

SPORT *Aerobatics*

August 2014

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE of the INTERNATIONAL AEROBATIC CLUB

Jeremy Holt and Mike Marrin talk
Skybolt



- Lone Star Recap
- Grassroots
- Midwest Championship



PONY UP. *Introducing the all-new Mustang*

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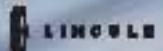
Every feature Mustang offers enhances your driving experience – whether it's the advanced sensors that detect cars in your blind spots or the innovative communications system. And for the serious performance enthusiast, Ford engineers used state-of-the-art controls software technology on the Mustang GT to bring you electronic line-lock – a feature guaranteed to get your heart pumping.

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Attention was paid to keep the airplane as clean and straight as possible. Energy and speed do increase quickly.

—Mike Mairin

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One of the Good Ones

Meeting some of the finest people

During my time with the IAC, I've had the opportunity to meet some of the finest people this world has produced. I've also been shocked at the loss of some of those very same people. As we were nearing the deadline for this issue of the magazine, the news came across that we'd lost Chapter 24 President Jim Doyle to an airplane accident in Texas.

I had the pleasure of meeting Jim and his wonderful wife, Pam, at Nationals a couple years ago. He and I kept in contact, and I bugged him for stories about his beautiful Skybolt, *Pamela's Patience*—he obliged, and the results were printed in the pages of this magazine. I'd been bugging him for a follow-up story on his airplane, but he had been too busy with all of his other commitments to make any promises. The world isn't quite such a bright place without Mr. Doyle's always smiling face in it. I send my deepest sympathies to Pam, daughter Darcy, and his family.

A couple months ago, we ran a story titled *Remembering Kiev*. That story sparked some memories of another one of our longtime IAC members, and he allows us to share those thoughts in this issue. It's always interesting to see the gamesmanship during the depths of the Cold War, and to see that competition aerobatics on the world stage wasn't always purely about competition.

I had the pleasure of talking with Mr. Hoover a few years ago, while the Airbus A380 was visiting Oshkosh.

IAC Chapter 38 President Beth Stanton shares a very memorable story about Bob Hoover—and shows us that, even past 90 years of age, he still has a wonderful sense of humor. I had the pleasure of talking with Mr. Hoover a few years ago, while the Airbus A380 was visiting Oshkosh. We were in the car driving to his hotel as the airplane lifted off directly in front of us. Mr. Hoover relayed with pure clarity what the chief test pilot had told him about the flying characteristics of the airplane—that moment will always be a cherished memory.

Once again, AirVenture rapidly approaches. I'll soon be loading up my teardrop trailer and heading east to Wisconsin to camp out at the world's biggest fly-in. This issue will be reaching your hands after it's all over—hopefully we'll have some wonderful tales to share.

IAC

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



DOUG SOWDER

COMMENTARY / IAC PRESIDENT, IAC 14590

Please send your comments, questions, or suggestions to: dsowder@aol.com

Not Goodbye

It's been a pleasure

THIS WILL BE MY LAST IAC PRESIDENT'S column. I have enjoyed my time as an IAC board member; Vice President, and these past two years as President, greatly. I have the late Vicki Cruse to thank for having her board appoint me, a couple of different times, to vacant seats. I believe she recognized it was very difficult for a member from the Northwest Region to garner enough votes to be elected. Although we have quite a bit of aerobatic activity and history here in the Northwest, we are the smallest region, population-wise, and not many of us get out to events elsewhere in the country.

The job of IAC President can be challenging; sometimes. I am amazed at the issues that come up. Learning the ins and outs of a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation has been interesting and frustrating at the same time. We just don't have the flexibility I am accustomed to. But we have a good board in place, with quality candidates for the upcoming (as I write this) election. If all goes as planned, current VP Mike Heuer will be our next IAC president. As a past President of IAC, and of FAI's aerobatics division CIVA, Mike probably knows more about aerobatics than anyone else on the planet. We will be in good hands.

I'd like to take up a bit of space to remind you all of some of IAC's fun programs. Many of our members do not seem aware of these. I don't see enough pilots taking advantage of the Achievement Awards programs

at contests and practice sessions. These are the "Smooth" and "Stars" awards, the former earned by performing specified figures before a judge; the second for scoring to a certain level during all three flights of a contest. Achievement Awards are available for all five categories of Power and Glider pilots, and can really add a dimension of fun to aerobatics, especially for newer pilots.

Another truly special award is the L. Paul Soucy award, presented annually to the pilot, regardless of category, who achieves the highest percent possible scores over three or more contests, including the U.S. Nationals.

I'll summarize the Non Flying awards briefly; these are truly special awards, and all are available to our many members who do great work for IAC outside of flying activities. They are:

The Frank Price Cup, awarded to the member who contributed most to the sport of Aerobatics in the previous year.

The Robert L. Heuer Award for Judging Excellence, awarded to the member adjudged by the Board of Directors to be the outstanding aerobatic judge in the previous year.

The Kathy Jaffe Award, recognizing an outstanding volunteer for the previous year.

The Harold E. Neumann Award for Outstanding Contribution as a Chief Judge.

The Curtis Pitts Memorial Trophy, recognizing an outstanding contribution to aerobatics through product design.

Recipients of the Non-Flying awards are determined by vote of the IAC Board of Directors, based on nominations which may be made by any IAC member, and are presented at the U.S. Nationals Awards Banquet each year. I was fortunate enough to win the Robert L. Heuer Award for Judging Excellence for contest year 2011, and I can tell you that I was deeply touched by that award, and having it presented to me at Nationals by Mike Heuer, Robert L. Heuer's son, was a highlight of my aerobatic career. I would like to see us, as IAC members, spread the word about these Non-Flying awards and be more active with nominations. Of course, see our shiny new website at iac.org for details.

One more recent program that I was pleased to see was IAC's creation of a Lifetime Membership. I was delighted to have the opportunity to become a Lifetime Member of IAC and to help support IAC and the sport of aerobatics. Not only that, but the "Lifetime Member" plaque looks great on the wall in my "flying room" and the jacket and cap look great on yours truly!

I'll close with this: I hope that by the time you read this, I'll have seen many of you at AirVenture Oshkosh. I'll be at as many contests as I can get to, flying, judging, and enjoying this great sport of ours. And at Nationals this year, I'm thinking that the Old Buzzard award is, at last, technically attainable if I can put together three good flights!

IAC



A Beautiful Skybolt



How It's Built

By Mike Marrin

This project took about four years and was built by Mike Marrin in Florida.

ENGINE: IO-540 built by Bob Barros of Virginia. It has increased compression and a Catto propeller.

WINGS: Custom-built squared, composite wingtips. Kevlar-covered upper wing center section; 4130 compression post in center section of upper wing; drag, anti-drag wires originate at this point; cold-molded wood laminate leading edges. New style ailerons as used on Kimball's Pitts Model 12.

The difference is built-up carbon fiber leading edges and composite balsa core trailing edges. No aluminum is used on the wings. All trailing edges on wings are composite with balsa core.

ELEVATOR: Static and mass-balanced and servo trim tab to keep elevator forces light.

Balance of build was

straightforward. Custom nose-bowl and oil cooler intake, pressure cowl, modified canopy (allows aft section of canopy to fit in forward windscreens).

Attention was paid to keep the airplane as clean and straight as possible. Energy and speed do increase quickly. The airplane was covered with 3.7-ounce Dacron, with all stitching done as normal. Airplane was covered again using 1.7-ounce ultralite Dacron to eliminate taping. This makes for a very firm covering that keeps the rib profile more in-line and reduces or eliminates problems associated with frequency vibration and lifting of tapes—especially in areas of prop wash. Since 1.7-ounce weave is so tight, less product (paint) is used on covering. It appears weight is a trade-off.

The above changes make this airplane different from plans-built Skybolts. Steen Aero used the airplane when available for display on several occasions. It won at Oshkosh in 2007. Having rebuilt and owned a Skybolt prior to building this one, many ideas were utilized in 348MM.

One wonderful and forgiving aircraft

JEREMY HOLT AND MIKE MARRIN

PHOTOS BY GLENN WATSON
MACHPOINTONEAVIATION.COM



How It Flies

By Jeremy Holt

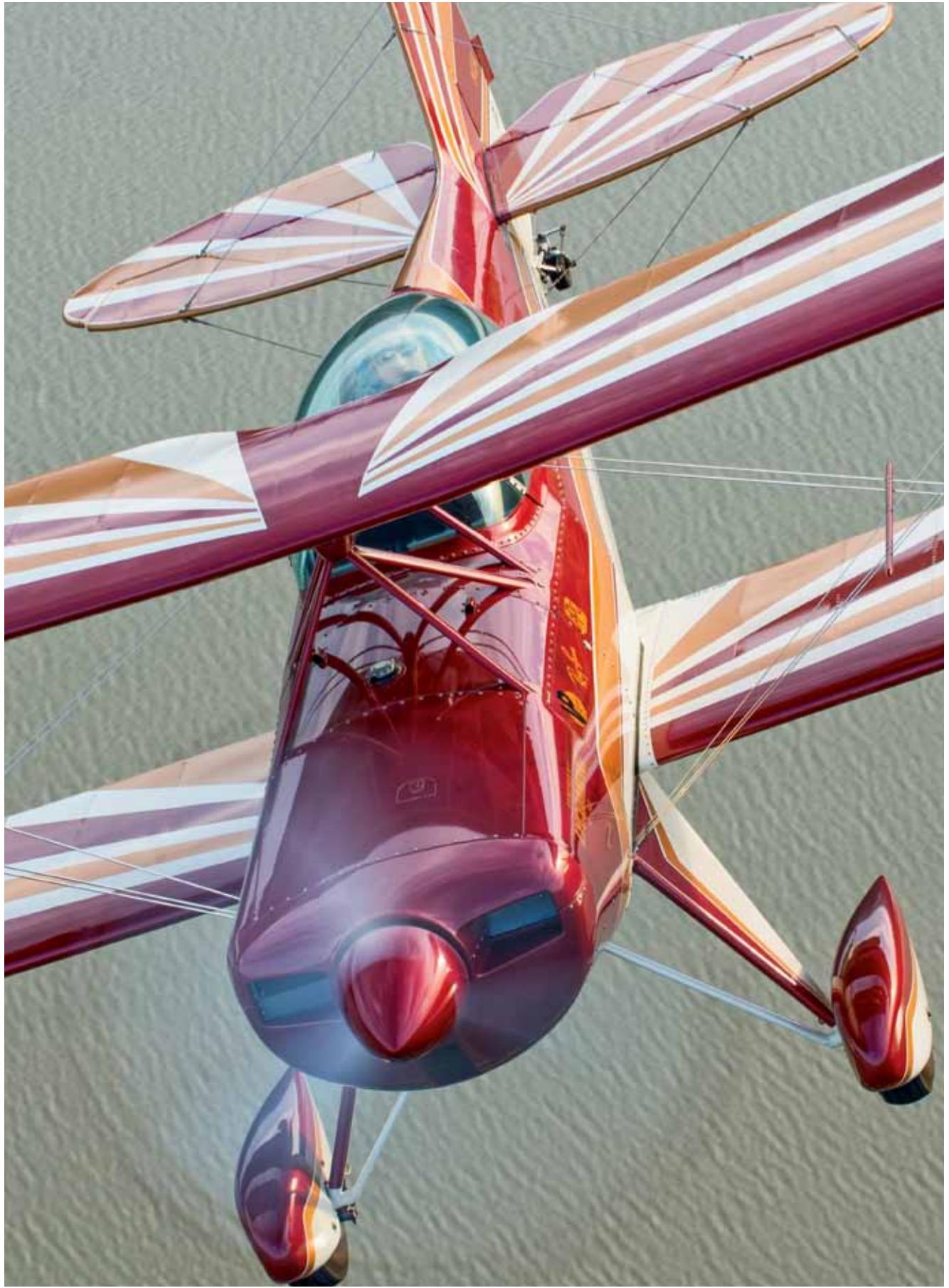
The Skybolt is a wonderful, forgiving aircraft to fly. It does everything a Pitts will do, but it's just a little bit larger. Minus the constant-speed prop, this particular Skybolt responds similar to an S-2B in the air. With the increased size of its symmetrical ailerons, the roll rate is very crisp and adequate for the larger size airplane. On the ground, the elevator is heavy, but once you pick up speed, the dual trim tabs lighten it up quite a bit, giving you large

amounts of control authority for anything you can dream up. With the 290-hp IO-540 on the front, it will get up and go but is slightly limited because of the fixed-pitch prop. Straight and level flight at 2700 rpm will give you roughly 140 mph. Because of its fuselage length it is docile like a Decathlon on landing, with a 90 mph final approach speed for a three-point. For good wheel landings, it seems to like 100 mph on final.

A typical practice flight for me is normally no longer than 30 minutes. What I am working on that day determines where and what

altitude I will be at. A new maneuver or idea I have always starts high—normally between 4,000 to 6,000 feet. This gives me a good idea how the Skybolt will respond and see if it is something I would want to continue to perfect for the lower air show environment. Air show practice is normally flown in the aerobatic box practicing maneuvers I have flown up high for a long time making sure the sequence flows properly.

My favorite kind of flying is taking others out for a sunset ride over Cypress Lake. Even though the Skybolt is larger than a Pitts,





the front seat can still be a tight fit. With the split canopy, if you are over 6 feet tall you might as well be a contortionist to be able to get your legs in and around. Once in, I have never had anyone complain about the view and all had the time of their lives. I was always told to keep it under 15 minutes, though, as to eliminate the chance of them getting sick!

The Pilot

As a child, Jeremy grew up watching his father build and fly remote-control airplanes. That was the magic that created a spark

in his soul for flight. He lived at the remote-control flying field on the weekends and would travel to different competitions with his father. It became a passion of his, being able to build, fly, and even compete with these aerobatic aircraft with the hopes of one day being an air show pilot. In high school, he received his private pilot certificate—the first step in reaching that dream.

His college of choice was Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University at Daytona Beach. Jeremy received his Bachelor of Science in aeronautical engineering and,

at the same time, enrolled in the Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps. He received a pilot slot through the Air Force; upon graduation, he headed off to Valdosta, Georgia, for pilot training in the T-6 Texan II. After graduating, he finished up fighter/bomber training in the T-38C at Columbus, Mississippi, and it was there he found out his assigned weapon system would be the B-52. He is now an instructor pilot in the 11th Bomb Squadron teaching new students how to fly this very large, powerful aircraft.

While at Barksdale, full-scale

aerobatic flying seemed to be the next logical step in his ultimate quest to become an air show pilot. He received his tailwheel training in a Decathlon and started working on basic aerobatics with his squadron commander who owns a Pitts S-2A. He purchased the Skybolt in the spring of 2012, and it has been love ever since. The Skybolt flew its first season of air shows in 2013 and logged more than 12 of them with 12 more scheduled in 2014. The airplane is based in Downtown Shreveport (KDTN). He lives in Benton, LA.

IAC





Lone Star Recap

Prescript for the Lone Star Recap

The tragedy of June 28, 2014, has greatly affected me personally and bears on the recounting of events you are about to read. As many of you already know, Jim Doyle perished on Saturday, June 28, while flying his beloved Skybolt. Jim was a fixture at contests throughout the South Central Region and at Nationals, and I doubt you will find a soul who could say anything negative about him. My intent here is not to eulogize such a great person;

I am hardly the man for that job. But I would like to tell you, briefly, about the Jim Doyle I knew.

2012 Nationals was the first contest I ever attended. The first guy to introduce himself was Jim. He walked up with a huge smile on his face and said, "Wow, it's great to see another open-cockpit biplane here. I'm Jim Doyle." He then proceeded to take me under his wing and educate me in the ways of the aerobatic world. He was a kind man with a big heart and a generous spirit.

Perhaps the greatest testament to the quality of a person is how their kids feel about them. After the spring 2014 Judges School in north Texas, Jim volunteered to fly his Skybolt so the judges-to-be could put their classroom learning to practical use. After he was done, he hit the smoke and gave the "judging" group a wing-wag and fly-by. At that moment I was standing next to his daughter. With reverence in her voice and joy on her face she said, "That's my dad." It was pure,



Tussle for the buckle

ARTICLE AND PHOTOS BY DOUG JENKINS

and it was love. And that may be all you need to know about Jim Doyle, the man.

Jim's accident is a stark reminder to us all that our time here is fleeting and can end rather unexpectedly. Live every day for all it's worth, tell those around you that you love them, and be "in it to win it" as Jim liked to say. I decided not to rewrite the article. I would just ask that, wherever Jim's name appears in this piece, please pause for a moment and remember the

friend we all lost.

The Lone Star Aerobatic Championship Recap

The good folks of IAC Chapter 24 (The Lone Star Aerobatic Club), led by Jim Doyle, once again played host to the Lone Star Aerobatic Championship with this year's edition taking place from June 19-21 at North Texas Regional Airport (KGYI) in Sherman-Denison, Texas. This particular air patch is the home not only to Lone Star but

also the IAC National Championships. Perhaps it's the chance to fly in the National's box, perhaps it's the relatively central location, or maybe it's the friendly people who put the contest on, but this year's "Tussle for the Buckle" was well attended indeed. "Tussle for the Buckle" you ask? Well, this is Texas after all, so what better trophies for the winner of each category than a truly world-class belt buckle? They really must be seen to be believed. Whatever the reason, many



KATE KYER

Monday morning briefing.



of the finest aerobatic pilots from Texas, the United States, and even the world migrated to north Texas for the fun and games. The contest staff, the sponsors, and the weather did not disappoint.

Thursday saw pilots rolling in steadily and meeting up with ever-friendly Barb Boyle to get registered, talking to the hard-working Maggie Richmond to get their volunteer responsibilities squared away, and getting tech inspected by eagle-eyed Mike Plyler and BJ Boyle. After all of the paperwork was done, most pilots were eagerly taking to the skies to hone their skills and become familiar with the aerobatic box. Oh, and we all collected cool T-shirts sponsored by MT Propellers and The Rhodes Group Realty. Real snazzy stuff! A brief afternoon shower paused flying for a couple of hours, but this would be the one and only time weather would be a factor in the contest.

Friday saw the completion of registration and the start of competition flying. Competition Director Kate Kyer and her Assistant CD Paul Richmond (ably assisted by Michael "Spanky" Gallaway) conducted the morning briefing and got everyone pointed in the right direction.

Starter Pat Kyer was busily herding the cats on the ramp to keep things moving. First into the box were the nine eager Sportsman pilots.

Living legend DR Bales was the highest scorer on the first flight (as well as the second), but he was flying for a patch only this time so first place went to Doug Jenkins in his bright yellow Pitts S-1E (aka Daisy) with Pete Setian taking second and Erick McDaniel taking third. Both Erick and Pete were flying the beautiful Great Lakes from Big Q Aviation.

Next were 11, yes 11, Primary category pilots. To those of you worried about the future of our sport I would say that this is a positive sign indeed. The first flight was won by Mitchell Reeves in an Extra 300L, followed closely by Patric Coggin in a nice RV-4, and Sean Looloian in the aforementioned Great Lakes.

Finally the eight Intermediate pilots were unleashed to fly their Known sequence. Curt Richmond, in his S-2B, finished atop the standings, but Jim Doyle in his labor of love Skybolt and Robert Salter in his One Design were close behind in second and third, respectively. For those of you adding up numbers, we have now had 28 pilots fly for the same three judges, so BIG thanks to Judges Tom Adams, Craig Dobesh, and Michael Gallaway, Chief Judge Kelly Adams, and all of their assistants and recorders for spending hour after hour in the punishing Texas sun and providing consistently excellent judging!

After the judges' line turned, the true sky gods were free to fly. A field of five Advanced competitors was led by Craig Dobesh in his beautiful Pitts S-1T. Less than one point behind was Kelly Adams in his Staudacher, with Bill Denton and his CAP 232 finishing third. Unlimited featured a field of two highly skilled pilots pummeling each other over the weekend. After the Known flight Spanky Gallaway, in his classy Extra 300SX, led Andy

Macha and his Staudacher. Advanced pilots now had their time to shine with their Free programs. Craig Dobesh again finished in first place. Bill Denton flew to a second place finish with Jason Flood, in his modified Pitts S-1, nipping at his heels just 30 points behind in third. The Unlimited gladiators had their tightest finish of the contest with Mr. Gallaway besting Mr. Macha by a mere 140 points. You will recognize most of the competitor names in these categories from the roster of judges from earlier in the day . . . truly Herculean efforts from all. Judges for the Advanced and Unlimited were Darren Behm, Curt Richmond, and Jim Doyle with Tom Rhodes serving as chief judge. Again big thanks to these hard workers along with their assistants and recorders, many of whom quickly turned from flying to the judging line.

Now roles were swapped again, and the Intermediate field of eight left their judges' chairs behind and took to the skies one more time to fly their well-designed and thought-out Free Programs. This round saw Mike Plyer (who graciously allowed all of us to haunt his expansive hangar for the weekend) flying his Staudacher to a decisive first place finish followed by Tom Rhodes in second and Robert Salter again in third place. The Intermediate judges and their teams remained unchanged and must have been exhausted by this point! Superior effort!

Friday evening culminated in a reception and dinner at the official contest hotel, the Hampton Inn and Suites in Denison. It is always a class act, and this evening was no exception. Much food was eaten, many drinks were drunk, and many flying stories were shared. The competition may be the focus, but the reason many of us keep coming back to these events is the chance for evenings like this. To spend time with good people who speak the same language we do...aerobat-

ics. My wife and I sat with and enjoyed a fine evening of conversation with an Air Force A-10 Air National Guard pilot and a gentleman from France who works in Dallas and was flying Sporty in an S-2B. Scattered throughout the room were other unique and compelling individuals with tales to tell and lessons to teach; all free of charge and many of the stories may even have been true.

Saturday dawned on time and revealed great weather that would last all day. Sporty was again first out the door. This time Erick McDaniel took first with Gina Killian in an Extra 300 in second and Rick Dillman and his One Design in third. Primary saw some movement at the top of the leader board with Patric Coggin moving up to take first, Sean Looloian moving up to second, and Paul Richmond showing up in third.

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gin who was trailed by Benjamin Dubose in a Super D. Sporty's third flight was won by Erick McDaniel with Doug Jenkins less than a point behind and Rick Dillman in third. The estimable judges for the final round were Craig Dobesh, Michael Gallaway (I see a trend here...the guys who swept their categories also swept the judging line. Is there a connection? You be the judge. Do you see what I did there?), and Andy Macha. When the last Primary pilot landed the 2014 edition of the Lone Star Aerobatic Championship was concluded, and all eyes turned to the tireless leader of the score room—Stephanie Virdine, who now had many numbers to crunch, along with a few letters. By the way, this contest was brought to you by the letters H and Z.

Saturday concluded at the eagerly awaited reception and awards ceremony held at The Library, which is, ironically enough, a very fine restaurant. Refreshments were sponsored by the crew from Hangar Life. Contest sponsors David Clark and Hooker Harness provided raffle prizes that were much sought after. Primary pilot Heather Sterzick walked away with a new headset, while Bill Denton (who bought roughly 10 trillion raffle tickets) took home the Hooker Harness. After the formalities, it was time to move on and present the awards. By the way Lone Star elected to present flight medals. I believe this is another fine idea that is just not that expensive and allows more people to go home and show their families and friends why they spend so much money on 100LL. Without further ado, here are the final standings:

Primary:

- 1st Patric Coggin, 85.91 percent in a Van's RV-4 (Move up! Move up!)
- 2nd Mitchell Reeves, 84.79 percent in an Extra 300L, from Chapter 24
- 3rd Sean Looloian, 81.22 percent in a Great Lakes, from Chapter 24

took to the sky next to showcase their abilities in the dreaded Unknown sequence. This one definitely had some twists and turns to it (do you see what I did there?), but when all was said and done Mike Plyler took first with Tom Rhodes in second and Jim Doyle in third. Judges this time around were Bill Denton, Craig Dobesh, and Michael Gallaway with BJ Boyle serving as chief. Of course, without assistants and recorders, these folks would just be glorified spectators. After this round Intermediate was complete, and it was time to move on to the Advanced and Unlimited categories.

After a short intermission, the



Advanced and Unlimited Unknown program got underway. In Advanced Craig Dobesh completed the sweep with Kevin Coleman piloting his Extra 300SHP to second and Kelly Adams taking third. Unlimited saw Spanky again best Andy, completing his own sweep. The judges from the first day were unchanged but were augmented by Pete Setian and his crew for a total of four line judges.

To wrap things up, Sporty and Primary got their third flight. While not required, I can attest as a Sportsman competitor, that this is much appreciated. In Primary Mitchell Reeves took first, just a single point ahead of Patric Cog-

Sportsman:

- 1st Erick McDaniel, 80.44 percent in a Great Lakes (Move up! Move up!), from Chapter 24
 2nd Doug Jenkins, 79.06 percent in a Pitts S-1E (aka Daisy), from Chapter 127
 3rd Pete Setian, 77.37 percent in a Great Lakes, from Chapter 24
 Patch winner DR Bales, 80.99 percent in an Extra 200, from Chapter 24

Intermediate:

- 1st Mike Plyler, 79.82 percent in a Staudacher S300 (Move up! Move up!), from Chapter 24
 2nd Tom Rhodes, 77.12 percent in a One Design, from Chapter 24
 3rd Robert Salter, 75.86 percent in a One Design (kinda like a One Design contest)

Advanced:

- 1st Craig Dobesh, 80.20 percent in a Pitts S-1T (Move up! Move

up!), from Chapter 24

- 2nd Kelly Adams, 76.72 percent in a Staudacher S300D, from Chapter 25
 3rd Kevin Coleman, 75.34 percent in an Extra 300SHP

Unlimited:

- 1st Michael Gallaway, 74.78 percent in an Extra 300SX (Move up! Move up!), from Chapter 24
 2nd Andy Macha, 67.29 percent in a Staudacher S300D2

Special Awards:

First Time Sportsman: Pete Setian
 Grassroots Award: Patric Coggins
 The Old Buzzard Award (given to the oldest living competitor at the end of the contest): the man, the myth, the legend . . . DR Bales

As the pilots, the contest staff and, in many cases, their significant others went their sepa-

rate ways as events wrapped up, it was with a profound sense of well-being. The sense that we had all just invested quality time with quality people doing something we all greatly enjoyed. The sense that we had spent our time wisely and that we would do it all again because it was fun and we all learned something and grew as pilots and as people. The truest testament to this is the fact that we were all asking who was attending the other upcoming contests because we were looking forward to seeing them again. As was overheard as my wife was saying goodbye to her new-found friends...we've moved past handshakes, and on to hugs. So, to all the folks of IAC 24 and all the folks who worked so hard to put the contest together . . . thanks for the great opportunity to better and test ourselves! And . . . next year that buckle is mine!

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Remembering Kiev Sparks Memory

Notable recollections

BY JAY HUNT, IAC 1816

I just finished reading the June issue of *Sport Aerobatics*, and did it ever bring back memories. Henry Haigh was a great supporter of Canadian aerobatic contests, attending many in the 1970s and '80s and welcoming us to the Michigan contests of the day. I especially remember the good times I had with him and the whole U.S. aerobatic team at Kiev in 1976. He was a tremendous asset to the growing aerobatic scene of the day.

Don Berliner's article on Kiev also brought back many of my own memories of the trip. I remember flying my Pitts S-1S, with the U.S. and other teams, over the hazy Carpathian mountains, listening to my engine for any sign of a hiccup, and wondering what I would do if I had to go down there. I remember the gaggle of us arriving over Lvov airport, our first stop in the Ukraine, to hear over the radio, "What are you doing in Soviet airspace? You have no authorization to be here. Leave immediately or we will shoot you down!" (Our flight plan had been approved several days earlier.)

We all ended up orbiting over the large airport, some to the right and some to the left, with all kinds of military aircraft arrayed on the fields below. Eventually, after the controller had consulted with his superiors, we heard, "Cleared to land." Our leader replied, "But, sir,

we are 30 aircraft." The response was, "Roger. Cleared to land."

**"What are you
doing in Soviet
airspace? You
have no
authorization to
be here. Leave
immediately or
we will shoot
you down!"**

The next few minutes were pandemonium as we approached base leg from both the left and right and picked an aircraft to follow. With seven or eight aircraft lined up on final, every once in a while one of us would see an empty spot on the runway and drop down to land while the rest of us went around again, each in our chosen direction. Thankfully, we all made it safely to the ground and took our turns using the only brick out-house I have seen. The Soviets were into recycling even back then, as we discovered that the toilet paper was Teletype rolls, with weather se-

quences on both sides, going for its third use.

Like Don, I was locked into my room at the Hotel Ukraina and had to endure psychological warfare during my stay, such as receiving a phone call at 3 a.m. the night before an early flight, only to have a female voice yammer at me in Russian for several minutes, then hang up, leaving me to lie awake wondering if someone from home had been trying to contact me.

My recollection of the daily food was what we came to call "meat lumps and rice" morning, noon, and night. At lunchtime we were all expected to endure the long bone-crushing bus ride from Chaika back to the hotel to eat and return. One day, several of us refused to do so, going to the restaurant on the field reserved for officials, sitting down, and refusing to budge until Vasiliev, our interpreter, eventually convinced them that we were more than willing to pay to eat there. Apparently, it never occurred to them that anyone might pass up a free meal to pay for one.

A taxi ride across Kiev to a cocktail party I had been invited to was quite memorable. The party was hosted by the wives of the Soviet soccer team, then competing at the Montreal Olympics. Taxis at the time had little lights in the windshield, green for vacant and red for occupied. I tried a few times to

flag down a green one, only to be ignored. I noticed that other people were having no trouble stopping cabs, and wondered, "Do I look that foreign?" Then I realized they were flagging down red cabs! Sure enough, the first one I tried stopped. There were two other passengers in it, but the driver acknowledged the written address I showed him and waved me in. Along the way, he dropped off one passenger and later picked up another. He then stopped at a gas station to refuel and finally dropped me at my destination, with one passenger still in the cab. Then it dawned on me. The first fare the driver picked up was recorded on the meter and went to the state. Every subsequent passenger's fare went unreported into his pocket. This was capitalism at work in the Soviet Union.

At this party, I was introduced to Russian pepper vodka. Instead of using charcoal filtration, the Rus-

sians placed a hot red pepper in every bottle to absorb impurities. My host at the party handed me a shot glass of this concoction, grinned, and said, "Drink, tovarish, you are my friend!" downing his own glass. Not wanting to be rude, I followed suit. For a few seconds everything was fine, then I began to burn, first at the back of my mouth, then down my throat, and finally in my stomach. My face must have been quite flushed with pain because he then handed me a cucumber sliced lengthwise and sprinkled with salt saying, "Eat!" As I ate it, I could feel it dispersing the pain as it traveled down my gullet. As I was beginning to sigh relief, back he came with another shot saying, "Drink, tovarish!"

One of the day-off events we attended was a tour of the Karl Marx chocolate factory, famous for its Kiev cake. Arriving at a factory that looked straight out of Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath*, we were ushered into a boardroom

where the factory president droned on interminably about how his plant produced enough chocolate to provide 7 kilograms a year to every man, woman, and child in the USSR. While this was going on a hostess kept filling teacups in front of us, not with tea, but with Russian brandy. After two cups, I tried to decline a third, only to have her ignore my plea and refill it. In desperation, I turned the cup upside down in the saucer thinking she would get the message. Undeterred, she turned it upright and filled it again. After two hours, we were herded back onto the bus, without ever seeing how the chocolate was made.

Thanks for the memories. **IAC**

The photos in Don Berliner's article on Kiev were improperly attributed—they were taken by him. Our apologies

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

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

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

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The Importance of Grassroots

Attracting new members



BY JAY HUNT
IAC 1816, OTTAWA, CANADA

As an IAC member since 1972, I have seen the ups and downs of general aviation and the sport of aerobatics in particular. As a founding member and past president of Aerobatics Canada, I have also experienced the same thing here. Maintaining enthusiasm and momentum in aerobatics is a considerable challenge, especially in the face of trends in the state of general aviation as a whole.

The future of the IAC depends on continually attracting new

members from the pilot community as a whole. We are on the right track in being a grassroots organization first and foremost. We need to become more visible within the overall pilot fraternity, promoting our values and the importance of aerobatic training for every pilot. What differentiates IAC from others is our emphasis on precision in aerobatics.

I believe there is much that we can do working through flying schools across North America to encourage student and newly certificated pilots to add aerobatics to their flying skills.

The IAC should become more involved in promoting recreational aerobatics through the schools and encouraging instructors to become qualified to teach aerobatics. In Canada, I was instrumental in having a specific aerobatic instructors rating introduced. This has encouraged many instructors to become qualified to teach aerobatics. The IAC could sponsor something similar in the United States.

Every flight school should be encouraged to have at least one aerobatic aircraft and offer a flight safety program of ba-



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sic aerobatics that teaches using an aircraft to the limits of its flight envelope. We need to continually deliver the message that “aerobatics is for every pilot” not just an elite few air show and competition pilots. Too often, flying schools tend to be focused on turning out commercial pilots and not enough on emphasizing the recreational aspects of flying.

Here is an example of the kind of thing every IAC member should look for opportunities to do.

For several years, there had

been little aerobatic activity in the Ottawa/Montreal area of Canada, and the Aerobatics Canada chapters there had become inactive. Last year I located several flying schools in the area teaching fundamental aerobatics in a Super Decathlon and a couple of Grobs. The instructors didn't know about the IAC or competition, being mainly military trained. I met with the instructors and pitched the idea of putting more precision in their training and giving their students a target to work toward. I encouraged them to get together

and reactivate our local chapter and, along with the only other local pilot who had competition experience, offered to support their efforts.

We organized a meeting of all interested pilots from the four local schools and explained how they could band together and put more fun into their flying. I suggested organizing an informal practice day at a local airport that we had permission to fly over, and they eagerly agreed.

Last fall we had our first session at Gatineau airport. Vintage Wings of Canada graciously of-



ferred us use of its hangar and ramp facilities. Eight aircraft and about 15 people showed up. I critiqued every flight and gave each pilot a debriefing afterward. A few people flew with their instructor as a check pilot, doing only a few figures they had been learning. Some flew the 2013 Primary Known, with a couple doing the Sportsman Known and one Intermediate. They all appreciated the precision approach that I was introducing to their flying. Some people brought snacks and drinks, and everybody enjoyed the day.

This spring, they were eager to do it again, so in early June I put on an evening seminar for them on judging criteria based on Chapter 8 of the 2014 IAC Contest Rules. I did not talk at all about marking or grading. I focused mainly on what the judges are looking for, with a little bit on what a pilot needs to do to present what the judge expects to see.



On the following Saturday, we held our second practice day. In addition to the Super Decathlon and Grob, a Pitts S-1S, Pitts S-2C, and Christen Eagle came up from the Montreal area. In addition to those that attended last fall, a number of new students came out and tried their hand for the first time. I encouraged as many of them as possible to get to at least one nearby IAC contest this summer—if not to fly, then at least to observe and help out on the judging line or elsewhere.

I am hoping this will lead to the group organizing a small contest of its own, if not this year, then in 2015.



This is the kind of activity I'd like to see every IAC pilot or judge undertake with flying schools in his or her local area. I believe activities like this are what it is going to take to revitalize and grow our sport. This is what I mean by grassroots.

IAC



Jessy Panzer's Pink Pitts.

Midwest Aerobatic Championship

Ratings, rankings and medals

BY DAVID MOLL
CONTEST DIRECTOR

ON JUNE 20-22, THE MIDWEST Aerobatic Club, IAC Chapter 80, known to us as MAC 80, held its annual aerobatic contest. This year we not only had a retired colonel as chief judge, but he was outranked by an 84-year-old retired brigadier general flying his Christen Eagle in his first contest as a Primary category pilot.

It's not often John Morrissey is outranked, but Richard (Dick) Bertrand not only outranked the chief judge, but out-flew all but two of the other Primary competi-

tors. Dick was the commander of the Nebraska Air Wing located in Lincoln until his retirement in 1990. I met him a couple of years ago at one of the MAC 80 parties, and then earlier this year I gave him his biennial flight review. At one of our monthly get-togethers when the practice box was opened, Dick decided to try the Primary sequence, and he did very well. Turn the clock ahead a couple of months, and he is competing in his first contest, ending up in third place with a score of 82.13 per-

cent. We at MAC 80 are extremely proud of Richard Bertrand.

The reason MAC 80's contest is so successful is the hospitality of Harry Barr who opens his hangar so we can have the contest. Plus our contest has the full support of the Seward Airport Authority, combined with the never-ending work of the FBO owners, Greg and Teri Whisler. To the competitors this means hangar space is always free and available (although donations are encouraged and passed on to the FBO). But



U.S. National Sportsman Champion Paul Thomson telling Mike Lents (R) and Dale Byrkit (L) why his "Point Monster" freestyle is so successful.



Dick Bertrand

the most important thing is MAC 80 feeds the competitors like they are kings and queens, which is included in the entry fee. Burgers and hotdogs were grilled on Friday at noon during registration and practice. Full dinners of beef on Friday night and chicken on Saturday nights, plus lunches on Saturday and before everybody left on Sunday. If you go away from our contest hungry, it's your own fault. Our aerobatic box is perfectly situated to parallel the section lines, making orientation quite easy, combined with the runway below you on the east side of the box in the event of an emergency.

Again this year we had two-time World Champion Betty Stewart as a line judge along with Linda Meyers Morrissey, a gold medal winner in world competition and one of the longest-

serving competitors the United States has ever had. While most judges struggle with following the higher categories' sequences, these two feel right at home and are always happy to offer their help and expertise.

Our contest started off on a blue note. Late Friday night a storm came up and blew over both of the portable toilets on the judges' line. But during the rest of the contest light winds were the norm. Dale Byrkit with his newly purchased Super "D" showed the way in Primary. Paul Thomson has proven year after year why his "point monster" Freestyle makes him national champion in Sportsman and again the winner here. John Owens led the Intermediate category, and Doug Roth took the Advanced category. Doug practices to fly Unlimited, but with no Unlimited pilots in atten-



UND pilots Jonathon Sepulveda and Alex Sachs taking a break for lunch.



Jessy Panzer, Lynn Bowes and Nancy Moll at the registration desk, waiting for the first pilots to show up.

dance, he stepped down to Advanced but was basically flying all Unknowns.

Sunday started out with lower clouds, but the goal was to get in at least the third flights for Primary and Intermediate, which we did with a couple of delays. We wanted to get a third flight for all categories, but also to get pilots home ahead of the weather storms that were building. As contest director, most decisions are loved by some and loathed by others, but my attitude is to get pilots home safely so the contest was called as final around noon.

The Kansas State University pilots had to cancel due to a maintenance issue. The University of North Dakota came down in force, and its top pilot was Amelia Gagnon who took home Highest First Time Sportsman. **IAC**



Hey, Bob, Nice Pitts!

Nice T-Shirt!



The year 2013 was the 50th anniversary of the Reno Air Races, and I had the amazing opportunity to crew for fellow IAC 38er Jeff Rose, who was racing as a rookie in the Biplane class.

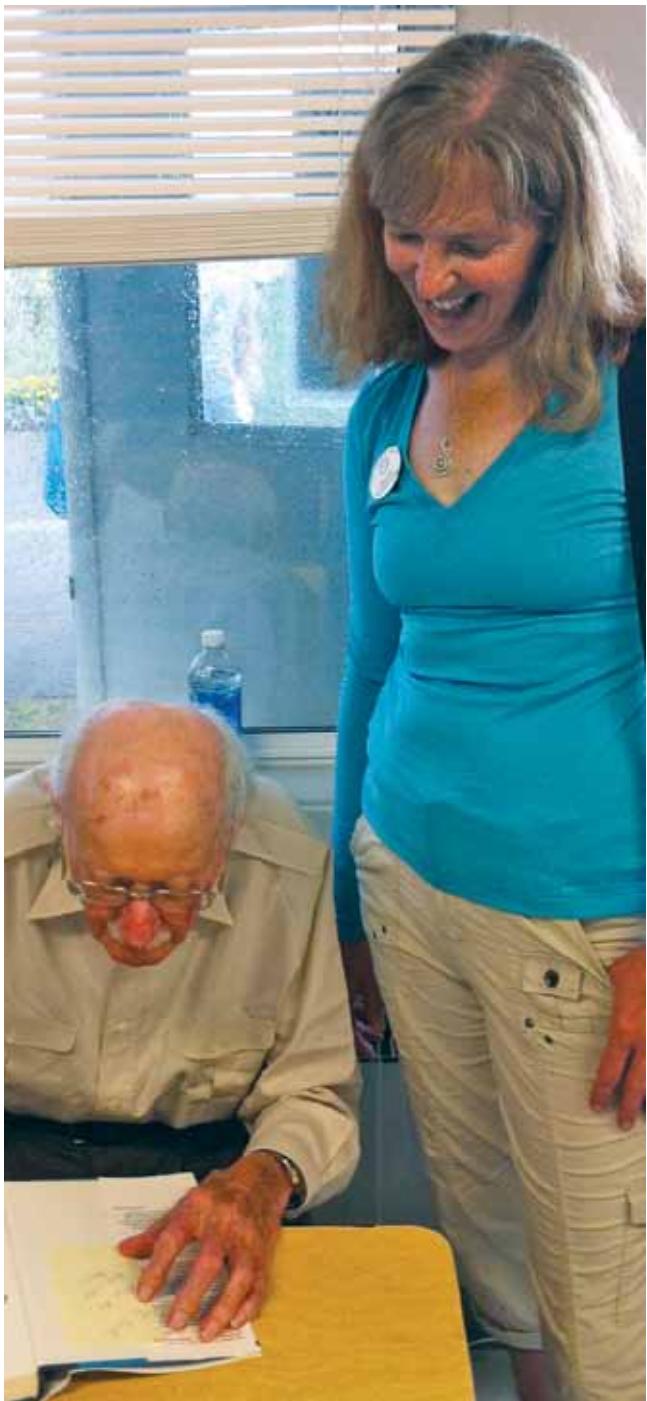
I decided that a Jim Nahom Nice Pitts T-shirt was entirely appropriate attire for the occasion. I showed up on day two of the Pylon Racing Seminar last June wearing it, and my fellow crew members immediately decided that Race 23 would henceforth be known as Show Me Your Pitts Racing. Jeff, who is a nice boy, was appalled. "I can't let my mother see that!" So of course we did it anyway.

Rewind to the prior summer at Oshkosh. I was

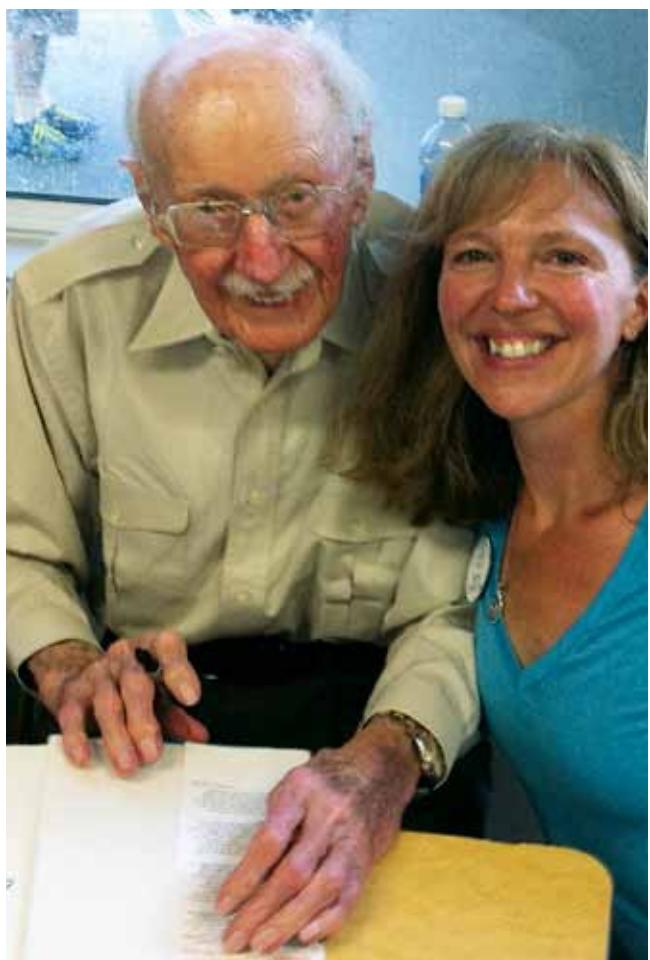
standing in line waiting to have Bob Hoover sign the book I had just purchased. He had been at it for over an hour. It was wiltingly hot, his hand was cramping, and the line was out the door. To expedite the process, an assistant came by with sticky notes and told us to jot down what we wanted Mr. Hoover to write in our book. I was stumped. I thought he was just going to sign his name. What on earth could I have Bob Hoover write?

"Thanks for last night . . ." popped into my head immediately.

NO! I glanced across the room at Mr. Hoover looking genteel and all-legendary-like and had a



In 2012 at EAA Oshkosh, Bob Hoover signs the first time in Beth's book.



inserting . . . upside down.

I was later regaling Wayne Handley with this tale of moral struggle and he said, "You should have gone for it; he would have loved it." I had lost my chance. DAMMIT.

Fast-forward to Reno 2013. Racing was done for the day. A storm had just blown through, leaving scattered debris and glistening tarmac in its wake. I'm at a cocktail reception in the pits watching the sunset through the scudding clouds. One of my buddies saunters over wearing his bright orange Section 3 T-shirt. He has been wearing it to Reno for years, and it is covered with autographs. I wonder if he has ever washed it. He nonchalantly lifts the right sleeve to show me his latest acquisition: "Bob Hoover" it reads in black scrawl.

"Where did you get this?" I demand. He points. About 50 feet away, there is Bob Hoover in a golf cart. "He's signing his book for people."

"Watch this," I call over my shoulder as I make a beeline to the golf cart. My heart was pounding. That morning, I was feeling particularly bold and had decided to wear my Nice Pitts shirt. Now, even for someone as brazen as me, it takes a bit of extra

truly frightening thought. What if I shocked him into a heart attack and became forever known as the woman who killed Bob Hoover? The angel and devil danced on opposing shoulders until the final instant. In a rare fit of appropriateness, I decided to go with the lame "Keep the blue side down." He mistakenly wrote "Keep the blue side up," forgetting I was an aerobatic pilot, then cleverly corrected it by



Beth gets her favorite T-shirt signed at the 2013 Reno Air Races after waiting a year.

mental preparation to parade around Reno all day wearing that shirt. The stars had aligned perfectly. I was going to have Bob Hoover sign my boob.

There were only two other people ahead of me in line. My hands were shaking and my cheeks flushing. I could not believe I was doing this. My phone

rings in my pocket, startling me, since I normally keep it silenced. I peek down to see who is interrupting this epic moment: "Wayne Handley." I glance around for evidence of some sort of Cosmic Candid Camera. A bunch of folks from Pine Mountain Lake were racing at Reno, and Wayne had been checking in for real-time updates. I answer the phone and without the benefit of a greeting, hiss in a stage whisper, "I am in line getting ready to have Bob Hoover sign my boob. I'll put you on speaker-phone." I could very faintly hear him chuckling as he relayed this information to Karen.

My turn. I squared my shoulders. I faced Bob Hoover and explained how I have been prostrate with regret since Oshkosh last year when I behaved with decorum and didn't have him inscribe my original sentiment in the book.

Since I was wearing a name badge on my right side, I said, "Mr. Hoover, I have a name on one side and need to balance it out with your autograph on the other. I'd like you to sign my shirt please."

His startled eyes widened and his mouth dropped slightly. Regaining his composure, his eyes twinkled. "I'll sign your shirt, miss, but only on the condition that you have to hear a story first."

"Oh my God," I am thinking, "I can't believe this is happening."

**“... I’d like you
to sign my
shirt please.”**



He starts his story. "One time at a show, a woman came up and asked me the same thing." He made the universal sign language gesture of a large bosomed woman: cupped palms up in front of his chest. "I recall she was built quite well all around," he mused. "I told her I'd sign her shirt, but when I tried, it was, well, too soft . . . I couldn't get any purchase."

"That won't happen with me," I confided. "Mine are quite firm."

He smiled. "So then I tell her perhaps she should go into the ladies room and remove her shirt. I could sign it better flat on the table."

"Oh, I see," I exclaim. "You were just trying to get her to take off her shirt!"

He looks at his driver in the golf cart. "I am going to be in so much trouble with my wife."

We are all still laughing as he reaches over to sign my shirt, and I am afraid that the heaving is going to mess up his signature. Wayne is still on speaker-phone listening to all of this. I hand the phone over to Bob to say hi.

"Wayne, my friend, it is good to hear your voice." They chat for a minute. "You know, Pard, at 91 it takes a lot to get my battery charged up these days."

He grinned at me. "But I think I'm good to go for rest of the night."

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CONTEST CALENDAR

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



Hoosier Hoedown (Mid-America)

[Saturday, August 9 – Sunday, August 10, 2014](#)

Practice/Registration: Friday, August 8

Power: Primary through Unlimited

Location: Kokomo Municipal Airport (OKK): Kokomo, IN

Region: Mid-America

Contest Director: Mike Wild

Contact Information: 765-860-3231

E-Mail: mike.wild@hotmail.com

Website: www.hoosierhammerheads.com

Beaver State Regional (Northwest)

[Friday, August 15 – Saturday, August 16, 2014](#)

Practice/Regist: Wednesday, August 13 – Thursday, August 14

Power: Primary through Unlimited

Location: Eastern Oregon Regional (PDT): Pendleton, OR

Region: Northwest

Contest Director: Christopher Branson

Contact Information: 503-803-7167

E-Mail: christopher.branson@comcast.net

Website: www.iac77.eachapter.org

Upper Canada Open (Mid-America)

[Friday, August 15 – Sunday, August 17, 2014](#)

Practice/Registration: Friday, August 15

Power: Primary through Unlimited

Location: Tillsonburg (CYTB): Tillsonburg ON

Region: Mid-America

Contest Director: Bjarni Tryggvason

Contact Information: 5198517887

E-Mail: bjarni.tryggvason@rogers.com

Website: aerobaticscanadachapter3.blogspot.ca

Kathy Jaffe Challenge (Northeast)

[Friday, August 15 – Sunday, August 17, 2014](#)

Practice/Regist: Thursday, August 14 – Friday, August 15

Power: Primary through Unlimited

Location: South Jersey Regional (VAY): Lumberton, NJ

Region: Northeast

Contest Director: Ron Mann, John Fellenzer

Contact Information: 914 329 6735

E-Mail: RLMMDPILOT@AOL.COM

Website: www.iac52.org

2014 Oshkosh Air Maneuvers Challenge (Mid-America)

[Friday, August 22 – Sunday, August 24, 2014](#)

Practice/Regist: Thursday, August 21 – Friday, August 22

Power: Primary through Unlimited

Location: Wittman Regional Airport (OSH): Oshkosh, WI

Region: Mid-America

Contest Director: Audra Hoy

Contact Information: 920-203-9000

E-Mail: audra_hoy@yahoo.com

Website: www.iacchapter1.org

Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/OshkoshAirManeuversChallenge>

CANCELLED

Rebel Regional (Southeast)

[Friday, August 29 – Sunday, August 31, 2014](#)

Power: Primary through Unlimited

Location: Everett Stewart Regional (UCY): Union City, TN

Region: Southeast

Contest Director: Mike Rinker

Contact Information: 731-796-0849

E-Mail: Mdr@vaughnelectric.com

Website: www.iac27.org

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

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

Practice/Registration: Friday, August 29

Rain/Weather: Monday, September 1

Power: Primary through Unlimited

Location: Delano Municipal Airport (DLO): Delano, CA

Region: Southwest

Contest Director: Steve De La Cruz

Contact Information: 760-963-6426

E-Mail: DelanoCD@iacchapter26.org

Website: www.IACChapter26.org

Hill Country Hammerfest (South Central)

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

Practice/Registration: Friday, August 29

Rain/Weather: Monday, September 1

Power: Primary through Unlimited

Location: Llano Municipal Airport (AQO): Llano, TX

Region: South Central

Contest Director: Jeffery Poehlmann

Contact Information: 512-423-5333

E-Mail: jeffery@texas.net

Website: <http://www.iac107.org/>

Apple Turnover (Northwest)

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

Practice/Registration: Thursday, September 4

Rain/Weather: Sunday, September 7

Power: Primary through Unlimited

Location: Ephrata Municipal (EPH): Ephrata, WA

Region: Northwest

Contest Director: Peggy Riedinger

Contact Information: 206-783-5141

E-Mail: iac67president@gmail.com

East Coast Aerobatic Contest (Northeast)

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

Power: Primary through Unlimited

Location: Warrenton–Fauquier Airport (HWY): Midland, VA

Region: Northeast

Harold Neumann Barnstormer (South Central)

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

Practice/Registration: Friday, September 5

Power: Primary through Unlimited

Location: New Century AirCenter (IXD): Olathe, KS

Region: South Central

Contest Director: Greg Shetterly

Contact Information: 913-486-8498

E-Mail: Halforeversecuban8@gmail.com

Website: www.iac15.org

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

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

Practice/Registration: Thursday, September 4 – Friday, September 5

Rain/Weather: Monday, September 8 – Tuesday, September 9

Power: Primary through Unlimited

Location: Olean Municipal Airport (ole): Olean, NY

Region: Northeast

Contest Director: Pat Barrett

Contact Information: 716-361-7888

E-Mail: cbpbmb@aol.com

Website: IAC126.blogspot.com

Rocky Mountain "OYSTER" Invitational Aerobatic Contest (South Central)

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

Practice/Registration: Friday, September 12

Glider Categories: Sportsman through Unlimited

Power: Primary through Unlimited

Location: Lamar Municipal Airport (KLAA): Lamar, CO

Region: South Central

Contest Director: Jamie S. Treat

Contact Information: 303-304-7937

E-Mail: jamietreat@q.com

Website: www.iac5.org

Salem Regional Aerobatic Contest (Mid-America)

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

Practice/Registration: Friday, September 12

Power: Primary through Unlimited

Location: Salem–Leckrone Airport (KSLO): Salem, IL

Region: Mid-America

Contest Director: Bruce Ballew

Contact Information: 314-369-3723

E-Mail: bruceballew@earthlink.net

2014 US National Aerobatic Championships (South Central)

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

Practice/Registration: Saturday, September 20

Rain/Weather: Saturday, September 27

Glider Categories: Sportsman through Unlimited

Power: Primary through Unlimited

Location: North Texas Regional Airport (KGYI): Sherman, TX

Region: South Central

Contest Director: Gray Brandt

Contact Information: 970-948-0816

E-Mail: graybrandt@yahoo.com

Website: <http://nationals.iac.org/>

Ace's High Aerobatic Contest (South Central)

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

Practice/Registration: Friday, October 10

Power: Primary through Unlimited

Location: Newton City Airport (EWK): Newton, KS

Region: South Central

Contest Director: Ross Schoneboom

Contact Information: 316-519-2079

E-Mail: schoneboomr@prodigy.net

Website: <http://www.iac119.webs.com/>

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A yellow biplane is shown from a low angle, flying over a coastal town. The town is built on a hillside overlooking a body of water. The sky is clear and blue.

THANK YOU

EAA members and visitors for making
EAA Adventure Oshkosh 2010
another successful year.



Ben Brazier

IAC 435882

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Age – 34



GD: Ben, or should I say... “Hey, mate” (I think that’s the official Aussie greeting), tell us a little about how you got started in aerobatics.

BB: G’day Gary, mate. My granddad, uncles, and my mum used to compete in a lot in gliding competitions and had a lot of success winning multiple state and Australian championships. That’s where my thirst for flying competitions first came from. I started flying planes in 1998 and obtained my commercial pilot certificate in 2000. In 2008 I decided to get serious about competition aerobatics and called Phil Unicomb from Action Aerobatics in Maitland, Australia, to talk about some training. We got into it, and I purchased a Pitts S-1S from the United States the same year. Competed at my first aerobatic contest in 2009 at the Queensland State Aerobatic Championship in Graduate and won all my flights. One of my dreams was to be a third-generation state and Australian champion in flying, and I’ve now crossed that one off the list.

GD: Being from “the land down under,” is flying inverted pretty natural for you, Ben?

BB: Being from the land down under makes it a bit easier to fly inverted, ha-ha. My mum flew aerobatics in gliders when she was pregnant with me, so I guess I’ve been flying aerobatics since before I was born. When I was about 2 years old, she used to sit in the glider with me strapped me in front of her.

GD: How did you get hooked up with John Smutny to fly his Wolf Pitts at the Nationals last year?

BB: I got in contact with John through one of my good friends Paul Bennet. I can’t thank John enough for letting me fly his beautiful Wolf Pitts at last year’s Nationals. It was a pleasure to fly.

GD: What are some of the differences in flying a contest in Australia and the United States?

BB: The main difference would be the safety maneu-

vers. In Australia we fly into the box and complete our safety maneuvers, then fly out, come around, and start. That’s good for checking the wind in the box but burns up a lot of time. I liked the U.S. Nationals’ style with a half-roll to inverted, then half-roll upright on base leg, then turn into the box and start. That worked so well with getting through so many competitors in a day.

GD: Do you have any specific goals in aerobatics?

BB: I’d like to start competing more in the United States and around the world and working my way up to being competitive at the World Aerobatic Championships (WAC) and someday win it.

GD: Tell us a bit about your Pitts S-1.

BB: My Pitts S-1S is set up with T-model wings, tail, and engine configuration. The engine has 10:1 pistons, the cylinders have been ported, Sky Dynamics sump with swinging pick up, four-into-one exhaust, and their lightened fly wheel, as well. It’s got a constant-speed MT prop with custom paint work and an Electronics International MVP-50 engine monitoring system to tell me what the engine is doing. It’s got lots of power, and I love flying it.

GD: Last question, do you have any specific preflight ritual just prior to flying your sequence?

BB: Just prior to flying my sequence, I like to separate myself mentally from the outside world and go over my sequence in my head, walk through it, and make sure I’ve got all the possible scenarios worked out for drift I might encounter in the box. Then I sit in the plane and get completely comfortable—making sure nothing is annoying me about the way the seat belts sit, how my parachute is positioned, how my helmet feels, and even if my socks are feeling good in my boots and not gathered up. I look for anything that might distract me from flying the sequence, so when I enter the box there is nothing else on my mind other than flying that sequence.

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