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SPORT *Aerobatics*

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE INTERNATIONAL AEROBATIC CLUB

AEROBATIC CLUB

Jason Stephens:

The 2008 Unlimited Glider Champion

Farewell to Lisa Popp • Airport Relations Part II

Inside the Air Force Academy's Aerobatic Glider Program

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Unlimited Champion Jason Stephens rolls inverted in his MDM-1 Fox sailplane. Photo by Hiroshi Seo.

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LETTER from the EDITOR

by Reggie Paultk

Reggie S. Paultk

Aerobatics and Gliders

This month was meant to be different. Vicki and I decided that silent aerobatics would be the focus for February. Debby Rihn-Harvey took the Unlimited trophy at the 2008 U.S. Nationals for powered aircraft, and we honored her achievement in the December issue. It got me thinking about the champions from the other categories, and I proposed that we cover gliders in order to reveal facets of our sport that some may be unaware of.

For those who haven't flown them, gliders can be addictive. I began my flight training in gliders, and I feel it was a great way to get my feet wet in aviation. Flying gliders is an experience that can't be described. Once you're released from tow, the quiet solitude is punctuated by the reassurance of a slow descent. It just doesn't compare to powered flight in any way. They are both unique and both enjoyable.

Aerobatics, especially in low-powered aircraft, is all about energy management. Trading altitude for airspeed and vice versa is part and parcel of the aerobatic repertoire. Even if you never fly one upside down, a glider teaches energy management

from the outset. You don't have any other choice. Every second spent in the air is borrowed either from the tow aloft or from whatever means of lift are available to you. How well you manage your energy determines the duration of your flight.

*... a glider
teaches energy
management
from the outset.*

Jason Stephens has taken the Unlimited glider championship at the U.S. Nationals for three years running. When I interviewed him for our story, it was apparent that he loves what he does. As the owner of Estrella Sailport in Arizona, he spends most of his time instructing transition and primary pilots, giving rides, and teaching aerobatics. If you're going to learn the craft of glider aerobatics, who better than Jason Stephens to be your guide?

I had the honor of taking a glider flight with Capt. Erich Kunrath at the United States Air Force Academy for our story on that program. I also had the privilege to meet and fly with some of America's finest in the aerobatic glider program there at the academy. The professionalism and perfection these young men and women demand of themselves shows through, both in their behavior and their flying. ☺

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

PRESIDENT'S PAGE

by Vicki Cruse • IAC 22968
E-mail: vcruse@earthlink.net



Vicki Cruse

Competition Can Bring Out the Best in People

But only if you know who you are competing against

Whether you realize it or not, you are competing in one form or another on nearly a daily basis. You compete in the workplace for the best position and salary. Your kids are in constant competition with one another over anything and everything. Competition generally allows us to improve on what we do. For instance, losing a contract to a competitor who made a better presentation than you usually means you won't make the same mistake again by improving your presentation. Competition inevitably leads to winners and losers, but are they really?

Aviation is an interesting endeavor that brings all kinds of people together who would otherwise never interact. For instance, at a typical contest on the West Coast, we have IT gurus, Silicon Valley execs, heart surgeons, unmanned aerial vehicle pilots, Ph.D. chemists, airline pilots, graphic designers, flight instructors, etc. Where on earth could you assemble such a group and have them all have something in common? Aerobatics tends to appeal to people who have some desire to challenge conventional thinking by flying in a three-dimensional world, where "up

and down" doesn't necessarily mean horizontal flight.

Unfortunately, aviation, and particularly aerobatics, can bring with it arrogance. Sprinkle arrogance with a little competition and you have the potential for disaster. The interesting thing about aerobatic competition, and perhaps competition in general, is that the "egos" don't hang around long. For those of us who have flown competition a number of years, we see types like this move through every few years. In their mind, they are the best, but the judges don't think so. Their fragile egos can't take the loss, and we never see them again. Fortunately these people are few and far between. IACers tend to be amazing people when you get to know them.

I recently found this quote, "The art of winning and losing is the art of learning to laugh at oneself and rise above the negativity." When a winner loses, how he or she acts in public says a lot about that person's character. It is how you carry yourself in the face of victory or defeat that sends a message to the rest of the world. It is often said that in order to win, you have to learn

how to lose. Winners don't lose their temper, but they are usually disappointed in themselves more than anything when they lose. They don't blame someone else for their loss. They enjoy the competition for the pleasure of playing, and perhaps most importantly, they compete with themselves.

In an interview with Debby Rihm-Harvey, the current U.S. National Champion, for the December issue of *Sport Aerobatics*, Debby was asked about competition flying versus air show flying. Her statement about competition flying explains exactly why Debby is a winner: "It is a contest between yourself and perfection, and I enjoy the challenge." She follows this up by answering the question about why she flies air shows, which are often seen as the "egocentric" portion of aviation: "I enjoy air shows because I can promote aviation, aviation safety, and encourage people to follow their dreams."

Those on the periphery of our sport focus on the competition aspect, but to those on the inside, the competition is within ourselves to do the best we can, in any given flight on any given day. Sometimes we win and sometimes we lose, but in the process we meet people of like interests, make lasting friendships, and always learn a little more about ourselves. ☺

*...in order to
win, you have to
learn how to lose.*

NEWSBRIEFS

Higbee Receives President's Award

Bob Higbee of Langley, Washington, received a special President's Award in Seattle, Washington, on December 13, 2008. International Aerobatic Club President Vicki Cruse presented the award in honor of Bob's outstanding performance as the contest director (CD) at the 8th Advanced World Aerobatic Championship (AWAC). The AWAC was a collaborative effort between IAC Chapters 67 and 77 of Washington and Oregon, respectively, and was headed by Robert Bismuth who, along with his executive committee, chose Bob to be the CD for the AWAC held in August 2008 in Pendleton, Oregon. He handled everything with dignity and treated everyone around him with respect and kindness.

"This contest was run very efficiently, and it was a pleasure to be present and act as chief judge," said AWAC Chief Judge John Gaillard of South Africa. "Very pleasant memories will always be associated with this contest. CD Bob Higbee put together a team to run this contest, and all the arrangements with regard to the judging line were excellent and in place at the commencement of the contest. The quality of the cooperation with Bob Higbee and his team cannot be over emphasized, and I would like to place on record my thanks for a job very well done. There were no areas which fell short of requirements or expectations."

"Bob Higbee is the best world championship CD I have ever worked with," said Jury Chief Mike Heuer. "Combining



Bob Higbee (left) and IAC President Vicki Cruse

the ability to delegate effectively, communicate well, work with people, and with a fine attention to detail—which makes or breaks these competitions—Bob inspired the people who worked with him and for him at AWAC this year. I can only hope we will see him again on the international competition scene as we need more people like him. He's a gentleman and dedicated IACer as well."

Lisa Popp: IAC's Do-It-All Executive Director



Wishing her the best for the future

By Vicki Cruse

While the International Aerobatic Club board of directors, chapter presidents, and committee chairmen are aware of the departure of Lisa Popp, the IAC executive director, many members are not. Lisa quietly announced her resignation just after EAA AirVenture Oshkosh, but she remains on a part-time basis until a new executive director can be hired.

Lisa was hired in 1999 by then President Doug McConnell. Her first meeting was the fall IAC board of directors meeting in 1999, and she came onboard full-time in November. She formerly worked for the Sheboygan Falls, Wisconsin, Chamber of Commerce, and she brought more than 10 years of experience in public relations, marketing, and program management to the IAC. At that time she had a bachelor's degree in journalism from Marquette University.

Continued on page 6



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Jason Stephens: the 2008 Unlimited Glider Champion





Reggie Pault

Jason Stephens is not your typical Unlimited aerobatic champion. For the last three years, he has taken the top trophy in his category and managed to dead-stick his airplane back at the airfield each time. Of course, every landing he makes after exiting the box is dead-stick; he flies an MDM-1 Fox high-performance sailplane.

"Lisa has a very understated way of getting people involved. She has a real talent for simply looking at you with a penetrating gaze and expecting that you will volunteer for whatever task she has set in front of you. She was instrumental in roping me into doing the scheduling of speakers for AirVenture a few years ago, which I continue with today. She has been a real asset to the IAC organization and will be greatly missed."

—Lorrie Penner, Former IAC Secretary and Achievement Awards Chairwoman

"The first time I met Lisa was at the annual meeting at Sun 'n Fun in April of 2003. After the meeting, she was a gracious host ensuring everyone had plenty of food and drink. That struck me, as I'm just another dues-paying member. That meeting set off the effort of the new scoring system that Lisa has been key in implementing and maintaining. I've had the absolute pleasure of working with her for the past three years. Mostly it's been via e-mail, but from time to time through phone calls. It's unfortunate that most of the members don't have any idea of how much she's actually done for the IAC. She will be sorely missed."—Bob Buckley, Jasper Developer & Technical Committee Member

"In my work with Lisa Popp on the Hall of Fame Committee, I always found Lisa to do what she promised. I will miss working with her."—Dave Lammers, Hall of Fame Committee Chairman

"I hired Lisa at a time when we had multiple turnovers in executive directors due to various personal reasons. Lisa had good management experience and did a great job fitting what the IAC needed. She's been an excellent manager of priorities, tons of detail, complicated schedules, huge year-round events, a very technical environment, and multiple committees, etc.! As the IAC became smaller, we had to reduce budgets, making Lisa's work even more challenging due to the loss of staff. She simply shouldered more and got very creative with getting help. She has done the work of six while never showing extra stress or frustration. She's been an excellent manager, politician, coordinator, and a wonderful asset to the IAC. Her longevity as executive director has been vital in making the organization run smoothly. She did a wonderful job with few accolades or recognition, and will be sorely missed. We all wish her great success in the future, and thank her for all she accomplished."—Doug McConnell, IAC President 1998 – 2001



Lisa and daughter sweltering at Sun 'n Fun 2008

Lastly, I'd like to personally thank Lisa Popp for her service to the IAC. During my tenure on the IAC board, she has been the only executive director with whom I have worked. She has been a pleasure to work with, a true professional who has always had the IAC's best interest at heart, and someone with whom my business style has meshed perfectly, allowing us to make great strides, despite the adversity we've encountered along the way.

For those of you wishing to send your personal wishes, I'm sure Lisa would appreciate them. Her e-mail address is *lpopp@eaa.org*. I speak for everyone in the IAC when I say we thank you, we will miss you, and we wish you all the best with your future endeavors.—Vicki

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Jason Stephens: the 2008 Unlimited Glider Champion



*Reggie Pault*

Jason Stephens is not your typical Unlimited aerobatic champion. For the last three years, he has taken the top trophy in his category and managed to dead-stick his airplane back at the airfield each time. Of course, every landing he makes after exiting the box is dead-stick; he flies an MDM-1 Fox high-performance sailplane.

Jason began his flying career at the controls of a Super Cub and Helio Courier his dad, Bruce, owned in the idyllic landscape of Alaska. The Cub made its home at Merrill Field, but the float-equipped Courier was kept at the family home on the shore of Campbell Lake just south of Anchorage. Jason spent his summers bushwhacking on wheels and floats and his winters sliding on the ski-equipped Cub.

When oil prices tanked in the mid '80s, Alaska's economy came to a screeching halt, and Jason's dad sold the remainder of his construction company, moved the family to Arizona, and purchased a glider flying school. That was 1987—when Jason was the ripe old age of 13. It was then that he began flight training in earnest.

"I got my glider certificate first," says Jason. "I never did any official training in Alaska. Mostly, it was just flying around with Dad, having him show me how to take off and land and that sort of thing."



Courtesy Jason Stephens

"We use what we hear to know what is going on..."

Jason began flying in the venerable Schweizer 2-33 training glider. Most glider pilots are familiar with the 2-33, but for those who've never seen one, it's a rather homely looking airplane. Its 52-foot wing is strut-braced and tapered—much like a Cessna Grand Caravan. The tandem fuselage is steel tube with fabric covering, and the empennage is a mix of conventional aluminum and fabric-covered tube. With an 18-to-1 glide ratio, the 2-33 doesn't win awards for efficiency, but it's an excellent trainer. Its relatively small control surfaces and large wingspan make for slow roll rates, sluggish response, and adverse yaw. Add to that a single, fuselage-mounted main wheel and nose skid and you have a recipe for disaster – er – learning.

Gliders are wonderful airborne classrooms. In the United States, most gliders are towed aloft by an airplane. This is known as an aerotow. Your first flight in a glider is a formation flight. With only 200 feet of rope separating the aircraft, pilots are forced to fly precisely from the moment the airplanes begin to move. Because gliders have only one wheel, the pilot must maintain wings-level by using the ailerons. With the 2-33, this means full-deflection control inputs during the early phase of the takeoff roll. Once air begins flowing over the wings, the glider is brought a few feet above the surface of the runway to allow the towplane to achieve flying speed. Once it does, the glider follows it aloft. For new students and pilots transitioning to gliders, this process can seem a daunting challenge. Once mastered, it becomes a great source of pride.

After earning his certificate in the 2-33, Jason moved on to the higher-performance single-seat Schweizer 1-26 and tandem-seat 1-36. He then got checked out in the Grob 103—a high-performance fiberglass aerobatic sailplane.

"My first aerobatic ride ever was on my 14th birthday with Les Horvath, who started Estrella," says Stephens. "That pretty much hooked me on aerobatics forever."

The Les Horvath Trophy is presented to the winner of the Unlimited glider category at the U.S. National Aerobatic Championships, and Jason has won it three times in the last three years. It's only fitting that Horvath gave him his first taste of glider aerobatics.

Estrella (pronounced Estraya) Sailport is located just south of Phoenix, in Maricopa, Arizona. Because of its location, Estrella enjoys flyable weather year-round and allows Jason's Arizona Soaring Inc. to operate continuously. This is an advantage in competition, as it allows him to keep a fine edge on his flying skills during the winter months. To pay the bills Jason spends a lot of time instructing and giving rides.

"We have a bunch of Schweizer 2-33s for primary training," he says. "We have a few Grob 103s

for rental and more advanced training, rides, and such. We tow with 250-horse Piper Pawnees, and they do really well."

Jason began competing about nine years ago at the Tequila Cup.

"I started out flying the Grob 103 in Sportsman for the first two years at the Tequila Cup," he remarks. "Once we got the Fox, I moved up to Unlimited and flew that at the Tequila Cup for a couple of years."

The Fox, rated at +9G and -6G, is not an airplane for the faint of heart. It's challenging enough to fly that Jason recommends not buying one unless a pilot is going to fly it all the time.



"Once you get used to it and you're really proficient, it's not too bad," says Jason. "But it's not a piece of cake like the other gliders. One time, I wanted to do a single positive snap roll and ended up doing three when I took my girlfriend up with me. Luckily, we were up high. I got too deeply in the stall, so it didn't want to stop and kept going around and around. It's just one of those things with that plane."

With a wingspan of 14 meters, the Fox's wing is 3 meters shorter than the Grob. It will do a full roll in about four seconds, which is twice as fast as the Grob—that may not seem very fast to powered pilots, but we're talking about a 46-foot wingspan here!

So what are some of the main differences between powered and non-powered aerobatics? Logistics is certainly one of them. One of the major hurdles at glider competitions is lining up a tow pilot. With a glider, you can't just strap in and head to the competition. Jason and the other glider pilots get together and blow up the phones looking for a candidate willing to tow them at a contest. Noise and vibration are another difference. In gliders, both are absent for the most part.

"A real advantage of glider aerobatics is you can tell your airspeed just by the sound," says Jason. "Powered airplanes cover that up, so you can't really hear it. We use what we hear to know what is going on, because you can't look at the airspeed indicator when you're setting a vertical line for a hammerhead."

Glider competition in the United States is quite limited. For 2008, Jason had only one other competitor at the Nationals—Klein Gilhouse. When pressed as to why there's not more competition in gliders, Jason gave a familiar answer—time and money. Competition demands a lot of both, and in the United States at least, gliders aren't as popular as their powered counterparts.

"It would be nice," he says, "if we had 20-30 people who wanted to fly Unlimited glider aerobatics every year, but that's not the case yet."

The picture is dramatically different overseas.

"When we went to the World's [World Glider Aerobatic Championships] in Austria last year," says Jason, "there were 52 pilots from 13 countries. It was very competitive and a lot of fun. I placed 20th overall and was very happy with that."

Lisa Burgess



Jason and his Fox MDM-1 at home base in Maricopa, Arizona.

The differences between competitors were minute. There was a very small spread from first place to last place."

Gliding may not be as popular here as it is elsewhere, but that doesn't mean it's any less enjoyable. If you're so inclined, Jason offers a transition course that allows existing pilots to add a glider rating to their certificates. In addition, he has a 10-flight aerobatic course that serves as a great introduction to unpowered aerobatics.

"I would say 80 percent of our business is training," says Jason. "Twenty percent is giving rides to the public. Of the training, three-quarters are add-on ratings to licensed airplane and helicopter pilots. We do most of that in the winter because it's cold and snowy everywhere else and it's pretty nice here."

Almost all of the aerobatic instruction is given to existing glider pilots who want to gain better skills. The 10-flight course is spread out over five days to accommodate two flights per day—anything more is usually too much Jason has found out.

"We'll usually do a flight," begins Jason, "take a 20-30 minute break, and then do another flight. We can compress it into three or four days, but fatigue becomes an issue and learning drops off. After aerobatics, they can do some afternoon soaring."

It's easy to see Jason's passion for soaring and especially aerobatics. He has made a career out of refining his skills while helping others realize the dream of soaring flight and aerobatics.

If you'd like to meet Jason Stephens and experience silent aerobatics for yourself, check out the website at www.AZSoaring.com. 

Aerobatic Soaring

with the





United States Air Force Academy

Story and photos by Reggie Paultk

In the United States, if you fly gliders or participate in glider aerobatics, one name stands out: The **United States Air Force Academy**. The reason? The Air Force runs the biggest glider operation in the world on a sprawling 18,000-acre campus.

The USAF Academy Airfield is located 7,000 feet above mean seal level, just north of the city of Colorado Springs, Colorado. It sits approximately one mile east of the stunning Rampart Range of the Rocky Mountains. The 14,110-foot summit of Pikes Peak, the mountain that inspired the song "America the Beautiful," is just a dozen or so miles to the southwest. The airfield's location in such close proximity to the mountains makes it an ideal base for wave soaring operations. It's also an idyllic backdrop for fresh cadets on their first ride with the Air Force.

With its 21 sailplanes, the Academy's 94th Flying Training Squadron (FTS) flies more than 15,000 sorties annually. That's an average of 41 glider flights *every day!* For those who've never flown gliders before, that's a heck of a lot of flights—especially if you take into account weather and other factors that can eliminate 15-30 days of flying per year.

When I contacted Capt. Erich Kunrath (pronounced kun-reth), the Academy's assistant director of advanced soaring, to ask if we could possibly do a flight for this story, he indicated that it would take a while to get approval from the powers-that-be. That was on December 5. On December 9, he sent an e-mail letting me know I was approved and we could go the next day. Somebody got some strings pulled!

Driving to the Academy Airfield is like going to any other Air Force base. You have to stop at the gate and have the armed guards wave you through. Once on base,

there's a definite change of atmosphere. Even in the middle of winter, everything is nicely kept and there's an air of purpose everywhere you go.

Arriving at the field, I was greeted by Capt. Kunrath and we walked over to the Air Operations Center to meet some of the cadets in the glider aerobatics program. After filling out some paperwork and assuring the flight surgeon that I wasn't going to die (at least not while on government property), we went out to the hangar to see the gliders.

As a civilian pilot, I was amazed by the contrast between a government flying operation and a private one. The Academy's glider hangar is huge. It fits gliders two by two with a slight overlap of their 50-plus-foot wingspans. In all, there are more than 21 neatly manicured gliders aligned on the shiny concrete floor. When I flew gliders, our ships sat on dirt in hangars whose patchwork doors drew doubts as to their ability to open. Cracked and peeling paint was part of the "character" of each ship. At the Academy, the only distinctions between aircraft are the numbers painted on the tails.

The Academy derives its aircraft from civilian manufacturers, but designates them with Air Force names. Today, its trainer of choice is the all-metal tandem-seat L23 Super Blanik, or TG-10B in Air Force parlance. Manufactured in the Czech Republic by Letecke Zavody, the TG-10B is rated at +5.3G and -2.65G with two pilots aboard and +6G/-3G solo. For the aerobatics program, five L13AC Blanik aircraft were acquired and given the designation of TG-10C. These gliders are certificated in the standard aerobatic category with two (thin) people aboard.

Unfortunately for me, I'm not as thin as I used to be, and my 6 foot 1 inch, 200 pound frame was too big to qualify for an aerobatic ride, so I had to settle for a formation flight aboard a TG-10B while a cadet flew an aerobatic demonstration for me in the TG-10C. Darn the luck!

Of course, I really didn't have much room to gripe when Capt. Kunrath explained what we'd be doing. After receiving a weather briefing from an enlisted briefer at the Air Operations Center (I did note they didn't have to call flight service), we went to get briefed on the flight. I would fly with Capt. Kunrath, and third-year Cadet Scott Hatter would fly his routine with Lt. Col. William Resnik in the back seat. The plan was to take off and form up for the climb to altitude. Once we released, Cadet Hatter and Lt. Col. Resnik would head into the aerobatic box while Capt. Kunrath and I flew along the southern border. This would allow me to take photos and maintain safe separation.

Once briefed, we headed out to the flightline and climbed into our ships. After takeoff, our four-ship



Cadets wait for their next tow aloft on a nice winter day.



From left to right: Cadets Bryan Johnson, Phillip Wilson and Scott Hatter. Wilson took the top spot in Intermediate and Hatter took the fourth place Sportsman's spot at the 2008 U.S. Nationals.

formed up for the 5,000-foot climb to 12,000 feet mean sea level. I've flown formation before, but doing it on tow is a whole new experience. Nobody should be allowed to have that much fun. The 180-horse Super Cubs climbed quickly, but it still took about 15 minutes to get to altitude. This allowed ample time to view the Air Force Academy from the air. As a civilian pilot, this view would be your last for a while after you got caught!

Off tow, we orbited while Cadet Hatter put the TG-10C through its paces. He performed a spin, roll, reverse-Cuban-eight, super slow roll, shark's tooth, hammerhead with one-quarter turn, barrel roll, inverted flight, and a split-S. That's a lot of aerobatics for someone with a full course load!

One word may be used to sum up the soaring program at the Academy: professionalism. It shows in every ele-

ment of the program from the flightline to the parking lot. It's meant to be that way. Capt. Kunrath came to the Academy as part of his assignment process.

"I went to pilot training and started flying B-1s," says Kunrath. "I flew B-1s for three years. After that, I was sent back here on a training assignment so I could give young people coming into the program a perspective of what's in the Air Force and what it's like to fly operationally."

As a part of the Air Education and Training Command (AETC), the soaring program acts as a link between new pilots and the operational Air Force. Modeled after an operational squadron, the soaring program mirrors the standardization and evaluation standards of an operational squadron.

"For a lot of cadets," Kunrath says, "this program is their first flight ever, as well as their first flight in an Air Force aircraft. We model our programs after an operational squadron, but they're exposed to it in a low-threat environment, and they can build upon that when they go on to pilot training to fly operationally."

As an Academy graduate himself, Capt. Kunrath knows the power of the glider program: It provided him with his first ride in the Air Force. So how does a cadet get selected to fly aerobatics in the Advanced Soaring Program?

"We put 550 second-year students through a 14-ride program every year," says Lt. Col. Lawrence Pravacek, 94th FTS commander. "Out of the 550, we select 80 to come back to become instructor pilots. Out of those 80, we select five or six to be on the aerobatic team."

**"That's an average of
41 glider flights every
day!"**



"If they show enough initiative and are able to keep their grades up, they can then apply to be on the aerobatic team. It's survival of the fittest"



The 80 students chosen to be instructor pilots take an additional 75-80 flights before they're instructor-qualified. Once that happens, they run the main 14-ride program for the 550 students. If they show enough initiative and are able to keep their grades up, they can then apply to be on the aerobatic team. It's survival of the fittest.

One of the cadets out at the airfield was senior Phillip Wilson. That name may sound familiar to those of you who were at the U.S. Nationals last year. Cadet Wilson took top honors in the Intermediate glider category. Knowing the demands the glider program may put on a student, it's surprising when he talks about his studies.

"I'm studying operations research," says Cadet Wilson. "It's not too bad. It's a lot of statistics and economics."

Not too bad? Maybe if that was all you were doing. And cadets take 20-credit course loads. So what does he plan to do once he graduates this spring?

"I'll be going to pilot training somewhere in Texas," Wilson says. "Hopefully Sheppard or Laughlin Air Force Base. To be honest, it's been my dream to fly jets since I was little, but I've never heard a pilot say he didn't like his job, so I'll be lucky to fly anything. Helicopters would be my second choice; search and rescue would be cool."

Third-year Cadet Scott Hatter also flew in Nationals last year. He placed fourth overall in the Sportsman category. After showing off his skill earlier, we discussed what it's like to compete.

"Texas (Nationals) is one of four competitions we go to during the season," says Hatter. "It's obviously the biggest competition we go to because it's Nationals. This year, we took our full team along with a couple officers to compete, and we did pretty well. Phil took first place in Intermediate, and Brandon Burfeind took first in Sportsman. Usually, we're competing against our own teammates, but it's a pretty awesome event for us because we get to display what we do here at the Academy, and we also get to fly some aerobatics. It's a great opportunity, and we appreciate it."

Cadet Bryan Johnson, a third-year student studying systems engineering, describes what got him involved in the program. "A couple of things that attracted me to the program," says Johnson, "are the type of people you get to work with. They are some of the most awesome people I've known. They are the best of the best, I guess you could say. Flying aerobatics is another attraction. You get to fly the aircraft to the limits of what it can do. It's something I probably wouldn't have a chance to do anywhere else, and I have a great time doing it."

Managing a full course load and flying is a juggling act that seems difficult to maintain. Not only are these young pilots flying all the time, but their coursework is also highly demanding. At the Academy, there's no such thing as skipping class. Accountability is the name of the game, and there's not much room for error. So how do they do it?



Gliders require aileron input to maintain wings-level during the takeoff roll.

"I would say time management is pretty challenging," says Johnson. "Flying is a lot of fun, so it might be a lot of work, but it helps me out. It's something that takes me away from being bogged down in the classroom. To be able to come down here every day to fly, teach people to fly, or fly aerobatics is a great combination. I couldn't ask for anything better. It's important not to be a procrastinator. You have to look into the future so you don't have a lot of work due in one day and end up having to do it the night before."

Even with the high academic standards and heavy course loads, the team manages to travel to its competitions with all 12 members on board the majority of the time. That's no small feat considering the obstacles they need to overcome. The field is pretty stacked. Looking at the results from Nationals, it's clear the Air Force Academy dominates Sportsman and Intermediate. Glider aerobatics is an even smaller niche than powered, and many times, the Academy is the only organization with competitors in their category.

As part of his or her achievement, each cadet accepted into the aerobatics program is supplied with a membership to the International Aerobatic Club. Their dedication to aviation, and especially competitive aerobatics, reflects highly upon our organization. In our sport, it's refreshing to see young people driven to challenge themselves far beyond what is required of them to pursue aerobatics. Our hats are off to you, cadets! 



Captain Erich Kunrath fills out paperwork after a flight.



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Airport Relations

Part II



Mark Mattioli, Esquire

The “Good Neighbor” Policy: Tracy Municipal Airport, California (TCY)

What do you do when neighborhood encroachment causes increasing complaints about aerobatic activity at a municipal airport? This was the situation facing Chapter 38's Darren Pleasance only a few years ago. When Pleasance became PIC of Chapter 38, its waiver at Tracy was in jeopardy of non-renewal. A small but vocal minority in the community complained to the city that noisy aerobatic aircraft were “flying right between the houses” and therefore constituted a danger.

For those who are not familiar with the airport, its waivered airspace is located over a gravel quarry just adjacent to the airport. Given its proximity to an airport, its desirability is evident for both safety and convenience reasons.

The local flights standards district office (FSDO) threatened to allow the waiver to expire, citing resident complaints, the potential encroachment of new homes, safety, and noise issues. Fortunately, one member of the city commission was supportive of IAC activities, and Pleasance saw his opportunity to change opinions. First, he reached out to the airport manager and thereafter began

attending city commission meetings. These meetings provided him with an opportunity to introduce the pilots to the local community and to explain what the chapter was all about. Moreover, it allowed Pleasance to debunk the “stunt pilot” notion that prevailed in the minds of some community members.

In this regard, he discussed aerobatic flying, the altitudes used, and, most importantly, the types of airplanes flown by chapter members and the airplanes' noise signatures. This was real and truthful information. For example, Pleasance explained that an Edge flying an Unlimited sequence will create more

UNDERSTANDING THE AIRPORT'S NEEDS MAKES THE DIFFERENCE

In Part I, we discussed two recent IAC success stories. We continue with two additional successes and conclude with some ideas to help enhance airport community relations.



Laurie Zaleski

noise than a Decathlon flying at 2,000 feet. He explained, however, that there are few Unlimited pilots, and these pilots don't fly all day. Rather, they may make one or two 15-minute hops. In addition, he explained that although a practice session may last several hours, only a small part of that time is spent flying. Thus, there is no continuous noise footprint. Finally, he explained how the community benefits from the aerobatic activity in terms of increased use of the airport.

Perhaps most importantly he agreed to a voluntary set of rules to which the chapter would adhere. As an example, the chapter agreed that

the aircraft would not enter or exit the box from the north, as that was where the majority of residents lived. Moreover, he agreed that the chapter would not start flying before 10:00 a.m. and that they would "mix up" the types of flights to avoid continuous low-level flying.

These meetings led to the chapter's hosting of an "airport day" where all area residents were invited, especially those who complained the most, and Pleasance briefed the attendees regarding aerobatic activity. Curiously, although none of the complaining residents attended the briefing, during the course of the day he spoke to one woman who complained that

an airplane, just the previous week, had flown right between two houses. Pleasance asked for more details, and after a few minutes, the woman pointed to a twin that had just landed and she said, "There is the airplane right there!" He explained that this was not a chapter airplane, but offered to go and talk to the pilot for the woman. The moral of the story is that we are often blamed for the flying of nonchapter members.

In any event, Pleasance also hosted a Young Eagles day with the local EAA chapter. Even though most of Chapter 38's members fly single-seat airplanes, the participants were able to sit in the aerobatic airplanes and

talk to the pilots. The event was a hit, and Pleasance is planning another Young Eagles session in the future.

Finally, Pleasance stated that he is vigilant about keeping the airport manager informed regarding aerobatic activities. In this regard, it is helpful for the airport manager to know when the box will be used so that he can provide information to anyone who calls to complain. In this regard, as the box is usually busy right before a contest, it helps if the manager can tell residents that the box will be busier than normal the next two weeks, but that after this time it will be very quiet. This information at least allays the residents' concerns that the increased activity is permanent. To assist the manager further, Chapter 38 keeps a detailed log of who was flying and when. That way, if there is a complaint, the manager and Pleasance can verify whether a chapter member was flying. Things have turned around to the point that the city supported the chapter's waiver request and the FSDO renewed the waiver for a three-year period.

Getting the Community on Board: Cape May Airport, New Jersey (WWD)

Our final success story comes out of New Jersey. A little history is in order. Cape May Airport (WWD) was the venue for the 1971 National Air Race. It was the last air race in New Jersey. During that year, four pilots lost their lives: three were killed in two separate mid-air collisions; the fourth died while attempting to avoid the first mid-air collision.

Hence, when Chapter 52 member Will Morey, a new Pitts S-2C owner, first discussed the idea of holding an aerobatic contest at Cape May Airport, the deck was stacked against us. Fortunately, this contest was a joint undertaking between Chapters 52 (New York) and 58 (Pennsylvania).

Unlike the Flying W discussed last month, Cape May Airport is publicly owned and operated by a bi-state agency called the Delaware River & Bay Authority (DRBA), which first took over operations in June of 1999. This is the same organization that manages the local ferry from Cape May, New Jersey, to Lewes, Delaware, in addition to Millville Airport (MIV), New Castle Airport (ILG), the Civil Air Terminal at Dover Air Force Base, and Delaware Airpark. Since taking over in 1999, the DRBA has made numerous improvements to the airport, such as adding deer fencing, new lighting and signs; a 24-hour fuel farm; state-of-the-art security gate access system and other extensive infrastructure improvements.. The airport also features a restaurant and wonderful aviation museum, which provided shelter to the contest aircraft.

I recently had the opportunity to sit down with Thomas Berry, the assistant airport operations manager at Cape May Airport. Tom, along with Dave McCarthy, the airport operations manager out of Millville, oversees both airports. Tom is a former landing signal officer, is a Naval Academy-enlisted instructor, and has extensive aviation experience.

First some background. Cape May Airport is a category C3 airport, in close proximity to the New Jersey beaches. As a result, it has a variety of aircraft—including business jets ferrying the wealthy to shore points, ultralights, general aviation, rotorcraft, banner towing, and even aerobatic aircraft—operating on its runways during the summer. All of this is accomplished on a nontowered field. As a result, Berry and the DRBA staff are focused on safety issues, and given the variety of operations taking place often simultaneously, safety was the concern that drove the DRBA during the negotiations preceding its commitment to allow the IAC to have a contest.

Community and Political Preparation

Before even approaching the airport, Will and Contest Director Craig Wisman spoke with various community leaders to obtain their backing for conducting the contest. Indeed, Will, Craig, and others attended council meetings where they presented the concept to the community. Will is very active in the community and a major force in Wildwood's economy. In addition to being a fierce aerobatic competitor (he took first place at the competition), he is a quintessential businessman and saw the contest as a way to direct positive attention to the community. All of this was done while explaining that we were not putting on an "air show," which would have raised additional issues for the airport in terms of crowd control, emergency services, etc. Thus, a candid picture was presented to the community leaders as to what a contest was all about so there would be no surprises. With the community leaders on board, it was then time to approach the airport.

Our Reputation Isn't Everything: It's the Only Thing We Have

Tom admitted that he did not have any experience with IAC contests. He did, however, know of the IAC and its reputation. With safety in mind, he did his own research and learned that the IAC has an excellent safety record. One of his and the DRBA's early concerns was how we would deal with airport traffic



patterns, since the aerobatic box would be right over the airport. This gave the DRBA some initial pause, and he asked the Philadelphia FSDO about our chapters. It was here that having good relations with the FSDO paid dividends. When contacted, the FSDO had glowing remarks for both chapters. Tom advised that this meant a great deal to the DRBA in terms of whether it would agree to allow the contest.

Moreover, Tom was impressed with the IAC's dedication to safety. Two incidents from the contest illustrate the point. As discussed, the DRBA was very concerned with how the contest box would interfere with traffic using the other runways. Cape May has two

"... we take safety seriously, and that safety rules will be enforced without exception."

operational runways, RW 10/28 and RW 1/19. The front of the aerobatic box paralleled RW 10/28. The DRBA was concerned that pilots exiting the box to the east and flying over Runway 1/19 at or below pattern altitude would present a collision danger to other traffic. Although the waiver technically permitted such flights, we were guests at the airport and allowing pilots to overfly the runway caused the airport great concern. The notices to airmen (NOTAMs) drafted by the DRBA provided, among other things, instructions to transient pilots regarding pattern entry, etc. Thus, contest officials reinforced these NOTAMs by advising contest pilots to avoid overflying the runways. Any pilot getting close to the eastern edge of the box and flying at or below pattern altitude was warned and asked to break. The airport's safety rules clearly outweigh the IAC rulebook in this regard and the permissions set forth in the waiver. Regardless of whether we are flying pursuant to an aerobatic waiver, FAR 91.13 (careless and reckless operation) always applies. Hence, it is not much of a defense to a §91.13 violation to argue you were operating under the terms of a waiver. The important point is that our willingness to adapt

to the airport's safety concerns was critical to whether we are invited back next year. Tom advised that the DRBA was pleased with the contest and sees no reason why the DRBA would not strongly consider having the IAC back next year.

The second incident that really made an impression on Tom and the DRBA involved a well-known, well-respected, and well-liked pilot who engaged in a flying activity that was deemed unsafe by the contest jury. After the flight, the incident was called to the attention of Tom and the DRBA by the contest officials. This pilot was eventually disqualified from competition. The action by the contest committee and officials demonstrated to the DRBA that we take safety seriously, and that safety rules will be enforced without exception. Although there is much talk about aerobatic pilots policing themselves, our credibility in this regard is paramount. As I have previously written, we are each other's keepers, and we must be diligent in enforcing safety rules.

What some did not realize was that just one week prior to the contest there were four fatalities in the area. First, an experimental F-1 Rocket crashed in a neighborhood street close to the nearby Woodbine Municipal Airport (1N1), killing the two people on board. Fortunately, no one on the ground was injured, and the aircraft landed in the street. According to the newspaper reports, the airplane was performing "aerobatics" just prior to the accident. The pilot was not involved in IAC activities. Only two days later, another pilot and his passenger were killed when an L-29 Delfin crashed after takeoff from Millville airport (managed by the DRBA). According to the preliminary National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) report, this pilot was seen fueling the L-29 from a drum on the back of a truck. The NTSB further reported that "the pilot purchased about 138 gallons of 'kerosene,' 6 gallons of 'off road diesel,' and 27 gallons of 'diesel' fuel, the day before the accident." Neither incident had anything to do with IAC flying. Nevertheless, to the public, these were two more "stunt" planes endangering the local community. We don't have the luxury of talking about policing ourselves: We must do it consistently and without hesitation.



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This commitment to safety and willingness to enforce the rules allowed Tom and the DRBA to confidently deal with community complaints. As he has been doing his job for 10 years, he knows that you never pick up the phone to respond immediately to a complaint. Instead, he has learned that the person needs to vent and that nothing will get accomplished by an initial confrontation before the individual has "vented." Thus, he allows the complaints to go to voice mail, and he responds a short time later. In many cases he was able to turn the person around, and many came out to watch the contest. Although the community was advised of the contest during public meetings, his thought is that people often forget, and many of the callers had forgotten about the contest. His advice would be to make sure the community is reminded of the contest shortly before its start.

Making It Better for Airports, Aviation, and Aerobatics

What is it that we can do to help our airports promote aviation, aerobatics, and, if we are really committed, growing general aviation? Primarily, we must view ourselves as partners with the airport for the purpose of advancing aviation. While there is no formula for doing this, based upon our successes we can distill the following lessons:

Enforce the Rules: We must continue to accept only strict adherence to safety. This manifests itself not only at contests, but in practices and all flying activities. Our reputation is the only thing we have. A good reputation with the airport, Federal

Aviation Administration (FAA), and community will receive a positive response when we want to conduct a training session or contest.

Be Advocates for Safety: The IAC sets itself apart from other organizations because of its emphasis on safety issues. We need to continue to sponsor safety seminars in conjunction with our partner airports. These types of seminars benefit the local community and the airport, and are a great source of getting new members. They are viewed positively by the airport, by other pilots, and by the FAA.

Attend Community Functions: Most in the community do not understand what we do, or why we do it. Speaking at local functions puts a face on aviation and enhances the image of aviation overall.

Support Airport Events: For any airport, especially a privately owned airport that relies upon the public for use of its services, it is vital that we partner with them to support their mission. This may include attending airport days, car shows, and any other public event where our aircraft and pilots are visible. It need not include flying, and a static display where members of the public can sit in the airplanes and take pictures may be more of thrill than watching a competition or air show. These types of events make the airport (and airport staff) look good in the eyes of the public. We need to do more in this regard.

Support Youth Activities: It is axiomatic that general aviation has no future without the youth. We need to be more active in promoting youth activities, whether it be sponsoring a Young Eagles day or even a special airport day dedicated to young people to learn about aviation.

Educate the Public: When a flying event is scheduled, we need to make sure that the public is aware. Many of the complaints received by airports during contests and other flying activities have to do with the public simply not knowing that an event is scheduled. Work with your local airport to inform the public. Sure, there will be some who will complain no matter what, but the majority of the complaints are simply based upon the fact that the aviation activity around the airport is something other than the normal. This should be done within a few weeks prior to the event so that it is not forgotten when the event actually occurs.

Don't View the Community as an Adversary: Many problems arise or are exaggerated because we often view the community as an adversary. This causes disputes to escalate into an "us versus them" mentality. We must avoid this mindset and instead think of the community as our neighbors. Such a change in mindset will result in better relations with the airport and, therefore, more opportunities for flying.



Laurie Zaleski

Presented here are some of the many IAC success stories. Unfortunately, there have been countless failures. As discussed, there is no one right answer, and what may work at one airport may not at another. What seems to be key is understanding the airport's mission and partnering with it to enhance that mission. Without airports, there is no competition flying, and no general aviation. We need to do our part to reverse the trend. 

The opinions contained in this article are those of the author, who does not purport to speak on behalf of EAA, the IAC, or any entity referenced in this article.

Mark Mattioli is a business and commercial litigation attorney with Post & Schell, P.C. in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. When not practicing law, he flies a Christen Eagle II based in Lumberton, New Jersey. By secret vote while he was otherwise indisposed and unable to object, he was appointed president of IAC Chapter 52 and is also a member of Chapter 58. Phone 215-587-1087 or email mmattioli@postschell.com.



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IAC Contest History 2000-2008

Interesting numbers and trends in the last nine years

Vicki Cruse

Several months ago, Lisa and I went through the past nine years of contest results to determine the number of competitors per contest and what categories were flown at these contests for the risk management department at EAA. I ended up putting all of these numbers in a spreadsheet, and what emerged was something I thought many of you might be interested in seeing. I was struck by the consistency over the past nine years, but I was also

struck by the movement of contests within each region over time, particularly in the Midwest and Northeast.

As I was putting this data together, a thread came on the Exploder regarding IAC history, competitors, and the like, so the request was timely. From those discussions, Randy Owens, our contest and judging tabulations guru, pulled from his records, and I've added his data on top of that from the spreadsheet. Enjoy! ☺

Highest number of participants at a regional contest:

69 - Fall Sebring, Florida 2000,

66 - Paso Robles, California 2008,

65 - Spring Sebring, Florida 2000

Highest number of participants at the U.S. Nationals:

102 in 2007, **101** in 2001, **96** in 2006

Average participants at all regional contests 2000- 2008: 30

Number of IAC members participating in contests

2006: 496 **2007**: 495 **2008**: 489

Average number of regional contests, 2000 - 2008: 38

Individual pilots flying in each category in 2008

(Power & Glider; pilots that fly more than one category are included in both):

Primary (power only): 97

Sportsman: 212

Intermediate: 113

Advanced (power only): 82

Unlimited: 50

Average number of competitors in each region, 2000 - 2008:

Northwest: 32

South Central: 26

Southwest: 36

Southeast: 40

Mid-America: 30

Northeast: 28

CONTESTS	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Northwest Region									
Apple Cup - Ephrata, WA	36	38	29	36	34	37	31	39	29
Beaver State - Pendleton, OR	33	32	36	32	23	24	34	45	30
Apple Turnover - Ephrata, WA								31	29
Northwest FunFest - Ephrata, WA		12							
Southwest Region									
Bill Briski Mini - Casa Grande, AZ	17	17	24	11	12				
High Desert Minifest - Reno, NV							9		
Copperstate - Casa Grande, AZ		39	51	34	31	22			
Copperstate - Coolidge, AZ							30		
Copperstate - Marana, AZ								15	37
Borrego Minifest - Borrego Springs, CA	8	21		17	16	18	15	18	16
Gold Cup - Victorville, CA	42								
Gold Cup - Apple Valley, CA		39	46	31	42	34	37	41	40
Northern California - Paso Robles, CA	26	58	63	45	53	45	51	52	66
Delano Minifest - Delano, CA		19							
Happiness is Delano - Delano, CA	47	58	47	31	56	36	45	52	47
Borrego Akrofest - Borrego Springs, CA	46	36	50	25	31	39	42	46	47
Tequila Cup - Coolidge, AZ							23		
Tequila Cup - Marana, AZ	53	59	55	45	25	38		40	39
Arizona State Championships - Casa Grande, AZ	36	36	33	30			25		
Arizona State Championships - Coolidge, AZ							23		
Mid-America Region									
Heuer Classic - Aurora, IL	24	36	26	44		36	31	22	
Heuer Classic - Peru, IL									12
Ohio Aerobatic Open - Columbus, OH	18	25	36	29					
Ohio Aerobatic Open - Marysville, OH						35	33	33	29
CAN-AM Championship - Jackson, MI	32				40	28	29		
Henry Haigh Challenge - Jackson, MI		19	30	36				22	14
Salem Regional - Salem, IL	29	39	33	41	52	29	25	41	19

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Land O Lakes Open - Land O Lakes, WI	12								
Doug Yost Challenge - Rice Lake, WI			22	33		23			
Doug Yost Challenge - Cumberland, WI							12		
Doug Yost Challenge - Albert Lea, MN							15	25	29
Great Lakes Contest - Kenosha, WI	37	40	42						
Illinois State Open - Mattoon, IL	29								
Illinois State Open - Carbondale, IL		27							
Illinois State Open - Peru, IL				13	29	33		24	
Illinois State Open - Kankakee, IL									17
North Central Contest - Albert Lea, MN	35		35	30		26			
Vavra Fall Fling - New Lenox, IL	14								
South Central Region									
One Design Mini - Katy, TX		15	17						
Doc Harvey One Design - Giddings, TX							10		
Okie Twistroff - Stillwater, OK		26	28						
Okie Twistroff - Claremore, OK					22	13	14		
Chuck Alley Contest - Estherwood, LA			30	24		25			
Chuck Alley Contest - LeGros, LA	23	20			19			28	18
No Frills Mini - Sterling, CO	12		10	6					
Ben Lowell Memorial - Sterling, CO	35	33	32	29	31	30	25	25	21
Two Design - Brenham, TX									20
Lonestar - Sherman, TX	33	37	39	35	28	38	30	37	25
Midwest Spring Fling - Seward, NE		11	11			7			
Midwest Club Challenge - Seward, NE	40	35	35	36	38	26	20		27
Okie Dust Devil - Weatherford, OK	39	41	38	37	36	28	42	22	25
Hill Country Hammerfest - Llano, TX			20	28	28	21	21	22	25
Aspen Leaf Challenge - Sterling, CO	25		25	21	22	15	27	21	
Gulf Coast Regional - Giddings, TX						31			
Gulf Coast Regional - Conroe, TX	34	38					35		
Gulf Coast Regional - Edna, TX				23	26			28	
Gulf Coast Regional - Brenham, TX		24							24
Rhythm in the Blue - Olathe, KS							13	19	19
Harold Neumann Barnstormer - Olathe, KS	16				15	19	27	27	26
Basic/Sportsman Veterans Challenge - Ottawa, KS									
Rocky Mountain Invitational - Lamar, CO									
Northeast Region									
New England Contest - Orange, MA	25	37	33	32	43	34			
Carolina Boogie - Lumberton, NC									18
PA Championships - Maytown, PA	47	11	35	22	23	21	18	11	
Mt Pocono Contest - Mt Pocono, PA	30	27							
PA Championships - Farmville, VA									9
Willowood Acroblast - Lower Township, NJ									32
Green Mountain - Springfield, VT	20	24	34		33	30	31	37	39
NE Aerobatic Championships - W Hampton Beach, NY		20							
Kathy Jaffee Challenge - Monticello, NY	23		33	36	21				
Kathy Jaffee Challenge - Lumberton, NJ						34	48		42
Kathy Jaffee Challenge - Medford, NJ								42	
East Coast Contest - Warrenton, VA			24	19		23	19	23	
Mason Dixon Clash - Farmville, VA		32	26	26		18	16	23	25
Southeast Region									
Sport Aviation Spring - Bunnell, FL		25	25						
ERAU Fall Contest - Bunnell, FL			28						
ERAU Spring Kickoff - Flager, FL				41					
Keystone Kickoff - Keystone, FL					37	36	31	39	
Phil Schact Kickoff - Starke, FL									34
Sebring - Sebring, FL	65	62	45	53	53	49	37	49	35
Southwest Open - Hampton, GA	30		25	16	28		30	31	29
Rebel Regional - Union City, TN									24
Sebring Fall - Sebring, FL	69	46	39	50	53	52	44	35	46
Amelia Island Challenge - Amelia Island, FL				14					
Glider Nationals	19								
US Nationals	64	101	85	86	81	78	96	102	80
Total Competitors	1247	1319	1347	1212	1091	1154	1096	1167	1143
Total Contests	39	39	39	39	32	38	37	35	38
Avg Competitors per contest (excl. Nationals)	30	31	32	29	32	28	27	30	28

2009 Additions for JaSPer, the IAC Contest Scoring Program

TWO NEW REPORTS AVAILABLE FOR PILOTS & JUDGES

Doug Lovell – Technical Committee

Your IAC Technical Committee, with guidance from President Vicki Cruse and the IAC Board, has developed two additions to the reports generated from our contest scoring software – JaSPer. There's something here for both pilots and judges.

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Figure 1

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Figure 2

FEEDBACK for PILOTS

The check/score sheets given to pilots will now show additional columns on the right, after the scores from the judges. The new columns show additional information and computations for each figure. (See Figure 1.)

First, the average is now the average rounded to the nearest tenth of a point, rather than the nearest half point. This reflects the rule change that allows the true average for an average, 'A' grade from a judge. You'll find the first addition on the sheet in the column to the right of the average. Numbers in parentheses show your rank for each figure, and for your overall flight before and after penalties.

The rank number is one greater than the number of pilots who did better. A rank number eight (8) means that seven pilots earned superior scores. A rank number one (1) means no other pilot earned a better score. The rank values let you know, for example, that the 8.2 average scored on figure one (ranked 7) was not so great relative to other pilots while the 8.6 average on figure three (ranked 2) was about as good as it got.

The ranking before and after penalties is a handy indicator of whether boundary infringements and interruptions cost you in the standings. Now you'll know for certain whether those three outs on the downwind side put you out of the wood.

The next column shows the K value for each figure, and then two new columns show how many points you lost and how many points were possible for each figure. The number of points you lost is equivalent to the total possible minus the points you earned. If you score a ten, your points lost equal zero. Anything less than a ten increases the number of points you didn't earn.

Points lost, combined with figure ranking, provide a great way to determine where to expend further fuel for greatest benefit. The pilot in the example lost the most points on figure eight. That is also the lowest ranked figure. This pilot might like to do some work on figure eight. Improvement to that figure has the most potential to improve the overall score.

Continuing with the example, the next five figures with most points lost all come in around thirty left unclaimed. Figure five was a top ranking figure. An 8.7 average is

about as much as anyone can hope to get from the judges on that figure. The same may be said for figure nine. Figure one, on the other hand, could use some work. The 8.2 average seems good enough, but six pilots received better scores.

The rank numbers for individual figures will not appear on free programs. They make no sense unless every pilot is flying the same figure.

FEEDBACK for JUDGES

We've provided something completely new for judges. Judges don't get anything to take home as a reminder of the good work they did at a contest. That is no longer the case. Figure 2 shows an example of the new report for judges.

The report shows, for each pilot in the flight, total score given; the rank from the judge; the average of all scores given and the overall standing.

Judges can see from this report how they ranked each pilot relative to the average across the entire judging line. This provides for judges some of the personal feedback that pilots get. What judges do with the feedback is their business, just like the pilots.

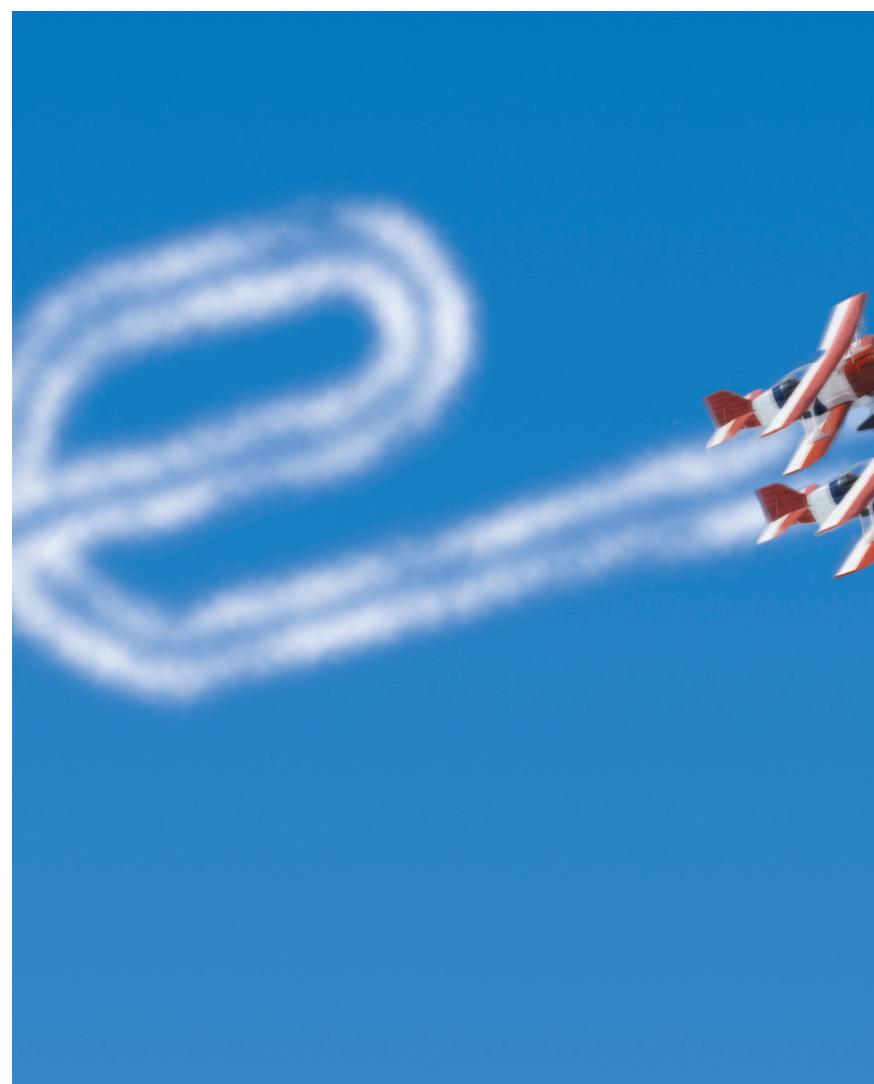
As a judge, you now have some armor, or not, when a pilot challenges your scoring. You can refer to the rank. The judge in the example can demonstrate to any pilot that, although the scores are lower overall than other judges, the rank is in nearly exact agreement with the overall standing. There's no better indication that the criteria were applied consistently and fairly.

NAMES from the PAST

The names in the figures have been changed to protect the guilty. Not that anyone is guilty! The pilots are names of people who were leading in this sport thirty years ago. How many do you recognize? The judges are some original members of Chapter 52, also thirty years old. The numbers are from a flight at the Kathy Jaffe Challenge in 2007.

IAC enjoys excellent software support for running our contests and determining our winners. We hope these additions prove beneficial to many, promote the sport, and promote our enjoyment of it.

Doug Lovell, Tom Myers, Vicki Cruse, DJ Molny, and Bob Buckley participated in developing and implementing these additions. 

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By Allen Silver, IAC 431160

Ask Allen

A master rigger answers your questions about parachutes.

Instead of a question, I'd like to open with some comments. I want to share the "good news!" This is not a religious statement, although some of you may fly on a wing and a prayer. What I want to share with you is that your parachute can now be packed on a 180-day cycle! This gives you an extra 60 days before you need a repack and recertification. Let me take a moment to thank my son, Darrin, for his help in seeing me through this three-year project to completion. Without his writing skills, the proposal could still be sitting on someone's desk in Washington, D.C.

The new law went into effect on December 19, 2008. By the time you read this, your parachute will be current if packed within the preceding 180 days. Let me clear up some of the confusion about the interim time frame. Prior to December 19, the law stated that your parachute must have been packed within the preceding 120 days. However, on December 19, the rules changed and that same parachute now must have been packed within the preceding 180 days. It doesn't matter that the last repack and recertification was under the old rules.

Here is an example: Suppose your parachute was packed under the old law on October 12, 2008. The next repack is due 120 days later on February 9, 2009. But, the law changed on December 19, 2008, and now states that the same parachute must have been packed within the preceding 180 days. This means the new due date is March 21, 2009, and you've just picked up an additional 40 days. There are some of you out there who will fall into this category as you read this.

What if your parachute was due for a repack on, let's say, December 15, 2008, under the old 120-day rule? The parachute would not be legal to wear on the 16th, 17th, and 18th. But if you waited (and did not use your parachute) until December 19, you could then recalculate the due date based on the new 180-day law.

By the middle of April 2009, this will all be a moot issue and everyone will be on the new 180-day cycle. No matter how confusing this may appear, it's now the law and your parachute is current if packed within the preceding 180 days. If you want more information, go to www.SilverParachutes.com and click on "News Flash! 180-Day Parachute Repacks Have Arrived."

Q: What side of the aircraft should I jump from?

A: Some owner's manuals (especially warbirds) may suggest a preferred exit side to use during a bailout. The reason may be based on physics or aerodynamics, but don't assume there is only one way to escape your aircraft in an emergency. Rarely will you encounter a textbook emergency so you must be prepared to try all options. The best scenario is that your out-of-control aircraft is experiencing negative Gs, you jettison the canopy, release your seat belts, and are ejected from the aircraft without any effort on your part. Don't plan on that to happen. If you have to bail out, things are already not going your way. Do whatever it takes to crawl and claw your way free of the aircraft. If you can't get out of one side, try the other side. If that doesn't work, try the first side again. What have you got to lose? In my bailout seminars I teach pilots never to give up. What may not have worked the first or second time, may work on the third or fourth try.

Of course, if you have a door only on one side, like on a Citabria, then you're pretty much committed to perfecting the quickest method of releasing it. Although, you do have the side window, and you could possibly kick out the front window if necessary (you get really strong

when you're scared). Find out what is unique about your aircraft and commit it to memory. Look around your aircraft for handholds or someplace to put your back or feet to get better leverage. Do this before your next flight, because it could be your last. You can never be too prepared in the event of an emergency. Remember, practice makes perfect.

Don't forget to properly brief your passengers. Not only will they be better prepared, but showing others what to do will help reinforce your own procedures so you'll react quickly and not have to think about what to do. In training sessions, I've helped people cut their egress time by 50 percent or more just by practicing the emergency procedures before and after each flight.

I wish all of you the best this coming year. Please keep the questions coming, and maybe I'll be fortunate enough to give your group a bailout seminar this year. ☺



IAC INFO • FIND IT FAST

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meet a member



Name: Paul Jennings **E-mail Address:** cfigok@juno.com

City, State: Hulbert, Oklahoma

Occupation: Airframe and powerplant (A&P) mechanic with an inspection authorization working at American Airlines for the last 23 years and at Eastern Air Lines for six years prior to that.

Family: Married to my best friend, Suzanne, for 24 years.

Children: Chad, 22, and Lance, 21.

Pilot Certificates: Commercial (single-engine land), certificated flight instructor-glider in all launch types, and designated pilot examiner for gliders

Aircraft Flown: SEL: Most Cessna types, several Cherokee/Arrow types, L-5, L-19, PA-18, Husky, Scout, Citabria, Great Lakes, Wilga, Pawnee, Ag Truck, and Ag Husky. Gliders: Most Schweizer types, Pilatus, Open Cirrus, Blanik (L13, L23, L33), Ka 6, HP-13, G109B, Twin Astir, Duo Discus T, LS4, Discus b, ASK 21, ASK 23, DG-505.

What experience drew you to flying? In the 1960's, my dad was a CFI [certificated flight instructor] at the Flying W Ranch in Medford, New Jersey, towing banners and flying air shows in his PT-13 Stearman. My first flying memory was sitting on my mom's lap in the front seat of the Stearman. A few years later my dad quit instructing, sold the Stearman, and did some crop-dusting and other stuff to keep us fed. I didn't get a chance to learn to fly from my dad, but ironically, I instructed him in 2008 and gave him a commercial glider rating. I wanted to become an aircraft mechanic, and in 1978 I earned my A&P licenses. In 1979 I soloed at Tulsa Downtown Airpark in a C-150, but didn't finish my rating there.

What was your first experience with soaring? In 1980 I started working for Eastern Air Lines in Miami as an aircraft mechanic. Fellow mechanic, friend, and pilot Brian Thorpe and I went to work, part-time, at Kendall Glider Port maintaining their fleet of airplanes and gliders. Rudy and Maggie Barlan ran this commercial glider school. We worked for flight time. I also worked on the local sky divers' 182 where they taught me to sky-dive and paid for my labor in jumps. Brian and I pooled our money and bought an old L-5 towplane we fixed up and got flying. My flying mentor in those days was Bill Harris, one of those guys who truly loved all kinds of flying. He was a Delta L-1011 captain by career and glider/airplane instructor all other times. He taught me to love flying and live to talk about it. Most of my time is in taildraggers, and I credit Bill for that. I eventually received my CFI glider and private SEL ratings from him.

What was your first experience with aerobatics? In 1983, Brian and I took an aerobatic course at North Perry Airport in a 2T-1A Great Lakes. After we passed the course we were allowed to rent the Great Lakes. I spent all my spare money on flying (not much has changed there). Aerobatics was a whole new type of flying that encouraged me to practice to become more skilled. I used this training in gliders and taught my students the aerobatics known today as unusual attitude recovery. I crop-dust part-time, and these aircraft are typically flown to the limits of their flight envelope. Using energy management techniques learned in aerobatics makes for more gentle and safe maneuvering of the aerial application process.

Tell me about your glider. The glider I used in the 2007 and 2008 contests is a Pilatus B4-PC11AF. I restored this glider and upgraded it to the latest model and changed the airworthiness to the aerobatic category. The Pilatus competes well in the Intermediate but will not be competitive in the Unlimited category. I told Jason Stephens and Klein Gilhousen my desire to eventually compete in Unlimited. Their recommendation for a competitive glider was a Fox or Swift S-1. Jason told me of a Swift S-1 for sale at Turf Soaring School, and after a few phone calls and a couple of trips to Phoenix, the Swift is now at my hangar undergoing a 500-hour inspection to get it ready for the 2009 season. This was pure luck. I thought it would take me several years to find a glider able to compete in Unlimited.

What is your most memorable contest moment? My first contest was at the 2007 U.S. Nationals. Never having flown against other pilots, I didn't know how I would compare and was hoping to not make a fool of myself. Receiving third place in the Sportsman category was unforgettable.

What is your favorite part of a contest? Flying, making new friends, and learning from some of the best pilots in the world is great. Volunteering gives me a good opportunity to learn how things work and what the judges are looking for in a perfect figure.

Where would you like to see yourself going in the sport?

I would like to become a judge while working toward a U.S. National Unlimited Glider Championship and later as the World Unlimited Glider Champion.

Tell me a person or persons in the sport you admire: Jason Stephens, Klein Gilhousen, Allyson Parker-Lauck, the Air Force Academy officers and cadets, IAC judges and officials/volunteers, and mostly all pilots who strive to better their flying skills and share those experiences with the rest of us.

What food would you most wish to see served at a contest banquet? I enjoy just about anything, but a smoked ham sounds pretty tasty.



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