

NOVEMBER 2008

SPORT Aerobatics

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE INTERNATIONAL AEROBATIC CLUB



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Understanding Insurance
AWAC Experience**

AWAC 2008

**Pendleton, Oregon Hosts the 2008
Advanced World Aerobatic Championship**



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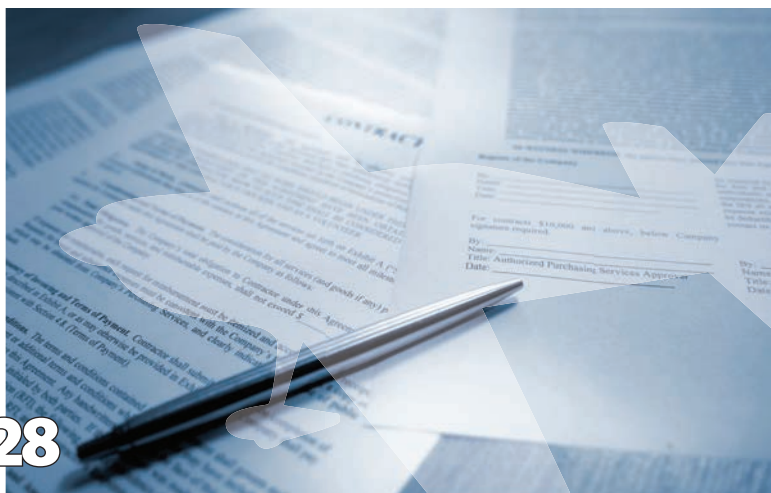
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Terry Burch at the 2008 AWAC in Pendleton, Oregon. Photo by Robert Bismuth

SPORT Aerobatics

Publisher: Vicki Cruse
Executive Director: Lisa Popp
Editor: Reggie Paulk
Art Director: Phil Norton
Interim Dir. of Publications: Mary Jones
Copy Editor: Colleen Walsh

Contributing Authors:

Ryan Birr Greg Koontz
Robert Bismuth Reggie Paulk
Vicki Cruse Lorrie Penner
Howard Kirker Dave Watson

IAC Correspondence

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

Advertising Director

Katrina Bradshaw **Tel:** 920.426.6836
E-mail: kbradshaw@eaa.org

Representatives:

Northeast: Chester Baumgartner
Tel: 727.532.4640 **Fax:** 727.532.4630
E-mail: cbaum111@mindspring.com
Southeast: Chester Baumgartner
Tel: 727.532.4640 **Fax:** 727.532.4630
E-mail: cbaum111@mindspring.com
Central: Gary Worden
Tel: 800.444.9932 **Fax:** 816.741.6458
E-mail: gary.worden@spc-mag.com
Mountain & Pacific: John Gibson
Tel: 916.784.9593 **Fax:** 510.217.3796
E-mail: johngibson@spc-mag.com
Europe: Willi Tacke
Tel: 498969340213 **FAX:** 498969340214
E-mail: willi@flying-pages.com

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

EAA-IAC Membership Services

Tel: 800.843.3612 **Fax:** 920.426.6761
E-mail: membership@eaa.org

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LETTER from the EDITOR

by Reggie Paulk

Volunteers Are the Fire That Heats AWAC 2008

Well, AWAC 2008 is complete, and by all accounts, it was an unqualified success. In this issue, Robert Bismuth describes in detail how the event was pulled off without so much as a hitch—and with an almost purely volunteer cast.

Reading Bismuth's story made me think about all the other activities in this sport that not only thrive, but depend on, the aid of volunteers from all over the community. AirVenture is one example of an event that wouldn't exist without the tireless efforts of so many who give freely of their time and energy in order to create an event that brings hundreds of thousands of people flocking to it every year.

With no promise of compensation, the words and photos between these pages are brought to you largely by people who are driven to contribute. If you've never done it, putting pen to paper in a meaningful manner can be a very difficult undertaking—it takes a lot of time and effort to organize our thoughts in a way that is purposeful.

In this issue, Greg Koontz brings 34 years of aerobatic teaching to bear as he describes the basics of teaching aerobatics to students. For those of you who haven't met Koontz, his

Southern drawl and sense of humor immediately endear you to him. In addition to Koontz, Dave Watson will now be writing a technical column that focuses on some of the things that can go wrong while performing aerobatics (or just getting to the box), and how to properly deal with them. Ryan Birr helps us navigate the treacherous insurance gauntlet with a thoughtfully written piece that gives secrets only an insider would know. As the owner of Northwest Insurance Group, Birr definitely qualifies. AWAC volunteer coordinator Lorrie Penner finishes off this month with a nice recap of what it was like from the true hot seat.

I think it's safe to say volunteers are, in many ways, the bread and butter of our industry. That being said, I wanted to make sure I acknowledge a photographer whose photos graced our pages last month, but weren't properly attributed. Laurie Zaleski's photos helped make October's airport relations piece complete, and I wanted to make sure credit was given where it was due. Zaleski's work will be showing up in a follow up piece by Mark Mattioli, so watch for it.

To all of you who give so freely of your time, thank you! 🇺🇸

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

PRESIDENT'S PAGE

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



Advanced World Aerobatic Championships 2008

The contest that almost didn't happen

By now you've probably figured out this issue pays tribute to the Advanced World Aerobatic Championship, which is now officially called the World Advanced Aerobatic Championship, but somehow WAAC just doesn't have the same ring to it as AWAC; kind of like how old-timers call AirVenture "Oshkosh" because that's what they called it growing up. For those of you who don't know, this contest was in the making as far back as 2006, when the United States was awarded the event at the CIVA meeting in Poland, and barring no problems in 2007, it would be held in the United States. At the time the contest was first awarded, we did not know exactly where the event was going to be, but this soon shook out, and Pendleton, Oregon, was the winner. The rest is history and can be read in Robert Bismuth's write-up in this issue.

Chapter 67 in Oregon and Chapter 77 in Washington are to be commended for their efforts to make this contest a reality. There was a period of time when everyone was holding their breath, because there was a chance it would not happen if enough people didn't support it in a number of ways. Though IAC isn't directly involved in world contests, we would like to take this opportunity to thank the hard-working people

who made this event possible, from the president of AWAC 2008 Inc., to the Boy Scouts who came out to help in Pendleton.

I would also like to thank every pilot from a country other than the United States and Canada for coming to the United States, competing, and leaving a lasting mark at this event. This includes Masa Utsumi, the Japanese competitor, who introduced

*I would also like to
thank every pilot from
a country other than
the United States and
Canada for coming . . .*

the pilots and volunteers to electrolyte enhancement of their drinking water with a product called Pocari Sweat as translated from Japanese to English. Despite the name, it wasn't bad. Without the foreign pilots, this contest would not have been possible. The last time the United States hosted an AWAC was in Law-

rence, Kansas, in 1997. Despite the fact that the United States probably has more aerobatic pilots than any other country, we find ourselves left behind when it comes to contest site selection. The large concentration of countries in Europe necessitates a long journey to the United States for many foreign pilots. To those of you who participated from the 11 countries outside the United States, we commend you for believing in this contest and attending it. We hope we made a lasting impression on you.

Lastly, congratulations to the U.S. Advanced Aerobatic Team for its fine efforts at the event under the management of Michael Steveson. The premise behind the AWAC was the sharing of airplanes so as to cut the expense of the event for the pilots. Four out of eight U.S. Team members flew borrowed airplanes, and of the remaining four, two of those allowed their airplanes to be shared by others. So to Rob (the new World Champion), Pat, Brian, Craig, Norm, Alex, Hector, and Todd, we thank you for your outstanding performance. Special thanks to Jeff Boerboon, the team captain, who had to withdraw weeks before the event with an injury, but who showed up in Pendleton to support his team.

To everyone who made this event possible, thank you. 🇺🇸

NEWSBRIEFS

Doug Sowder Named to IAC Board of Directors

October 2, 2008 - The IAC Board of Directors has elected Doug Sowder, of Spokane, Washington, as the interim Director to fill the vacancy left by the untimely death of Erica Simpson. Doug will represent the Northwest Region, with Robert Armstrong being named as the Southwest Regional representative Doug was previously on the IAC Board for a one-year term from 2005 to 2006. He is an Advanced competitor who was also a volunteer and aircraft renter, at the Advanced World Championships in Pendleton, Oregon. When not flying, Doug is a ski-lift engineer in the Spokane area.



Aerobatic Calendars Available...



Robert Bismuth, the "Official Photographer" for the U.S. National Aerobatic Championships, has produced three calendars for 2009: You may choose from U.S. Nationals, AWAC 2008 and the Pacific Northwest regional series. As in prior years, each calendar depicts the pilots, judges, volunteers, aircraft and visitors to the associated competition or championship. You may view and order the calendars online at: <http://www.cafepress.com/finegrain>



IAC Chapter 19 announces the availability of its 2009 Sky Surfers Calendar of aerobatics. Following on the success of its 2008 calendar, Kent Misegades has teamed up with noted aerobatics photographer Daryl Jacobs to provide IAC members with twelve inspiring images of pilots and airplanes participating in IAC contests and air shows on the east coast in 2008. The low cost of \$12 per calendar (\$14 for international orders) includes shipping. To place orders, see <http://iac19.org/calendar.html> or contact Kent in Raleigh, NC at 919-303-8230. A portion of the proceeds goes to support IAC 19's activities.



Clarke McNeace Earns MCFI-Aerobatic

Clarke McNeace recently earned his Master CFI-Aerobatic accreditation. Clarke is the chief CFI with Aviation Performance Solutions (<http://apstraining.com>) at Williams Gateway Airport (IWA), where he specializes in upset and aerobatic training. A former naval aviator and combat veteran, he also serves as a FAASTeam rep in the Scottsdale FSDO area.



Mike Goulian Launches New Website

Air show entertainer Mike Goulian's new website is a highly charged place to visit for thrilling photos and videos from his performances. His short videos offer thrilling in-cockpit shots, air-to-air footage and unique camera angles. Just visit <http://mikegoulian.com/>

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A blue aerobatic airplane is shown in a steep climb, leaving a thick, white smoke trail that curves downwards. The aircraft has "AEROBATIC AIRCRAFT" written on the top of the wing and "NEXUS" on the side. The background consists of a vast, flat landscape with green and yellow fields under a clear blue sky.

The 2008 Advanced World Aerobatic Championship

Coming Together to Make Something Wonderful

Story and photos by Robert Bismuth

The Genesis of AWAC 2008

In August 2008, the United States hosted the 8th Advanced World Aerobatic Championship in Pendleton, Oregon. Thirty-eight pilots from 13 nations around the world, along with their support teams, friends, and families, came to compete in Pendleton. For 10 days some of the best aerobatic pilots in the world made the Pacific Northwest their home and enjoyed the hospitality of the local residents and volunteers from all over the United States.

Producing a successful international event is far from simple. The planning, fund raising, volunteer recruiting, etc., had actually begun 18 months before the start of the event—back in the fall of 2006. Details ranging from the CIVA box requirements to the amount of water needed each day had to be carefully thought through, planned, and then implemented. In addition, even before the event started, logistics needed to be in place for practice areas as close as possible to the actual championship site.

Once the master task list was established and the timeline sketched out, it became clear early on that the key to all logistics was fund raising. Five members of IAC Chapter 77 and IAC Chapter 67 stepped forward to form the not-for-profit 501(c)3 Oregon corporation that would be the actual host entity for AWAC 2008. Even with 18 months ahead of them, time was already too short.

When we set out on this journey, we did not know the exact path we would take. We did know that we wanted to provide the aerobatic community with the best international event possible while preserving the normal activities of the local IAC chapters, steer clear of financial difficulties, and, the hardest of all, still remain good friends after the event concluded. Though these were all tough objectives, through hard, focused effort, and with the help of people from all over the United States, we managed to achieve all our goals!

Funding or Bust

The first hurdle we faced was financing the event; corporate sponsorship was almost impossible to obtain. Even though this was a fully sanctioned international event with great media potential, major corporations had a hard time understanding the value that sponsorship of

aerobatics would bring to them. After more than a year of cold calls and knocking on doors, we finally achieved significant sponsorship from Alaska Airlines, American Airlines, the city of Pendleton, Northwest Insurance Group, Pendleton Air Museum, Pendleton Aircraft Services, PepsiCo, Perkins Coie, Rhino Staging, Starbucks, Sunbelt Rentals, Unidym Inc., Western Petroleum, and Zpt Silver Company. However, what really made the event possible were private donors—including one donor who very generously matched the donations of all others.

As we neared the start of the event, we were also able to count on the grassroots nature of aerobatic competition: Lorrie Penner, secretary of IAC Chapter 34 and co-volunteer coordinator for AWAC 2008, suggested we ask IAC chapters to sponsor the lunch breaks for AWAC, and the chapters responded immediately with cash donations. IAC chapters 1 (Chicago, Illinois), 26 (Delano, California), 34 (Columbus, Ohio), 38 (Livermore, California), 49 (Los Angeles), 52 (Montgomery, New York), 67 (Washington state), and 77 (Portland, Oregon) all jumped on board and made sufficient donations to give our volunteer caterer, Carol Burch, the budget she needed to feed the hungry masses each of the eight days of competition.

Feeding the Multitudes: WACy Bucks—Whacky?

Carol's excellent catering, together with Pepsi's donation of pallets full of bottled water, would keep everyone running during the long, hot days of the events. For breakfast and dinner we needed a different mechanism, though.

Registered participants in AWAC had already paid for their meals. Rather than cram them into the hotel restaurant day after day, Bob Harris, an AWAC board member from Chapter 77, came up with the idea of AWAC Bucks, quickly referred to by one and all as WACy Bucks. These were plastic cards in various denominations of U.S. currency, tastefully displaying images of well-known aerobatic aircraft and the official AWAC logo, that could be redeemed for meals at most restaurants and fast-food locations throughout Pendleton. This gave AWAC participants the run of the town when it came to food and drink—some even kept a few WACy Bucks as souvenirs.



Local Support

In order to make the WACy Bucks work, the Pendleton Chamber of Commerce became the coordination point for redemption by local merchants. This was only one of the many things the chamber volunteered to do. The hardworking people of the chamber fully supported AWAC 2008. In addition to behind-the-scenes infrastructure, they also organized the event's excellent opening ceremonies. The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation led the opening parade dressed in full tribal regalia, and then welcomed all of those involved in AWAC 2008 to their traditional homeland.

While the chamber looked after events and activities in Pendleton and the surrounding area, it was EAA Chapter 219, together with the very cooperative local air traffic controllers and airport management, that provided the on-airport support for AWAC 2008. The tower controllers and airport management basically provided anything they had that we needed. EAA Chapter 219 lent its entire World War II-era hangar to AWAC 2008, which allowed us to construct the international village, store competition aircraft overnight, and access all types of tools, hoists, and airport vehicles.

Volunteers: The Key to Success

Early on, the board of AWAC 2008 Inc., the host organization, realized that it had to recruit key volunteers for the event. Two positions were

essential: the contest director and the volunteer coordinator. With those roles staffed appropriately, the board could turn over the rest of the recruiting and running of the event to the CD and VC—and, of course, provide whatever support those two key individuals needed.

Normally a difficult role to fill, the volunteer coordinator proved the easier of the two. Lorrie Penner was nominated by several different people. To everyone's relief, she not only said yes immediately but recruited her co-volunteer coordinator, Nancy Wright. Lorrie wisely realized, based on her past contest experience, that the VC job for AWAC was huge, and she split the task with Nancy. Together they leveraged their network of contacts throughout the U.S. aerobatic community and recruited capable people from all across the country.

It is impossible to name all the volunteers in the limited space here, but without each and every one of them—people who all spent 10 days working hard in the unforgiving heat of the Pendleton summer, away from family and work—AWAC 2008 could not have happened. They are the people who made AWAC 2008 the success it was, and they earned the thanks and compliments of every single registered attendee. They were indeed a tireless workforce for whom no task seemed too great.

Recruiting a suitable CD was much harder. The ideal candidate had to be experienced as a CD; be able

to delegate tasks appropriately; be a diplomat sensitive to the needs of a very eclectic group of international visitors, and at the same time, be able to make hard and fast decisions to keep both the preparations for the event and the event itself continually moving forward. Given the time commitment this role required right from the start, the list of candidates was very short.

Fortunately, the candidate at the top of everyone's list was available and interested. To his credit, he didn't just say yes. He thought about what was needed and interviewed all the AWAC 2008 Inc. board members to make sure he'd have their backing and the resources necessary. He also talked to both the head of the IAC and the head of CIVA to make sure he'd also have their backing. His process alone told us that, in recruiting Bob Higbee, we had found exactly the right person for the job.

Taking over the weekly planning meetings, Bob put in place assistant CDs Mike Mulcahy and John Pierson. He also convinced Mary Higbee to be the registrar—a critical role given the distances people were traveling from, and the potential language problems that might surface.

While Bob put the management infrastructure in place and filled in the massive project plan for the entire event, Gene Harrison of EAA Chapter 219 and Mac Engh of IAC Chapter 67 took on the task of moving the Pendleton box. After long discussions with the airport and the FAA, the existing



Rob Holland - First Place



Tamás Illés - Second Place



Eddie Goggins - Third Place

box was decommissioned and a new box location chosen that would allow for judges to be positioned on any side of the box, depending on wind direction and sun location. Once surveying was completed and concrete forms constructed, 10-meter-long concrete box markers were poured in place along with flags that would be visible on the ground to the farmer who'd be harvesting the wheat growing around the markers during the weeks before and after AWAC.

AWAC Begins

The organizers all breathed a collective sigh of relief looking around the room at the first official briefing for all attendees. Everything had come together—the practice areas had been continually occupied in the prior two weeks, practice at Pendleton was completed, the judges and jury had arrived, and everyone had their WACy Bucks. All that remained was to brief everyone on the operational procedures, head out to the airport, and send up the first pilot.

Looking around the room, you could see the anticipation on everyone's faces. From the large U.S. Advanced Aerobatic Team in its colorful team shirts to the solo independent competitors (already flying a Jolly Roger in place of a national flag), people were ready and anxious to get started. Bob Higbee, along with John Galliard (chief judge) and Mike Heuer (president of the international jury), thoroughly covered all the logistics and processes that would govern the event and introduced warm-up pilots Jason Bialek, Mac Engh, Greg Howard, and Doug Sowder—all of whom were also volunteers at the event, and who covered many different jobs.

The Typical Pendleton AWAC Day

A CIVA-sanctioned international championship operates quite differently from the U.S. Nationals and regional competitions. Competitors get up to 15 minutes of box time per flight—time that can be spent in certain warm-up/safety maneuvers or flying the designated sequences. Unless weather cuts the event short, each has four flights over approximately eight days: two Unknowns, their own Free-style, and the Known sequence.

There is almost always a significant delay between competitors' flights while the judges complete paperwork

on the previous competitor and prepare for the next competitor. In addition, the judges can request updated wind information if they feel there has been a change in the wind. Finally, there are mandatory breaks for the judges every few hours.

As a result, it is not really feasible to use a hold location and keep an aircraft waiting up in the hold while one competes in the box. Instead, each aircraft is launched in response to a request from the chief judge and proceeds directly into the box.

Given that temperatures in August for Pendleton are generally in the mid- to high-'90s with bone-dry air and no shade, sun umbrellas, wet towels, and plenty of bottled water were essential on the starting line. So the starter, Tom Adams, and his assistants not only had to have the aircraft ready to launch but also had to worry about the pilots. It was crucial to make sure the pilots were not succumbing to the blast-furnace environment out on the ramp while waiting in their cockpits to start up and launch.

The heat and surrounding mountains made for continually changing winds. A hardworking team of wind observers led by Doug Sowder wound up having to check on the wind almost every half-hour. No doubt there are people in various corners of Oregon wondering where all the red balloons came from that eventually descended on them unexpectedly!

As complex as the air, ground, and weather logistics were, the entire

event ran smoothly from the first day. Starting each day at approximately 9 a.m. and continuing until around 6:30 p.m., with a short break for lunch and a couple of breaks for incoming commuter airline flights, aircraft were launched without a hitch. During the entire eight days, only a few hours at the end of one afternoon were lost to weather when some unusually severe thunderstorms threatened the airport.

The Awards Banquet

With the flying over, the scoring completed, protests handled, and the results posted, all that remained was to celebrate the conclusion of the championship and present the awards. After an excellent banquet at the Pendleton Country Club, including wine provided by Diva Vineyards of California (a sponsor who also provided a Giles 202 flown in the championship), came brief speeches from various invited guests, including IAC President Vicki Cruse, who welcomed our visitors officially on behalf of the IAC. Following the speeches, AWAC 2008 Inc. presented each judge and member of the international jury with a gift made locally in the Pacific Northwest: a silver money clip featuring a cowboy riding a bucking bronco—an icon for Pendleton and the legacy of America's Wild West.

Then came the main business of the evening: Bob Higbee and Mike Heuer presented the winners with tro-





phies from the organizers and official gold, silver, and bronze medals from the FAI.

The quality of the flying had been excellent throughout the championship. However, the final scores now told the tale. Rob Holland of the United States took first place as top individual pilot, with second and third places going to Tamás Illés of Hungary and Eddie Goggins of Ireland, respectively. The U.S. Team took first place, followed by South Africa in second place, and Great Britain in third place.

As a final token of thanks, the competitors, judges, and jury were invited to autograph two checkered flags as gifts for the control tower and the airport.

The Final Air Show

From the start, the AWAC organizers planned to host an air show at the conclusion of AWAC 2008, and approached the Pendleton Air Museum to make the show a jointly promoted and organized event. Our idea was to host a free event to thank the local residents and let them see some examples of the excellent flying that had been taking place for 10 days at their local airport.

In support of this goal, a number of AWAC competitors with ACE cards had agreed to fly in the air show. Additional regional performers also signed up, allowing us to run a three-hour air show. The Oregon Air National Guard and the U.S. Marines even arranged some military flybys

for the crowd, while the Pendleton-based Army National Guard put on static displays of its equipment and its Chinook helicopters.

Members of the Pendleton Air Museum provided the majority of volunteer help for the air show. Local police and emergency services personnel also helped out. It was welcome assistance given the thousands of people who came to see the flying. Competitors flying in the air show included Rob Holland, Alex Land, and Masahiro Utsumi. They were joined by warm-up pilot Greg Howard and assistant judge Will Allen, who opened the air show by singing the Stars and Stripes from the cockpit of his Super Decathlon while flying his air show routine!

Regional air show performers Terry Burch, Matt Groth, Kevin Hopkins, and Don Mobley made up the balance of the acts, with John Coffey doing an excellent job as the official air show announcer. It was a fitting and much appreciated conclusion to the 10 days of aerobatic activities AWAC had brought to Pendleton and the surrounding communities.

Life After AWAC

Many people questioned our sanity in our proposal to host AWAC 2008 here in the United States. At times we did, too! We started with nothing but an idea, our own enthusiasm, and the encouragement of those around us. From the beginning, the core group of organizers, Robert Bismuth, Jennifer Haglund, Robert Harris, Robert Top-

pel, and John Smutny, stayed engaged and filled in wherever necessary—doing everything from raising the cash to driving the daily shuttle bus at the championship.

Sometimes it seemed a long and almost impossible path to walk, but fortunately we were not alone. We counted on the support of the aerobatic community as a whole to make the event a success. That support came through for AWAC 2008 time and time again. We cannot thank everyone enough for all the help, donations, and patience with our questions and requests for guidance.

If there is a key to bringing off an event as big as a world championship, it lies in never wavering and in bringing on board motivated people with the right skills at the right time. Aerobatics is a grassroots activity—from the local to international levels. We could never have staged AWAC 2008 without that level of support and so, on behalf of the board of AWAC 2008 Inc., thanks to everyone who helped the United States host an event that we are told by the attendees was one of the best they have ever experienced! And to those who registered and came to the Pacific Northwest to fly or support their teams, thank you for coming and competing. We will never forget you and neither will the friends you all made in Pendleton and in the practice areas. You are welcome back to visit anytime. In fact, you have a standing invitation to compete in any of our regional competitions. 🇺🇸



The Gold Medal winning 2008 U. S. Advanced World Aerobatic Championship Team: (from left) Michael Steveson, Rob Holland, Hector Ramirez, Todd Whitmer. See all final AWAC results on page 24.

Practice Makes Perfect

By Robert Bismuth

Pendleton has been home to IAC Chapter 77's annual regional competition for more than 24 years. While the local residents are very supportive of aerobatics, the AWAC organizers decided early on that they did not want to cause any noise issues with continual practicing at Pendleton. Thus it became necessary to establish practice areas within the region that had similar weather and reasonably close density altitudes, along with available hotels and supportive communities.

IAC Chapter 67 immediately volunteered the use of its box in Ephrata, Washington—a short flight up the Columbia River from Pendleton. John Smutny of Chapter 67 volunteered to canvass for additional locations and, together with other members of Chapters 67 and 77, work with the various FAA flight standards district offices involved to obtain appropriate waivers. The communities and airports at Deer Park, Washington; Davenport, Washington; and Madras, Oregon, stepped forward and became official practice areas, and the FAA worked quickly to approve the required waivers.

Once the practice areas were selected, John Pierson volunteered to coordinate team use of the areas and make sure the various teams and individual competitors had local logistical support. In the weeks leading up to AWAC, John frequently shuttled between the practice areas in his Cessna 210 to keep everything running smoothly for the visiting competitors. He even transported a needed crankshaft seal over the Cascades to keep one of the AIO-540s up and running.

Finally, it came time for the competitors to head to Pendleton. Practice slots in the competition box were made available to all competitors. With the start of flying, AWAC began to come to life—and for the volunteers, the scramble started in earnest to handle all the last-minute tasks before the start of the championships!



Aerobatics Tech with Dave Watson

Over the years, I have written a few articles for *Sport Aerobatics* with the sole purpose of sharing aerobatics-induced mechanical issues with a greater audience so others could benefit from my experience and perhaps avoid the same pitfalls. In the same spirit with which I wrote my articles, I have recently accepted Vicki's offer to edit the Technical Column for our magazine. I hope this first double-header article, which I am pleased to present as the new editor for this column, brings home the very real appreciation that our safety is based on many factors, including as pointed out here, a 1/8 inch thick piece of plastic and, of course, the human element. Only through sharing these experiences can we help contribute to the safety of others. Please help us increase this safety by sharing your experiences. Send your contributions to **SA@BBBBBBB.com**

– Dave Watson

Canopy Conundrums

By Dave Watson and Howard Kirker

WINDBLOWN – OPEN COCKPIT IN A LASER!

BY HOWARD KIRKER

Friday, April 13th (remember that!), is a nice, sunny afternoon in the Bay Area with gentle winds. It's a great day to continue my familiarization process with my friend's Laser; this would be my sixth flight. It's a wonderful airplane, with just a touch more capability than my Great Lakes, and it is taking me no small amount of effort to make the transition to higher speeds, faster roll rates, and some bona fide vertical capability! Without the comfort of the overhead wing for sight cues and the sound and sensation of the wind and wires for speed and attitude input, I'm feeling a sort of sensory deprivation as I attempt to explore an expanded aerobatic envelope. Little do I realize...

THE EVENT

Preflight, engine start, taxi, run-up and take-off all are normal. My two climbing 90-degree turns and a right-

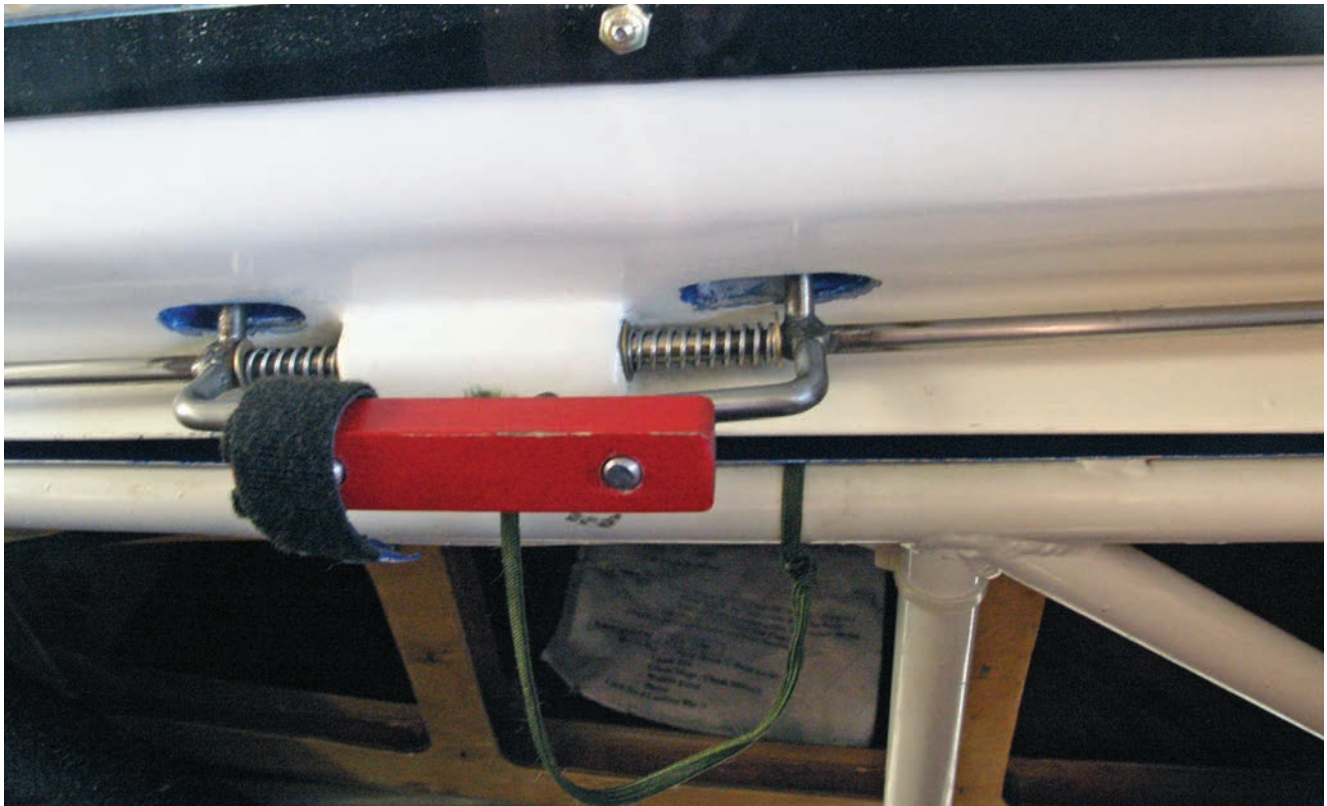
downwind departure from KLVK's 25R are all normal. Passing through about 2,000 feet, I turn north toward the practice area and continue climbing with aggressive clearing turns as I check the engine instruments, all is normal. It doesn't take long in the Laser to reach 6,000 feet, and passing over Los Vaqueros reservoir, it's time to level off, pick up airspeed, adjust trim, set throttle, prop, and mixture, and head direct to "CUT"!

What do I mean "cut"? I mean, stop the action/story, because there is a missing segment. I don't know what happened next. It's a total blank! Even today.

My recollections begin again, hazily, a few microseconds (?), or seconds (?), or minutes (?) later. My senses and consciousness return slowly, vaguely similar to a serious g-induced grey-out (note: The g-meter later confirmed no unusual forces). It's lighter upward, darker below; there's my right hand on the stick, which looks to be roughly neutral. Things seem relatively stable. I'm in an airplane; I'm flying; I'm still alive. This is good! But my



Detail shot of the damaged canopy hinging.



Canopy frame lock. Failure to fully engage the front locking pin remains a likely cause of the mishap.

slowly gathering awareness shouts that something is very, very wrong. Visually, everything is grey and indistinct. My eyes are tearing and I'm shrouded in deafening noise and howling wind. I am in sensory overload and everything seems to be happening in slow motion, but it begins to dawn on me that I must have a canopy issue – perhaps it's come loose and needs to be secured? My left hand reaches for the locking handles and my head turns to the left to

look. While my brain starts to wrestle with the possibility that this actually may not be the best course of action, my eyes, in the fog of wind and blurred vision, register a jagged shard of Plexiglas at the canopy rim.

Still processing information excruciatingly slowly, I start to understand that I am now flying open cockpit! The Plexiglas bubble has shattered and departed the aircraft. And yet, as if in one of those old-time comedy routines, I




Another view of damage done by the wayward canopy.

can't stop my hand from reaching up to confirm that the canopy bubble is, indeed, missing. Yep, gone.

Now a cascade of thoughts, in no discernable order, compete for attention:

- My eyes are being blasted by the wind; darn, my glasses are gone!
- There is absolutely no windscreen or other protection to shrink behind.
- This is painful and frightening!
- I need to slow down – throttle back and get the nose up.
- Airspeed, altitude? – Can't make them out.
- What now?
- Stay under control.
- Think!

As I wrestle with the plane, my mind and what to do next, I note a discomfort below my headset's left ear cup. Reaching to feel the cause, I discover my glasses dangling from the helmet's chinstrap; miracle #3! Carefully grabbing and repositioning them, I can now see – and my situation no longer seems quite as desperate. These aren't just sunglasses, but prescription sunglasses – with thick lenses!



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I believe there were two prior miracles. First, I consider my survival, thus far unharmed, of this terrifying incident – the shattering and departure of the canopy bubble – to be miracle number one. I know that others have not been as fortunate. And second, recovering from my state of suspended consciousness upright and under control has to be miracle number two. I believe the canopy (and my active control of the airplane) departed at about 150 mph, and this particular Laser is slightly out of rig; it tends to have a slight roll to the left when slower than 150, and a slight roll to the right above 150. The “event” seems to have occurred at just the right speed and trim.

Okay, glasses are on in this howling windstorm; don’t lose them now! Keep your head straight. My left eye is still blurry (it turns out there was some gunk on the lens), right eye isn’t too bad, given the oscillating turbulence. Slow the airspeed to about 100 mph. Altitude is about 3,500 feet; bring the power back in and try to maintain that until things get sorted out. Wind/prop blast increase, but I know that altitude is life. The perplexing question now occupying my mind, where had about 2,500 feet gone and how long did I wrestle with this situation?

So, now the key remaining issue presents itself; do I think I can see well enough to get back to the airport and land this thing? I can’t really turn my head around to check out the aircraft, but wiggling the stick and rudders produces normal responses, so I conclude the Laser has not been severely damaged. I call the tower and get no response. I try again with the same result; too much wind noise? My lips are sticky and dry from the wind, so it’s hard to talk. I fly closer to the Class D, adjust squelch, and try again. After several more attempts, communication is established and I’m cleared to approach and land. Right base to 25R, final at about 100, nose-high flare, slow, tailwheel-first touch-down, and roll out. YES! Miracle number three.

THE AFTERMATH

What actually happened? There was only one witness to the “event,” and he doesn’t know! On shutdown, I see that almost all of the Plexiglas is gone, yet the canopy frame is still in place. The Laser’s canopy has two locking pins on the left side, one front and back, which individually engaged into the fuselage structure, and a piano hinge along the right side. I notice the front pin is inserted; the rear is not. I climb out, avoiding remaining sharp pieces of the bubble, and exercise the canopy locking handles/pins/hinge a few times. It all seems normal. I depart the airport shaken and still perplexed as to what happened and probably in aftershock, my mind grappling with the event; was it a bird strike, propagating stress cracks from the mounting screws, or had the canopy mysteriously opened and reseated? I am, however, certain that I am a very lucky man. Not a scratch or bruise on me! I go home, recover, relax, rethink and reluctantly tell my wife the saga. She is, of course, relieved and happy that I’m OK, but less than thrilled at this stark confirmation of risk that accompanies this wonderful, addictive sport of ours; she will always worry. I call the owner and he’s his typi-

cally supportive self, thinking of me more than the plane. We agree to check it out in a day or two.

Subsequent examination of the Laser revealed further damage, strongly suggestive of a violent opening and closing of the canopy. The fiberglass canopy frame was flexed/cracked in a number of locations around the perimeter. The rear six inches of the hinge was pulled loose and distorted. The swing-over restraining strap was torn loose. The ignition/mag key and a toggle switch on the instrument panel were bent, and there was damage to the sheetmetal panel and surround. And there was some cosmetic fabric damage on the empennage with apparent cuts from departing pieces of Plexiglas.

It was unlikely a bird strike, as there are no indications. It is unlikely just a Plexiglas failure. It is most plausible that the entire canopy rotated open 180 degrees under flight load, but it did not depart (as one would expect it would if opened) but it smashed against the right wing, the bubble shattered (the pieces of which trailed down the side of the fuselage, missing me), the frame rebounded and ultimately managed to reseat itself, with the front

spring-loaded pin engaged. I somehow missed all of this, both mentally and physically, but I must have been the cause. We played with torquing/bending the canopy frame, sans bubble, and this scenario seems possible if the front locking pin had been only partially seated

and it had worked loose under air loading. So I still try to recall the pre-flight; canopy closed and locked prior to start-check. Canopy confirmed locked prior to run-up-check; 10 minutes of flight before any issues-check... But was the front locking pin FULLY engaged (it can be balky)? Honestly, I’ll never know, but it seems not. Or, in movement of my left hand to adjust trim and power, did I brush and dislodge one of the canopy locking-pin handles? This is also a possibility.

So, we’ve gotten a new bubble made and the canopy frame repaired. Fortunately, the damage to the airplane was not structural and the largely cosmetic defects were as good as new with a few hours of fiberglass work and some canopy-fitting expertise. We’ve improved the locking handle/pin arrangement with an additional retaining block, which provides some important physical, as well as psychological, security for this pilot. I’m comfortably “back in the saddle” – but, of course, I’ll forevermore obsess on the “canopy closed” checklist item. What other “lessons learned” can I suggest for fellow aerobats? You’ve probably heard or read them before:

- When *#@?/?* happens, *fly the plane.*
- Remember that *altitude is your friend.*
- And make sure your canopy is fully and securely latched. *Now check it again!*

I hope something like this never happens to any of you, or if it does, that you have an equal share of good fortune. I now consider Friday the 13th to be a very lucky day!

WINDBLOWN – OPEN COCKPIT IN A YAK 55!

BY DAVE WATSON

My inadvertent open-air experience was neither so harrowing nor so unexplainable. My story starts at the pre-flight inspection. It was time for my practice flight in the box at a contest and a curious pair of local policemen were on the ramp checking out the planes. They were asking me questions about my Russian plane, and I was obliging them rather than focusing on my task at hand. With the distraction, and in my rush to get to my time in the box, I did not notice that the center strap of my Hooker Harness had slipped a bit and was not at its normal pre-set length.

My second mistake was to forget my two-point roll safety check. So I dove in and did the first maneuver—which included a two of four up on a vertical followed by a $\frac{3}{4}$ outside loop. Just as I was approaching horizontal inverted on the bottom at about -5G, I felt

I spent the rest of the weekend marching through rows of grapes, almonds, and watermelons looking for the back half of the canopy and never found it.

my body slip a few inches and my helmet was now pressing against the canopy. At this point I knew I could not pull to correct this so I continued pushing through. As I did, I slipped some more; my helmet was now pressed against one shoulder, the other shoulder now also against the canopy and suddenly it got windy. I completed the push to horizontal and rolled upright. Looking over my shoulder, I noticed that the entire back half of my canopy was gone.

The landing was uneventful except for the looks of disbelief from my friends as I taxied to my spot. I

spent the rest of the weekend marching through rows of grapes, almonds, and watermelon looking for the back half of the canopy and never found it. The front half of the canopy has a prominent location in my hanger as a constant pre-flight reminder to keep my head out of my rear whenever I am preparing to fly. 🍷



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A vibrant red biplane is shown from a low angle, flying over a dense forest with autumn foliage in shades of orange, yellow, and green. The sky is a clear blue. The biplane's propeller is blurred, suggesting motion. The title text is overlaid on the upper right portion of the image.

Teaching the Basic Aerobatic Course

Part Three: The second lesson plan

The following is the third part of a series about teaching a basic aerobatic course. The course is about teaching the four fundamental maneuvers of aerobatics (loops, rolls, hammerheads, and spins) to the beginning student. Here I will be addressing the instructor who wants to learn more about teaching this kind of course, but hopefully the contents will be helpful to those seeking to begin an aerobatic course as well.

Flight instructing is an art, and therefore it is personal. I will share my personal techniques and philosophy about the subject, but in the end each instructor will teach his or her students with a style best suited to them. Therefore, no information shared here is meant to be a judgment of the quality of the instruction given by anyone else.

GREG KOONTZ, MCFI-A

In the last segment, we covered the first flight and what I would usually cover in the lesson. The emphasis was on getting the student familiar with the new aircraft, learning good orientation techniques, and doing the first aerobatic maneuver: the fundamental aileron roll. That lesson assumed the student had no aerobatic background or experience in the typical aerobatic aircraft, a clean canvas with which to paint a new picture.

Students often ask what would be the best reading to prepare for their course. I always tell them if they want to prepare, get a copy of *Stick and Rudder* and give it a good read. As for aerobatics, I want to be the first impression. There are many great works out there, and I personally approve of most, but each manual on aerobatics has its style and that is easily confusing. My preferred style is to explain each point in simple terms easy to relate to, and then after completing my course, I strongly encourage my students to dig into the technical side with any of many great books. By then they have been there, done that and can relate to the more complex explanations. By my way of thinking, it's a mistake to attempt to pack a huge amount of information into the student's head and then expect him to decipher it all in such a short course. Let's go by the old acronym KISS (keep it simple, stupid).

I start the second lesson by first assuring that lesson one has been successfully retained. We do a few of those really fundamental rolls as a warm-up and review. They usually need a little polish, so keep in mind that our primary purpose was to A) get the student used to a real aerobatic maneuver and B) teach the student how to "feel" when she is at the zero lift angle of attack. I use this time to re-emphasize how useful a simple roll like this can be when one accidentally ends up inverted.

The first new task of lesson two is to improve on the roll. It is all part of a sneaky plan. I don't teach slow rolls all at once. What I do is begin with the fundamental

aileron roll and slowly improve on it in a series of changes offered each lesson. The roll eventually is "straightened out" into a level-flight roll! On this flight I offer a new way to start the roll and a new way to end it. I leave the parabolic arc, in the middle of the maneuver, alone for a later lesson.

The new beginning is to combine the efforts of adding aileron deflection to the roll and setting the neutral or "zero lift" angle of attack (AOA) into one motion instead of the forward-then-left-stick "L" we learned the lesson before. To do this, I have the student first do the usual pitch-up to establish an arc (but this time not as steep), and then I have him apply aileron followed immediately with forward stick until the stick eventually ends up in that same full-aileron/zero G position. But this time the student is going to have to apply a short, but definite, coordinating rudder deflection to counter that brief period of adverse aileron yaw caused by applying ailerons before getting to the zero lift AOA. All this is accomplished in just a few degrees of roll, and once set, the aileron roll progresses as usual.

Once the student can execute the new start of the roll, show her the new way to end it. At the last knife-edge position, have the student begin "top rudder," meaning rudder in the direction of the roll to keep the nose up on the horizon. At the last 45 degrees of roll, have the student introduce elevator back-pressure to again

hold the nose up. From there the student tapers off the rudder as the roll is completed. For review: top rudder, back-pressure, off the top rudder. With a little repetition, the student will pick up the finesse required to taper these control moves in and out. In the preflight briefing, use a model to

show how the controls needed to hold the nose up transfer from the rudder to the elevator during this ending. During practice, I always take the opportunity to point out how useful this ending is in reducing altitude loss when the roll is used as an upset recovery method.

The new maneuver for lesson two is the loop. This old barnstormer move is a lot of fun to do, fun to teach, and packs a wallop of benefits when it comes to busting the student out of his two-dimensional world. I start by explaining that the loop is akin to the motorcyclist at the circus that drives along a looped path. He has to enter

"THIS OLD BARNSTORMER MOVE IS A LOT OF FUN TO DO, FUN TO TEACH, AND PACKS A WALLOP OF BENEFITS WHEN IT COMES TO BUSTING THE STUDENT OUT OF HIS TWO-DIMENSIONAL WORLD."



with enough speed to keep a positive G on the loop-shaped ramp; otherwise he would fall. We loop airplanes with a positive G on the wings. But with the ability to vary the size of our loop, we are charged with the task of creating a loop size and airspeed that will work.

We are also charged with the task of keeping our loop symmetrically round. When we learned turns-around-a-point as students, we had to correct for changing groundspeed by turning harder when we were downwind and slower when we were into the wind, so as to keep a round circle. Loops are not “groundspeed” maneuvers; they are “airspeed” maneuvers. But the analogy works in the sense that at high airspeeds, we have to pitch harder, and at low airspeeds, we pitch lighter to keep our loop round.

So here is how I explain it. After obtaining the recommended entry speed, we set the size of our loop by how hard we pull. I find most aircraft I fly can do a nice round loop with an entry G-load of about 3.5G. This has worked for me from Cubs to jets. There is surely some room here for personal technique, but my comfort level for a good loop falls between 3G and 4.5G. The beginning of the loop is a fast place in the loop, so this G comes along right

away. Smooth but immediate application is required. The top of the loop is obviously the slowest point and will require the minimum G for the maneuver. I find myself cresting the loop near, but not quite at, zero G. On the way up, use two checkpoints to determine if you are pulling correctly. Through the vertical you should be noticing a detectible need to relax the pull on the stick. Through the 45 degrees-on-your-back position you should be dropping below 1G or beginning to feel light in the seat.

“TO GET YOU AND YOUR STUDENT OUT OF THIS PREDICAMENT, BE SURE TO CAUSE IT TO UPSET SO THERE IS NO TAIL SLIDE.”

At the peak of the loop a subtle but definite change in stick motion is applied to go from “getting slower and light” to “getting faster and heavier.” The 45-degree nose-down position marks the beginning of significant airspeed acceleration and increasing back-pressure/

G-loads. The loop ends with the plane back to high speed and maximum G.

Your student will most certainly experience some of the common errors found in performing the pitch aspect of the loop. The first is at the entry, where most will add back-pressure too cautiously and slowly, causing the airplane to attempt too large a loop. This usually ends with the airplane poised straight up and running

out of airspeed. To get you and your student out of this predicament, be sure to cause it to upset so there is no tail slide. Just continuing to let the nose pitch over will usually do. Take this opportunity to show your student how, as the plane pitches over abruptly and has little airspeed to fly, you can neutralize the stick, reduce the power, and the airplane will seek out straight flight like a lawn dart. The contrast to this is a rushed pullout that encourages a spin.

The less likely error at the entry is to pull very hard with no letting up. This usually causes an accelerated stall at or near the inverted position. Correct this again by going to the lawn dart position first to stabilize and then roll to right side up. I always hope the student makes at least one of these mistakes so she can experience the correct way to recover.

I find the next pitching error is the student getting carried away with letting up back-pressure on top. This makes for a flat-top loop and sometimes causes a real "cone of confusion." It can be confusing because as students let up too much, they sometimes cross into a negative angle of attack creating a negative center of pressure on the wing or, simply, a negative weight and balance. This makes the stick go very light when the instructor is in the back of a Decathlon or Citabria and can lead the student astray! Tell students that if the scenery out the front windshield begins to get very slow or quits changing altogether, they need to PULL!



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Next, we need to back up and discuss the visual orientation for the loop. As the loop is entered, have your students look straight ahead to check for the airplane being square with the horizon, not trying to bank or yaw. As the nose cuts the horizon, have them move their eyes to the left wingtip to see the plane of the wing and the horizon all at once. There they will see their pitch checkpoints. The wing should appear to twist as it stays right on the horizon (or relatively stable in position as it twists). As the airplane reaches the top of the loop, have them turn their heads straight ahead and catch the horizon (and the straight reference you are flying over) and follow the reference on around the loop. The most common error in reference is students not turning their head. We learn early on to reference our attitude by looking at the nose of the airplane, and it is difficult to wean some students of this habit. Watch closely for this, and remind them every loop if required.

Finally, let's go over the use of rudder in the loop. On that initial pull, you will be introducing a big gulp of P-factor. You will also be causing some gyroscopic precession. P-Factor draws you left and gyroscopics draws you right. The P-factor wins in everything I have ever flown except when flying behind one of those M14P radials. But, since they turn backward, you still

need right rudder! So as the loop starts, anticipate the need for right rudder. You will see its handiwork while you are watching the wingtip. Normally the tip creeps down during the loop indicating the lack of correcting rudder. Remember, when watching the wing on the pull-up, you can raise it with the right rudder and lower it with the left rudder.

The need to correct for P-factor will decrease as you back off the elevator going over the top. But, just to keep you on your toes, a new requirement for right rudder creeps in as you are getting slow. Spiraling slipstream (air swirling around the fuselage from the prop) will begin to give the airframe a mild left twist, so a little right rudder has to return to fix it. You can teach your students to see this by noticing the wingtip trying to slip back from whatever point it is presently on. The truth is, this is a bit much for most students to notice on their first go at loops, but tell them all about it so they at least understand why, when they turn their heads

"THE TRUTH IS, THIS IS A BIT MUCH FOR MOST STUDENTS TO NOTICE ON THEIR FIRST GO AT LOOPS, BUT TELL THEM ALL ABOUT IT SO THEY AT LEAST UNDERSTAND WHY..."

to look straight ahead at the top of the loop, the nose is always a little off to the left!


By this point in the lesson, you have the student finessing his way through better aileron rolls and doing loops that start and end in the same direction, and maybe kind of close to entry altitude. It's too early in his

aerobatic career to get too picky, so be sure that while showing him what's wrong, you're encouraging him with comments on what went right! For heaven's sake, by this point you have both been working hard, so take a moment to check the fun meter here.

If things are going well I like to have my students do a whole bunch of loops and rolls in combination. It makes them speed up their thinking and gives you a chance to introduce a good habit of establishing level flight between maneuvers. Those early habits last the longest. Your student will soon learn the importance (and maybe the consequences) of how they set up for each maneuver.

I use the skills learned so far for one last exercise before heading home. I have the student do a loop, but at the tiptop, I have her do the last half of an aileron roll (be sure to let her know this is not the true definition of an Immelmann or a Cuban). I call it a roll off the top of a loop. This does a couple of good things. First, she learns how to do a roll to level from a less than ideal speed. That's great for preparing her for an unexpected upset/recovery. Second, it builds on her ability to find her orientation. I still remember how confusing all this flip-flopping is in the beginning!

The second lesson is surely a busy one, and the third one really gets going! If doing only two maneuvers doesn't sound busy consider this: As great and wonderful pilots who love what we're doing, we easily slip into a common pilot and instructor error—we all want to get to the cool stuff in a hurry! But as good flight instructors, we should direct our students through some good ol' repetition. Practice, practice, practice. Time spent in supervised practice is giving them the quality instruction they're paying the big bucks for. It can surely be a lot less exciting for the instructor, but believe me, your students are up to their earlobes in excitement.

Lesson three adds the third of the fundamental maneuvers: the hammerhead. Until next time, please feel free to contact me with any questions at greg@gkairshows.com. Your questions are welcome, and believe me, if you have a teaching technique you are willing to share, I'm willing to learn. 



Greg Koontz is a NAFI Master Certificated Flight Instructor-Aerobatic and has been teaching basic aerobatic courses since 1974. He is a full-time aerobatic professional sponsored by American Champion Aircraft flying shows in his Super Decathlon, is an aerobatic competency evaluator (ACE), and is a member of the International Council of Air Shows' ACE Committee. Greg is a member of the National Association of Flight Instructors (NAFI) and actively supports its efforts to raise the standards for aerobatic instructors.

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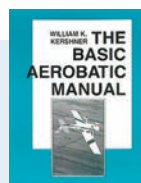
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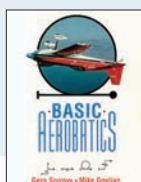
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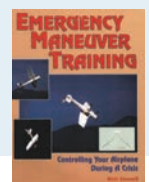
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AWAC 2008

Robert Bismuth

Final - Combined Overall Contest RESULTS • AWAC 2008 at KPDT, 3-9 August 2008

Rank	Team	Pilot	Airplane	Registration	"Q" #1	Free #1	Unknown #1	Unknown #2	Totals	Percentage
1	USA	Robert Holland	MX2	N-540RH	(1933.09)	2441.56	2513.84	2426.04	7381.44	76.10
2	HUN	Tamas Illes	Edge 540T	N-540TA	(1924.86)	2373.33	2322.60	2536.14	7232.07	74.56
3	IRL	Eddie Goggins	Extra 300L	N-8XT	(1903.31)	2337.78	2352.18	2390.70	7080.66	73.00
4	USA	Todd Whitmer	Edge 540T	N-540TW	(1976.44)	2344.13	2228.32	2473.50	7045.95	72.64
5	USA	Hector Ramirez	Extra 300L	N-25AP	(1857.99)	2376.66	2257.52	2405.14	7039.32	72.57
6	USA	Alex Land	Sukhoi SU-29	N-55SU	(1870.96)	2262.01	2370.52	2375.70	7008.23	72.25
7	USA	Craig Dobesh	Pitts S1-XTC	N-4477X	(1856.36)	2357.15	2360.88	2233.67	6951.70	71.67
Ind		Steve Johnson	MX2	N-487MX	(1653.33)	2274.40	2337.13	2262.48	6874.01	70.87
8	RSA	Nigel Hopkins	Extra 300	N-325TJ	(1873.81)	2290.34	2082.18	2496.51	6869.03	70.81
9	GBR	Julian Murfitt	Extra 230	N-694DH	(1634.94)	2274.78	2203.41	2314.15	6792.34	70.02
10	BEL	Didier Amelinckx	Extra 300L	N-25AP	(1649.06)	2297.41	2201.21	2273.26	6771.88	69.81
11	CAN	Guido LePore	Pitts S1	C-GIPS	(1699.14)	2224.17	2183.82	2353.12	6761.11	69.70
12	GBR	Stephen Madle	Extra 230	N-694DH	(1830.52)	2259.31	2208.83	2275.80	6743.94	69.53
13	CAN	Jerzy Strzyz	Sukhoi SU-29	N-55SU	(1827.70)	2208.73	2222.60	2307.82	6739.15	69.48
14	RSA	Patrick Davidson	Extra 300L	N-203EX	(1930.67)	2323.08	2269.90	2103.36	6696.34	69.03
15	USA	Patrick Clark	Pitts S1T	N-396PC	(1782.57)	2333.54	2040.93	2291.94	6666.41	68.73
16	RSA	Mark Hensman	MX2	N-540RH	(1785.38)	2148.93	2220.45	2284.12	6653.50	68.59
17	UKR	Sergey Prolagayev	SP-91	N-791SP	(1556.67)	2344.64	2113.28	2155.44	6613.36	68.18
18	GBR	Alan Cassidy	MX2	N-540RH	(1819.51)	2037.20	2240.60	2322.05	6599.85	68.04
19	USA	Norm DeWitt	Edge 540T	N-540TW	(1679.45)	2374.18	2277.49	1786.10	6437.77	66.37
20	USA	Brian Dierks	Sukhoi SU-29	N-329SU	(1886.15)	2147.38	2285.43	1925.03	6357.84	65.54
21	SWE	Daniel Ryfa	Yak 55M	N-55XK	(1823.51)	2148.38	1917.76	2214.39	6280.53	64.75
22	GBR	Paul Tomlinson	Extra 230	N-694DH	(1837.79)	2239.33	2060.06	1960.64	6260.03	64.54
23	GER	Norbert Werle	Giles G-202	N-352S	(1730.33)	2154.06	2053.08	1898.65	6105.79	62.95
24	GBR	Nick Richards	Extra 300	N-325TJ	(1495.41)	2256.63	1923.76	1907.93	6088.32	62.77
25	JPN	Masahiro Utsumi	Extra 300L	N-277E	(1614.62)	1931.85	2078.78	1778.64	5789.27	59.68
26	HUN	Tamas Abranyi	Zlin 50	N-50ZA	(1562.34)	2084.35	1703.47	1905.59	5693.41	58.69
27	GBR	Ron Allan	Pitts S2B	N-161JH	(1339.07)	2101.16	1945.00	1637.68	5683.84	58.60
Ind		John Coffey	Yak 55M	N-55XK	(1663.15)	2218.62	1622.97	1789.97	5631.56	58.06
28	LUX	Gerrit Nijs	Extra 300L	N-25AP	(941.85)	2022.94	1572.26	1943.97	5539.17	57.10
29	ITA	Rudolfo Natale	Extra 300L	N-203EX	(1423.92)	1728.59	1878.34	1631.40	5238.33	54.00
30	CAN	Dave Barbet	Pitts S1	C-GOVA	(1742.97)	2101.40	1374.71	1533.07	5009.18	51.64
31	GBR	Cas Smith	Pitts S2B	N-161JH	(1395.73)	871.14	1726.40	1246.98	3844.52	39.63
32	ITA	Guido Mencarelli	Pitts S2B	N-161JH	(1204.64)	1892.73	1163.56	704.87	3761.16	38.77
33	RSA	Kevin Benecke	MX2	N-540RH	(1745.43)	2035.20			2035.20	65.65
34	CAN	Royden Heays	Yak 55M	C-GRED	(1335.58)	1377.56			1377.56	44.44



The Masa Utsumi fan club



AWAC 2008

Through the Lens of
Robert Bismuth

Corner Judges
on the loose



"What the heck does he think he's doing?"



Those Brits and their umbrellas



An F-22 Raptor fly-by



Some of the pageantry from the opening ceremony



John Gaillard soaking up the sights



Rob Holland going ballistic



Opening briefing



A Short Course In Insurance Coverage

Named pilots and named insured - what does this really mean?

Ryan J. Birr, President, Northwest Insurance Group

Insurance is much like the kitchen disposal; it takes care of all the junk when it's working right, but no one really knows what is down in the drain when it's not working (and everyone is afraid to stick their hand in there to find out). We'd all like to think the disposal is always going to work and suck down everything we put in it, but it's a real mess in the sink when it stops working. What should happen with insurance is that you know what is going to cause problems before the loss, just like knowing what you should not put into the disposal.

We consistently get asked questions about "approved pilots" and "named pilots" and "pilot warranties" and "named insureds" and "additional insureds." Most everyone we talk to has a tendency to blend these various terms together, somehow expecting that they are all one in the same. Insurance contracts are like that darn disposal, always mixing and grinding stuff up so that you never have any idea what you actually put down there.

In the truest sense, though, insurance policies are legal contracts between the insurance company and the named insured. All the coverages and/or promises that are made in that contract by the insurance company are strictly for the benefit of the person or organization shown on the declarations page (the front page) of the policy; that person(s) or organization(s) is the **named insured**. In other words, the liability coverage is there to protect the **named insured**, and the aircraft physical damage coverage is there to repair or replace the **named insured's** aircraft in the event

of a loss. Notice how I have emphasized the term named insured? No matter who the pilots are, and no matter who the additional insureds are, the contract for insurance is always solely between the insurance company and the named insured. It is the responsibility of the named insured to make sure all the provisions of the policy are complied with if the named insured is to have coverage after a loss.

Simply, every aircraft insurance policy has certain requirements that must be complied with to trigger coverage after a loss; a few of these conditions include always operating the aircraft within the approved territory, always operating the aircraft for the agreed upon uses, and always having the aircraft be flown by pilots the insurance company has previously agreed may fly the aircraft. If any one of these conditions are not met at the time of an accident, the policy may not respond to an insurance claim—whether or not it's for liability or hull damage. These conditions are firm, they are clearly stated in the insurance contract, and they are not negotiable **after** a loss.

We have found that most of the confusion amongst policyholders surrounds the term named pilot. It is most often the belief that a pilot who is approved and named on a policy also enjoys all the coverages on the policy provided to the named insured, but this is not the case. Any pilot flying an aircraft that is not approved by name or approved by reference to the minimum pilot requirements in the policy (often referred to as an "open pilot warranty") will invalidate the policy in the event of a loss. If a named


"... subrogation is a risk every pilot takes when flying someone else's aircraft."



pilot who is not the named insured on the policy wrecks the aircraft, the named insured will be protected for liability and for physical damage, but the named pilot may not be. In this case, the insurance company would cover the loss and pay the named insured for the hull damages, but then it possibly may attempt to recover its losses from the named pilot; this action is called subrogation. Subrogation is when the named insured's insurance company tries to recover its financial losses from the responsible party. Although it's not a terribly common action for insurance companies to employ in aviation, subrogation is a risk every pilot takes when flying someone else's aircraft. One solution is for the named insured to request from the insurance carrier a "waiver of subrogation" for the benefit of that named pilot, and this must be done in advance of a loss. The other solution is for the named or approved pilot to carry "non-owned" insurance to cover losses to aircraft he or she is flying but does not own.

There are times when people or entities request to be added as an "additional insured" onto an aircraft policy. We see this with hangar leases, air show performances, or other charitable activities. An additional insured simply implies that if the named insured has a loss and those other entities are dragged into the loss by association with the named insured, then the policy would respond with a defense for the additional insureds on the named insured's behalf. The policy has **not** given coverage to the additional insureds for anything other than losses caused by the named insured.

The named insured must make sure that all conditions are complied with to have valid and in-force coverage. Everyone other than the named insured are just parties to the named insured's losses, but the policy isn't there to protect them for their own negligence; it's just there to protect the named insured, even if an approved pilot or additional insured is responsible.

Whenever you fly your aircraft for other than personal use, or pilots other than the named insured fly the aircraft, or you sign lease agreements with insurance requirements, it is vitally important to discuss these situations with your aviation insurance agent and make decisions on how to best protect you while still meeting your obligations. 

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Thursday, November 6 - Saturday, November 8, 2008

Practice/Registration: Wednesday, November 5 - Thursday, November 6

Power: Primary through Unlimited

Location: Sebring Regional Airport (SEF): Sebring, FL

Contest Director: Mike Mays

Phone: 561-734-1955 E-Mail: soaerobatics@aol.com

TEQUILA CUP (Southwest)

Friday, November 7 - Saturday, November 8, 2008

Practice/Registration: Thursday, November 6

Glider Categories: Sportsman through Unlimited

Power: Primary through Unlimited

Location: Marana Northwest Regional Airport (KAVQ): Marana, AZ

Contest Director: Jim Ward

Phone: 603-860-4456

E-Mail: james.roger.ward@gmail.com

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the AWAC 2008 experience

Lorrie Penner

AWAC Volunteer Coordinator

Having attended the 2003 World Aerobatic Championships in Lakeland, Florida, I thought I knew what to expect from AWAC. Although there were similarities, the event had its own flavor and had a smaller family feel to it.

Unlike WAC 2003, the pilots were housed in the same area as the volunteers and officials. It was a very friendly atmosphere with lots of camaraderie.

The most important highlight for me was not having the event delayed because Nancy and I didn't have our volunteers in place... That was our number one goal and we succeeded in our mission. When we first arrived at the event, our roster of volunteers was only half-filled, so we were hoping that some kind souls would show up and volunteer for all the other spots that were still waiting to be filled... *and it happened!* We actually had extra volunteers during two days of the championship!

Second only to accomplishing our goals, I really enjoyed the opening ceremonies. The Parade of Nations was led by local

members of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla. Beautiful native dress and fantastic dance moves preceded the pilots and officials into the arena at the Pendleton Rodeo Grounds.

Another great thing about the event was getting to know, and working with, the organizers who are members of IAC67 (WA chapter) & IAC77 (OR chapter). Special thanks to Bob Higbee, the Contest Director, one of the best guys in our sport! His leadership enabled Nancy and I to accomplish our VC duties easily.

Because we were quite busy with the VC duties, Nancy and I spent little time actually watching the flights. We did manage to watch about half of the unknown flights, which are the best ones to watch anyway...

Overall, it was a wonderful experience and I am very glad to have been a part of it. The AWAC team has already received very high praise from chief judge John Galliard, who said it was one of the most organized and well run championship events he has attended in many years. Way to go Team!

Volunteer Coordinators
Lorrie Penner (left) and
Nancy Wright helped
make AWAC 2008 a
glowing success.



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



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Kelly R. Neil*

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