and Marle Hewitt.

proached aviation from slightly different angles: some fly right-side up, some upside down, some build airplanes, others teach how to fly them. But we all have one thing in common: a love of aviation and a desire to see it thrive.

I gave my presidential plug for the IAC: who we are, what we do, and why pilots of all stripes should join our ranks. As always, I encouraged unusual attitude and spin training to help become a safer and more competent pilot, even for those not interested in aerobatics.

Paying It Forward

Next, Randy Howell, founder and owner of the Patriots Jet Team, got up to speak.

One of our chapter missions is to give back to the community and promote general aviation. It had recently come to my attention that the new Patriots Jet Team Foundation (PJT) was already doing just that. Instead of reinventing the wheel, I thought IAC 38 could join forces with the foundation. The PJT is an all-volunteer, nonprofit organization, and as their pro-

grams expand, they need more volunteers. Several IAC 38 members have already committed to volunteering for the foundation. Randy shared his vision of the PJTF becoming a premier center in America for educating kids about its potential role in aviation and aerospace, as well as preparing them to apply the sciences and mathematics along their career paths.

Imagine Immensities

"Imagine immensities, don't compromise, and don't waste time. Start now. Not 20 years from now, not two weeks from now. Now."

—Debbie Millman

Marle gave a marvelous presentation filled with anecdotes, video, and fascinating details about the mission that did not necessarily make it to the news.

This endeavor encompassed millions of moving pieces that all had to work perfectly, utilizing technology and engineering in entirely

novel ways. After years of trial, error, and failure, and an undisclosed amount of money, the team accomplished their mission. This group of bold and visionary people stretched beyond the known and shattered the illusion of limitation.

I was stunned to learn that it was Felix who actually approached Red Bull. He had a dream of a stratospheric free fall that would expand the limits of human flight. As aerobatic pilots, we live in the place of transcending limitations, fear, and rationality. The Red Bull Stratos story echoes a longing in us to rise above the mundane and achieve the impossible. This spirit speaks to all who dare to dream the "impossible," who I am guessing just might be . . . you.

For more information about the Red Bull Stratos Mission, go to www.RedBullStratos.com. For more information about the Patriots Jet Team Foundation, go to www.PJTF.org. Beth can be reached at bethstanton@gmail.com.



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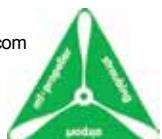
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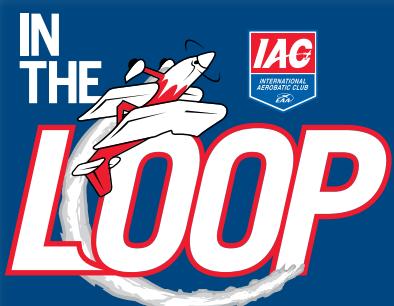
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Quiet Alone Time

Lifesaving practices

I HOPE EVERYONE IS HAVING A GREAT FLYING SEASON.

Those of you who have been faithfully reading my column know that my columns consistently talk about preventive measures, and not just how to pull the ripcord of your parachute. I hope bailing out of your aircraft is not an option you'll ever have to experience.

I attend many flying events each year and often hear some great suggestions that will help you remain inside your aircraft when it's flying. At the last International Council of Air Shows (ICAS) convention, I heard several great presentations. I also receive safety bulletins written by ICAS members who have your safety in mind. These typically are written by people who have been there and done that. Their advice is worth flying by.

One suggestion was to write out and give yourself an honest and critical assessment of your flying. You'll become more aware and it'll be easier to identify potential hazards. For example, maybe you're not spending enough time on emergency procedures or pre-fighting *yourself* and *your* aircraft before you fly off into the wild blue yonder. In the air show industry they've been touting "The Sacred 60 Minutes" before a performance is flown. You may not be performing in front of a crowd, but you're still performing. You need quiet and uninterrupted time to yourself to gather your thoughts and run through your mind what you'll be doing. An example of this is walking through your routine on the ground one last time. This is the sacred time when you check out your aircraft undisturbed and prepare yourself mentally for the task at hand—which, in my opinion, is to fly safely and to land inside your aircraft and not under your parachute because you forgot one small detail. Are you prepared to do this, or will you become the next headline on the six o'clock news?

When I pack your parachute I make sure I'm not interrupted, but when I am I have a backup plan. I literally back up a few steps and double check myself. I also, like surgeons, count my tools at the beginning and end of each repack to make sure I haven't left

something in your parachute. My UPS driver got used to me running a quick inventory of my tools before he picked up that day's boxes and often asked me, "Did you count your tools?"

On a serious note I recently lost my very close flying partner to an air show accident. It appears that the emergency response time could have been better, but that is not for me to decide. As I stated before, you may not be flying in front of thousands of people, but you still need to take some very basic steps to help ensure your safety. You may not have a fire truck or ambulance standing by, but you should have fire extinguishers at the ready. Consider placing them in a vehicle like a pickup truck that can respond within seconds in case you have a fire. Position the vehicle close by and ready to go with the keys in it. I would place it near where you refuel and have a route planned out to get to the aerobatic box quickly, if the need arises.

If you have first responders on or near your field, invite them to learn more about your aircraft and how to quickly assist you in case of an emergency. They'll appreciate it and if something does occur they'll be better prepared. You could invite them to park a fire truck on the ramp, especially if you provide them with shade, water and food. It's a win-win situation for both of you.

You could show them how you plan on egressing your aircraft on the ground in case of a fire. They'll be very interested in the location of the emergency release(s) for your aircraft canopy. Will they need special tools to unfasten the cowling? One thing they'll want to know is where your battery is located; they may need to disconnect it. Also, show the location of your master switch. While you're at it, show them your parachute and how you put it on and take it off. Keep in mind they have sharp knives and love to cut things off of people. They may not realize that it could be easier to unsnap or unthread your chest and leg straps. I know a little about aircraft/liquid firefighting. I was on an Air Force crash/

rescue crew for over 15 years.

In my bailout seminars, I recognize and talk about stress and some of the things you can do to help manage it. It will not go away but you can learn to live and fly with it. Psychologists claim that only 10 percent of our decisions are based on fact and the other 90 percent are based on emotions. Let's make sure your decisions are sound and based on fact. Stress can and does make for poor decisions, delayed decisions and many other bad judgment calls. Make sure you're properly rested and pay particular attention to being hydrated.

Just like the contest you're about to fly, hopefully you've practiced. Practicing will help you build excess workload capacity. By practicing you'll be able to think and work better under stress. You'll remain disciplined and focused much better. By practicing you Learn It – Link It – Live It. That's why I emphasize Practice, Practice and more Practice at my seminars. You want things to be committed to muscle memory. If things go bad, you already know what the first two words out of your mouth will be. Then your mind goes into high gear and thinks about what to do next and how to do it. Finally, as time and altitude fly by, you have a plan of action. By practicing your routine over and over before your flight, your reaction time will be greatly reduced; it's now stored as muscle memory. Likewise, practicing your bailout procedures before and after each flight will save you time. You'll still say those first two words, but after that you'll go right to doing it because you've pre-programmed your brain to react quickly by practicing. None of this will happen unless you are mentally prepared to reduce your stress as I have talked about above.

A couple of questions often asked of me are how much time is needed for a parachute to open, and how low can you be when you bail out? First, you need to understand your parachute must be *fully open and going as slow as it ever will go in three seconds or less to be certified*. What will change within those three seconds is the distance it takes your parachute to open based on the attitude and speed of your aircraft when you bailed out. If you and your aircraft are screaming straight at the ground when you pull your ripcord, your loss of altitude will be much greater than if you bailed out straight and level. To help you understand this I have at the bottom of my home page a link to the "Freefall Deceleration Chart" you can print out. This chart helps explain how quickly you slow down. Basically, within two seconds, regardless of your airspeed, you'll be slowed to a safe opening speed for your parachute to work properly.

In order for all this to come together you must be mentally prepared to reduce as much stress as you can. Remember "Don't Worry, Be happy," practice and drink your water.

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BY DAVID MOLL, PRESIDENT

davidmoll66@gmail.com

There are quite a few people who think Nebraska is the most boring part of the world they've ever driven through, but as a pilot there is nothing better. We have section lines pointing in the four cardinal headings so you don't get lost, plus wind to help you get either to your destination or back home faster. Since we are located in fly-over country, politicians don't stop here and bring 20 lanes of traffic to a complete stop at the 5:00 p.m. rush hour. Here in Nebraska we can actually drive to the airport and do some flying before supper.

The Midwest Aerobatic Club, IAC 80, or what we refer to as MAC 80, has been around since 1973 and was organized by aerobatic-minded folks in and around the Omaha and Council Bluffs area. Since that time the base of our operations has moved westward to the Lincoln area and now calls Seward, Nebraska, home. MAC 80 grew from just a few people to 60 members today. However, we measure our progress in more than mere growth. The real success story lies in our activities promoting the sport of aerobatics.

Beginning on the third Saturday of April, MAC 80 sponsors a monthly free luncheon and aerobatic play day at Seward, Nebraska. It's open to anybody who has an interest in learning about safety skills through aerobatics that they will retain for the rest of their flying careers. Because giving acro introduction rides to attract new

members is prohibited by EAA insurance, I wrote a syllabus spelling out guidelines how to do this safely. The syllabus has been submitted to IAC President Doug Sowder, who in turn hopefully will finalize it with Jeff Skiles. We think this will be an excellent tool for membership development all IAC and EAA clubs should support.

With aerobatics being the reason we have an IAC chapter, some of our women have excelled in the sport, beginning here in Lincoln and then onto the world stage competing at the highest level of the sport. Chandy Clanton first hit the national scene with Sean Tucker's "Stars of Tomorrow" in 2003, then qualified for the United States Unlimited Team three consecutive times. Jessy Panzer also flew with Sean Tucker's "Stars of Tomorrow" in 2005, and then qualified for a spot on the United States Advanced Team competing in Nyiregyhaza, Hungary, in 2012.

One of our club members is Lynn Bowes, a member of the International Aerobatic Club board of directors. Lynn got the idea to resurrect the IAC Collegiate Committee after seeing the University of North Dakota aerobatic team fly with high precision at our aerobatic contests in Seward. Lynn saw an untapped stream of young and professional pilots coming out of the college aviation schools who take to aerobatics with unbridled vigor. Then during a meeting with the Kansas State University aviation director, he asked our club if

we would put on a contest near Salina for the benefit of his students, and the idea for the Collegiate Challenge contest was born. Our club sponsored its first collegiate contest at McPherson, Kansas, in 2013. This is a contest open to all aerobatic pilots with an emphasis on the college pilots, but we separate out the veteran pilots who normally fly more advanced sequences from the other pilots even though they all fly the same loops, spins, and rolls. In the end we have a winner in Sportsman, and another winner in veteran Sportsman. The Nebraska Department of Aeronautics even gives our club some help. I write a column for the department's bimonthly magazine called PIREPS. In this article I am given the latitude to write how aerobatics makes you a better pilot, plus information about our club activity including our contests. Here is a link to my latest article found on page 2: www.Aero.Nebraska.gov/2014FebMarPireps.pdf.

Throughout the year, club events such as practice days for our two aerobatic contests, several hangar parties, as well as organizing the Seward Fourth of July Air Show are what keep us active and growing. Being a member in our aerobatic club doesn't mean you have to be an excellent aerobatic pilot, and most of our members are not. But we all believe aerobatics is a safe family sport in which everybody can participate in one form or another. MAC 80 is a very active club, and we are very proud of our efforts.

IAC

AirVenture IAC Pavilion Speakers' Schedule

Wednesday, July 30

- 10:00am – 11:15am Bill Bainbridge/B&C – Aerobatic Wiring, Oil Systems, and Lightweight Starters
11:30am – 12:45pm Patty Wagstaff – Aerobatics: Good for your health
1:00pm – 2:15pm Michael Church – TBA

Thursday, July 31

- 10:00am – 11:15am Rich Stowell – Basic Aerobatics, Fun with a Purpose
11:30am – 12:45pm Jim Taylor – "Stick and rudder exercises that will improve your flying"
1:00pm – 2:15pm David Burroughs – Stearman Aerobatics

Friday, August 1

- 8:30am – 9:45am Will Berninger and Tom Wheeler,
International Miniature Aerobic Club, Scale Aerobatics
10:00am – 11:15am Martin Albrecht and Gerd Muehlbauer, MT-Propeller,
Propeller Safety and Maintenance in Aerobatic Use
1:00pm – 2:15pm Michael Lents/University of North Dakota – TBA



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CONTEST CALENDAR

Mark your calendars for these upcoming contests. For a complete list of contests **and for the most up-to-date contest calendar**, visit www.IAC.org. If your chapter is hosting a contest, be sure to let the world know by posting your event on the IAC website.

Green Mountain Aerobatics Contest (GMAC)

Friday, July 11 – Sunday, July 13, 2014

Practice/Registration: Thursday, July 10 – Friday, July 11
Glider Categories: Sportsman through Unlimited
Power: Primary through Unlimited
Location: Springfield Hartness Airport (VSF), Springfield, VT
Region: Northeast
Contest Director: Bill Gordon
Contact Information: 802-585-0366
E-Mail: wsgordon@earthlink.net

The Best Box in Texas Open (South Central)

Friday, July 18 – Sunday, July 20, 2014

Practice/Registration: Thursday, July 17
Power: Primary through Unlimited
Location: Jackson County (26R): Edna, TX
Region: South Central
Contest Director: Gary Walker/Debbie Rihn Harvey
Contact Information: 832-656-8314
E-Mail: gawalker@aol.com

Doug Yost Challenge (Mid-America)

Saturday, July 19 – Sunday, July 20, 2014

Practice/Registration: Thursday, July 17 – Friday, July 18
Power: Primary through Unlimited
Location: Spencer Muni (SPW): Spencer, Iowa
Region: Mid-America
Contest Director: Dan Pichelman
Contact Information: 612-386-0352
E-Mail: dan.pichelman@swivity.com

CanAm Challenge (Northwest)

Friday, July 25 – Saturday, July 26, 2014

Practice/Registration: Thursday, July 24
Power: Primary through Unlimited
Location: Cut Bank International (CTB): Cut Bank, MT
Region: Northwest
Contest Director: Bob Harris
Contact Information: 503-501-1496
E-Mail: flyhran@aol.com

Hoosier Hoedown (Mid-America)

Saturday, August 9 – Sunday, August 10, 2014

Practice/Registration: Friday, August 8
Power: Primary through Unlimited
Location: Kokomo Municipal Airport (OKK): Kokomo, IN
Region: Mid-America
Contest Director: Mike Wild
Contact Information: 765-860-3231
E-Mail: mike.wild@hotmail.com
Website: www.hoosierhammerheads.com

Beaver State Regional (Northwest)

Friday, August 15 – Saturday, August 16, 2014

Practice/Regist: Wednesday, August 13 – Thursday, August 14
Power: Primary through Unlimited
Location: Eastern Oregon Regional (PDT): Pendleton, OR
Region: Northwest
Contest Director: Christopher Branson
Contact Information: 503-803-7167
E-Mail: christopher.branson@comcast.net
Website: www.iac77.eaachapter.org

Upper Canada Open (Mid-America)

Friday, August 15 – Sunday, August 17, 2014

Practice/Registration: Friday, August 15
Power: Primary through Unlimited
Location: Tillsonburg (CYTB): Tillsonburg ON
Region: Mid-America
Contest Director: Bjarni Tryggvason
Contact Information: 5198517887
E-Mail: bjarni.tryggvason@rogers.com
Website: aerobaticscanadachapter3.blogspot.ca

Kathy Jaffe Challenge (Northeast)

Friday, August 15 – Sunday, August 17, 2014

Practice/Regist: Thursday, August 14 – Friday, August 15
Power: Primary through Unlimited
Location: South Jersey Regional (VAY): Lumberton, NJ
Region: Northeast
Contest Director: Ron Mann, John Fellenzer
Contact Information: 914 329 6735
E-Mail: RLMMDPILOT@AOL.COM
Website: www.iac52.org

2014 Oshkosh Air Maneuvers Challenge (Mid-America)

Friday, August 22 – Sunday, August 24, 2014

Practice/Regist: Thursday, August 21 – Friday, August 22
Power: Primary through Unlimited
Location: Wittman Regional Airport (OSH): Oshkosh, WI
Region: Mid-America
Contest Director: Audra Hoy
Contact Information: 920-203-9000
E-Mail: audra_hoy@yahoo.com
Website: www.iacchapter1.org
Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/OshkoshAirManeuversChallenge>

Rebel Regional (Southeast)

Friday, August 29 – Sunday, August 31, 2014

Power: Primary through Unlimited
Location: Everett Stewart Regional (UCY): Union City, TN
Region: Southeast
Contest Director: Mike Rinker
Contact Information: 731-796-0849
E-Mail: Mdr@vaughnelectric.com
Website: www.iac27.org

IAC Open West – 40th Annual Happiness Is Delano Contest (Southwest)

Saturday, August 30 – Sunday, August 31, 2014

Practice/Registration: Friday, August 29
Rain/Weather: Monday, September 1
Power: Primary through Unlimited
Location: Delano Municipal Airport (DLO): Delano, CA
Region: Southwest
Contest Director: Steve De La Cruz
Contact Information: 760-963-6426
E-Mail: DelanoCD@iacchapter26.org
Website: www.IACChapter26.org

Hill Country Hammerfest (South Central)

[Saturday, August 30 – Sunday, August 31, 2014](#)

Practice/Registration: Friday, August 29
Rain/Weather: Monday, September 1
Power: Primary through Unlimited
Location: Llano Municipal Airport (AQO): Llano, TX
Region: South Central
Contest Director: Jeffery Poehlmann
Contact Information: 512-423-5333
E-Mail: jeffery@texas.net
Website: <http://www.iac107.org/>

Apple Turnover (Northwest)

[Friday, September 5 – Saturday, September 6, 2014](#)

Practice/Registration: Thursday, September 4
Rain/Weather: Sunday, September 7
Power: Primary through Unlimited
Location: Ephrata Municipal (EPH): Ephrata, WA
Region: Northwest
Contest Director: Peggy Riedinger
Contact Information: 206-783-5141
E-Mail: iac67president@gmail.com

East Coast Aerobatic Contest (Northeast)

[Friday, September 5 – Sunday, September 7, 2014](#)

Power: Primary through Unlimited
Location: Warrenton–Fauquier Airport (HWY): Midland, VA
Region: Northeast

Harold Neumann Barnstormer (South Central)

[Saturday, September 6 – Sunday, September 7, 2014](#)

Practice/Registration: Friday, September 5
Power: Primary through Unlimited
Location: New Century AirCenter (IXD): Olathe, KS
Region: South Central
Contest Director: Greg Shetterly
Contact Information: 913-486-8498
E-Mail: Halfreversecuban8@gmail.com
Website: www.iac15.org

The Bill Thomas U.S./Canada Aerobatic Challenge (Northeast)

[Saturday, September 6 – Sunday, September 7, 2014](#)

Practice/Registration: Thursday, September 4 – Friday, September 5
Rain/Weather: Monday, September 8 – Tuesday, September 9
Power: Primary through Unlimited
Location: Olean Municipal Airport (ole): Olean, NY
Region: Northeast
Contest Director: Pat Barrett
Contact Information: 716-361-7888
E-Mail: cbpbmb@aol.com
Website: IAC126.blogspot.com

Rocky Mountain “OYSTER” Invitational Aerobatic Contest (South Central)

[Saturday, September 13 – Sunday, September 14, 2014](#)

Practice/Registration: Friday, September 12
Glider Categories: Sportsman through Unlimited
Power: Primary through Unlimited
Location: Lamar Municipal Airport (KLAA): Lamar, CO
Region: South Central
Contest Director: Jamie S. Treat
Contact Information: 303-304-7937
E-Mail: jamietreat@q.com
Website: www.iac5.org

Salem Regional Aerobatic Contest (Mid-America)

[Saturday, September 13 – Sunday, September 14, 2014](#)

Practice/Registration: Friday, September 12
Power: Primary through Unlimited
Location: Salem–Leckrone Airport (KSLO): Salem, IL
Region: Mid-America
Contest Director: Bruce Ballew
Contact Information: 314-369-3723
E-Mail: bruceballew@earthlink.net

2014 US National Aerobatic Championships (South Central)

[Sunday, September 21 – Friday, September 26, 2014](#)

Practice/Registration: Saturday, September 20
Rain/Weather: Saturday, September 27
Glider Categories: Sportsman through Unlimited
Power: Primary through Unlimited
Location: North Texas Regional Airport (KGYI): Sherman, TX
Region: South Central
Contest Director: Gray Brandt
Contact Information: 970-948-0816
E-Mail: graybrandt@yahoo.com
Website: <http://nationals.iac.org/>

Ace's High Aerobatic Contest (South Central)

[Saturday, October 11 – Sunday, October 12, 2014](#)

Practice/Registration: Friday, October 10
Power: Primary through Unlimited
Location: Newton City Airport (EWK): Newton, KS
Region: South Central
Contest Director: Ross Schoneboom
Contact Information: 316-519-2079
E-Mail: schoneboomr@prodigy.net
Website: <http://www.iac119.webs.com/>



“Best Box?” Not So Fast!

The perfect bull’s-eye

BY DJ MOLNY

IN THE MARCH 2014 ISSUE OF SPORT AEROBATICS, Gary DeBaun boldly proclaimed the box at Borrego Springs to be the “World’s Greatest Aerobatic Box.” Sorry, Gary, but in my not-so-humble opinion, it’s not even the best box west of the Mississippi.

Consider, dear friends, the IAC Chapter 12 box in Sterling, Colorado.

The center of the box is an irrigation pivot—a perfect bull’s-eye, if you will. The box is parallel to the section lines, which run precisely north-south/east-west. An east-west road points directly at the irrigation pivot, and runs to the horizon. Since our X-axis is north-south, that road forms an excellent reference for center box positioning.

On the arid eastern plains of Colorado there are no pesky trees, dense vegetation, or haze to obscure the

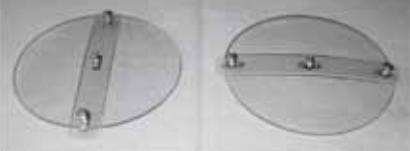
pilot’s view. And the box is positioned just a few hundred yards from the thresholds of two runways, which should be very comforting to any competitor who feels a sudden need to return to terra firma.

Our markers are made of white plastic-covered fabric, with each leg measuring 8-by-20 feet. We anchor each marker to the prairie soil with about a dozen custom-welded rebar stakes, passing through reinforced grommets. This system has withstood gale-force winds on multiple occasions. Transcontinental jet pilots reportedly use our box as a visual waypoint, and astronauts aboard the International Space Station have reported sightings. I can neither confirm nor deny rumors that sunlight reflecting off the box markers has occasionally blinded DOD spy satellites.

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MEET A MEMBER

BY GARY DEBAUN, IAC #4145

Jim Doyle

IAC 20312
Occupation: Airframe stress engineer
Chapter affiliation: Chapter 24
Age: 47
E-mail: chopmo65@gmail.com



GD: Jim, first things first, tell us how you got started in aerobatics.

JD: My dad built an S-1C Pitts when I was very young. He hangared it at Oak Grove in Fort Worth, Texas, during the '70s so I thought all pilots were aerobatic pilots. In the mid '90s my wife and I took an aerobatics course from Hart Air in Long Beach, California, flying their Robin 2160s. We learned a lot and had a blast! Flying the Skybolt after 13 years of building made aerobatics part of my life.

GD: Where was your first contest? What did you fly and how did you do?

JD: My first contest was a Two Design contest in Giddings, Texas, run by IAC Chapter 25 in 2008. They had several Decathlons available for Primary and Sportsman and a separate category for RV aircraft. I flew a Decathlon with Jeff Stoltenberg as my safety pilot. I took first in Primary and made a lot of new friends. It was a great way to experience competition aerobatics for the first time.

GD: Who, if anyone, has been your mentor into the world of aerobatics?

JD: I'd have to say Dan Clark is my aerobatic mentor, but I've learned a lot from his brother, Pat, as well. Dan is my coach, and Pat keeps me safe. I am very grateful to benefit from their experience.

GD: I know you just bought a nice-looking Pitts. Will that be your primary competition machine or will you still go with your Skybolt?

JD: This year I am going to stay in Sportsman with the Skybolt because I think the Bolt "shows" better in that category. Maybe next year I'll campaign the S-1C in Intermediate. I traded a Luscombe for the Pitts because I thought I'd fly a Pitts more. I was right!

GD: If you could have your choice of any aerobatic aircraft out there today, what would it be and why?

JD: The modified Pitts I am currently building. There is nothing more satisfying than doing aerobatics in something you've built. I like the compactness of the Pitts and the redundancy in the externally braced structure. The new Pitts will have large pressure-balanced ailerons and a tapered-rod landing gear. I hope to parlay the S-1C into a new engine for it.

GD: What is your favorite contest?

JD: The Lone Star Aerobatic Championships at GYI is my favorite. The belt buckle trophies are beautiful, the facilities are outstanding, and the box is the same box used for the Nationals.

GD: Do you prefer wheel landings or three-pointers?

JD: I always three-point the biplanes but usually wheel-landed the Luscombe when it was gusty. My preference is three-pointers.

GD: Do you listen to music while you are flying acro?

JD: During aerobatics I listen to the engine and the airplane as best I can, so no music. I have listened to music on cross-country flights to help the time pass.

GD: Do you have any other interests outside of aviation?

JD: Whatever activity my wife, Pam, and my daughter, Darcy, would have me do. I love being with them.

GD: Have you set any aerobatic goals? What are they?

JD: I plan to keep things fun and keep myself challenged. I'd like to build a Bücker Jungmeister someday. It is quite a builder's project!

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