

OCTOBER 2019

SPORT *Aerobatics*

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE of the INTERNATIONAL AEROBATIC CLUB



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COVER

ON THE COVER: Beautiful Christen Eagle II lined up and ready for a regional contest.
Photo by Camden Thrasher

ABOVE: Debby Rihn-Harvey putting her Cap 232, *Hurricane 2* through its paces.
Photo courtesy of Andy Steineke.

Sharing a Passion for Sport Aerobatics

BY LORRIE PENNER, IAC 431036

AS THE OCTOBER ISSUE of this magazine was coming together, I had to draw the obvious conclusion that our contributors are sharing their passion for the sport of aerobatics and watching out for each other. From Debby Rihn-Harvey's 41 years of flight instruction to Wes Lui's thoughtful article on judges giving the pilot the benefit of the doubt, we all endeavor to be part of an environment that boosts others' confidence and creates space to find enjoyment and accomplishment in aerobatics.

Jim Bourke, chairman of the Membership Committee, describes his first experience in competition aerobatics with IAC CH77 member Robert Toppel, who mentored him through

the Ephrata, Washington, contest. With Robert's coaching and guidance, including flying through the sequence twice with him, Jim credits Robert with his eventual success at the contest and winning the Best First Time Sportsman trophy.

Then we move to reflections on the MAC80 contest in which the senior airmen are encouraged by the next generation. Sometimes just hearing stories of those up-and-coming, fresh-faced college students gives us all reassurance that our sport and the future of aviation and aerobatics is bright. Thank you to the seasoned and the fledgling among us for keeping passion's flame burning. **IAC**

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

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How the Competition Has Changed Over the Years

BY ROBERT ARMSTRONG, IAC 6712

GREETINGS, IAC MEMBERS!

The time of this writing is in that space where information and news will be well-covered before this magazine gets to you. The U.S. Nationals will have concluded just a week or so back and the 2019 World Aerobatic Championships is probably old news.

However, not to let time win, congratulations to the U.S. Unlimited Aerobic Team! After overcoming some of the big hurdles required for a tremendous performance, board member Rob Holland comes home with a gold, as well as a bronze medal in Unknown flights, and has carved his name on the 4-Minute Free again! And the combined hard work and perseverance from Rob Holland, Mark Nowosielski, Craig Gifford, Jim Bourke, Krysta Paradis, and A.J. Wilder earned the United States the silver team medal. Congratulations to the entire U.S. team! We are so very proud of you. Full results can be viewed at www.CIVA-Results.com.

Surprise — I am not a devotee of social media. So when I received a cross-posted email thread of interest, I fumbled through and logged on to see what was generating such activity. It was a posting of sequences from 1988. This simple post did something interesting: It got many members'

attention, and they responded. As I followed the exchange, it was interesting that many of the member comments mirrored topics and ideas that I feel as well. Information was presented that created new questions. There were interesting posts that showed how a popular sport that started with inexpensive equipment and good participation dealt itself a near death with cost escalation across the board and other expectations.

Several observations were made during the discussion of airplanes and the need for new and more expensive equipment, and I will add some. One commenter noted that the Russians were all flying Extra airplanes in the WAC. It may be questioned that they want "better" planes than the traditional mount, so I did more studying and offer this: The Su-26 made its debut in world competition in 1988. During the early 1990s it evolved into a great machine; when I first flew a Sukhoi, it was quite interesting to have a flight envelope with practically no speed or g limits. Now these airplanes are all nearing 30 years of age, which has taken a toll on the remaining fleet. It is true that there is a finite life to almost every structure, so replacement became inevitable.

What was that all about? It is the same with the aircraft fleet in the United States. As the complexities of aerobatic sequences placed higher stress on both the pilots and the planes, many were not interested in (or capable of) spending the money and time, so they opted for something else. The planes are still in a hangar, just not actively flown in competition. Many of these owners/members are still very active as judges at regional contests and as chapter leaders.

The main interest in this thread was how the competition has changed over the years. Yes, it has, and some changes were made to issues multiple times (think rules). Some changes can be reviewed as good and others even

corrected themselves once the changes to rules went into effect.

The use of K to rank the difficulty of a sequence is interesting, as the evolution of reducing the number of figures in programs has hidden agendas. To some it was an effort to reduce the time required to conduct a contest. To others, using the first as a shield, it was a method to attempt gaining an advantage. The "bonus" program saw a short life, thank goodness.

To equate K to difficulty and the reasons the complex figures evolved can be interesting. To give an example of a K fail, a Decathlon can do an excellent loop. A Decathlon can do an excellent 4-point roll. Now, how many Decathlon pilots will say that their plane can do a 4-point roll on the top of a loop? But this would be lower K.

When the number of allowed figures for the Unlimited Freestyle was fixed at 9, there was a need for increasing the "K" in each figure. This is when the super eight, the N figure, and the Double Humpty were created. They were in no way making the flight any better, only moving the K into a fewer number of figures. This has the direct consequence of requiring more from the aircraft to complete a sequence.

We will be conducting the IAC fall board of directors meeting in early November. In this meeting, we will have a presentation and review of the revised IAC rulebook. This is not a final word. I anticipate that the board will direct that we present to the members and open a comment period for all to engage. Please follow and let all board members know your feelings at that time.

The IAC board of directors works for the membership. Please communicate with us.

Safe flying and gentle winds. **IAC**

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

TOP STORY

New IAC Chapter 134, the Yooper Loopers



ROGER BENTLAGE, IAC 16398, is the passion and brains behind IAC Chapter 134. Roger pulled together a group of 17 charter members from the Marquette County Flying Club and EAA Chapter 850. The group had its first official charter meeting on Saturday, September 7, 2019, at Sawyer International Airport (SAW) in Gwinn, Michigan.

Appointed IAC Chapter 134's first president, Roger's interest and passion for aerobatics began in the 1990s when he purchased a Christen Eagle II. For the next 10 years he enjoyed casual aerobatics but watched the IAC activities with interest. In 1998, the Pitts S-2C was introduced, and Roger took delivery of No. 5 in 1999. By then an active member of IAC Chapter 88 in southeast Michigan, he flew competitively for several years.

In 2003 he retired his business activities and decided to build a Van's RV-7. He sold the Pitts to make time and hangar space for the project. The RV first flew in May 2008, and although it was unpainted at the time, it was a beautiful aircraft.

After moving to Marquette, Michigan, he figured he was spending too much time at home since his wife suggested he should get back into aerobatics. He agreed and began looking for a safe place to practice.

The area surrounding SAW is rocks and forest. There is no place to put down or anyone to get you if you bail out. With the support of airport management and tower personnel, and nine months of working with the FAA, he was awarded a waiver within the Class D airspace. The waiver runs the length of the 12,300-foot by 3,300-foot runway.

To test the waters of interest, Roger ran a practice event the second weekend of May 2019, inviting Michigan and neighboring Minnesota and Wisconsin EAA/IAC members to join the fun.

According to Roger's message after the event, it was a roaring success. The yet-to-be-formed chapter's charter members and EAA 850, along with the flying club, saw aircraft come in from Chicago; Appleton, Wisconsin; and local Michigan pilots, as well as several drive-ins. Saturday had beautiful weather, and Sunday was even more spectacular. Airport management made available their resources, such as hangar storage and a large training room for briefing. The local FBO, Boreal Aviation, supported the event

behind the scenes with a continental breakfast, barbecue, line support, and A&P mechanics standing by if needed.

With the practice day success, the group decided to go ahead with the formation of a chapter and went through EAA chapter coordinator Serena Kamps to get all the paperwork in order and solidify the new chapter.

The charter members agreed at their September meeting that they officially would be known as the Yooper Loopers. For those unfamiliar, a Yooper is a person who is native to Michigan's Upper Peninsula. Once a Yooper, always a Yooper, even if they move somewhere else. They will always come home as often as possible.

Welcome, IAC Chapter 134, the Yooper Loopers!





COLLEGIATE AWARDS

AT THE IAC MEMBER GATHERING AND DINNER on Friday, July 26, IAC Collegiate Program Chair Jordan Ashley presented individual and team collegiate trophies for the 2018 season.

The Team Championship trophy was presented to members of the University of North Dakota aerobatic team for the first-place win over Metropolitan State University of Denver. The win was very tight, with total scores from UND of 84.70 percent and MSU of 84.06 percent. Wow, what a battle!

Individual collegiate trophies went to first-place winner Jarrett Croy with 83.05 percent, second place to Sam Robinson with 81.47 percent, and third place to Liz Birch with 81.38 percent.

The collegiate competition program is intended to increase flying safety and encourage interest in aerobatics among college-age students. It is the intent of this program to sharpen pilot skills in the categories where they can be most rewarded in terms of pilot ability and collegiate recognition. The program is also intended to be a springboard for competitors to continue their pursuit of aerobatics upon leaving the college environment.

CONGRATULATIONS, DAVID MOLL

BY LYNN BOWES, IAC 14305

CONGRATULATIONS TO DAVID MOLL, IAC 8237 and member of Chapter 80 in Lincoln, Nebraska, for earning the Wright Brothers Master Pilot Award from the FAA. David has been an active pilot for 51 continuous years, from flying business jets to flying his Christen Eagle and countless airplanes in between. He soloed on June 17, 1968, immediately after his 16th birthday, enrolled in an aviation program at Mankato State College in Minnesota, and began a long aviation career during which he has logged 11,600 flight hours.

David has been the contest director for several of the Midwest Aerobatic Club Chapter 80 regional events and was active as its president for a number of years. In 2014, David attended the National

David and Nancy Moll and Roger Zimmerman, the Lincoln FSDO manager. David is a member of the pilot crew in the Duncan Aviation Flight Department in Lincoln, Nebraska. His wife, Nancy, also a pilot, is an *assistant project manager* for Duncan Aviation.

Intercollegiate Flight Association competition, SAFECON, in Salina, Kansas, where he made a presentation to students on the advantages of spin and upset training and entry into aerobatic competition. He subsequently made contact with leaders in Kansas State University Polytechnic Campus at Salina and helped them to form a collegiate team whose students competed in several regional events, including the specially organized Collegiate Challenge, a Primary/Sportsman Only contest in McPherson, Kansas, in 2015.

When asked what made him want to start flying, David said, "My father had an airplane, and at 16 you wanted to try as many things as you can. We didn't have cellphones or iPads; you actually had to go out and do something."

When asked about his plans for the future, David replied, "I will continue to fly until it is no longer enjoyable. Work is supposed to be fun, and when that stops, you get out of the cockpit."

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SAW REVO Roars to Life

RECIPIENT OF THE 2015 Curtis Pitts Memorial Trophy

Eddie Saurenman is in the testing phase of a project begun in 2016. The unlimited lightweight aerobatic monoplane is called the SAW REVO. Combining advanced aerodynamic technology with the latest composite construction technologies has resulted in an extremely lightweight aerobatic airplane unlike anything available on the market.

The SAW REVO prototype is operating with a Rotax 912 80-hp engine. Eddie said that the project started off as a little science experiment for himself. He set out to prove that a two-stroke 582 engine with fabric-covered wings could compete in the Unlimited category and win against the half-million-dollar fire breathers with their O-540 Lycoming engines. The project has morphed somewhat from the original idea.



Although it wasn't specifically planned to fit the LSA category planes, Eddie mused that it might have made it except for the LSA rules of 45 knots maximum stall in the landing configuration. The gross weight, originally estimated at 750 lbs., is 850 lbs. At the moment, the predicted limit load factors of +8.0 to -8.0 should remain. Those g loads may change slightly when the prototype makes its maiden flight and goes through static proof load testing.

During high-speed taxi tests at 75 mph, Eddie found that the prototype had excellent elevator authority and a powerful rudder. Aileron authority comes on line relatively quickly as well. Right now, the biggest thing is getting the propeller set and focusing on getting the prototype flying. Eddie is not in a big hurry because, "You don't want to be in a hurry. The real work begins when you finish the build, particularly with a new design. Keep the risk low for the pilot and the plane."

Several of the most interesting design features include the oversize control surfaces, which have been designed for aggressive maneuvering at lower airspeeds, the full-flying

vertical tail with no vertical stabilizer, and the ailerons that extend and include the outer wing tips.

Although the Rotax 912 powers the prototype, other engine options will be available on the production aircraft. Initial startup on August 9 went very well and Eddie received a clean bill of health on the FAA inspection. FAA designated airworthiness representative (DAR) Tim Wilson issued the airworthiness certificate on August 15.

Eddie gives recognition to Orange Aircraft, Aero Speed, Whirlwind Propellers, Grove Aircraft, M.A.D.E. STL, Bob Hamilton, and Scott Crandlemire for all their efforts, considerations, and contributions to making the SAW REVO a reality. Orange Aircraft will be doing the serial production of the SAW REVO in Breda, Netherlands.

As a kid of 17, Eddie was already dreaming of providing a world-class capable airplane for grassroots pilots with an affordable price tag.

His aviation career started in 1975 working for Aerotek in Albuquerque, New Mexico, building 15-meter composite sailplanes with mentor George Applebay. Over the next several years, Eddie worked at many of the major aircraft manufacturing companies in Wichita, Kansas, such as Cessna, Beechcraft, Learjet, Raytheon, Bombardier, Helio Aircraft and others.

Eddie's passion has always been aerobatics and aerobatic aircraft design. He has designed and modified airplanes for a number of today's premier airshow pilots. These modifications include wing design, tail design, fuselage modification, control system modifications, and installation of turbojet engines as auxiliary thrust units. When you see John Klatt's *Screamin' Sasquatch*, the Yak-110, Kyle Franklin's *Dracula*, Sean Tucker, Rich Goodwin, Mike Wiskus, Greg Poe's Edge, the Pitts S-2C, and Skip Stewart's airplanes, you are seeing Eddie Saurenman's considerable expertise in action.



IAC Board of Directors Fall Board Meeting and EAA Hall of Fame

IAC'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS will meet at the EAA Aviation Museum in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, on Wednesday, November 6, and Thursday, November 7, 2019, for its annual fall board meeting. The meetings will begin at 8:30 a.m. and run all day.

The fall board meeting agenda will include a number of important issues:

- 2020 rule change and Known sequence recommendations
- Fiscal year 2021 budget
- IAC activities at EAA AirVenture Oshkosh 2020 – the 50th anniversary of the creation of the IAC
- Review of IAC programs and activities
- U.S. Unlimited and Advanced Aerobatic Team efforts in 2019 and 2020

The agenda documents for the meeting can be found at www.IAC.org/meeting-docs. Member login is required to access them. Look for the documents for the fall 2019 IAC board of directors meeting. All documents will be downloadable individually or in a complete agenda book for those who wish to review it all easily.

Member comments are always welcome and can be directed to your regional director. A list of the directors and their contact information is in the agenda documents and can be found online at www.IAC.org/yellow-pages.

The EAA Sport Aviation Hall of Fame ceremony takes place on Thursday, November 7, 2019, beginning with a reception at 6 p.m., followed by dinner at 7 p.m. The IAC will be inducting John Morrissey to the IAC Hall of Fame for his significant contribution to aerobatics.

All are invited to attend the induction ceremony. Tickets are \$50 each (plus \$2.50 tax) and include the ceremony and full-service dinner. Questions can be directed to Jane Smith at jsmith@eaa.org or 920-426-6823. **IAC**

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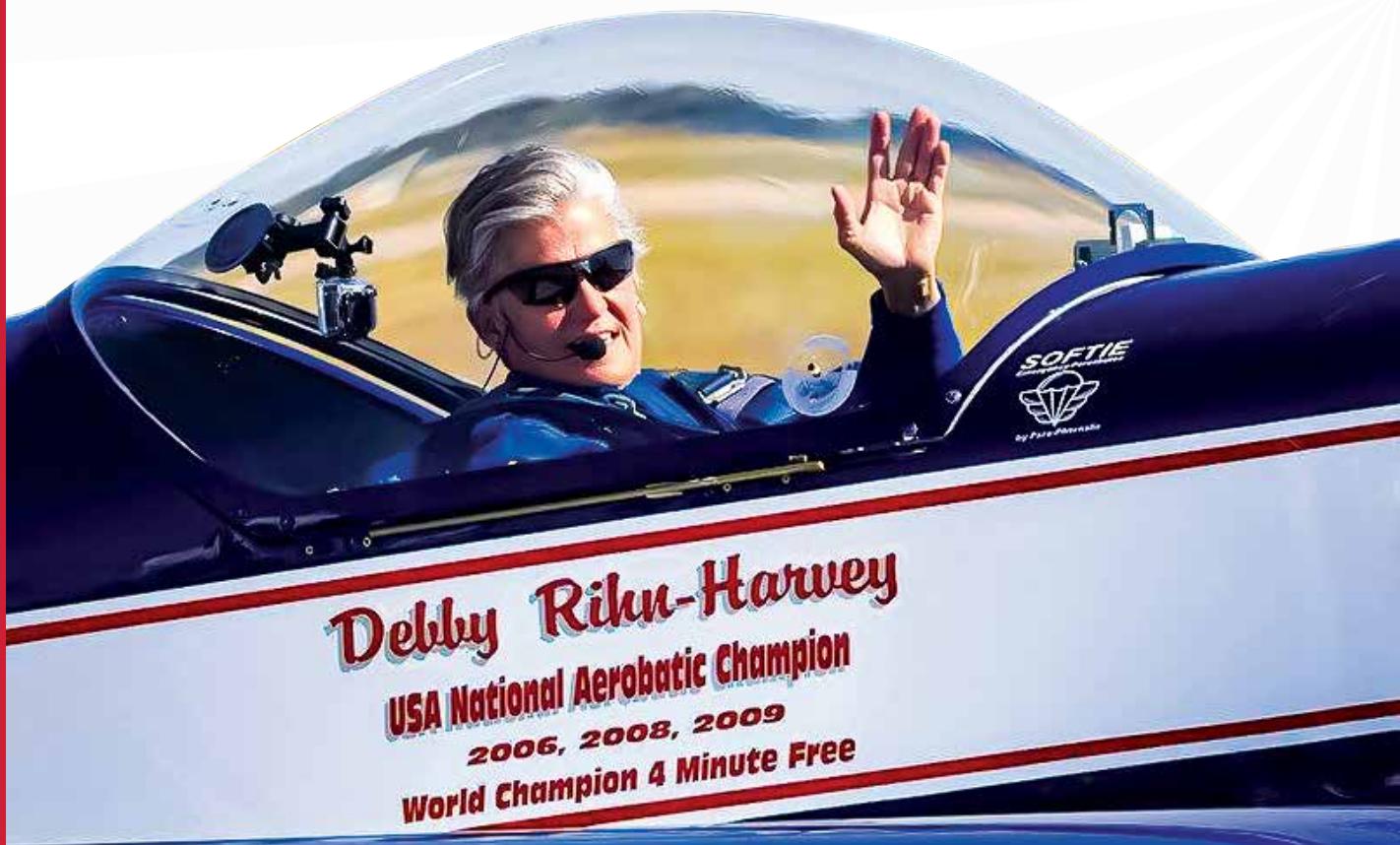


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PUTTING A *Spin* ON AEROBATIC TRAINING

Handling the Airplane in any Situation or Attitude

BY RACHEL ASHLEY



Debby Ruhn-Harvey

USA National Aerobatic Champion

2006, 2008, 2009

World Champion 4 Minute Free



D

EBBY RIHN-HARVEY is arguably recreational aviation's greatest advocate. She's done it all, from being a top aerobatic competitor to volunteering with Women in Aviation and the Ninety-Nines.

She's kind of a big deal in general aviation for everyone, both women and men, which makes perfect sense when Debby tells you she's passionate about promoting the diversity of aviation.

Since she retired from being a captain at Southwest Airlines, Debby has been at Harvey & Rihn Aviation almost every day. Harvey & Rihn — Debby's flight school — teaches everything from private to ATP, including CFI, tailwheel, upset recovery, and aerobatics. And it has been doing it for 41 years in La Porte, Texas.

When I was finally able to steal an hour of her time at EAA AirVenture Oshkosh 2019, Debby had just wrapped up two solid weeks of promoting aviation. She was also midconversation with one of the many IAC members trying to catch up with her before the week was done. The hour she spent with me was the longest I've ever seen her sit still.

Debby has been flying pretty much her entire life. Her grandfather, father, and brothers were all aviation enthusiasts and pilots, but even though she was flying in her teens alongside them, Debby took a nonaviation route with her career at first. Flight was calling, though, and she couldn't ignore it. "It's in my blood," she said in the *Skydancers* documentary film shot in 2013 at the World Aerobatic Championships in Sherman, Texas.



Harvey & Rihn Aviation, La Porte, Texas. Est. July 1, 1979.

After doing some instruction in her free time, she left her career in health care behind and joined Southwest Airlines, where she would stay for the next 27 years, operating the flight school on the side.

ACCORDING TO DEBBY, THERE ARE THREE THINGS THAT CAN MAKE YOU A BETTER, SAFER PILOT: LEARNING THE FULL ENVELOPE OF YOUR AIRPLANE, DISCOVERING YOUR PERSONAL CAPABILITIES, AND FIGURING OUT HOW TO CATCH A PROBLEM BEFORE IT BECOMES CRITICAL.

THREE ELEMENTS OF BEING A BETTER, SAFER PILOT

Aerobatics is part of Debby's school and her life as a pilot because safety is important to her, she said. According to Debby, there are three things that can make you a better, safer pilot: learning the full envelope of your airplane, discovering your personal capabilities, and figuring out how to catch a problem before it becomes critical.

"We encourage all of our students to do spins and a little bit of upset recovery," Debby said. "It's hard not to do aerobatics or want to do some if you're surrounded by it. You see people out doing it, coming back smiling and happy. People don't get that false impression that it's scary and dangerous and it'll hurt you."

The school teaches all kinds of students, both local and just passing through the area. She said it's listed in overnight books in Houston, and some students drop in for a couple days of instruction or a few lessons.

Debby learned aerobatics from her late husband Eoin Harvey. Her first lessons were in a Cessna 150 Aerobat just a year before the school opened. As soon as she had the basics mastered, she began teaching and spending time on the weekends coaching away from her home airport.

Over time, she developed a pretty straightforward philosophy about aerobatics: Even a little bit of aerobatic training makes a more proficient pilot. And beyond that, competition aerobatics grows and stretches pilots in new ways.



PERSPECTIVES ON LEARNING AEROBATICS

CONFIDENCE AT THE CONTROLS

Jerold A. Greenfield wrote an article about what he learned from aerobatics training, and said it helped him build confidence at the controls. "The real advantage of this training is that it demonstrates the gravitational forces that act on your airplane, requires you to understand them, and shows you how to deal with them," he said.

ELIMINATING DISCOMFORT OF DIFFICULT LANDINGS

Rick Durden wrote in an AVweb.com article that he took an aerobatic lesson in order to improve his landings. "Part [of training] is learning where to look to get the information you need as to where the airplane is going – you establish reference points that allow you to make the airplane go where you want it to," he said.

REDUCING FEAR OF THE UNKNOWN

California air show performer Spencer Suderman told AOPA that unusual attitude training takes the fear out of the unknown. "If you learn unusual attitudes you will be comfortable when there are unknowns," he said. "When you don't know what it's like to be upside down in the airplane, you are fearful."

UPSET RECOVERY AND SPINS SHOULD BE MANDATORY TRAINING

Many flight schools, both foreign and domestic, highly recommend aerobatic training before students get into the habit of keeping the aircraft far from its performance margins. Students should have the opportunity to experience the limits of the airplane with the safety of an instructor nearby.



Debby getting ready for takeoff with student and brother Scott Furstenburg.

► Women Soar You Soar members gather with Debby around *Hurricane*.



LEARNING TO GIVE YOURSELF A LITTLE GRACE

Debby believes aerobatic training helps you become a life-long learner, competing against yourself, not other pilots. "I think competition really teaches you discipline. It's a discipline whether you do air shows or not," she said. "It can be fun and enjoyable for everyone even though we're all Type A personalities. Really, competition is a competition with yourself. You're putting your skills up against perfection."

When she's in the airplane with students, Debby's goal is to help them see and understand their own mistakes. Many students don't look far enough outside of the airplane to have full situational awareness — they're stuck seeing only what's under their noses, suffering from tunnel vision. Once they relax a little and trust the instructor, she says their field of vision really opens up and allows them to execute maneuvers with precision.

Sometimes her students freeze at the controls and can't relax. Debby carries a stick for such occasions when they need just a "little nudge," she said.

Harvey & Rihn Aviation prefers to give students more than what's required in their training, especially spin training. According to the FAA, more than half of stall or spin accidents happen in the traffic pattern when the aircraft is too low to recover. This is where aerobatic training may be beneficial, albeit not preventive. Rob Mark, author of *Flying* magazine's February 2018 article "The Persistent Threat of Loss of Control," argued that many pilots can't actually articulate the techniques for recovering from stalls, even though they may understand the cause. Many aerobatic instructors would probably argue that even a small amount of upset prevention and recovery training would mitigate and shrink this gap for pilots.

"Our flight school encourages everyone to do spins. We like them to understand what all the controls do and how they affect and aggravate spins. If everything fails, you know what you're capable of as a pilot," Debby said.

I asked Debby what advice she gives to students who are considering aerobatic training. Without hesitation, she said not to learn aerobatics from YouTube, and I laughed nervously. As a millennial, I'm guilty of "learning" things from free amateur videos.

"It's hard to unlearn what was improperly trained," Debby said. "If they learn from someone that's qualified with a curriculum, they start the right way." And she said competition aerobatics gives students a place to use their skills and learn even more.

Debby has no problem keeping her skills sharp. She is still an air show performer, has competed multiple times in the Air Race Classic, and, as of this interview, planned to race at Reno in September this year.

Retirement from the airlines hasn't slowed her down one bit. If anything, she's looking forward to spending more time with her students.

"If I can pass on just a fraction of my experiences to someone else, I'd be happy, because mine have been great," she said. **IAC**

Debby completed the last flight of her 27-year career with stepdaughter Chris Dale in the right seat.



Debby performs at EAA AirVenture Oshkosh 2016 during IAC's "Grass Roots to the Top of the World" themed exhibition.





LEFT TO RIGHT: Craig Fitzgerald, first place Intermediate; Ashton Croy, first time Sportsman; Michael Lents, second place Intermediate; Alex Hunt, third place Sportsman and Grass Roots Flight Medal; Leo Garzon Gonzalez, second place Primary; Michael Forney, second place Advanced; Kiley Lynch, third place Primary; John Ostmeyer, first place Advanced; Daniel Wilmoth, first place Primary; Jon Vanderhoof, third place Intermediate; Ben Bagby, first place Sportsman; Jay Hansen, second place Sportsman; Dick Fennell, third place Advanced.

A New Generation Brings Future Promise for Aerobatics

Midwest Aerobic Championships in Seward, Nebraska

BY DENNIS CRISPIN, EAA 258290

THINGS APPEARED TO BE off to a bad start — rain all night and thunderstorms predicted for the rest of the day. Then, about midmorning, the event organizers opened the hangar doors to discover the rain had stopped and patches of blue sky were appearing overhead. Gentle breezes and comfortable temperatures allowed for a grand day of competition aerobatics.

IAC Chapter 80, also known as the Midwest Aerobic Club (MAC80), holds the Midwest Aerobic Championships in Seward, Nebraska, each June. The club was organized in 1975 to support the aerobatic community in Nebraska and Iowa. It held annual get-togethers at several airports in Iowa before moving the contest to Seward in 1992 to take advantage of a great venue for aeronautical competition.

This year's contest was June 21-23, 2019. Unfortunately, the weather didn't hold. On Sunday, low ceilings canceled competition, so an award ceremony to celebrate the completed Known and Free flights was held before the contestants disbanded.

A significant part of the competition is the collegiate aerobatic teams. Groups representing flying clubs and aviation programs of colleges and universities vie for nationwide ranking.

Two groups participated in the Seward meet. A team of 10 competitors with three ground crew represented the aviation and aerospace program at Metropolitan State University of Denver. They shared a Pitts S-2C. UND Aerospace at the University of North Dakota fielded a team of five with three support personnel. The UND group flew a bright green Super Decathlon.

Some of our MAC80 members had the opportunity to talk to a few of the young people and found their stories fascinating.

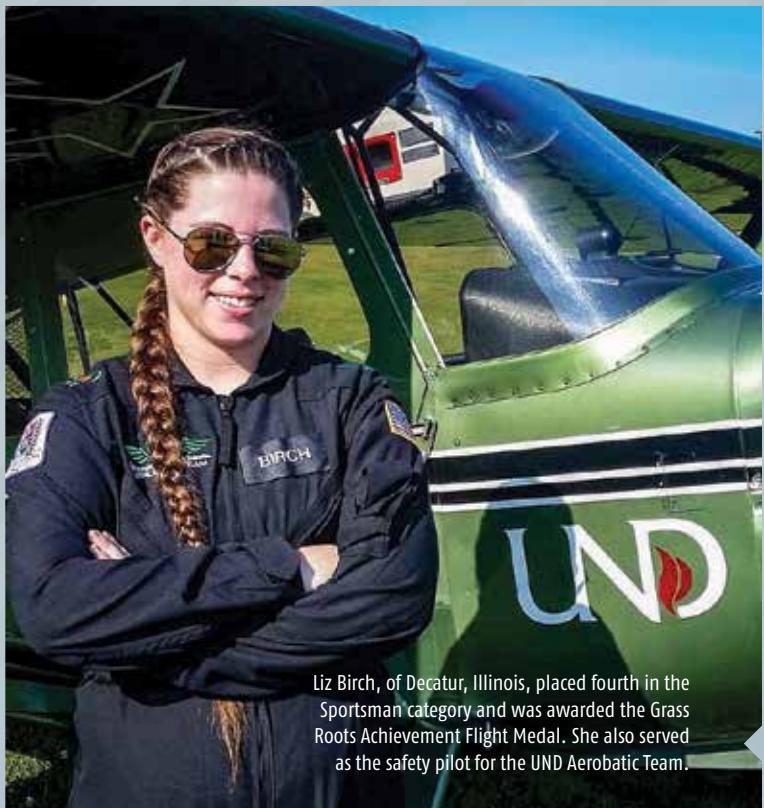
Jenna Coffman was motivated toward an aviation career when she received an EAA Young Eagles ride at age 15. She started flight training shortly after she turned 17 and earned her CFI on her 19th birthday. She began teaching her younger sister to fly. Jenna competes with the MSU team while pursuing a degree in aerospace engineering.

Roger Austin Belleau is a technician in the Colorado Air Guard. He is enrolled in the commercial aviation program at MSU en route to a career in military aviation.

Daniel Wilmoth was a business administration major but found he had neither the interest nor skills for accounting. Upon hearing there is a demand for airline pilots, he transferred to the flight program. His short-term goal is to earn his CFI certificate.

Leo Garzon's goal is simple: He wants a pilot seat on the airlines.

As we talked with the MSU group, we were impressed with how fast they are working their way through the program. A couple of them are flying competition aerobatics only a little more than a year into their flying education and are bringing back first- and second-place trophies!



Liz Birch, of Decatur, Illinois, placed fourth in the Sportsman category and was awarded the Grass Roots Achievement Flight Medal. She also served as the safety pilot for the UND Aerobatic Team.

"WITH A NEW GENERATION AS FINE AS THESE, THE FUTURE OF AVIATION AND AMERICAN SOCIETY IS ASSURED".





The judges line.

When Elizabeth Birch received an EAA Young Eagles ride at age 13, she knew she wanted to make flying airplanes her life work. She received the four-year degree in commercial aviation in just two and a half years and is now employed as an instructor in the UND flight program. Liz was hired by Wisconsin Airlines, reported for training in September, and will be flying in the right seat of a regional jet airliner by Christmas!

Liz came to the MAC80 meet to compete in the Sportsman category and to serve as the safety pilot who rides in the back seat of the Decathlon for the beginning competitors who are not yet qualified for solo aerobatics.

Meeting with these young people, we found them energetic, focused, dedicated, personable, and motivated. With a new generation as fine as these, the future of aviation and American society is assured. **IACI**



MAC80 contest planes in the hangar.

MIDWEST AEROBATIC CHAMPIONSHIPS

Seward, Nebraska (South Central), June 22, 2019
Director: Tom Trumble, IAC Chapter 80
Chief Judge: John Morrissey

PRIMARY CATEGORY

Daniel Wilmouth, MSU
Jose Garzon Gonzalez, MSU
Kiley Lynch, MSU
Roger Belleau, MSU
Landon Diedrich, MSU
Jonathan DeLove, UND
Robert Hollingsworth
Sean Yamaguchi, UND

Pitts S-2C N317JK
Pitts S-2C N317JK
Pitts S-2C N317JK
Xtreme Decathlon N555XD
Pitts S-2C N317JR
Super Decathlon N317R
Christen Eagle I N969AM
Super Decathlon N317JR

SPORTSMAN CATEGORY

Benjamin Bagby
Jay Hanson
Alex Hunt, UND
Elizabeth Birch, UND
Ashton Croy, UND
Vibeke Gaard, MSU
David Lutes
Jenna Coffman, MSU
Andrew Hollingsworth, UND

Pitts S-1T N49329
MX2 N22120
Super Decathlon N317JR
Super Decathlon N317R
Super Decathlon N317JR
Pitts S-2C N317JK
Pitts S-1T N49307
Xtreme Decathlon N555XD
Super Decathlon N317JR

JUDGES

Dick Swanson
Jon Vanderhoof
Jon Morrissey
John Ostmeyer

Craig Fitzgerald
Linda Meyers Morrissey
Betty Stewart
Nick Slabakov

INTERMEDIATE CATEGORY

Craig Fitzgerald
Michael Lents, UND
Jon Vanderhoof
Nick Slabakov, MSU
Samuel Robinson, MSU

Extra 300L N540TD
Super Decathlon N317JR
Pitts S-2A N13LP
Xtreme Decathlon N555XD
Pitts S-2C N317JK

ADVANCED CATEGORY

John Ostmeyer
Mike Forney
Dick Fennell

Pitts S-1T N2301M
Pitts S-1T N49306
MXS N530JK

GRASS ROOTS

Alex Hunt
Elizabeth Birch
Ashton Croy

Jonathan DeLove
Sean Yamaguchi
Andrew Hollingsworth

COLLEGIATE SERIES

Alex Hunt
Daniel Wilmouth
Ashton Croy
Jose Garzon Gonzales
Vibeke Gaard
Kiley Lynch

Roger Belleau
Jenna Coffman
Landon Diedrich
Jonathan DeLove
Sean Yamaguchi
Andrew Hollingsworth

FIRST TIME SPORTSMAN

Ashton Croy

Andrew Hollingsworth

MSU getting ready to fly.





GB1 GAMEBIRD

Designer Philipp Steinbach trails behind
2013 World Aerobatic Champion François Le Vot.





Before Pittsburger

BY LAWRENCE V. DRAKE



IN THE AUGUST ISSUE of *Sport Aerobatics*, Lawrence (Larry) Drake was surprised to see an article by Budd Davisson on a Pitts Special hanging in a Scottsdale Burger King. That was his airplane, the one he rebuilt back in 1994!

Larry flew the Pitts in 1995 in the Basic and Sportsman categories. He didn't like being judged on his flying, which seemed to take the joy out of the freedom of flight for him. He preferred to compete against himself rather than some of the other pilots who took the whole competition thing way too seriously. He continued to fly aerobatics and improved his skills over the next two years in what he calls gentleman aerobatics.

When 1997 rolled around, he sold the Pitts, N-number N20DS, to Mike Headrick, who sold it to Raymond P. Perry less than a year later in 1998. The mystery of why the plane ended up in the Scottsdale Burger King became clear when he found out a little bit about Raymond.

Raymond moved to Arizona in 1980. He was a Burger King franchisee as well as president and CEO of Arriba Mexican Grill. He was a helicopter and fixed-wing pilot for more than 40 years. On July 1, 2012, Raymond was among four people who died in the private helicopter that crashed in the Verde River in Yavapai County, Arizona. During the flight from Sedona to Scottsdale, the helicopter flew into an unmarked overhead cable installed by the U.S. Geological Survey. It seems reasonable that the plane hung in the Scottsdale Burger King as a memorial to Raymond. Inquiries to the corporate owners and family have not received any replies.

Larry has not seen the Pitts in the Burger King himself, but only discovered it was there when someone posted a picture on the Taildraggers Anonymous Facebook page a little more than a year ago. At the time of his discovery, he wrote a short story about the plane, his purchase, and rebuilding the 21-year-neglected Pitts up from a stripped and bare tube skeleton. Following are excerpts from his short story, reprinted by permission. Enjoy!

"It's the real deal and the last thing you'd expect to find hanging over your head in a Burger King, an actual S-1C Pitts Special."

— Budd Davisson





W

SNAP-ROLLS TO BURGERS

alk into the Burger King at the Sun Airpark in Scottsdale, Arizona, and you might be surprised to see a small red, white, and blue biplane hanging from the ceiling. I was astonished to learn an airplane I had owned and restored in the early '90s had been retired to a niche in the ceiling of a burger joint. I wrote the following story in 1995 after completing the restoration of Pitts Special N20DS.

June 1993. The handbill read, "Wanted: Pitts Special. Middle-aged man needs Pitts Special to get through midlife crisis. Need aircraft for under \$15,000." A large, side-view drawing of a Pitts S-1C occupied the middle of the page, so there was no mistaking what I was looking for. I chose hot-pink paper to make sure it would catch attention. The field had been narrowed down to a Pitts after several years of pondering over the right airplane for me. I knew I wanted to fly aerobatics again, and the Pitts was the airplane to do it in, according to my new friends in the IAC.

Back in the '70s, which seems like another life, I owned an aerobatic flight school complete with Citabrias, Decathlons, and a Stearman. Located on a grass strip in California with biplanes, antiques, and warbirds, there was nary a nose gear in sight — the closest thing to heaven a seat-of-the-pants pilot could find. Problem was, it spoiled me for straight and level. Chugging along, wings level, checking out the neighbor's backyard just didn't hold a thrill anymore unless I could see them cutting their grass looking up through my Decathlon's greenhouse window. The recession of the '70s and life's responsibilities charted a new course for this would-be air jockey after trying to hang on to an aviation career with my fingernails.

Two years ago, I got wind of a judges school that the IAC was holding at the local airport here in Buffalo, Minnesota. What luck! Even if I could not afford an aerobatic airplane, at least I could be around them. I decided to attend even though I knew very little about the IAC or what it did. Herb Hodge flew his toy Pitts through all the maneuvers over the chalkboard box as he walked a classroom full of aerobatic enthusiasts through the ins and outs of a contest. It was great, and I got to talk flying with other people, good people, who liked to turn airplanes upside down too. The next thing I knew, I was a member of IAC Chapter 78.

I was hooked, and a search ensued for a steed that would carry me into the competition arena. Well, maybe a pony to start. Problem was, I didn't have \$30,000, \$40,000, or \$50,000 to spend. I started looking at kit planes and plans. It didn't look as though there was anything even close to my price range. I talked about planes like the clipped wing Cub, Citabria, RANS Sakota, RV-3 or -4, Baby Lakes, Smith Miniplanes, and so on, dreaming of the day I would scribe those perfect figures in the sky.

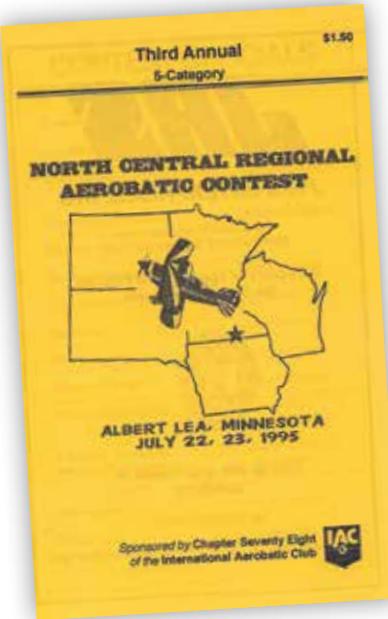
One of the first people I met in Chapter 78 was Phil Schacht, who flies a Pitts S-1S and took an interest in me right away. He kept nudging me toward a Pitts, and I thought it would be great, but who was going to donate the dinero to cover the cost? Then came my first contest at Albert Lea, Minnesota. After seeing those stubby little biplanes lined up side by side with their chests puffed out, each one waiting for its turn to growl through a sequence, I knew I had to have one.

There was plenty of advice to be had. I just mentioned I was looking for a Pitts, and everyone had an opinion of model, engine, and accessories. I came away with two things from that first contest. One, it might be possible to find an old flat-wing, two-aileron S-1C suitable for competition that would fit my pocketbook. Second, they were a great bunch of people. It didn't matter that I didn't have an airplane or any experience in competition; I was accepted by one and all. From the Basic pilots to the Unlimited, they all were willing to share their time and experience with me. That is a rare find in today's world.

With the resolve of locating a Pitts, I scoured the usual sources like *Trade-A-Plane* and *General Aviation News and Flyer*. I made a few trips to look at low-priced S-1C models only to discover how deceiving photographs can be. I was beginning to get discouraged. EAA AirVenture Oshkosh was coming up and I figured it would be a shopping mall of aircraft. Surely I could find what I was looking for there. That is when the hot-pink poster was created. The idea was to tack it up all over Oshkosh and watch as the Pitts leads poured in. I also mailed 50 of them to FBOs within a three-state area asking the recipients to post them on the bulletin boards. Oshkosh came and went, and there wasn't a Pitts



Larry's first contest at Albert Lea, Minnesota, with IAC 78.



Contest program from the IAC Chapter 78 contest in Albert Lea, Minnesota.

an experienced pilot. It seems Otis flew the second time and ground-looped it. From what I hear, it is a familiar story among Pitts owners. At any rate, the experience was frightening enough that the plane went back in the hangar and only came out for engine runups over the next 21 years.

In my earlier life, I attended A&P school and, with my natural attraction to tube-and-rag airplanes, got involved in a number of rebuild projects. Now I tried to summon up some of that ancient knowledge to evaluate Otis' dust-encrusted airplane. The Pitts definitely needed some work. The engine had less than three hours since new but 21 years of sitting. There was surface corrosion on many of the visible parts, and the bottom cowling was missing. As I poked my flashlight down the fuselage, I was delighted to find it looked as good as a three-hour-old airplane should look. The welds appeared professional and straight. In general, the airplane looked pretty sound. It needed a paint job and the engine would have to be checked out, but it had possibilities.

The next weekend, Dave Rhudrud, another Pitts owner, and Tom Tschida, Phil's mechanic, flew over in Dave's Bonanza to take a "look-see" and keep me thinking straight. "Well, it wasn't built to be a showpiece," Tom commented. I had to admit, it was kind of rough. "That pressure carburetor needs to be tested; the diaphragms are probably rotted," Tom said. "An engine sitting that long is probably full of rust. Have you looked into the engine with a borescope?"

S-1C to be found except for a plansbuilt project about 60 percent complete

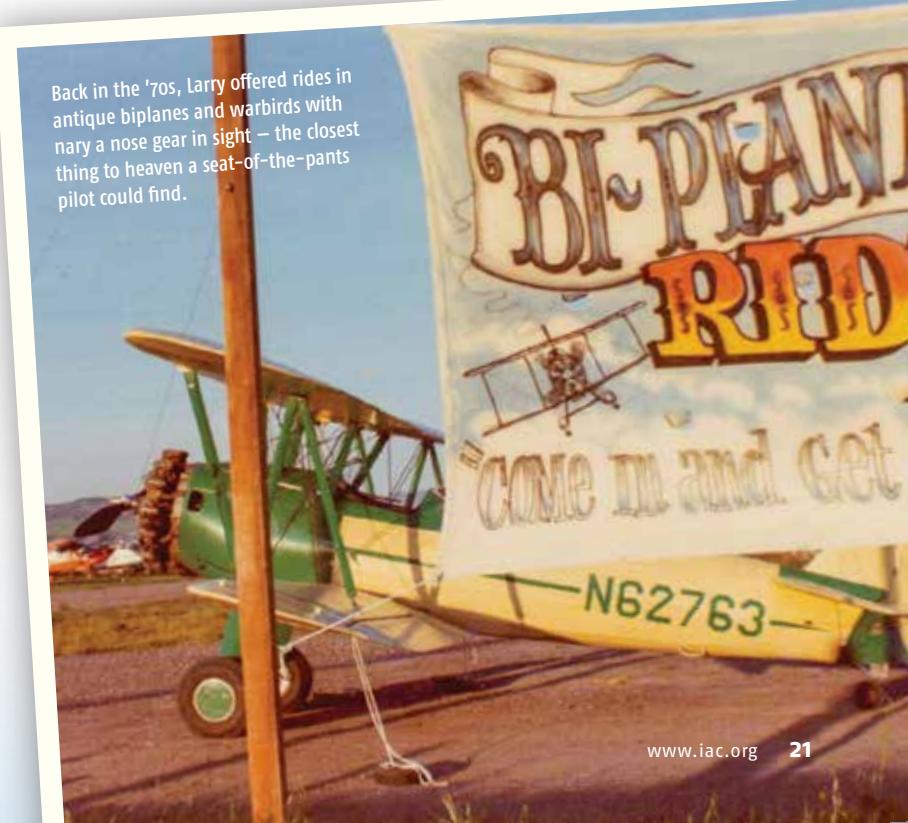
Several months later, after the poster was forgotten, I got a call out of the blue. "Saw your poster on our bulletin board," the voice said. "I know of a guy who has one in his hangar that he hasn't flown for 20 years. He says he is ready to part with it; could be just what you're looking for."

A few days later I was parked in front of a hangar at Anoka County Airport waiting for Otis to show up and give me a peek at his creation. He had built it with the help of some experienced Pitts builders and completed it in 1973. It had been test-flown once by

THE NEXT THING I KNEW, I WAS A MEMBER OF IAC CHAPTER 78. I WAS HOOKED, AND A SEARCH ENSUED FOR A STEED THAT WOULD CARRY ME INTO THE COMPETITION ARENA.

I returned one more time without an airplane, torn between walking away or jumping in. Making a commitment to buy an airplane is hard enough. Throw in a questionable history, possible deterioration, and an unknown amount of work and it would be easier to drop all my hard-earned cash at the horse races — with better odds. Sometimes I get this nagging little voice deep down inside that keeps saying, "Go for it! Go for it!" It may not be the most logical way of making a decision, but it often turns out to be right. I think our brains take in and process information back in some deep crevice of our cerebrum that is far more efficient than our conscious thinking ability. At any rate, I went for it, holding my breath all the way.

A good friend and clipped wing Cub owner, Dick Weber, helped me remove the wings from N20DS and trailer it the 60 miles back to my little workshop. Once in my shop, I started inspecting every inch of my new toy. It was the end of October and I figured I would have it in the air by spring. That is, providing the factory-new engine didn't need an overhaul, the carburetor didn't need rebuilding, the fabric wasn't weak, the frame wasn't corroded, the instruments operated, and I remembered at least a portion of what I had learned in A&P school.





**I KNOW THAT THERE ARE MANY PILOTS
OUT THERE WHO THINK COMPETITION
AEROBATIC AIRPLANES ARE JUST TOO
DARNED EXPENSIVE. HOWEVER, I JUST
PROVED THEM WRONG.**

I was eager to look inside the cylinders and any other orifice I could poke a gooseneck flashlight into. To my great relief, all that poking could not find any engine corrosion. Otis said he had faithfully pulled the engine through regularly and even had it borescoped several years ago. His diligence paid off, because the engine appeared clean. Originally, I thought I could just replace the fuel and oil lines, test the carburetor, do some cleanup, build a lower cowl, and go flying. Paint could come later. Nice plan, but a bit naive. Every time I took something off I found something else that either needed to be repaired, replaced, or rebuilt. I even discovered that, while the wings and tail feathers were covered with Ceconite, the fuselage was

cotton. It is amazing how easily fabric comes off an airframe. I was looking at a Pitts skeleton in no time.

The winter flew by. Almost every night and weekend were spent in the shop. It's not too hard to do when the wind is howling outside with 40-below windchills and the snow is piling up. I would work away on the Pitts, dreaming of my first competition. Almost every part was disassembled, inspected, painted, and put back in place. At first, I was a bit timid about defrocking the old girl, but as I got to know it I became more confident and nothing was beyond scrutiny. Floorboards, bungees, fuel lines, oil lines, tail wheel, rudder pedals, firewall, wings, tail feathers — I got into everything and enjoyed it all. Before I knew it, spring had arrived, and I was a long way from flying. I worked away into summer, pushing

Look closely and you can see the Pitts Special hanging in the top windows of the Scottsdale Burger King.



Larry proudly poses by N20DS after the rebuild was completed in the early 1990s.



hard to get it into the air by the end of July for the Albert Lea contest. No luck! Even though I was able to help Larry Runge as the assistant starter for the contest, it was hard to sit and watch everyone else fly. Looking at all those gleaming airframes inspired me, and when I got home the sanding dust flew from my determination to put a shine on my paint finish.

Near the first of October, Dick and Larry helped me haul the revitalized Pitts to the Buffalo airport, where Terry and Susan Marsh were kind enough to let me use their heated maintenance hangar to put Humpty Dumpty back together again. On October 13, almost a year to the day from when N20DS and I were united, it lifted me off the runway, my heart pounding, knees shaking, heading for the sky, where we both were meant to be.

I know there are many pilots out there who think competition aerobatic airplanes are just too darned expensive. However, I just proved them wrong. One thing I learned from sharing this experience with

others is that there are a lot of neglected Pitts sitting around in the back of hangars waiting to be discovered. Many of them just need a little TLC. Some need a major makeover like mine. The thing is, they can often be had for less than \$20,000. I have less than that in mine after all the work. That's the price of an ultralight! It will be a while before I compete in the Unlimited category. When I get there, I will worry about a better airplane. In the meantime, Basic, Sportsman, Intermediate, look out! **IAC!**

► **LAWRENCE (LARRY) DRAKE**, was born and raised in Montana, and has lived all over the United States. In his early years, he worked as a flight instructor, agricultural pilot, aerobatic instructor, and FBO owner/operator in his flight school, AeroSport Schellville in Sonoma, California, in the late 1970s. He has been a pilot for most of his life, owning and flying a variety of sport and private aircraft, including a Stearman, Pitts, Cubs, Champs, and several amateur-built planes. Larry has been published in dozens of periodicals, written industry-related books, and penned a monthly international newsletter. His latest memoir, Schellville, captures those adventure-filled days. Books, short stories, and other projects can be found on his website at DrakelP.com.

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**WHEN IT COMES TO THE
RULEBOOK, THERE ARE CHANGES
IN THE WIND. THIS SEASON
IAC HAS AN EFFORT, LED BY
REGIONAL DIRECTOR JIM BOURKE,
UNDERWAY TO REDUCE THE SIZE
OF THE RULEBOOK AND/OR MAKE
IT MORE COMPUTER-FRIENDLY.**

What is benefit of the doubt?

BY WESTON LIU, IAC 10467

THE MOST RECENT COUNT on the IAC website's current judges list is 150. Thank you to each and every one of you who has stepped up to support the sport of aerobatics by dedicating your time to training and exercising that training on the judges line at your home chapter contest and throughout the United States and Canada.

A glance at contest listings on the IAC website reveals that 24 contests were flown from March through the end of September. There is more fun yet to come! There are 11 more contests scheduled in October and November.

One topic that has popped up this season is benefit of the doubt. What does that expression in the *IAC Official Contest Rules* mean? Does it mean you grade a competitor carrying a safety pilot less critically than another competitor who is flying in the same airplane solo? Do you grade a competitor who you know is flying an airplane that had engine problems during the precontest practice less critically than his peer flying a new, healthy Extra 330SC?

7.1.1(i) says, "When there is any question about exactly what was observed, the benefit of the doubt shall always be given in the competitor's favor." My computer counts six uses of the phrase "benefit of the doubt" in this year's rulebook, and every use speaks to the imperfect performance of you and me as judges, not of making any allowance for the competitor being less than perfect. My takeaway is that if we as judges stumble, if we blink as the competitor snaps or stops a roll on a point, if we have to really squint to see a Pitts S-1 in the back of the box, etc., the competitor gets the benefit of judges' inability to continuously perform at 100 percent. That said, if we judges are performing at 100 percent for a competitor's flight, that competitor's score should reflect every deviation from perfection that was part of the flight. I read the rulebook as providing guidance that letting

THE COMPETITOR GETS THE BENEFIT OF JUDGES' INABILITY TO CONTINUOUSLY PERFORM AT 100 PERCENT.

some bobbles go since we know the competitor's airplane might not be at 100 percent is not the benefit of the doubt. It is unfair to be Santa Claus on the judges line.

If you are new to aerobatic judging and would like to see some real-world examples of judging scenarios, you can go to the IAC website, click on the YouTube icon, and navigate to a playlist titled "How Did the Judges Miss That?"

We first started posting these clips with commentary in November 2017, and the playlist has grown to 30 clips. Each starts with a slide showing the figure the competitor flew and the grades awarded by a panel of five to seven judges. Once the figure has been flown, it is followed by a slide asking what you saw. Did you see the initial 45-degree line as being too steep? Was that really a 4-point roll or was it only 3? Until your eyes get used to the speed that the plane is flying, it can be difficult to identify the elements of the maneuver and the accuracy with which it was performed. In some cases, you may have to use rule 7.1.1(i) and give the pilot the benefit of the doubt.

When it comes to the rulebook, there are changes in the wind. This season IAC has an effort, led by regional director Jim Bourke, underway to reduce the size of the rulebook and/or make it more computer-friendly. Jim's goal is to reduce the page count of the book that we need to have in hand at contests by 25 percent or more and make it a document that is easy to search.

Most of us carry the rulebook in our tablet, phone, or laptop, and the current format does not facilitate finding an obscure topic buried in the fine print when one of our friends has a question on contest day, or when you are looking at a revalidation and currency exam question about a situation you may have never seen in real life. A number of us have expressed the desire to see the rulebook lightened. We look forward to Jim's presentation at the fall board of directors meeting November 6-7. Stay tuned. **IAC†**

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Robert Toppel

Mentoring Instrumental in Contest Success

BY JIM BOURKE, IAC 434151

I SHOWED UP AT my first contest in Ephrata, Washington, in 2008 with no clue whatsoever. I had run through the Sportsman sequence, but I did not know anything about judges, the box, scoring, etc. To be quite honest, I wasn't even that good at starting the Russian radial engine in my airplane, a Yak-54.

I met Peggy and Jerry Riedinger, who were very welcoming. They introduced me to the gang. Eventually I was handed off to Robert Toppel, who hadn't been flying for a while, but at the time was very proficient in his Pitts biplane nicknamed *Norma*.

Robert and I talked a bit, and when it became clear to him that I had more aerobatic daring-do than proficiency, he offered to hop in the plane with me and

teach me how to wag into the box. Robert brought along a little blue motion sickness bag, explaining, "Sometimes when other people are flying, I get a little nausea." Looking back on this, Robert placed a lot of trust in me.

We climbed to about 4,500 feet and talked a bit about how things would go during the contest. At that time I did not know all the things I did not know, as they say, but Robert made it easy for me to understand. He told me how I would find out my position in the flight order, how I would be launched, where I would go for the hold, what frequency to listen to, to keep the radio silent until I was called in, and how to set up a base leg. We turned toward the box and dove at a 45-degree angle. The box looked so small! Robert said, "Don't worry about the box, just fly!" so I did some very gentle wags and pulled level at about 2,500 feet.

We ran through the sequence twice. I started feeling nausea about halfway through the second



► Robert Toppel flying in his Pitts biplane nicknamed *Norma*.



Robert Toppel with his grandson.



flight. Humorously, Robert was doing just fine despite my herky-jerky flying. Since it was practice day, Robert suggested I fly one more sequence, this time with him on the ground critiquing me. He told me most of my flying was good, but I should work on hammerheads. I was pivoting at too high an airspeed, which results in a flyover penalty. I think I flew 20 hammerheads for him. Nowadays that would be easy, but back then it was exhausting. I slept off the fatigue and made it to the briefing, nervous but feeling like I was as ready as I would ever be.

Robert's patient mentoring was instrumental in my success at the contest. We looked at the scores after each flight, and I made big improvements by the end of the contest. I scored 80.58 percent overall and won the Best First Time Sportsman award.

I still think about this foundational mentoring experience when I work with new pilots, because I remember how hard it was to dive into the box for the first time. The box used to look so small! Robert was patient and calming. I've tried to mirror that approach.

Everyone seemed so confident, and I felt like I was just pretending to be an aerobatic pilot, but Robert made me feel like I belonged. **IAC**



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SOUTHEAST AERO



Hannah Neil

BY ZINNIA KILKENNY

WE ENCOURAGE AND INSPIRE each other through shared experiences and stories. The Meet a Member column has been lovingly shepherded by Gary Debaun for many years. Finding a replacement wasn't easy, but Zinnia Kilkenny has stepped up to take on the task. She is an IAC member, competitor, and regional judge who lives in beauteous California and flies a Pitts S-2A. Join Zinnia each month as we listen to recounted tales and great adventures.

In her own Meet a Member column in February of 2018, Zinnia said of aerobatics, "Where else could you experience the power and perils of high flying, artistic brilliance, drama, and redemption?"

Hannah Neill, IAC 440946, is a student studying geography at University of Oregon. She holds a private pilot certificate (airplane single-engine land) and is currently pursuing an instrument rating and commercial certificate. She is an IAC Chapter 77 member.

ZK: WHEN DID YOU JOIN IAC?

HN: I joined the IAC about a month ago, in July of 2019.

ZK: WHEN WERE THE SEEDS OF AVIATION SOWN, AND BY WHOM?

HN: My uncle is an airline pilot for United and encouraged me to become a pilot. It was always a silent dream of mine that I was never brave or confident enough to act upon until semi recently. I'll never forget the exact moment that I texted him, "So, I think I want to be a pilot." I flew on an A380 for the first time two years ago, and I was so fascinated that something that massive could leave the ground. I couldn't stop staring at it

while in the gate, and I wanted to know everything about how it worked. So that's the moment I made up my mind that I wanted to be a pilot.

ZK: I UNDERSTAND YOU STARTED FLYING AEROBATICS FIVE MONTHS AFTER EARNING YOUR PILOT CERTIFICATE. HOW DID YOU DISCOVER AEROBATICS?

HN: In May, I won a contest through the YouTube channel Flight Chops, where they flew me out to Manitoba, Canada, and I got to fly in an Extra 300L with IAC member and competitor Luke Penner. It absolutely blew me away, and I chased the feeling of flying inverted ever since I left Canada. There was that little voice in my head that told me I needed to pursue aerobatics.

ZK: YOU SET YOUR SIGHTS ON COMPETITION AND ATTENDED THE CORVALLIS CORKSCREW LAST JULY, INTENDING TO VOLUNTEER AS RECON TO COMPETE THE FOLLOWING YEAR. HOW DID VOLUNTEERING GO?

HN: Numerous pilots told me that volunteering at a competition is the best way to get involved in aerobatics. I expected that I'd probably show up and hand out water bottles or sell T-shirts. I had already been in touch with Steve Vets, as he had advertised a share in his club's Super Decathlon and we had flown together before. The week before the contest, he invited me to sit in for his Sportsman sequence practice. Back at the hangar, I was introduced to Jim Bourke of the IAC Unlimited Team. It didn't take long for him to ask, "Why don't you just compete?" I went from intending to volunteer with zero aerobatic experience to suddenly becoming an aerobatic pilot in a matter of days. It was very fun being on the judges line as a recorder, too! I learned a lot that way and it helped calm my nerves.

ZK: FROM VOLUNTEERING TO COMPETING, HOW DID YOUR FIRST COMPETITION GO?

HN: I couldn't be happier with the way my first competition went. I feel very proud of what I accomplished with such little preparation beforehand. From my first competition flight to



Hannah Neil

my third, I saw drastic improvement in my scores, confidence, and flying. On my first flight I accidentally did some weird version of an Immelmann instead of a half-Cuban-eight, then HZ'd [hard zeroed] the spin and wagged out. By my last flight, I completed the sequence, did every maneuver the best I could, and never HZ'd. It was by no means perfect, but I showed up and just tried it out, and that's all that matters. I went from never having flown aerobatics four days before a contest to placing second out of four in the primary category. Seeing that steady progress and improvement was very important to me. It makes me excited to continue working on aerobatics and expand on what I've learned. I'm at a fantastic starting point.

ZK: SHARE YOUR PROUDEST MOMENT FROM THAT COMPETITION.

HN: My proudest moment was definitely, as I was flying away from the box after commencing

my third and final flight of the contest. I had the biggest grin on my face. Everything had clicked into place. Feeling the progress and the hard work from the past four days manifest in how well my last flight went was the proudest I've probably ever felt in my life, honestly.

ZK: FROM PRACTICE DAY TO THE AWARD BANQUET, WHAT DO YOU ENJOY MOST?

HN: I would say I liked the practice days the most. The excitement building up to the contest, as well as hanging out with and learning from the other competitors, was something I really enjoyed.

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MEET A MEMBER

ZK: FOR THOSE YET TO FLY THEIR FIRST CONTEST, ANY ADVICE?

HN: If you're on the fence about competing and have the time, money, and resources to fly a contest, just go for it! The amount I learned in those four days by just being there, talking to pilots, flying, and making a ton of mistakes is more than I could ever have imagined.

ZK: WHAT ARE YOUR GOALS IN AEROBATICS?

HN: I think I'm just going to take it day by day and see what happens. There's still an incredible amount of learning that needs to be done, but I have an awesome support system in my chapter to help guide me. I pretty much still need to learn the basics. However, I hope to be a safe and proficient pilot, and to compete next year in Sportsman. When I become a CFI next year, I want to take my students up in the Super Decathlon to demystify spins, as well as show them the possibilities and benefits of pursuing aerobatics. I guess those would be my short-term goals!

ZK: DO YOU HAVE A FAVORITE AEROBATIC FIGURE OR COMBINATION?

HN: I love tailsides! Even though I can't do them yet, I've always had a lot of fun riding along for them.

ZK: WHAT POEM, PROSE, OR BATTLE CRY INSPIRES YOU?

HN: "As aggressive as necessary, as smooth as possible, and above all, whatever it takes!" One of my aviation mentors and hangar neighbors, Ray, goes by this motto. He has over 22,000 flight hours and was lieutenant colonel in the Air Force, instructing on the T-38 and B-52. I've learned a lot from him about flying, and I always think of this quote. Especially the "whatever it takes" portion. That's how I get things done.

ZK: AS YOUR JOURNEY CONTINUES, WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE YOUR CONTRIBUTION TO BE?

HN: I want to make an impact on my students as a CFI. I hope to send my students to their checkrides knowing they've been in a spin before and are aware and ready to avoid a stall/spin crash on base to final. I think that by exposing my students to proper upset recovery and spins, I can help train a generation of safer pilots. **IAC**

Krysta Paradis
IAC #435851
2019 USA Unlimited Team Member
IAC Chapter 11 Washington, DC

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WELCOME NEW MEMBERS



MEMBERS ARE THE HEARTBEAT OF IAC, and our heart is beating at a healthy pace. In the last quarter, IAC greeted 102 new members into the ranks of aerobatic competitors, recreational pilots, and enthusiasts around the United States and the world. In addition, we especially recognize the members joining or upgrading to a lifetime membership, demonstrating a commitment to enhance the safety, education, competition, and enjoyment of aerobatics.

LIFETIME	Charles Guthrie	Soeren Daiber	Terrance Nordquist	PENNSYLVANIA
Jim Bourke, Corvallis, Oregon	Robert Mitchell	Brenna Dittmar		James Beasley
Jason Hickox, Ontario, Canada		Sean Goggins		Robert Steich
INTERNATIONAL	ARIZONA	PAUL PESCIETELLI	MONTANA	TENNESSEE
CANADA	August Campbell	Al Van Lengen	Kale Hellwinkel	Troupe Foden- Sparks
Reuben Brown	Jett Campbell		Barnack Kisthard	Angelique Medow
Roberto Sanchez Solowan	Melise Campbell	ILLINOIS	NEBRASKA	William Morgan
Chris Unrau	Scott Campbell	Thomas Baltz	Christine Boggy	Jerry Slaven
Nicholas Wilson	Bill Finnell	James Butler		Nathan Sparks
ICELAND	Stephanie Frazier	Andrew Hollinger	NEVADA	TEXAS
Sigurdur Asgeirsson	Kevin Garland	David Hollinger	Josef Kuhlen	Mark Davis
Valdimar Johann Bergsson	Michael Nicason	Luke Hollinger	NEW HAMPSHIRE	Carl Deckard
	Glenn Roberts	Christopher Kenney	Carl Gustafson	John Letkeman
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MEXICO	Alexander Giryavets	Darin Sanders	Richard Smith	UTAH
Hugo Esnaurizar	Rob Holmes			Joshua Grundberg
	Aram Kurchian	KANSAS	Austin Greenheck	Nate Harris
NORWAY	Bruce Laurie	Emmy Dillon		Joshua Kelson
Lief Andre Moland	Ken Smith	Todd Gaugler	NORTH DAKOTA	VIRGINIA
POLAND	COLORADO	LOUISIANA	Dan Brown	Greta Liebeler
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	Anthony Gilson	Ryan Walker	OKLAHOMA	Eugene St. Clair
SWEDEN	Thomas Horan	MARYLAND	Jone Wise	WASHINGTON
Pär Bergqvist		Ryan Bennett		Edward Hodapp
Göran Elwinge	FLORIDA		MICHIGAN	WISCONSIN
	Zachary Heathcott		Peter Bowers	
UNITED KINGDOM	Matthew Thomas		Jeffrey Nielsen	Druanne Pierce
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		Aiyana Daiber		
UNITED STATES				
ALABAMA	Amanda Daiber	MINNESOTA		
Phillip Box	Marcus Daiber	Jonathan Delone		



STATEMENT OF OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, AND CIRCULATION (Required by 39 U.S.C. 3685). 1. Title of Publication: Sport Aerobatics. 2. Publication No.: 0953-560. 3. Filing Date: 9/9/9. 4. Issue Frequency: Monthly. 5. No. of Issues Published Annually: 12. 6. Annual Subscription Price: \$18.00 in U.S. 7. Known Office of Publication: EAA, 3000 Pobernerry Road, P.O. Box 3086, Oshkosh, WI 54903-3086. Contact Person: Randy Halberg, Telephone: 920-426-6572. 8. Headquarters or General Business Office of the Publisher: Same address as above. 9. Publisher: Jack Pelton, EAA, 3000 Pobernerry Road, P.O. Box 3086, Oshkosh, WI 54903-3086. Editor: Evan Peers, c/o EAA, 3000 Pobernerry Road, P.O. Box 3086, Oshkosh, WI 54903-3086. Managing Editor: None. 10. Owner: International Aerobatic Club, 3000 Pobernerry Road, P.O. Box 3086, Oshkosh, WI 54903-3086. 11. Known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding 1 percent or more of total amounts of bonds, mortgages, or other securities: None. 12. Tax Status: Has Not Changed during Preceding 12 Months. 13. Publication Title: Sport Aerobatics. 14. Issue date for circulation data below: October 2019. 15. Extent and Nature of Circulation (Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months)/No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date): a. Total No. of Copies Printed (4586/4395) b. Paid Circulation (By Mail and Outside the Mail): 1. Mailed Outside-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541 (Include paid distribution above nominal rate, advertiser's proof copies, and exchange copies) (3701/3564). 2. Mailed In-County Paid Subscriptions Stated on PS Form 3541 (Include paid distribution above nominal rate, advertiser's proof copies, and exchange copies) (0/0). 3. Paid Distribution Outside the Mails Including Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Paid Distribution Outside USPS (6464/454). 4. Paid Distribution by Other Classes of Mail through the USPS (e.g., First-Class Mail) (0/0). c. Total Paid Distribution (Sum of 15b (1), (2), (3), and (4)) (4166/4018). d. Free or Nominal Rate Distribution (By Mail and Outside the Mail): 1. Free or Nominal Rate Outside-County Copies Included on PS Form 3541 (0/0). 2. Free or Nominal Rate In-County Copies Included on PS Form 3541 (0/0). 3. Free or Nominal Rate Copies Mailed at Other Classes Through the USPS (e.g., First-Class Mail) (0/0). 4. Free or Nominal Rate Distribution Outside the Mail (Carriers or other means) (0/0). e. Total Free or Nominal Rate Distribution (Sum of 15d (1), (2), (3), and (4)) (0/0). f. Total Distribution (Sum of 15c and 15e) (4166/4018). g. Copies Not Distributed (See Instructions to Publishers #4, (page 3)) (420/377). h. Total (Sum of 15f and g) (4395/4586). i. Percent Paid (15c divided by 15f times 100) (100/100). 16. Publication of Statement of Ownership: Publication required. Will be printed in the October 2019 issue of this publication. 17. I certify that all information furnished on this form is true and complete. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions (including fines and imprisonment) and/or civil sanctions (including civil penalties). Manager: Lorrie Penner, 9/9/19. PS Form 3526, July 2014.

CONTEST CALENDAR



2019 IAC Contest Season Calendar

DATES	HOST CHAPTER	NAME	REGION	LOCATION	AIRPORT
Aug. 3, 2019	78	Doug Yost Challenge	Mid America	Iowa	KSPW
Aug. 9, 2019	67	Can-Am Championship	Northwest	Montana	KCTB
Aug. 16, 2019	52	Kathy Jaffe Challenge	Northeast	New Jersey	KVAY
Aug. 16, 2019	AC3	Canadian National Aerobatic Championships	Mid America	Ontario	CNY3
Aug. 31, 2019	AC7	Rocky Mountain House Contest	Northwest	Alberta, Canada	CYRM
Sep. 6, 2019	67	Apple Turnover	Northwest	Washington	KEPH
Sep. 7, 2019	11	James K. Polk Open Invitational	Northeast	Virginia	KHWY
Sep. 21, 2019	-	U.S. National Aerobatic Championships	National	Kansas	KSLN
Oct. 5, 2019	5	The Clyde Cable Rocky Mountain Aerobatic Contest	South Central	Colorado	KLAA
Oct. 11, 2019	36	Akrofest	Southwest	California	Lo8
Oct. 11, 2019	19	Mason-Dixon Shoot Out	Northeast	Virginia	KFVX
Oct. 18, 2019	107	Texas Hill Country Hammerfest	South Central	Texas	KAQO
Oct. 18, 2019	3	Mark Fullerton Memorial 2019 Bear Creek Bash 2.0	Southeast	Georgia	KRMG
Oct. 19, 2019	12	Las Vegas IAC West Open Championship	South Central	Nevada	OL7
Nov. 1, 2019	23	Sebring 80	Southeast	Florida	KSEF
Nov. 1, 2019	26	Foxy Figures	Southwest	California	KWFJ
Nov. 15, 2019	62	Tequila Cup	Southwest	Arizona	KAQV

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