



SPORT

# AEROBATICS

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2024

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE INTERNATIONAL AEROBATIC CLUB

2024 IAC HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE

## LINDA MEYERS MORRISSEY



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things don't always go  
according to plan!**



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Hall of Fame Inductee Linda Meyers Morrissey recognized for her dedication to the sports of aerobatics, over 12 years of involvement on the US Unlimited Aerobatic Team and to the many years of judging and mentoring future aerobatic pilots.

### ABOVE:

One of the 2024 US National Aerobatic Championships judging lines. Thank you to all of our volunteers!

**Publisher:** Jim Bourke, president@iac.org

**Executive Director:** Tim Dahnke, execdir@iac.org, 920-426-6574

**Editor:** Lorrie Penner, editor@iac.org

**Contributing Authors:** Jim Bourke, Carter Evans, Wes Liu, Lorrie Penner, Duncan Koerbel, John Morrissey, Linda Meyers Morrissey, 2nd Lt. Avery B. Simer, Jake Speidel

**Senior Copy Editor:** Colleen Walsh

**Copy Editors:** Jennifer Knaack, Bryant Shiu

**Proofreader:** Tara Barn

**Print Production Team Lead:** Marie Rayome-Gill

## IAC CORRESPONDENCE

International Aerobatic Club, P.O. Box 3086

Oshkosh, WI 54903-3086

Tel: 920-426-6574 • Fax: 920-426-6579

Email: execdir@iac.org

## ADVERTISING

### Senior Sales and Advertising Executive:

Sue Anderson, sanderson@eaa.org

## MAILING

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Email: membership@eaa.org

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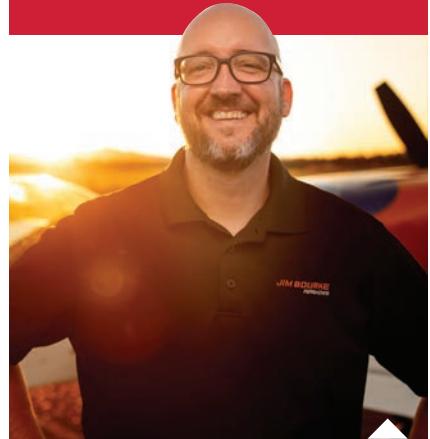
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# Hall of Fame, U.S. Nationals, and IAC Programs

BY JIM BOURKE, IAC 434151



## Congrats to Linda Meyers Morrissey

**OUR NEWEST INDUCTEE TO** the International Aerobatic Club Hall of Fame is the accomplished Linda Meyers Morrissey. Linda has a storied history in aerobatics both as a pilot and as a volunteer. While I never had the pleasure of receiving Linda's instruction, I've watched from a short distance while she works with pilots, and they are lucky to have her incredible experience and professional demeanor on their side. The results speak for themselves with many top pilots crediting Linda for their success. My congratulations to you, Linda, both for the award and for the profound effect you've had on this sport and the people who love it. Well done!

## U.S. National Aerobatic Championships

Sadly, I was unable to attend the IAC's U.S. National Aerobatic Championships this year, but I have heard enough rave reviews to know that it was a success. My thanks to Shad Coulson for agreeing to be the man in charge again this year. It is absolutely without question the hardest volunteer position the IAC has to offer. There is a ton of work to do and never enough thanks. Frankly, if you mess it up, you will never hear the end of it. Only a brave few have dared to try it even once, and possibly it could be said that only those volunteers lacking a self-preservation instinct would give it a second or third go! We are lucky to have you, Shad!

Those of us who couldn't attend were able to relax in our homes and watch the fun on the IAC's livestream. This experience is getting better and better every year. We owe erstwhile IAC editor Lorrie Penner and Nationals videographer Forrest Fox a great round of applause for the vision and hard work they donated to our aerobatic cause. If you missed the livestream, you can catch up on the IAC's YouTube channel.

## IAC Programs

Each year at the IAC's fall board meeting, we receive reports from our program chairs. Sometimes people ask me

how they can pitch in, so I thought it would be good to briefly run down the list of programs to give everyone an idea of what type of work there is to do. Reaching out to me or to a program chair is a great way to get involved at the national level as a volunteer.

Achievement Awards – responsible for the Smooth and Star awards earned in practice sessions or in aerobatic contests. This committee sets the standards for the awards and mails out certificates to members who earn them.

AirVenture Committee – responsible for the planning and operations of our EAA AirVenture Oshkosh offerings. If you haven't been to AirVenture, you will probably be surprised to learn that the IAC has incredible real estate right at show center. The AirVenture Committee plans for merchandising, forum presentations, parking, and hospitality of our many guests during the show.

Annual Awards – this committee is responsible for gathering candidates for the IAC's nonflying awards, which are given each year to our judges, innovators, and volunteers.

Ballot Certification – responsible for counting votes after an IAC election.

CIVA Relations – represents the United States at CIVA, which is the international governing body of aerobatics.

Collegiate Program – promotes aerobatics at the college level by developing teams that compete in the collegiate points series.

Contest Sanctioning – provides sanctioning to contests so they can be insured and have official results recorded in the IAC Contest Database (IACCDB.IAC.org).

Executive Committee – a small committee of IAC board members who can be tasked by the board with issues that do not require the full board's attention.

Finance Committee – chaired by the IAC treasurer, this committee creates the budget and handles IAC investments.

Glider Aerobatics – ensures that the opinions and needs of glider pilots are represented in our rule making, along with any other issues that are addressed by the board.

Government Relations – works with government agencies to ensure that aerobatic rights are protected and acts as a support group for IACers who are having trouble with waivers or regulatory issues.

Hall of Fame Committee – collects nominations and chooses the Aerobatic Hall of Fame inductee, subject to board approval.

Historian – records the history of aerobatics, collects memorabilia, and reminds us of our traditions.

Judges Program – recruits and trains judges and informs the rule-making process.

Nominations – seeks and collects nominations for IAC elections.

Rules Committee – maintains the IAC rulebook. Each year the committee asks for proposals, publishes those proposals to the membership, collects member feedback, meets and debates the proposals, and issues a set of recommendations to the board.

Safety Committee – promotes safe operations and practices during aerobic training and competitions.

Sequence Committee – creates and maintains all IAC sequences.

Technical Committee – provides IT support for the IAC's website and other digital offerings.

### Drop Me a Line

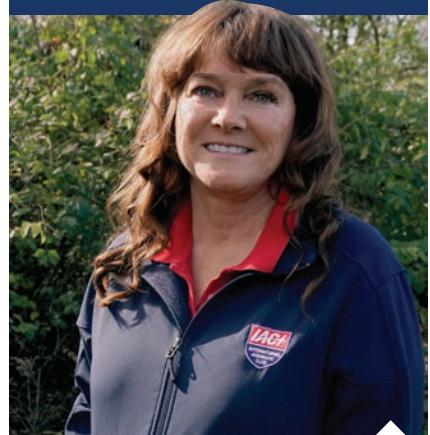
Need something? Grateful for something? Angry about something? Want to tell someone a story? Want to share a picture of your new airplane? I like hearing from you!

Thank you for your support as I enter my third term as IAC president. It's an honor to serve you; I promise you my best. As always, I can be reached at president@iac.org. **IAC**

The advertisement features a large propeller aircraft on the left, with several smaller aerobatic planes performing loops and rolls in the background against a clear blue sky. On the right, a large black flight helmet is shown from a side profile. The LIFT AVIATION logo is at the top, followed by the slogan "MADE FOR HIGH PERFORMANCE". Below the helmet are five small square images showing close-ups of helmet features: "CARBON FIBER SHELL", "ROTATABLE BAYONET RECEIVER", "MAGNETIC DUAL VISOR", "KOROID EPS", and "FIT SYSTEM DIAL KNOB". The bottom left corner contains the text "© 2024 LIFT Aviation | liftaviationusa.com | @liftaviationusa".

# U.S. Nationals and Aerobatic Hall of Fame

BY LORRIE PENNER, IAC 431036



## U.S. Nationals

**ANOTHER NATIONALS IS UNDER** our belts, and it was a great contest: amazing levels of planning, well run, lots of effective volunteers, great teamwork, a venue that had been upgraded, fun evenings of eating and socializing, and mostly drama free. I have yet to see all of the chief judge reports, but it seems like the biggest outdoor irritant was the muddy conditions on the east side after rain the first day of the championships. There appeared to have been some issues over boundary penalties during warmup flights in the Unlimited category, and the Advanced category chief judge is calling for future Unknowns that do not start on the Y-axis. You can see all of the Nationals reports online at [IAC.org/meeting-docs](https://IAC.org/meeting-docs) with your IAC website login.

Special thanks to Shad Coulson, who is doing an excellent job as contest director! He started planning right after last year's event was complete and continued all year long to organize multiple details with the trusty help of the key volunteers that meet as a group and individually with Shad throughout the year leading up to the next championships. Thank you to this group and the multitudes of judges, assistants, recorders, and boundaries who sit in the sun for hours on end to provide the scores that determine the champions.

In this issue there is not an article about the 2024 U.S. Nationals because the timeline for magazine production falls too early to make this issue. So be watching for a lot of coverage in the January/February 2025 issue. In this issue we celebrate with photos of each of our Nationals champions in their respective categories in the center spread.

## Aerobatics Hall of Fame

As we usually do at the end of the year, we are featuring the 2024 Aerobatics Hall of Fame inductee in this issue. I met Linda Meyers Morrissey when her husband, John, was inducted into the Hall of Fame. Certainly, there was an awareness that she had been a member of the Women's Unlimited Aerobatic Team multiple times. What I was unsure of was her participation in coaching.

Reading through the nomination form and then speaking with her later, I realized that Linda is a much sought after and effective coach. For over 30 years she worked with John at the aerobatic camps in Ashland, Kansas. "Coaching is very rewarding. I enjoy sharing what I have learned and mentoring the pilots. To watch the progress of students and see their self-assurance improve, tamp down their competition nerves, and see them striving for perfection is very gratifying," Linda said.

You will also read about the aerobatic camp at Ashland. I don't want to oversell it, but the town and the airfield are magical places. Meeting many of the people who have been involved over the years and listening to their stories of John, Linda, and the camp brought a great appreciation that we have wonderful aerobatic ambassadors in our midst here at the IAC.

Drop me an email at [editor@iac.org](mailto:editor@iac.org) and share your story. Whether a builder, a competitor, a volunteer, a technical expert, or a recreational flyer, learning more about what other members are doing keeps us connected and appreciative of the aerobatic community. **IAC**

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# 2023 Annual Award Recipients

## EACH YEAR THE INTERNATIONAL

Aerobatic Club's outstanding volunteers are recognized for their contributions to the sport of aerobatics. Through nominations by the IAC membership, the board of directors is presented a slate of nominations annually in June for the previous year.

There are five "nonflying" awards that cover recognition of a person who has contributed the most to the sport of aerobatics in a calendar year, an outstanding judge, an outstanding chief judge, a volunteer who exhibits the spirit and enthusiasm of Kathy Jaffe, and a person or company that has made a lasting impression on the world of aerobatics through design.

Whether it is on the local or national level, the IAC membership appreciates the efforts of fellow IAC community members coming together to make the IAC experience one of inspiration, safety, engagement, and joy in the sport of aerobatics.

The 2023 annual nonflying award recipients are:

## Frank Price Cup

Linda Meyers Morrissey and her husband, John, have hosted more than 30 years of regular training camps in Ashland, Kansas, as well as other minicamps in other locations. It is Linda's eye for detail that has helped her many students thrive. She consistently trains award winners with instruction that only her time in the cockpit can provide, and with that, she knows what she's talking about and can fine-tune the best pilot.

In addition to training camps, Linda has been a Nationals judge for many years and has helped to teach judging at schools across the United States. Her expertise in judging is well known, and she has been a valuable member of the Nationals cadre of judges. Linda's skill set includes her 12-plus years on the U.S. Unlimited Aerobic Team, and her hardware consists of countless medals and trophies.

Linda attends regional contests and never fails to step up wherever needed. She knows the ins and outs of running contests and quickly can spot what needs to be handled, volunteered, and helped. She deserves this recognition for all of her expertise in handling any contest problems that may arise, for her dedication to training the next-generation of aerobatic pilots, and for being some of the best company you can have on the judging line.

She has shown a loyalty to the IAC that begins at the basics of sport aerobatics. Linda is as grassroots as one can get and supports training all classes, which she does year after year.

## Harold E. Neumann Award

Wayne Buescher is an excellent chief judge and has been a constant and reliable chief judge in the Mid-America region since 2013.

In 2023, Wayne chief-judged the Michigan and Ohio Opens as well as the Yooper Looper aerobatic contest. He chief-judged for the Primary, Sportsman, Intermediate, and Unlimited categories for a total of 44 pilots.

Although he lives in Michigan, he has traveled every year to Ohio for the IAC 34 contest. There have been times when we would have not had a contest if he hadn't come to the rescue.

Wayne is the type of chief judge that is professional during each flight at a contest. He knows the rulebook inside and out and keeps the flying going at an even pace. He is respected for his knowledge and experience of IAC rules and judging criteria.

When he briefs the category, he often takes an educational opportunity for competitors and judges to solidify or learn the rules on a deeper level. Because he is so well versed in the rulebook and respected for his leadership on the judge line, he is known to be fair and unbiased. Wayne is an outstanding chief judge.

## Robert L. Heuer Award for Judging Excellence

Awarded posthumously for Jerry Riedinger, Jerry's profound impact on the aerobatic community and his unwavering dedication to the sport make him an exceptionally deserving candidate for this prestigious award.

In 2023 alone, Jerry judged 210 flights across four different contests, demonstrating his tireless commitment to the field. Since 2006, Jerry has judged 1,851



LINDA MEYERS MORRISSEY



WAYNE BUESCHER



JERRY RIEDINGER

flights, placing him ninth on the IAC database list of all-time judges. His generosity at the Nationals was particularly notable, where he judged multiple categories in addition to competing himself.

Jerry was known to all as a humble and conscientious aviator, inspiring many with his passion for aerobatics. His contributions to the sport were multi-faceted: He competed at the upper levels, served as an esteemed judge, frequently took on the role of contest director, and played a vital role in the IAC's government relations team. Furthermore, Jerry was a mentor to many aspiring aerobatic pilots, offering guidance and support that have left a lasting legacy.

In addition to his judging and competitive achievements, Jerry was a prolific philanthropist, donating generously to various aerobatic causes. His friends and colleagues remember him for his positive and pragmatic approach to problem-solving, coupled with his dry wit and astute observations, always delivered with a twinkle in his eye.

Professionally, Jerry was a distinguished intellectual property lawyer, but to those who knew him outside of work, he was a pilot's pilot — an aviator of the highest caliber and distinction. Jerry's dedication to aviation and his exemplary character have left an indelible mark on the aerobatic community.

His legacy of excellence, generosity, and passion for aerobatics makes him a most worthy candidate for this honor.

### Kathy Jaffe Volunteer Award

The criteria for the Kathy Jaffe Volunteer Award sounds as though they were written specifically for Mary Beth Rudd. She consistently, unselfishly, and eagerly accepts more responsibilities than she seemingly has time for, yet she exceeds those responsibilities with efficiency and ease and absolutely makes the sport more enjoyable for everyone.

Mary Beth has been either the registrar or scorer, and oftentimes both, at numerous regional and Nationals contests, as well as the World Advanced Aerobatic Championships in Las Vegas, Nevada, last fall (October 2023).

The contests in the southeast could not happen without Mary Beth performing her magic. She is usually the first contest official that competitors see, and

each pilot leaves registration knowing that the contest will be fun because of Mary Beth's cheerfulness, positivity, and enthusiasm.

Any contest director she works with considers her their secret weapon! She is a wonderful ambassador for the IAC and aerobatics. Mary Beth truly is a one-of-a-kind, top-notch volunteer.

### Pitts Memorial Trophy

Dell Coller is an expert aircraft builder whose innovative designs and engineering prowess have significantly contributed to the field of aerobatics. His most notable project, the Yak 110, stands as a testament to his exceptional skills and dedication to aviation.

Dell spent 18 months designing, modifying, and building the Yak 110, which originated from two separate Yak 55M aircraft. The centerpiece that unites these two aircraft took nearly 12 months to develop. He was intimately involved in every aspect of the design and engineering of this complex center section. Dell meticulously designed and constructed all the Yak 110 flight controls and installed a full set of tri-motor

systems, demonstrating his unparalleled expertise and innovative spirit.

Last summer, Dell further modified the Yak 110 to include feathering of both propellers, allowing for part of the air show to be performed with the engines shut down as a tribute to the legendary Bob Hoover.

In addition to the Yak 110, Dell has built and restored numerous aircraft, including One Design aircraft, CAP 10Bs, and the one-of-a-kind Screamin' Sasquatch Jet Waco. Dell possesses a unique ability to envision the scope of a project and understand exactly what it takes to transform a concept into a fully functional aircraft. His work on the Yak 110 exemplifies the repurposing of an excellent aerobatic design to create something that will inspire future generations of aerobatic enthusiasts.



MARY BETH RUDD



DELL COLLER

Dell's contributions to aviation extend beyond his remarkable technical skills. His dedication to advancing the field and his willingness to share his knowledge and experience with others have made a lasting impact on the aviation community. **IAC**



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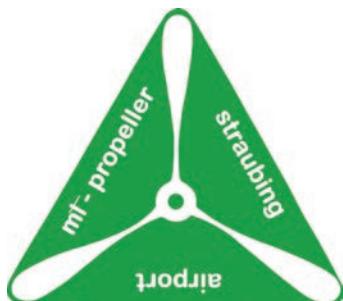
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## CONTEST HIGHLIGHTS



MSU Denver Aerobatic Team with their new Gamebird GB1.

# Hard Zeros, More Zeros, Good Fortune, and Heartbreak

BY DUNCAN KOERBEL, IAC 437649

**THE 2024 HIGH PLANES** Hotpoxia Fest (HPHF) was held in mid-July for the ninth consecutive year at Fort Morgan (KFMM), Colorado, just east of Denver. It lived up to its billing with temperatures above 100 degrees Fahrenheit and a density altitude well above 7,000 feet. You cannot be a wimp and fly in Colorado. We had 27 pilots and, as always, a great time. As is often written, it is about **the people**.

We flew the planned three flights — well almost (see below) — and the hard zero confetti machine was often running at full speed. One of our first-time Primary contestants with approximately 250 flight hours managed to eke out low double digits after five hard zeros (HZs) in her first flight. You must exit your spin in the right direction. As we all know, this feels like crap. In the spirit of camaraderie, one of our Advanced pilots, a former Air Force pilot and current FedEx captain with over 13,000 hours, threw in five more HZs on his flight! We all had a good laugh together during the day-one awarding of flight medals, which I hope helped the egos recover. Who hasn't this happened to? The only question is how soon is too soon to give your friends a hard time!

With the last two Intermediate contestants for the contest airborne, flight 80 and 81, the weather was rolling in over the Rockies,



We have a LOT of fun in Colorado.



*Advanced hard zeros for the three bald guys. The contest director has had his own fair share! left to right: Mark Steward, Duncan Koerbel, and Nick Slabakov.*



*Team MSU with some box-marking skills!*

and our chief judge, DJ Molny, made the right decision to recall the pilots. Winds gusted to 80 mph by the time we had everyone back in the hangar. There is a saying, “Character is what you do when people are not looking.” Before I could find the last two pilots to discuss scoring, I was advised they already both volunteered to take all zeros to let the “standings compute” for all three flights for their category. Way to go, JP and Jamie.

In the last decade we have had approximately 40 contests in Colorado with over 800 contestants. This is second only to California, which is seven times more populous than Colorado. We have the good fortune that the MSU Denver Aerobatic Team coached by Dagmar Kress and the USAF Glider Team coached by Matty Matticola keep introducing kids to aerobatics. I love aerobatic flying and know it makes each of us better pilots ... especially when just getting started. These former “kids” are now flying C-17s and right seat in United and Southwest as first officers. We are in capable hands with these young pros. So why

not have three-plus contests a year when it is this much fun and we can help our future aviators? A shoutout to fellow Colorado contest directors Nick Slabakov and Jamie Treat; our perennial chief judges, DJ Molny and Bob Buckley; and Mike Forney and Bob Freeman, who have taught me so much. Jeff Baker is on deck to be the contest director (CD) at next year’s HPHF as I am hanging up my CD cleats. Well done team, Colorado.

Sadly, most of us were back in Fort Morgan six weeks later for the funeral services for Kyle Scott. Kyle was lost in an aerial spraying accident. Kyle ran KFMM and Scott Aviation, and founded CO Fire Aviation with his partner, Chris Doyle. Kyle happily let us invade KFMM every year and was an incredibly gracious host who never asked for a penny. Kyle was a pilot’s pilot, a man’s man, and heartbreakingly left behind two lovely teenage daughters and a beautiful wife. Kyle was an outstanding aviator I looked up to. All accidents must remind each of us to re-up our diligence every time we get into the cockpit. Our Colorado community will forever miss Kyle. It is about **the people. IAC**



*Kyle Scott*

# What I Learned From Teaching UPRT

BY CARTER EVANS, IAC 442691

## I STARTED INSTRUCTING AT Pilot Makers

Advanced Flight Academy in Provo, Utah, July 2023. I was drawn to the academy by its focus on upset prevention and recovery training (UPRT) and aerobatics. Three years before, I did my tailwheel training in a Decathlon and got a little bit of aerobatic experience. I had just graduated from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, Daytona Beach, Florida, moved back from Florida, and was instructing in a Cessna 150, but I wanted to do more than just fly a slow airplane around.

I met Pilot Makers' chief pilot, Devin Harris, who told me about the school, its Extra 300L, and its Super Decathlon (Super D). I was immediately attracted to the Super D and asked him, "What do I have to do to fly it?" He connected me with Jeff Granger, and the first day we met we went up and flew basic aerobatics. It was my first structured experience with upset recovery and aerobatics.

Soon after this first experience, I met with Pilot Makers' director of operations, Erika Robinson, and interviewed and received an offer to join the team as an instructor with an eye to becoming the next UPRT instructor. While preparing myself for my new job, I learned about the history of spin training, upset recovery, and the foundation on which Pilot Makers was founded.

Before the 1950s, most flight training was done in light, fabric-covered tailwheel airplanes such as Piper Cubs and Aeronca Champs. As part of private pilot training, one would learn basic upset recovery techniques as well as spins. The FAA ended the spin requirement in 1949 and put training emphasis on stall recognition and avoidance instead.

I wondered whether it was enough to just learn how to stall safely; I was taught in the safety classes at Embry-Riddle that most fatal



crashes are due to loss of control. So I wanted to be a competent stick-and-rudder pilot, and with my desire to do aerobatics, I thought by teaching UPRT at Pilot Makers I could get that deep level of experience.

When I started at Pilot Makers, it had been at least three years since I flew a tailwheel aircraft, so it took a few flights just to get back in the groove with basic proficiency. It also took six or seven flights to get over motion sickness, which is a factor a lot of pilots run into when flying unusual attitudes. After these proficiency flights, I started getting comfortable with the UPRT and spin syllabus, first by flying solo and then being trained to an instructional knowledge level.

Being an instructor, I knew that students would put me in awkward situations from time to time, so I wanted to make sure that I could recover from my own mistakes as well as any unusual attitudes the students would throw at me.

Pilot Makers was founded in 2016 by Barry Hancock. It immediately had identified its role in not only training aviators in fundamental flying but also fostering a curriculum to address the rise of loss of control in in-flight (LOC-I) incidents.



Carter starts off the UPRT ground lessons with aerodynamic principles of normal and aerobatic flight.

The syllabus at Pilot Makers has a section for CFI's to teach all aspects of tailwheel, aerobatics, UPRT, and spins in the Super D. It begins with the tailwheel endorsement itself, runs through the UPRT and spins programs, and then to Primary aerobatics. After that, the CFI moves to the rear seat and does it all again in an instructional role for a total of 75 hours.

Compared to the front seat, the sight picture in the back is quite different. All of one's automatic responses have to be relearned. You don't have access to the instrument panel, just the stick, rudder, and throttle. I can talk on the radio, but I can't tune it.

Pilot Makers' UPRT syllabus starts with ground lessons that ensure the student has a solid understanding of aerodynamic principles of normal and aerobatic flight. Flight lessons begin with learning the "language of the airplane": adverse yaw exercises, high-banked lazy-eights, and multiple power-off stalls with power idle recovery. Then cross-controlled stalls, steep turns, and g-loads up to a 4g level follow. We introduce accelerated stalls and a base-to-final stall-to-spin demo. It's also helpful to demonstrate high wingovers going to knife-edge to show that the airplane can go very slow at a low angle of attack and not stall. We aim to disabuse students of the idea that stalls

are solely based on speed and emphasize that it's all about exceeding the critical angle of attack (AOA).

Later flights introduce extreme nose-high and nose-low unusual attitude recovery techniques. Initially, the recovery is done by the instructor as a demonstration, and later the student is drilled over and over again on Rich Stowell's "power-push-roll-pull" to build confidence recovering from various unusual attitudes. Some Primary- and Sportsman-level aerobatic figures introduced early on include aileron rolls, barrel rolls, two-point rolls, and the split-S. I emphasize to the students how risky the split-S maneuver can be unless it is started at low speeds and plenty of altitude.

Once I started teaching students upset recovery, I did come across some consistent and common misconceptions. Many think the spin is a violent maneuver that throws you around in the airplane at a high g-load. In reality, spins are a low-g predictable maneuver. Spins are fairly easy on the body except for the rapid rotation.

Control inputs for recovery must be assertive. You have to push full opposite rudder to stop the yaw motion and get the stick slightly forward to recover from the stall in what is likely to be an unfamiliar sight picture. But the student soon finds that in the Super D you really don't need the stick far forward. Just keep that opposite rudder in and get the stick to neutral. The aircraft will recover shortly after, within one-quarter to one-half of a turn.

If we're practicing a normal stall (upright flight, climbing, slowing, and wings level), the airplane will start to spin when sufficient yaw is introduced. The student initiates the spin, and I will take over and do the recovery. Afterward, we'll talk about what happened and what to do to





Pilot Makers Advanced Flight Academy Extra 300L.



Carter uses aerobatic flight for building confidence and skill.

prevent it, keeping anxiety levels down and reducing the chances of developing new fears.

If time is available at the end of a lesson, we usually do some Primary- or Sportsman-level aerobatic figures. It's not just because we are interested in aerobatic competition, although certainly we are, but because it's a useful technique for building confidence and skill. Doing aerobatic figures, the student becomes much more aware of stick force, g-force, and what its effect is at different speeds. When you begin a loop, you're doing 3-1/2g to 4g. At the top of the loop, you're floating at half a g or less. If you later get into an undesirable attitude, you can instantly

compare it to an aerobatic maneuver, and you are trained and confident on how to get out of it.

Most students who have gone through instrument training will understand the concepts of UPRT and can recover from moderate unusual attitudes. I'll have them watch me put the aircraft into an unusual attitude, and then we'll talk through how to recover. For nose-low recoveries, we use the saying "I see brown, power down, push, roll, pull." Power down reduces the risk of an overspeed, push puts the aircraft on a straight flight path (especially important when inverted as the nose naturally wants to pull through), roll wings level reduces g-load on the aircraft, and pull the nose to the horizon is for stopping the loss of altitude. For nose-high recoveries, the saying is "I see blue, power through" and gently lower the nose to reduce the angle of attack, adding power to increase airspeed and maintain or minimize altitude loss while simultaneously leveling off the aircraft.

During an upset recovery exercise, we'll recover together, and then they'll do it again as pilot in command, allowing them to get the muscle feel and memory for a proper recovery. The students need to start off in a very controlled, very obvious simulated environment. That way, they feel safe, and the learning is not compromised by high anxiety. Because they saw the recovery demonstrated first, they trust that they can recover from the upset. During these types of training exercises, the students were more confident, because they knew if they panicked, I was there to recover. Panic is not as common as I thought it would be, but it definitely can occur.

I've seen some pretty severe panic attacks, where just a little bit of turbulence caused a student to lock up and start overcontrolling the airplane. I've had this occur just by demonstrating straight-ahead stalls. The first time I experienced a student who was panicking, I was caught by surprise. We were executing a power-off stall, and the student froze up. Pushing the stick full forward, I was able to overcome the student and implement the recovery.

Nausea and vertigo are common on the first flight of spin training. That's one reason we plan three lessons for a CFI spin endorsement. The student's initial response to autorotation is impossible to predict. In most cases, tolerance to the sensation of spinning develops rapidly, and later flights result in a better learning experience.

If the student shows up for the lesson with a lot of anxiety (clammy hands, twitching, etc.), I can usually anticipate they're going to get nauseated quicker than those who are calmer and more

engaged. Before the flight, we address motion sickness as a possibility and go through signals they can give since I'm in the back seat and can't see their face. I'd tell them, "If you start feeling nauseated, immediately stop maneuvering. Lift your microphone up, and that signals to me you are not feeling good. I'll take over the controls and fly straight level." You should open the "sick sack" just in case. That would end the lesson as nausea never gets better in flight, at least not enough to resume maneuvering.

What is mainly responsible for motion sickness — g-force or rotations? I think it's different for each student. The g-force can certainly cause tunnel vision or grayout, although the intensity and duration of g-force for UPRT in the Super D is low enough that it has not been much of a problem.

After training UPRT for some time now, I find that this training results in a higher level of student confidence. No matter what the experience level of the student or how many hours they have, they come out of this program feeling much more comfortable and confident with a better understanding of the aerodynamics of maneuvering flight. The student may be shaky and hesitant at first and uneasy about controlling the airplane with maximum control deflection. But as they progress and see themselves doing these maneuvers, it builds a level of confidence that can't be achieved any other way.

Pilot Makers works with clients at all levels — student, private, commercial, and ATP. UPRT is integrated into our private pilot curriculum. So, most of our students go to their private pilot checkride having already experienced spins.

The Super D has a g-meter that gives the student a better understanding of accelerated flight and how increasing load factor affects the stall speed. If you don't have a g-meter, it's really hard to tell how much you are pulling. They can see the g-meter in the front seat; they can do a turn at 60 degrees of bank and hold 2g. They've got that sight picture, and they've got the feeling in the seat of their pants for what 2g feels like.

The students are taking more information in, which helps them develop g-awareness. It is not something that can be done in the simulator. Even the highest-level simulators can only create a momentary g-load in the vertical plane or tip back to simulate acceleration. Effective UPRT training should be done in an aerobatic category airplane.

But it's not all about the airplane. Books and videos are helpful. Our primary training manual is Rich Stowell's *Emergency Maneuver Training* ([RichStowell.com/shop/books/book-emergency-manuever-training](http://RichStowell.com/shop/books/book-emergency-manuever-training)). I urge all of our students to purchase and read it from cover to cover. It totally changed my understanding of how an airplane flies.

Most pilots are not getting UPRT or spin training unless they seek a CFI rating and need the spin endorsement. UPRT training is helpful for all pilots, not just the CFIs. Anyone can get into an upset, but it's especially important for instructors. They're teaching brand-new pilots who are often unaware exactly what they're doing with the aircraft at a given time. A student pilot can quickly put an instructor into a dangerous situation. The CFI that has been through a rigorous spin and UPRT course will recognize an entry into a spin more quickly and correct it in a timely manner.

Although dual flight instruction is generally seen as safer than any other type of GA flying, there certainly have been significant fatal accidents during dual instruction flights, especially the stall into a spin on

the base to final turn. In a situation like the base to final turn accident, there are only seconds to react. So, I think it's important for instructors to have that knowledge, not just for their own safety but so they can pass it on to their students.

From my experience teaching UPRT, I have learned that this type of upset recovery training is valuable to all pilots. If you are a pilot and haven't taken this type of training, seek out your local flight school with an aerobatic-capable aircraft and an experienced UPRT or aerobatic instructor. If you are in Provo, Utah, stop by Pilot Makers and get some training in our Super D or Extra 300L.

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**Carter Evans** is the oldest of five boys raised in Eagle Mountain, Utah. His immediate family was never directly involved with aviation, but he had a great-grandfather who was a P-51 pilot in WWII.

A fascination with flight became a passion the summer of 2014. Carter's soccer coach, Jason Judy, was an air traffic controller for Salt Lake City Center with a private pilot certificate. That summer, he took Carter on his first flight in his yellow Long-EZ out of St. George Regional Airport.

Carter is a 2023 graduate of Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University in Daytona Beach, Florida. His credentials include commercial single-engine/multiengine and CFI/CFII certificates with an instrument rating.

Total hours flown are 1,250-plus with 820-plus as a flight instructor and 150-plus teaching UPRT/spins and aerobatics. Carter has flown a wide range and variety of GA aircraft, starting with the humble C-172 and C-150 and moving through the ranks up to a Piper Meridian and M600 assisting in Angel Flight transportation. **IACF**



*Carter has learned that UPRT is valuable to all pilots.*



Linda Meier

# IAC HALL OF FAME

# Linda Meyers

# Morrissey

BY LINDA MEYERS MORRISSEY, IAC 6551, WITH EDITOR LORRIE PENNER, IAC 430136



**LINDA MEYERS MORRISSEY IS** well-known in the sport of competition aerobatics. It is not only her dedication and keen ability, but also her generosity in sharing her knowledge. She is well respected throughout the world of competition, is tough and skilled, and is a much sought-after aerobatic coach.

In a note written by Gary Barnhill, husband John Morrissey's, F-105 combat test friend, Gary elegantly sums up Linda's accomplishments and personality.

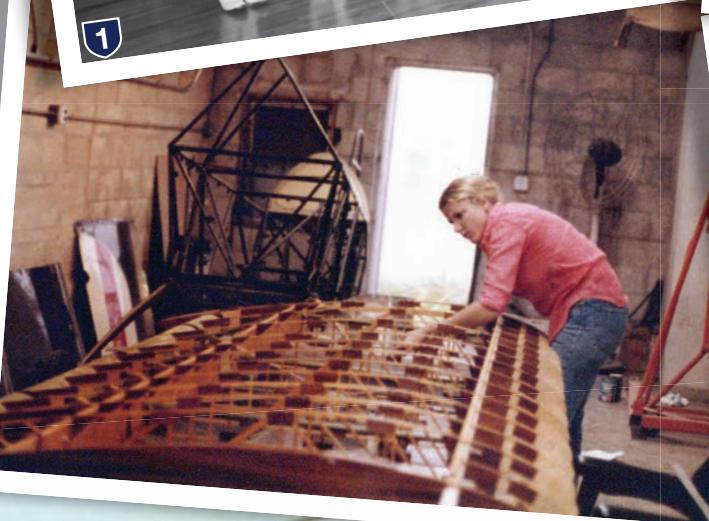
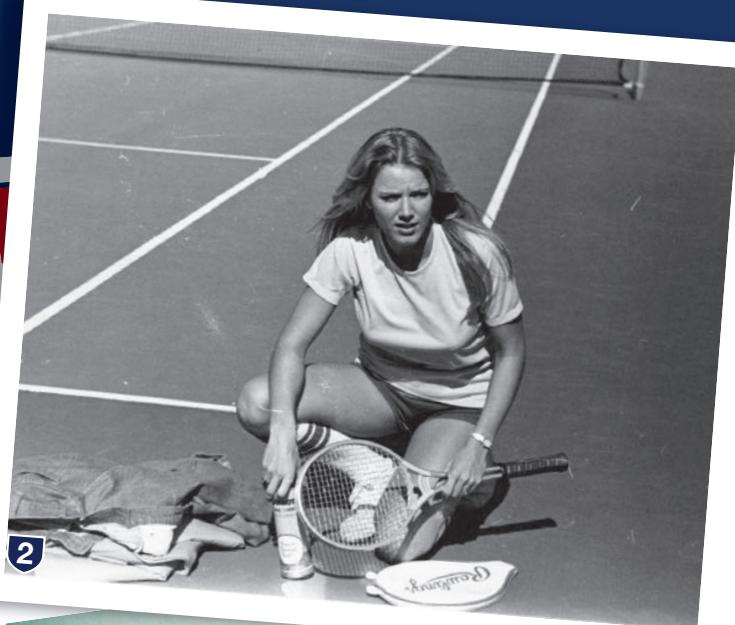
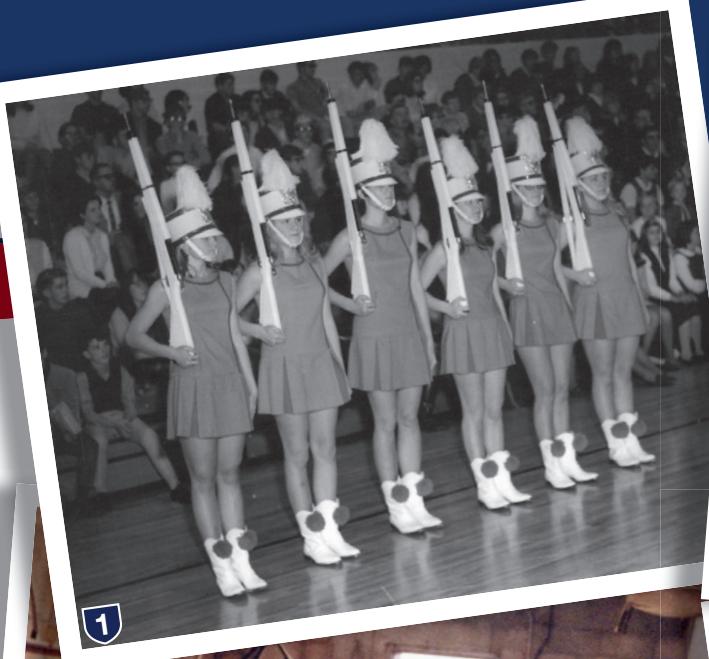
"Among earth's 8 billion people, there are only a handful that are so talented, so accomplished, they are in a class all by themselves. My admiration for your aerobic skills knows no bounds. I feel honored to have shared a meal with you (you are a superlative cook and hostess too!!) in your home.

"Having once floundered around in a Pitts S-2A attempting to master the vanilla loop and roll in Sportsman's Class ... what you did in Unlimited Class ... and to perfection ... is a skill level very few of us posers can truly appreciate. I praise, hand-salute, and congratulate you for your off-the-chart achievements. And, style points too for waving the U.S. flag from the podium. You are quite literally one of a kind.

"Suggestion: remind hubby, from time to time, that ... he married up ... way up!"

While Linda would eventually spend much of her life in the aerobatic community, she stepped into the sport innocently enough. No one in her family was in aviation. "Growing up, I didn't know anyone who flew, had a plane, or anything about air shows or fighter pilots either," Linda said. "I did not dream to be a pilot; I never saw a plane fly by and wished it was me. I just enjoyed how the world looked from the sky and wanted to continue to be in the air."

Her first taste of flight came as part of a chaperone gig. "One of my girlfriends in high school met a couple of guys who were pilots. She wanted to date one of them, but her father insisted that she go on a double date. So I went along to satisfy her father's wishes." The event occurred when Linda was 17, and she didn't remember what kind of airplane (probably a Cessna 172) or which of the guys flew it, but she did remember the flying. "I was enthralled."



# WAC '94 Was Hot, Smooth and Dominated by the French

Article & Photos  
by David Gustafson



Being from a small town in Indiana, Linda first attended Indiana University (associate degree in accounting and business) and Purdue University afterward (Bachelor of Arts degree in interior design). She received a full scholarship, and at that time (1976), it included a grant, a loan, and a work-study program. "You'd take the job they gave you and pay back the loan portion of the scholarship with it. I usually had some sort of office job, or accounting clerk, sometimes a receptionist and other similar jobs."

While in college, Linda decided to start flying lessons. Her fascination with flying was still buzzing in her head. So, during the summer she would head out to the airport, either the Michigan City or the Michigan City Municipal Airport, which were the closest to her hometown. There she took lessons in whatever airplane was available. "Usually, it was a Cessna 150 or 172, or one of the Piper 140s or 160s."

For a short time, Linda joined a skydiving club that was on the Purdue campus. Indicating she didn't have a burning desire to skydive, Linda said, "I was invited to join. It didn't feel instantly wonderful the way the airplane flight had felt; it seemed like there was more opportunity for something to go wrong. Even though there was a note of danger, skydiving was still something fun to do for a while."

There was an airport on the Purdue campus; however, the club met at Halsmer Field for their activities. The airfield was a result of a dream of three brothers who became hooked on aviation after a trip to an air show in 1927. Joe, Francis and John Halsmer were tinkering with homemade airplanes using parts from a Model T. All three brothers gave flight lessons and were flying charters. Joseph turned the airport into his personal workshop where he invented the Aero Car, the Halsmer Safety Twin, and a push-pull airplane with roe fore and after propellers.

Meeting at Halsmer Field would turn out to be a fortuitous change in the trajectory of Linda's life; it happened to be the airport where Kermit Weeks was keeping his two-place Pitts Special. She started going to aerobatic contests with Kermit and found it wasn't flying that enthralled her as much as it was the aerobatics that thrilled her.

Still taking flight lessons, Linda started adding on certificates and ratings. "I was working on additional ratings while flying aerobatics, because all flying was interesting to me. I knew if I learned more about instrument flying that there might be a commercial job available that would allow me to fly even more. I didn't necessarily want to be an airline pilot,

1. High school competition drill team.
2. College tennis.
3. Building wings.
4. Fixing airplanes.
5. Gold Medal, South Cerney, England, 1986.

Thanks to the sponsorship of the Shell Oil Company, makers of Aerobell, a domestic associate sponsor and thousands of individuals, mainly from the ranks of IAC, the USA was able to send nine pilots and an excellent support staff to the World Aerobatic Championships in Debrecen, Hungary. American pilots all finished in the top half of the final standings.

U.S. National Aerobatic Champion Patty Wagstaff won a silver medal in the Known, a bronze medal in the Unknown, and wound up second in the women's division. She was the only U.S. pilot to win medals in the three flights.

Patty, who flies an Extra 300S, was 10th in the overall men's/women's combined race. Rick Massagge wound up 19th in his Storch SU-26. Phil Knight finished 21st in his Extra 300S. Linda Meyers, who flies a CAP in her spare time, Debbie Rahn, flying her one-of-a-kind Texas Hurricane, placed 31st. Mike Goodwin wound up 33rd in his Staudacher S500. Flying the only biplane in the WAC, Bob Morris took 35th place and Robert Armstrong was right behind him in his Stearman.

It was a contest that left a lot of "what ifs" hanging. For example, Patty was second in the women's division after the Known and Free-style. She was close behind Christine Goss, who vowed to win the Unknown. Christine flew on Wednesday night in ideal weather conditions. On Thursday, the winds came up. Starting just before Patty took off, weather station released a balloon and recorded a gust of 30 knots. The legal limit for a World Contest is 24 knots. However, before she got the word out to the starters, Patty had been waved off.

When she learned that the entire flight had been blown out of limits, she asked the Jury if she could refly the sequence. The jury met for about five

The three Women's Teams, France (center) was first, Russia (left) was second, USA was third.



SPORT AEROBATICS 19

but did get a multiengine rating and commercial license. I got seaplane and glider ratings as well."

About this time, Kermit gifted her with a 10-hour aerobatic course with Bill Thomas. Yes, The Bill Thomas of the *Flying for Fun* book. "Everything he [Bill] taught me became valuable later on. I applied what I had learned from him. His style of teaching was to be very tuned in to the student pilot. He knew what needed to be taught and the progression of what you needed to learn next. He was a very compassionate instructor."

In 1977, Linda went with Kermit for his qualifying flights for a 1978 U.S. Men's Team slot at the IAC Championships in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, and the U.S. Nationals in Sherman, Texas. (Both were requirements for the team. The scores were added together to determine making the team.) He flew his own biplane that he designed specifically to compete at the world level, the *Weeks Special*. "Watching the competitors who were the best in the U.S. was very interesting. I became interested in progressing in aerobatics and learning at a higher level."

After she had finished her 10-hour course with Bill Thomas, she dipped her toe in the aerobatic waters by flying her first competition at the U.S. Nationals. She competed in the Sportsman category in a Pitts Special S-2A. Two years later, she was living in Florida and moved up through Intermediate, Advanced, and then the Unlimited category. In Florida, she was surrounded by pilots and others who were interested in international competition, such as

Mary Gaffaney, Bill Thomas, and Kermit. "There were a lot of aerobatic people around the Tamiami airport. All very interested in the U.S. team and international competition. We'd take video, do some critique, and some had radios in their airplanes — only a few because there weren't many aircraft with electrical systems."

In 1981, Linda went out for the U.S. Unlimited Aerobatic Team. She was successful in qualifying and went with the U.S. Women's Team in 1982 to Spitzerberg, Austria. The team traveled to Austria, flying their own airplanes first to JFK airport, putting them on pallets for shipment by airfreight, and retrieving them in Frankfurt. From there, they went to a small airfield in northern Germany and worked with their team trainer, Clint McHenry. Clint would later win the 1986, '87, and '89 U.S. National Aerobatic Championships and compete as part of the U.S. Men's Team at the 1990 WAC.

At this, her first world event, she flew Kermit's airplane, the *Weeks Special*, while he flew the new, larger airplane, the *Weeks Solution*. By the end of the competition, Linda stood on the podium with teammates Betty Stewart (two-time women's world champion) and Patty Johnson Nelson as the second-place silver-medalist U.S. Women's Team.

Since that first trip to a world event, Linda would continue to make the U.S. Women's Team a total of eight times. From 1982 until 1996, she would compete at the World Aerobatic Championships (WAC) in Hungary, United Kingdom, Canada, Switzerland, France (rained out), Hungary again, and finally Oklahoma City. She would again appear many times on the podium for individual flight medals and as a member of the U.S. Women's Team.

Although there are too many to keep track of, Linda has two medals that stand out in her mind. The first was a flight medal at the 1984 WAC held in Békéscsaba, Hungary. "You don't find out initially because it took a couple of days for the flights, then the scoring calculation before they get the scores published, but I won an individual gold [first place] flight medal for the Known program on my birthday," Linda said.

The second medal that shines like a beacon was won at the 1990 WAC held in Yverdon-les-Bains, Switzerland. "One of the things that kept driving me to excel at the world level was the possibility of winning and becoming the world champion," Linda said. "I was very close a number of times, including a silver [second place] overall medal in Switzerland. This goal kept me going."

Despite the drive to become the world champion, that desire was stifled in 1992 when Hurricane Andrew, a Category 5 hurricane, destroyed Linda's airplane and the Weeks museum where she worked with Kermit. Because the

airplane was being rebuilt, she missed going to the U.S. Nationals. "I decided the competition wasn't where I wanted to spend all my energy," Linda said. She continued on for two more world events in 1994 and 1996 before she retired from world competition. Her last international event was a Breitling sponsored invitational in Switzerland in 1997.

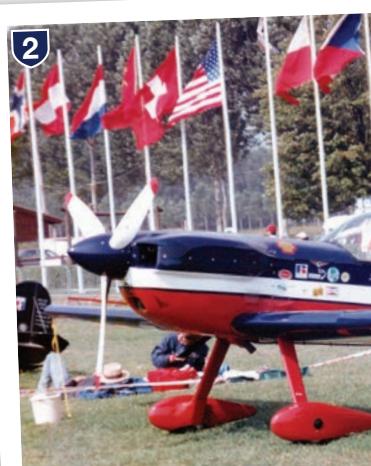
After her retirement from the world stage, her passion for aerobatics continued through coaching. The coaching came out of a natural transition from her aerobatic judging. "It's important for a competition pilot to become a judge to see how they are being evaluated," Linda said. "Not that every pilot has to be a judge, but they should at least be familiar with the judging criteria." Looking at the last 14 years in the IAC database, Linda has judged over 1,174 pilots at numerous contests across the country. "I can't say that it is an enjoyable thing, but I go to judge at contests because I think I should go."

In 1986, John had already created Great Planes

Aerobatics and was giving dual instruction. He was part of a group of pilots who were looking for an airport where they could make some noise and critique each other. They would have impromptu get-togethers. By 1993 John started an aerobatic training camp in Ashland, Kansas. He had taken a cross-country trip and spotted

**"Coaching is very rewarding. I enjoy sharing what I have learned and mentoring the pilots."**  
— Linda Meyers Morrissey

1. Bronze Free 1994, Debrecen, Hungary.
2. Cap 231 Yverdon 1990.
3. Breitling, Atsugi, Japan.
4. Critiquing in Ashland, 1994 to present.
5. Spanish Masters, Aranjuez, Spain, 1990.
6. Paris Airshow 1991.
7. Flying warbirds.
8. England 1986.
9. Gold Team, Red Deer, Canada, 1988.







(top to bottom)

Linda at the last camp, May 2024.

2021, Linda and John at Seward (photo by Phillip Gragg)

Linda and John .

Ashland from the air and thought it would make a great location on the sparsely settled Kansas plains to hold a focused training camp.

In 1994, Linda was training for the U.S. Women's Team again and attended the camp in Ashland as a participant. She and John were married in 1995.

John and his son Matt were both U.S. Advanced Aerobatic Team competitors as they were flying and preparing for the Advanced World Aerobatic Championships (AWAC, now renamed WAAC). Linda began critiquing them for the 1995 and 1997 AWAC events.

The Ashland camp continued to develop, and Linda started helping out at some of the first camps, which were made up of seven or eight students. John and Linda made a strong coaching team. Throughout the last 30 years, they have held up to four training camps per year, as well as training individuals at their home airfields.

"Coaching is very rewarding. I enjoy sharing what I have learned and mentoring the pilots. To watch the progress of students and see their self-assurance improve and tamp down their competition nerves. See them striving for perfection and growing their physical capabilities. Increasing their awareness of their own plane and how it flies is very gratifying," Linda said.

As with coaching, Linda is most proud of another nonflying reputation she acquired in international competition. "It was always more important for me to know the culture of the country I was visiting than to talk about myself or my

**We thank you,  
Linda Meyers Morrissey,  
for your aerobatic skill,  
your mentorship, and  
being a remarkable  
ambassador for the  
sport of aerobatics!**

country's culture. There are poignant moments and a bigger picture; meeting the competitors and working with them meant more than simply competing against them. And more than that, the joy in flying against

someone from a country who was controlled by another and then meeting them again when they were free."

"After flying some of the Breitling competitions in Japan and at the Paris Air Show, I received a lot of feedback on how good of an ambassador I was for the United States. That meant everything."

We thank you, Linda Meyers Morrissey, for your aerobatic skill, your mentorship, and being a remarkable ambassador for the sport of aerobatics! **IAC**

# WHY FLY THE REST? COME FLY THE BEST, MX.



MX is a multiple aerobatic competition winner and an unbelievable air show performer with an all carbon fiber aerobatic design.

Setting the benchmark in unlimited performance aircraft MX has a range of features including:

- Well-mannered aircraft
- Unmatched manoeuvrability at +/- 14G's
- Roll rate in excess of 420degrees/second
- Thousands of hours of flight testing
- A fast-cross country sports plane with a cruising speed of 200 knots and up to 900 miles of range!

#### Pilot: Rob Holland

- Twelve-time, consecutive, U.S. National Aerobatic Champion
- Five-time, consecutive, World 4-minute Freestyle Champion
- Thirteen-time, U.S. 4-minute Freestyle Champion
- 2015 World Air Games Freestyle Gold Medallist
- 2012 Art Scholl Award for Showmanship Recipient
- 2008 World Advanced Aerobatic Champion
- Nine-time U.S. Aerobatic Team Member
- 32 Medals in International Competition (14 Gold)



[www.mxaircraft.com](http://www.mxaircraft.com)



+61 89414 7770



[jack@mxaircraft.com](mailto:jack@mxaircraft.com)



**PRIMARY POWER** (left to right) 1st Erik Ledet, 3rd Vincent Evans, Peter Winter (nonresident scored in the top three)



**SPORTSMAN POWER**  
(left to right) 3rd Trevor Smith, 1st Justin Miller, 2nd Mark Haven



**ADVANCED POWER**  
(left to right) 2nd Brittanie Lincoln, 1st Kyle Collins, 3rd Craig Gifford



**INTERMEDIATE POWER**  
(left to right) 3rd Daniel



**UNLIMITED POWER**  
(left to right) 2nd Goody Thomas, 1st Rob Holland, 3rd Aaron McCartan



**FOUR-MINUTE FREESTYLE**  
(left to right) 2nd Brennon



**INTERMEDIATE POWER**  
(left to right) 3rd Jared Bixenman, 1st Steve Johnson, 2nd Phillip Gragg



**SALINA C**  
(left to right) 2nd San



#### INTERMEDIATE GLIDER

1st Greg Borovskyh, 2nd David Petzold



#### SPORTSMAN GLIDER

1st Del Russel, 1st Robin Simmons, 2nd Peyton Nunn



#### PRIMARY GLIDER

1st Huges, 1st Amelia Anderson, 3rd Nicholas Gierach



#### CCLASSIC — ADVANCED GLIDER

1st Elleison, 1st Luke Lipetska, 3rd Michael Laub



**SPONSORS** Thank you to the sponsors who were present at the awards dinner:  
(left to right) Doug Vayda, Extra Aircraft; Jo Ann McClure, Salina Chamber of Commerce;  
Jennifer Vukovic, Fly Good Merch; Rob Holland, MX Aircraft; Brayden Lentz, LIFT Aviation.



#### CHAPTER TROPHY

IAC Chapter 78: Top-scoring pilots Patrick Keating, Eric Ledet, and Forrest Scholin combined for an overall score of 82.56 percent.



**GOODRICH TROPHY**  
Highest-scoring non-U.S. citizen  
within the highest category that has a  
non-U.S. citizen participating —  
Luke Penner, 71.21 percent.



**SERAFIN TROPHY**  
Highest percentage of points in a  
Free Program in any category —  
Robin Simmons, 81.84 percent.

# The Aerobatic Field of Dreams



Over 30 years of aerobatic training in Ashland, Kansas

BY LORRIE PENNER, IAC 431036

## **THAT FIELD I SAW FROM OVERHEAD**

by Phillip Gragg

The flying's done  
The planes are gone  
The hangar locked up tight  
The curtains closed, the stage goes dark;  
Green runways in its stead  
But memories remain, skills sharpened  
for the months ahead, and  
another year is closed;  
On the aerobatic field of dreams.

**MAY 23-29, 2024**, brought the official Ashland camp in Kansas to its close. Always professional and on task, John Morrissey led the last group of four pilots through the five essential and sequential skill sets that John has identified for a consistent successful aerobatic competitor.

"I suppose it [the five essential and sequential skill sets] could be called a 'what-to' approach. The 'how-to' approach concentrates mostly on perfecting individual maneuvers. In my experience, this describes the essence of the aerobatic training I have seen in the U.S. over the past 38 years. Essentially, it is a critique of maneuvers or performances accompanied by suggestions for improvement. It took me a while to

understand that there is a difference between a good critique of aerobatic maneuvers and comprehensive aerobatic training. A good critique will tell you *what* is working well, as well as what isn't. Training will show you *how* to produce a good performance by following a proper path to competitive aerobatic competence," John said.

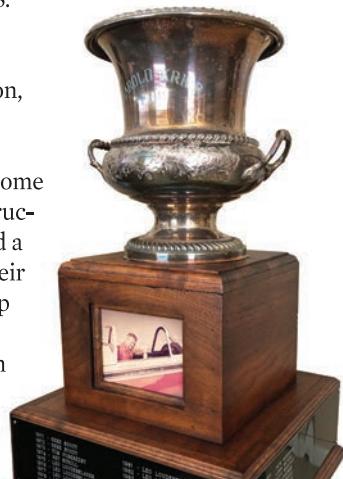
During the last week in May, with blue skies, a surprise hailstorm, and golden fields of grain surrounding them, Phillip Gragg, Tom Rhodes, Andrew Coughlin, and Shawn Higgins were exposed to: (1) the basic tools of their craft, (2) maneuver linkage, (3) box entry, (4) energy management, and (5) presentation. "Once this phase is complete, you will be able to consistently play the game of competition aerobatics with a reasonable expectation of a strong competitive performance while finishing near the top," John said.

As you look at the photos on the wall of the hangar office at Harold Krier Field, you will see many camp attendees smiling back at you who have benefited from the camp. There is a huge 8-foot-long bulletin board with faces whom you would recognize who had great success at the U.S. Nationals or who have been U.S. aerobatic team members: Cecilia Aragon, Gerry Molidor, Melissa Pemberton, Cory Johnson, Doug Bartlett, John Ostmeyer, Debby Rihn-Harvey, Aaron McCartan, Bill Denton, and Michael Lents, to name a few.

It's hard to believe the rich tradition that is "Ashland" started off with a few pilots looking for a place to fly, make some noise, and critique each other. John was already giving instruction in his Great Planes Aerobatics business and had spotted a nice-looking field on a cross-country trip that would suit their purpose. He approached the city of Ashland in 1993 to set up the aerobatic camp home base there.

"We really weren't surprised when John came into town with his idea to have an aerobatic camp," said Bill Shaw, who was the mayor of Ashland when John first started

**Yes, the aerobatic camps brought them, but John and Linda, as well as a whole town of "family," kept them coming back for 31 years.**



The Krier Kraft and the Great Lakes Special at the Pioneer-Krier Museum in Ashland, Kansas. Upper right: The Krier Cup.

the camp. "There was a lot of activity at Krier Field. And even before that, when I was a kid, I remember there were tremendous air shows. Harold Krier would come in, bring all his friends, and give us quite a show. Many people would come to watch, and airplanes would line the runway. It was a big deal."

"The community is used to having aerobatic airplanes here; in fact, they miss them if they are not here! There is a great relationship between John and his camp pilots and the town," Bill said.

"When they have something that breaks or they need a tool or a little piece of something, we just loan them the tool for the day and then they bring it back. We have a lumber company here, Spotts Lumber. If the pilots have something that breaks or they need a little piece of something or a tool, it can be found at the lumber company. If they need a part or something, it can usually be cobbled up. We will make something work for them. It's a community effort where everyone takes an interest."

"Ashland is a small town and the community is always welcoming and having fun getting to meet and know the pilots who come from diverse backgrounds from all over the country. Another aspect of them being here is a financial thing. They bring dollars to the community by buying fuel, eating out, shopping at the grocery store, and renting rooms. There is a nice economic impact for the community."

"We will certainly be missing John and all his pilots. It's a lot of fun when they are here; they bring all the schoolkids out to look at the planes and get in their cockpits. Some people from town just come and sit and watch the practice. It's been a way of life for 31 years now."

"We were all pleased that the IAC board granted permission to have the Harold Krier Cup put on loan to our local museum, Pioneer-Krier Museum. John was instrumental in working with IAC historian Mike Heuer, who presented the request to the board and shipped the trophy out to Ashland for a presentation early in May 2024. This is where the trophy should be," Bill said. "We are very proud of having it here with us."

Toward the end of the week, I went over with John and Linda to the Ashland museum to see the Krier Cup. The cup sits in the entry to the museum. Tony Maphet, the museum curator, was welcoming and proud to show us the excellent display of Krier memorabilia lining the walls and two of Harold's airplanes: the Krier Kraft, tail No. N5400E, and the Great Lakes Special, tail No. N21E.

Not far from the airplanes is a certificate signed by Paul Poberezny from EAA, an Outstanding Individual Achievement Award for "constructing a private-built aircraft



Ashland Camp 2009-B. Standing left to right Brian Correll, Tom Rhodes, Bill Denton, Doug Barlett, Doug Sowder. Kneeling left to right Phillip Gragg, John and Linda Putt, Bruce Ballew.



(Left to right) Aaron McCartan, Doug Bartlett, John Ostmeyer, Debby Rihn-Harvey, Bill Denton, Phillip Gragg.



John receives the key to city from Mayor Kendal Hopp May 2024.



John with Bill Shaw, who was mayor in 1994.



John with Kristi Lee, city clerk, city of Ashland.



John and Linda with museum curator Tony Maphet and the Krier Cup.



Czechoslovakian Zlin 50LS flown by an Italian, German Extra EA300 flown by an American, Russian Sukhoi 26 flown by a Mexican, and American One Design flown by an American.



Ashland 2008-B. Standing left to right: Kellee Valentine, John Ostmeyer, Robert Armstrong, Bruce Ballew, Linda with Putt. Kneeling L to R: Luisa Romero, Patrick Carter, Doug Bartlett, Debby Rihn-Harvey.



The Last Camp, May 2024. (left to right) Phillip Gragg, Tom Rhodes, Andrew Coughlin, Shawn Higgins.



May 2024: getting ready to start the day at Ashland.

[the Krier Kraft] and in appreciation for his contribution in developing, promoting, and advancing private and sport aviation interests.” Signed April 15, 1963. And on the wall behind the airplanes is another certificate from the national aerobatic competition held at Oak Grove Airport, Texas, and signed by M.H. “Pappy” Spinks, October 20, 1968.

By the beginning of the decade of the '60s, Harold Krier had become a dominant figure in the air show industry. He started flying air shows in a clipped wing. Later he moved up to the aircraft that assured his fame in aerobatics — a highly modified Great Lakes 2T-1A, in which he installed a 185-hp Warner engine. His gift at flying really surfaced with the Lakes.

In 1962, he decided he could build a better aerobatic airplane himself and set out to develop a biplane he dubbed the Krier Kraft. His objective was to construct a much lighter airplane than the Great Lakes, and he was successful in that regard. For its time, the Krier Kraft had superior vertical performance and roll rate. He took that airplane to the World Aerobatic Championships in 1964 — the first of three world contests he participated in — but he realized when he got there that monoplanes seemed to have a distinct advantage. He came home, sold the Krier Kraft to Charlie Hillard, who flew it in Moscow in 1966, and started work on Super Chipmunk.

A stone's throw from the museum is the city office where all the town's local government departments are housed. Kristi Lee, city clerk, was gracious to take time out to describe how the aerobatic camps affected her and the community as a whole. “John always keeps us updated on what they are doing, when the pilots



Local schoolkids out for field trip to look at the airplanes.

are coming. I keep all his emails in a special folder and make sure they have everything and anything they need for the week.

"The pilots have been a lot of help to the community, coming into the shops, eating at our local restaurants, really being a big asset to our town," Kristi said. "I'm going to miss them being here. John always keeps such good care of the facility out at the airport."

"There's been times if something broke or went wrong, John or the pilots let us know about it," she said. "Just like this morning, when John came in and let us know the handle to the door had broken at the airport office he uses. He had already gone ahead and fixed it and paid for it. We've told them we have an account at Spotts Lumber, and to please bill us."

"We keep the roads maintained and the air field mowed," Kristi added. "Sometimes the road might not be in the best shape, from rain or whatnot. But we make sure the runway is packed [rolled] right. John and the pilots keep an eye out for gophers and things that might need our attention. They love our grass runway. We also prepare the box markers and lay them out before camp. Sometimes we have to hose those box markers down, even had to scrub them down with a pressure washer a few times."

"There are so many wonderful memories," she said. "I came on at the city in February of 1997, so I've known John and Linda almost the whole time they've been having aerobatic camps at Ashland. They are amazing people, and I have enjoyed meeting each and every one of those pilots."

"Aviation people and the aerobatic pilots are very friendly in general," she noted. "They are at the airport continuing with the aerobatics and honoring Harold — yes, it makes me tear up. I would have loved to have met him. The first time I saw the Harold Krier trophy in the museum, I teared up. It is a major honor to have it here."

Kristi isn't the only one who feels at home with John and Linda. The proprietor of a local bed-and-breakfast since 1994, Essie Waites' home has been hosting John and camp participants for many years. "Pilots having been staying with me since 1995. John and Linda were co-instructing, and there were like seven or eight of them [pilots]. In for a week and then out, and new ones would come."

"Some of the pilots in the first batch would sit around in the evenings and have their cigars and scotch," Essie said. "I thought that was okay; they were ready to go fly again the next day. 'Course I had a swimming pool, and they liked to sit around that pool for a lot of years. I finally filled it in and used the space for barbecues."

"The aviation people are lovely. Most times they'd have eggs Benedict. One year a pilot from Oregon sent me salmon on ice when he got home, and so I added that to the breakfast menu," Essie said. "I made a lot of friends over the years. I didn't usually go to watch them fly the whole time, but John liked it when I came at the end of camp and

asked me to pick out who did the best. I was mostly on target."

"John does such a good job at picking the people who come to camp by his invitation. He knows what each one needs individually and how they would fit in with the rest of the pilots and the town," Essie said. Here at the house, the days have their own rhythm, according to Essie. "John comes down (there are three upstairs bedrooms), and then a second one; they go out to the front porch and talk aerobatics until everyone is up. Then breakfast and it's off to the airport."

"I did get a chance to go to the Nationals in Salina," she said. "It was great to see some of the pilots who had been to camp. Even though I hadn't seen them in a while, they all knew me. It's just like family."

Family. In every article about contests or chapter events, we always hear someone say, "It is the people, all my old friends and the new ones I make each time, that keep me coming back." The Ashland camp feels the same. Pilots who have been to the camp often return, some multiple times. Yes, the aerobatic camps brought them, but John and Linda, as well as a whole town of "family," kept them coming back for 31 years.

*"But memories remain, skills sharpened  
for the months ahead, and  
another year is closed;  
On the aerobatic field of dreams."*



*The UND Super Decathlon heading out to the Ashland aerobatic box for the last time.*

# The Five Sequential and Essential Steps to Competition Aerobatics

BY JOHN MORRISSEY, IAC 3238

**MOST OF THE PIECES** I have written for *Sport Aerobatics* over the years have been “how-to” in nature. This one is from a different perspective — a look at aerobatics on a broader piece of canvas, where one steps back a bit to see the total process of aerobatic competition training rather than the specifics. I suppose it could be called a “what-to” approach. The how-to approach concentrates mostly on perfecting individual maneuvers. In my experience, this describes the essence of the aerobatic training I have seen in the United States over the past 38 years. Essentially, it is a critique of maneuvers or performances accompanied by suggestions for improvement.

It took me a while to understand that there is a difference between a good critique of aerobatic maneuvers and comprehensive aerobatic training. A good critique will tell you what is working well, as well as what isn’t. Training will show you how to produce a good performance by following a proper path to competitive aerobatic competence. What I would like to offer, and without a great deal of specifics, is what I believe to be the five sequential, and essential, skill sets required for successful aerobatic competition.

Honing this craft of aerobatic competition is not for those who require instant gratification. It is a process that takes a strong desire to learn. It takes time. It takes a proper airplane. It is expensive. And it takes frequent dedicated practice. But taking the proper path to aerobatic excellence takes less time and is more economical in the long run than following false paths leading to cul-de-sacs that cause aerobatic skills to plateau early and block the further refinement of your skill sets.

We have conducted advanced aerobatic training camps from the grass runways of Krier Field in Harold’s hometown of Ashland, Kansas, every May for 31 years. The purpose of those

**A good critique will tell you what is working well, as well as what isn’t. Training will show you how to produce a good performance by following a proper path to competitive aerobatic competence.**

camps is to offer a path to competition competence that will allow aerobatic aspirants to realize aerobatic goals compatible with their talent, available time, and aircraft capabilities.

Aerobatic success can mean different things to different folks. It does not necessarily mean being world champion. It does mean optimizing your skills to achieve your maximum potential. It means being a contender. It means being respected by your competitors, as well as respecting the game of competitive aerobatics.

While talking about respecting the game of aerobatics, I should mention that you have only one chance to make a favorable first impression on your judges and fellow competitors. Using a competition as a training camp by flying in a category above your skill set level will be counterproductive to that goal.

Here are the five essential skill sets I have identified as essential, as well as sequential, for consistent successful aerobatic competition:

**1. The basic tools of your craft.** These are the skills you will need to be a consistently successful competition pilot. Remember, you will have only one chance to make that good first impression on the judges. Bill Thomas had a saying that summed up many secrets of competition: “The judges like straight lines, round circles, and accurate brisk rotational elements on those lines.”

Your basic tools include mastering these lines, angles, circles, and rotational elements for your category of competition. You will also need a good working knowledge of the rules of competition, as well as a technical and visual understanding of your new language of aerobatics — Aresti.

When you see an Aresti sequence as a pilot, or a judge, you should be able to immediately visualize it as it will be flown.



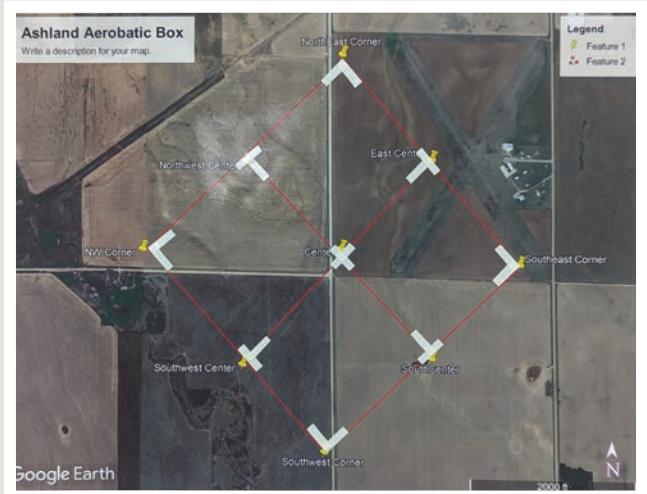
Tom Rhodes in his CAP 232.



Phillip Gragg observes Tom Rhodes' preparation before flight.



John starts the day off with a brief.



You will need to visualize your flight program from your cockpit, as well as understand how it will be seen by the judges. You should be able to adjust this visualization for wind. And you need to know how much box real estate and how much energy each maneuver will require.

**2. Maneuver linkage.** Once you have obtained a reasonable skill in the individual maneuvers needed for your category of competition, you will need to learn how to link them, to learn how much energy will be needed for each maneuver and how much can be lost. Or gained. You will have to learn to balance the time, distance, and speed between maneuvers. After you have learned how to link the maneuvers of a complete

sequence in the required dimensions of your aerobatic box, you will need the next skill ...

**3. Box entry.** You will have to develop a skill set that will allow you to achieve the proper flight path required to guarantee the requisite energy at the exact altitude, speed, and box position for the first maneuver of your sequence. That is the only time in an aerobatic sequence that you are in total control of the exact point and energy for a maneuver.

That initial box entry creates a mindset for the judges, a mindset that affects your scores — for the better or the worse. The entry phase of your flight is not scored by the judges, but you can be certain it is evaluated.

The two basic entry maneuver possibilities are entering high and descending to gain speed for a lower-altitude high-energy first maneuver, or a high-altitude low-energy beginning to your sequence. Those two entries are further subdivided into upright and inverted entries on either the major (x) or minor (y) axis, as well as downwind upright and inverted entries on the x-axis. Once this skill set is reasonably developed, we can begin to discuss ...

**4. Energy management.** Think of energy in the aerobatic sense as the combination of altitude, indicated airspeed, and thrust of your engine prop combination at any given moment during your sequence. You must understand how to maintain the energy a sequence must have for a strong finish above the lower altitude limit of the box. You must understand the relationship between g-loading, induced drag, and available energy. And the effects of negative g on energy. You must learn how to modify the tempo and g of your sequence to adjust your performance to the wind and density altitude of the day. This is an essential part of learning the “game” of aerobatics.

**5. Presentation.** This is *the* critical skill set for successful competition aerobatics. If not well in hand, all your efforts to perfect the maneuvers will be wasted. During the presentation phase, you will learn how to display your sequence within the stage located inside the main “box.” In order to do that, the skill set of x- and y-axis wind control *must be learned* and firmly in hand, unless you want to be held hostage by the wind. Additionally, you must also begin to develop the ability to establish the rhythm and tempo necessary to balance the speed, time, and distance requirements between both high- and low-speed maneuvers, as well as roll positioning within maneuvers. During training, you will be shown how to do this.

You will also have to learn how to adjust certain maneuvers to create the illusion of perfection. During this phase, you will begin to learn to trust the control of the aircraft to your hands and feet while you are totally focused on your presentation and not on the execution of individual maneuvers.

Finally, the good news: Once this phase of training is complete, you will be able to consistently play the game of competition aerobatics with a reasonable expectation of a strong, competitive performance while finishing near the top.

I do not pretend this is an easy task. If it were easy, anyone could do it. But it can be done. And if you do it with the correct mindset, the journey will be as enjoyable as the result. **IAC**

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# An Easy Decision to Bail Out!

BY JAKE SPEIDEL, IAC 442692, WITH LORRIE PENNER, IAC 431036

*NTSB Preliminary Report*

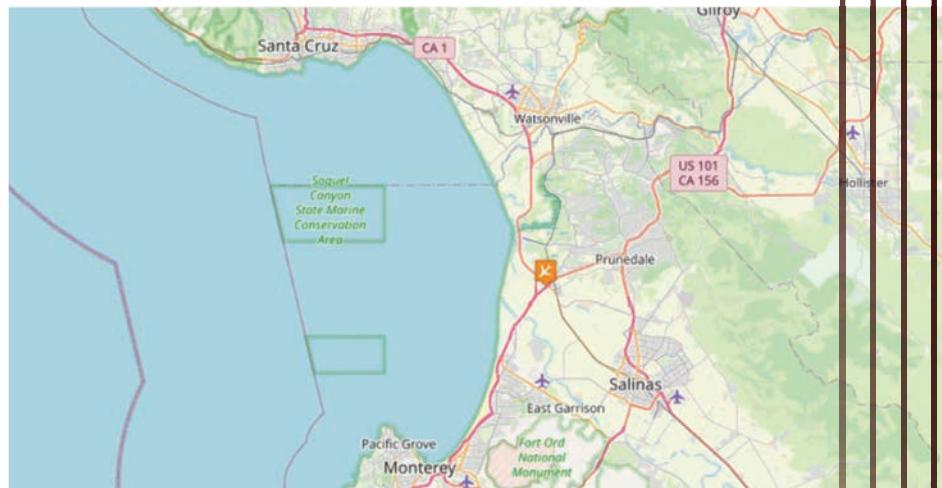
**On March 12, 2023, at 1505 Pacific Daylight Time, an experimental, amateur-built Cassutt M11 airplane, N55XJ, was substantially damaged when it was involved in an accident near Castroville, California. The pilot was seriously injured. The airplane was operated as a Title 14 Code of Federal Regulations Part 91 personal flight.**

The pilot stated he had conducted clearing turns and was performing an aileron roll when the airplane suddenly entered an uncommanded high-g maneuver, and he lost control of the airplane. He was able to release his seat belt and parachute to the ground. The airplane impacted a muddy field. He reported the left aileron had departed the airplane. The wreckage was retained for further examination.

**READING THIS REPORT AGAIN** takes my breath away. Like just about everyone else in aviation, you never think something like this will happen to you. Yes, we in the aerobatic world know that there might be a slim chance, and we practice our egress routine occasionally and make sure the parachute is repacked as required every 180 days. We practice a lot and do all of the required recurrent training, field checks, and flight reviews, rarely imagining that we will have to perform lifesaving procedures for real.

I sit with the NTSB report for a moment and can't help but return to the instance when I realized I would have to bail out. On the day of the accident, I was flying the Cassutt to stay current for future air races.

Helping out race crews at the Reno Air Races long ago, I was immediately attracted to racing myself. The Cassutt is a great competitive entry-level race-plane for the International Formula One (IF1) class and an economical airplane, as well. My first Cassutt was stock with a Continental O-200 and



The orange square on the map shows the location where the fuselage landed.

narrow 16-inch-wide cockpit. N55XJ was my second Cassutt that sported the moniker of 45 Quad Nickel.

45 was a highly modified Cassutt M11 purchased in Texas. The fuselage was steel tube carbon-fiber wrapped. The aircraft had a custom wing designed for racing. This particular wing was sealed up with no inspection ports, and one of three airplanes with this wing design was actively flying at the time of the accident. The accident investigation revealed that this particular wing design had construction flaws that affected structural integrity. All the wings (6) with this design were retired after my accident.

When I first purchased the airplane, I knew it needed some work. I'm an airframe and powerplant (A&P) maintenance technician, and I hold an inspection authorization (IA) certificate and owned a maintenance shop at one point. 45 needed about six months of work to get airworthy again. 45 had a long history of racing, but had been neglected before I bought it. To get it up to par, the engine was rebuilt. A beautiful paint job was applied at the end of the project, finish by T&P Aero in Salinas, California.

In the air race world, there are a few recurrent check ride maneuvers that need to be performed annually. On the day of the accident, I was headed out to the aerobatic box to practice these maneuvers, a half-roll right and then half-roll left (much like an exaggerated wing wag when diving into the aerobatic box). The maneuvers should not lose more than 50 feet of altitude.

I took off and climbed to 3,500 feet AGL and after some clearing turns, I began the first roll to the left as the airplane was about 220 degrees through the roll; all of a sudden, the stick ripped out of my hands, and immediately the airplane was in a high g-force spiral. I couldn't reach the stick.

It was an easy decision to bail out — I knew that something was seriously wrong. My arms were pinned down in the narrow cockpit with the



Practicing in Reno in 2022 for the air races. Jake coming up from the rear to pass. Photo by Kevin Eccles

heavy g-force. I was losing my vision, starting to go gray, g-lock setting in. I could not lift my arms to jettison the canopy due to the high g-forces.

Struggling and wrestling to get out of the airplane was my only objective. And there I was, outside the airplane. I decided to release my harness first and then somehow release the canopy. Immediately after I released my harness, the main wing spar gave way and the high positive g-load turned briefly into a negative g-load and I was forcefully jettisoned out through the canopy. The sense of urgency was overwhelming; I was out of time, tumbling through the air. I knew where the D-ring was, felt it, and pulled it aggressively. The chute deployed with an extreme amount of force.

Now I had time to take a look and see where I was. Not what I hoped for. I was about 1,000 feet in the air,





45 Quad Nickel debuted its deep candy apple red paint job in September 2022 at the Reno Air Races.

looking down at fast traffic on a busy highway. Wishing I had my paraglider chute from my Colorado paragliding days with a nice square wing, there wasn't a lot I could do with a round chute. However, the past paragliding experience did help me navigate enough toward some agricultural land. I estimated I landed at about 15-20 mph. On landing, I could feel one of my quad muscles tear off the bone. But I couldn't concentrate on that too much because the parachute was dragging me around.

Seeing my situation, a person on a bike path happened to be next to the

field I had landed in. They were able to capture the parachute, and the dragging was stopped. As I was recovering my senses, worry began to flood my mind — where was the airplane? Had it hit someone or caused a car accident?

As it turned out, the airplane had crashed about half a mile from my position on the other side of the highway. The canopy was on the highway with some carbon-fiber parts, and the fuselage was buried about 8 feet in the ground, which had seen flooding during the rainy season at this time of year.

I don't think I sat in the field for long. There were 15 911 calls from people in the area that had seen 45 come apart. I was taken to the ER to get checked out. During the exam, the doctor saw the condition of the quad muscle, and I had surgery to repair it right away.

Now, a year and a half after the accident, I can reflect on it with a bit more ease. The scariest thing for me was that this event could have gone another way if I hadn't made the right decision before I got in the

airplane that day. On a previous flight, the weather wasn't as good as the accident day, with low ceilings. I hadn't worn a parachute, and I was only practicing landings. On the day of the accident, there were some lower area clouds, but they were sparse, and there wasn't a ceiling issue. I could have made that same decision not to wear my parachute, but thankfully I made the right decision and was wearing it.

My parachute was purchased in May 2011 from Softie Parachutes by Para-Phernalia Inc. I picked the company and the chute for its reputation. At that time, I was in the market for a small compact parachute and chose the Mini Softie. My view on parachutes at that point was that I simply needed a parachute to fit the race plane, but I didn't have to have one. It's kind of a hassle making sure to have it repacked, putting it on and off, and imagining I would never need it.

After the accident, Para-Phernalia owner Dan Tarasievich checked up on me. I thanked him profusely for saving my life. He is such a great individual; Dan signed me up for the Caterpillar Club (A group of people who have successfully used a parachute to bail out of a disabled aircraft). He also wanted to get some facts about the speed in which the parachute

was deployed. The Mini Softie is tested and rated for up to 150 mph at deployment. During the accident, it has been calculated that the chute opened at a speed over 180 mph. It's great data to have and a testament to the workmanship of the product.

For me, the saving grace was the parachute and a helmet. Wear them. Other things to practice or think about:

- It can't be said enough that you should practice your egress every time you put the chute on so it is fresh in your mind. You won't have any time to think about where that D-ring is.





At work in the cockpit with sister Hannah Jo Speidel.

- Come up with scenarios, especially of being trapped. It might be different than what you imagined. I was clawing around.
- Get a good canopy tool located close enough to your hands that you don't have to fumble around for it, as well as a handy seat belt cutter.
- Think about the terrain that you will be flying over. With limited control on a round canopy, you may change the route you are flying to avoid being over congested areas and busy traffic.
- Wear a helmet, I would have of had a serious head injury getting pushed through the canopy without one,

- Have you ever had any actual training with a parachute or made a jump? You might want to consider this experience in a nonthreatening environment.

In the aftermath, I've had to consider how I felt about aviation moving forward. There were three things that got me back in an airplane: my daughter, my Pitts Special, and time.

My daughter asked me to go flying in a Piper Tomahawk a couple of months after the accident. She really helped me get back into flying. Having a nonthreatening production aircraft around me didn't feel like it was something that would disintegrate around me. And of course, her company was reassuring and comfortable. It was casual, just out to enjoy a nice scenic flight.

Focusing on the Pitts became my therapy; it was really helpful getting into the Pitts. Aerobatics is usually a solo endeavor, and it gave me a feeling of control. There's no one else zipping around me that I can't control. In addition, being in the aerobatic community made me feel pretty competent with the use of critique from being surrounded by pilots who were at a higher level and could help me.



Jake is having a lot of fun in aerobatics with his 10-year-old son.

Jake's Pitts Special S-2B N9QT.



And finally, time is the best healer of all. Separation from the event and allowing the ability to move on. This year, I have competed in two contests, the Hammerhead Roundup in April and the NorCal Aerobatic Contest in May.

I always wanted to fly a contest; I actually took some aerobatic training from Rob Holland when I lived in Maine about 15 years ago. He is a real professional with a great teaching style. He has the gift of adapting to my flying style and tailoring the instruction to meet my training needs.

My Pitts has the 50th anniversary commemorative paint job with gold striping and is signed by Curtis Pitts. It is a great airplane to fly. After I bought the Pitts, I got a checkout with Brooks

Mershon, who came to my airport and spent two days with me doing pattern work. Then I flew with Johnny De Gennaro for some spin training. I also received some training from Yuichi Takagi out of King City.

After some encouragement from my friend Jen Watson, I showed up at the Hammerhead Roundup. Of course, I was a little nervous up to that point since I hadn't flown in an aerobatic box. However, everyone was so welcoming and happy to show a first-timer the ropes. It was a delightful surprise how great the aerobatic community is — a really generous group of people.

I'm having a lot of fun now with aerobatics and plan on more contests in the future. Sometimes I'm just

flying aerobatics and loving taking my 10-year-old boy for rides. We both love the pull-push-push humpty.

The competition aspect has me working on perfecting maneuvers. I'm currently working on a hammerhead with a snap roll on the down-line. Although it is challenging, I think I might put it in my Freestyle if I can work out the timing. **IAC**

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**Jake Speidel** holds an ATP. His current occupation is as a B-777 captain for a major U.S. carrier. He has a total flight time of 21,000 hours, 135 in a Pitts Special S-2B and 180 aerobatic.

He is a graduate of Metro State University, Denver, Colorado, class of 2000 with an Aviation Technology Bachelor of Science degree.

Jake comes from a family of pilots. His father was a flight instructor, and that's how he met Jake's mom; he gave her flight instruction, and she earned her private pilot certificate. Jake and his dad have flown together on the B-767 professionally on the same airline.

His sister is an instructor for the B-737 at the same airline that Jake works for. They have also flown together professionally.

Jake's daughter is currently a sophomore at the U.S. Air Force Academy. She soloed at 14 and flew cross-country from California to Maine in a motorglider in 2019.

At the age of 15, Jake's older son soloed six months ago in a Schleicher ASK 21 glider.

The younger son is 10 years old and is poised to get into aviation as soon as he can.



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Gentile flies inverted during her weeklong stay at Tutima Academy of Aviation Safety, King City, California. The U.S. Air Force Academy cadet was given this opportunity through the Taryn Ashley Robinson Scholarship. Photo by Gentile.

# Scholarship for Former Cadet Inspires a Passion for Aviation

BY 2ND LT. AVERY B. SIMER, U.S. AIR FORCE ACADEMY

**THE TARYN ASHLEY ROBINSON SCHOLARSHIP** is awarded by the Tutima Academy of Aviation Safety to a United States Air Force Academy cadet on a yearly basis. This scholarship was established in memory of 2nd Lt. Taryn Ashley Robinson, a 2005 academy graduate. Taryn was gravely injured during a flight training accident in Texas. She fought bravely and with great dignity for 111 days before succumbing to her injuries on January 10, 2006. Taryn's parents, Maj. Gen. David Robinson (U.S. Air Force, retired) and Gen. Lori Robinson (U.S. Air Force, retired), sponsor this scholarship alongside Sean D. Tucker. The cadet chosen for the scholarship

receives a week of aerobatics and confidence training at Tutima Academy in King City, California.

The Robinson family's strong legacy of service, combined with Tucker's remarkable career in aviation, make the Taryn Ashley Robinson Scholarship possible. Maj. Gen. David Robinson served as the mobilization assistant to the chief of the Air Force Reserve as well as the squadron operations officer and demonstration pilot for the Thunderbirds. Gen. Lori Robinson retired as commander, U.S. Northern Command, and commander, North American Aerospace Defense Command, after serving as the commander of the Pacific Air Forces. She was the first woman to command a major Unified Combatant Command, and when she retired, she was the most senior woman in the history of the U.S. military. Maj. Gen. David Robinson said, "If you have to see it to be it, look no further" than his wife.



Knox (third from left) is presented the Taryn Ashley Robinson Scholarship to Tutima Academy of Aviation Safety. The U.S. Air Force Academy cadet is flanked by (left to right) retired Maj. Gen. David Robinson, retired Gen. Lori Robinson (parents of the former academy cadet the scholarship is named for), and Sean D. Tucker, who owns the Tutima Academy. Photo by Knox.

The Robinsons “dedicated their lives to serving and are wanting to create light after losing a daughter in service,” said Tucker, a renowned air show pilot who shares their commitment to inspiring others. He is a U.S. National Advanced Category Aerobatic Champion and a National Aviation Hall of Fame inductee and was named one of the 25 “Living Legends of Flight” by the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum, among numerous other accolades. Moreover, he is a philanthropist. Tucker is the chairman and co-founder of the Bob Hoover Academy, whose mission is to use “the power of flight to change lives” as it aims to inspire at-risk and low-income teens.

In preparing for a flight, Tucker is focused on achieving “total conviction of purpose” and commitment to the dance, saying, “You can’t be perfect, but you can be excellent.” Tucker explained that “when people watch me fly, I want them to be enchanted. I want to be the lightning rod that touches their soul. I want to share with them my path that I’ve chosen. Not for them to be an air show pilot, but for them to be joyful in their life. To be joyful in their work. To be joyful in their love.” His goal is to be an inspiration and joy for others, sharing his path and passion for aviation and life in general.

The Robinson family and Tucker have been close friends since 1987, stemming from the air show circuit. In 2004, Tucker offered Taryn a scholarship to Tutima Academy once she finished undergraduate pilot training “to make her the best pilot she could be,” he said. “Taryn really moved me with her passion of aviation and joy ... she was all in.” She “fired on all emotional cylinders: reverence, passion, empathy,” and that was part of what made her so special. After Taryn’s death, Tucker promised the Robinsons she would never be forgotten and that he would give a yearly scholarship in her name to a deserving cadet at her alma mater, the U.S. Air Force Academy. Maj. Gen. David Robinson noted that “without Sean, there would be no scholarship.”

To continue her legacy, one cadet is selected each year from the 94th Flying Training Squadron (FTS) to receive the Taryn Ashley

Robinson Scholarship. Senior class cadets on the Glider Aerobatics Demonstration Team choose a junior cadet based on their merit and aviation potential. The selected cadet learns from Tucker, striving to be the best possible pilot while also learning invaluable life lessons. The skills and confidence gained at Tutima help the cadets win competitions upon their return to the academy. Since the scholarship’s inception in 2007, 18 cadets have received the opportunity to fly with Tucker in Taryn’s memory. The most recent recipients have been 2nd Lt. Jared Bachman for ’22, 2nd Lt. Isabella “Bella” Gentile for ’23, Cadet 1st Class Gretchen Knox for ’24, and Cadet 2nd Class Jack Kastens for ’25.

Bachman was afforded the opportunity to attend Tucker’s camp alongside (now 2nd Lt.) Warren Quinlan, ’21. Bachman said going to a new environment with a teammate was remarkable, especially because he got to see different levels of growth as they worked through new challenges together. When asked what he carries with him still as a young officer, he said, “I learned that you are never too high up or too disconnected to take interest in creating officers of character. No matter what you do to develop, motivate, or expose others is never too little.” Bachman also said that he learned a lesson in the value of life, family, and spending time with those important to you.

Gentile said this scholarship allows her to “take on Taryn’s legacy and spread her light” while “inspiring others and dedicating her life to aviation.” She also said being a recipient of this scholarship “showed me that every day is an opportunity to share my passions and experiences.” Gentile said she took away many lessons from her time at Tutima, notably, “an entire new mindset. Sean’s discipline, respect, and passion for flight reshaped my entire perspective on airmanship. Flying is not just an activity; it is a way of life. I walked away with an entire new knowledge of flying aerobatics, but I also walked away as a better human being.” During a dinner with the Robinsons and Tuckers, Gentile learned about what kind of person Taryn Robinson was. The evening turned into an impactful night for Gentile, leaving her wanting to “strive to honor Taryn’s memory and challenge herself to grow as an aviator and leader.”

Knox can’t help but light up when she talks about her experiences at Tutima. She said Tucker “instilled a gratefulness and appreciation of flight in me that I hope to pass on,” and she learned that “being a great pilot requires being a great



Kastens (front) and Tucker (rear) practice a basic routine put together during Kastens' weeklong stay at Tutima Academy of Aviation Safety, King City, California. The U.S. Air Force Academy cadet was given this opportunity through the Taryn Ashley Robinson Scholarship. Photo by Kastens.



(left to right) Sean D. Tucker, Bella Gentile, and Maj. Gen. David Robinson stand next to an Extra EA-300 after Gentile's name was added to the Taryn Ashley Robinson Scholarship plaque at Tutima Academy of Aviation Safety, King City, California. Photo by Gentile.

person. You have to be humble and reverent of the opportunity to fly. Being humble about your skills and respecting and listening to the plane is key to flying beautifully." Knox said one of her favorite memories was when she and Tucker finished a sequence for the first time, and Tucker "did a beautiful gyroscopic aerobatic maneuver

that made me so happy." She said the awe reminded her of the feeling of the first time she flew upside down two years ago.

Kastens, the most recent recipient of the Robinson Scholarship, said that he is most looking forward to "learning how to slow down his mind" during performances — a skill the previous recipients said that Tucker had taught them. He is eager to experience the passion Tucker has for flying after seeing cadets return from the Tutima Academy with a deepened love and respect for aviation.

One thing Tucker tries to instill in the cadets during their time at Tutima Academy is that you can be in any configuration, and if you understand where you are, you are in control. He finds risk mitigation at the top of his list to teach his students, followed closely by reverence and elegance in flying. "Every cadet I have flown with has been excellent," he said. "It is wonderful that they have the finesse of a glider, and they can thrive with power in the Extra EA-300." Over the last two decades, Tucker has flown with many cadets he describes as "the best that America has to offer. It's an honor to fly at an elegant level with these cadets who are striving for excellence in the execution of everything they do."

The legacy of Taryn Robinson continues to inspire and uplift young aviators through the Taryn Ashley Robinson Scholarship. With the support of the Robinson family and generosity of Tucker, cadets are able to learn from an aviation expert while carrying on Taryn's passion for flying.

Tucker encourages everyone to "live with passion," and "if you have passion, you can accomplish anything." Located at the 94 FTS, a plaque for the Taryn Ashley Robinson Scholarship states, "Taryn will always be an enduring example to those who dedicate their lives to a passion for the art of flight." **IAC**



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Mark Fullerton Memorial Bear Creek Bash



Estrella Glider Classic



Snowbird Classic

DATES	HOST CHAPTER	NAME	REGION	LOCATION	AIRPORT
November 8, 2024	3	Mark Fullerton Memorial Bear Creek Bash	Southeast	LaGrange, Georgia	KLGC
March 20, 2025	62	Estrella Glider Classic	Southwest	Maricopa, Arizona	E68
March 20, 2025	62	US National Unlimited/ Advanced Glider Championships	Southwest	Maricopa, Arizona	E68
March 27, 2025	89	Snowbird Classic	Southeast	Keystone Heights, Florida	K12J

[IAC.org/Contests](https://IAC.org/Contests)



The U.S. National Aerobic Unlimited and Advanced Glider Championships are held in Maricopa, Arizona at the Arizona Soaring Inc. flight school. Photo by Lorrie Penner

# A Perspective on Grading Presentation

BY WES LIU, IAC 10467

**ONE WAY TO THINK** of the presentation grade is that it carries the weight of another figure in a flight program. Which can make it an important factor in a competitor's score if a judge really thinks about how well a competitor put on a show for the judges.

Individual figures are graded 10 down to zero. A judge can look at the "show" put on by the competitor and take away points for problems with the total impression made by the competitor. Did the competitor fly a figure at the front of the box too high so it was hard to see?

I suggest that a judge can have the recorder put a little "P" in the remarks box for that figure on the grading form. Historically some judges have made a tick mark on the form as a reminder. Does the judge see a figure that was best placed center box but instead was flown way downwind? Have the recorder make another note. Each figure in a flight program has a best location in the box, and a judge can comment and have the recorder note mispositioning.

The *IAC Official Contest Rules 27.15.1 Scorability* instructs a judge to deduct 2 points from the grade of a figure that is flown where the judge cannot see the quality of the figure. An example might be a small airplane (Pitts) that is flown so high in the back of the box that the axis of the airplane on 45 lines is not visible. The judge can immediately award 2 points of downgrade.

If a loop is flown high at the front of the box so that the judge must strain to assess its roundness, the competitor can immediately lose 2 points. This rule applies to individual figures. But the notes for these issues that the judge

*Wes recommends briefing the recorder to put a little "P" notation in the remarks box next to a figure that would contribute to taking away points for total impression.*





Category: Power Sportsman  
Program: Known

Date: 2024

wind direction

R

Figure K  
129  
Total K  
139

Judge Name IAC#  
Lou 10967  
Asst. Name IAC#  
Johnson 403107

Pilot #

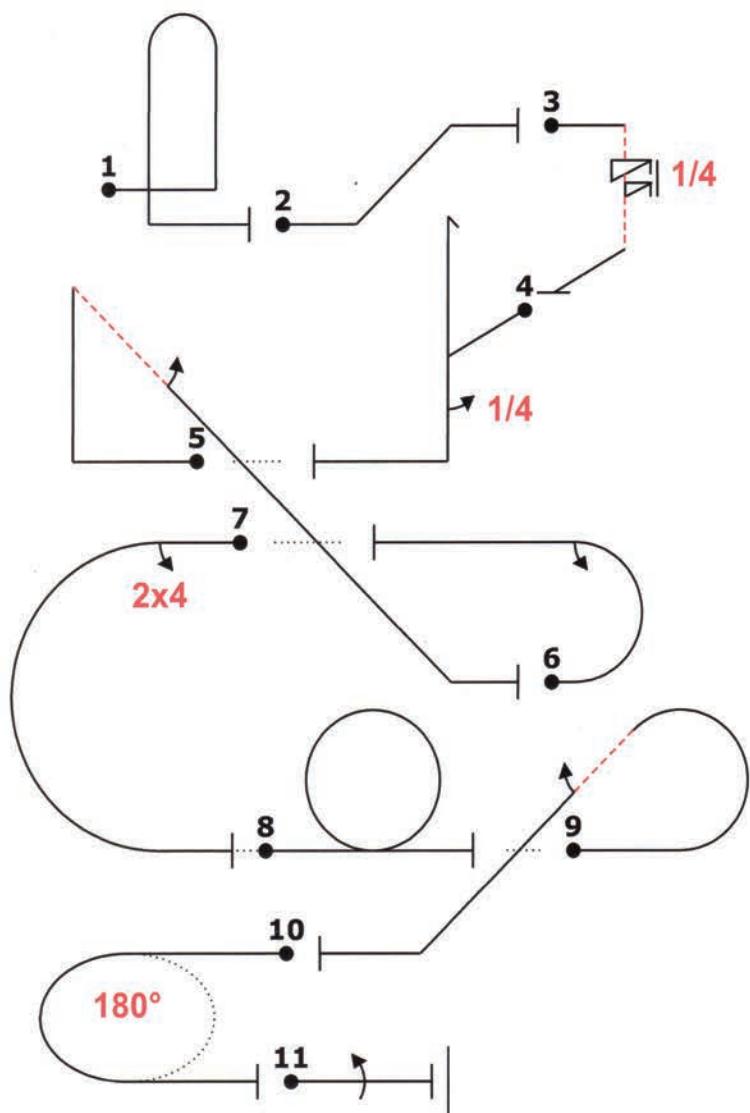


Fig	Grade	Remarks
1	6.0	Closed late P before box?
2	7.0	Sleep far away
3	6.0	Over rot Heading start far
4	4.5	Heading in tongue pivot long after roll P-left
5	5.0	Out of box? Pinched top long after roll No line after
6	5.5	No line in No wind connect P-way left
7	5.0	Out of box? under on pt pinched into loop
8	6.0	P-way left L-loops Heading
9	6.5	Pinched top long after roll center not right
10	7.5	Turned right overhead soft exit
11	9.0	Nice roll

Presentation  
10      5.0      Too downwind

Fig 1 8.4.1.1	K 13	Fig 2 1.1.2.1	K	Fig 3 7 1.1.6.3	K	Fig 4 9.11.1.5	K	Fig 5 5.2.1.1	K	Fig 6 9.1.5.1	K	Fig 7 1.2.7.1	K	Fig 8 7.2.2.1	K	Fig 9 6 7.2.3.3	K	Fig 10 7.4.1.1	K	Fig 11 10 8.5.6.1	K	Fig 12 4 9.1.4.2	K	Fig 13 2.2.1.1	K	Fig 14 4 9.1.3.4	K	Fig 15 2 9.1.3.4	K
13		7		14		19		17		2		17		13		6		11		10		14		4		4		10	

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