

SPORT *Aerobatics*

June 2014

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE of the INTERNATIONAL AEROBATIC CLUB

Remembering ...



- **Henry Haigh**
- **Looking Back**
- **Kiev Vignettes**



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Then things started to get interesting with the visit to my apartment by an FBI agent who had been alerted to my presence at the Eastern European offices by one of his fellow agents, who manned a camera in a rented room overlooking the parking lot of one of the two offices.

—Don Berliner

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Henry Haigh's Super Star in 1984—Photo Mike Heuer.

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REGGIE PAULK
COMMENTARY / EDITOR'S LOG

History is a great teacher

Enthusiasm, the thread that binds

A few weeks ago, I was fortunate to receive two boxes filled with bound volumes of *Sport Aerobatics* magazine from Mike Heuer (IAC #4). The treasure trove of issues dating back as far as 1978 has given me a glimpse of an organization facing many of the same issues we face today.

One story I've included in this month's issue is a piece from 1980 written by Mike's late father Bob (IAC #2), who, incidentally, owned the volumes now in my possession. In it, he describes the genesis

tions today. Running through all of this is a common thread. Enthusiasm of, and participation by, members has been the hallmark of the IAC's success over its lifetime.

A case-in-point are the authors of the stories you read in this magazine. Every month for nearly six years, I've been fortunate to receive materials from people who contribute their time and effort putting pen to paper and camera to subject. Each one of them has dedicated precious time to putting their effort into words and photographs in order to enhance the wonderful experience of competition aerobatics. The variety of experience has been astounding, and I want to personally thank each of you who have done so.

You'll notice the cover this month has a special airplane built by Henry Haigh. Mr. Haigh recently passed away, and Mr. Heuer gives us a wonderful account of his life and involvement with the IAC over the years. The photo is from 1984 . . . If you look closely, you might make out Debby Rihn-Harvey's Pitts in there!

I'll soon begin work on the July issue of *Sport Aerobatics*. Soon after that, it'll be off to Oshkosh and camping out in the teardrop camper. It's hard to believe this will be my seventh time at EAA AirVenture—a place filled with wonderful experiences and people. If you are there, stop by the IAC building and say hello. I'll see you there!

IAC

Many people...are
probably unaware that
Paul Poberezny (IAC #1)
played a significant
role in planning the
organization.

and initial formation of the IAC in 1970. Many people, especially newer IAC members, are probably unaware that Paul Poberezny (IAC #1) played a significant role in planning the organization.

As I dive deeper into these volumes, common themes keep popping up—skyrocketing fuel prices; the high cost of aerobatic aircraft; airspace restrictions . . . these were all issues facing the IAC 30 years ago and continue to press for solu-

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



The Bücker Jungmann & Jungmeister

by Bill Meyer

(Reprinted from April 1980 issue of Sport Aerobatics)

After the Treaty of Versailles was signed in 1918 formally ending the Great Hate I, Germany was forbidden, among other things, from building aircraft. A young naval aviator went to Sweden, a neutral country, to continue his flying career as an experimental test pilot for the Swedish navy. His name was Herr Carl Clemens Bücker (pronounced almost like Beer-ker for all you language students.) He also possessed considerable business talents, for in 1921 he established his own aircraft company known as Svenska-Aero that produced some Heinkel designs under license and also some original types. In 1932, at about the time President Von Hindenburg's government was giving way to the party of National Socialism (Nazism), Bücker returned to Germany and set up shop there. In the ensuing year his chief engineer, a Swede named Anders J. Anderson, designed and constructed a new two-seat biplane in less than six months time. The ship was designated the Bu-131A Jungmann (student or young man) and after completion of test flights went into production for the German flying schools association known as the Luftsportverband. This was a secret organization formed at the direct order of Adolf Hitler since by that time he was in the process of defying the Versailles

accords with increasing regularity. The Luftsportverband was for the express purpose of training pilots for future combat. The design evolved as time passed with engines of increasing horsepower being utilized.

Then in 1935 a single-seat version with a 135-hp Hirth HB-6 inline engine was introduced. It was slightly smaller than the Jungmann and was designated the Bu-133A Jungmeister (young master or champion), and like the Bu-131 it had a steel tube fuselage and constant chord wings which were sharply swept. The wings were constructed of wood and fabric, and the upper/lower panels were interchangeable. Both aircraft were stressed to an ultimate load factor of 12g's while being kept as light as possible for maximum maneuverability for the unlimited aerobatics of the day.

Although the aircraft were designed nearly half a century ago now, some of the engineering features are to this day so clever as to be unequaled in modern aircraft [of 1980], and if incorporated into present aerobatic designs would undoubtedly bring about improvements in handling characteristics. The Jungmeister subsequently was engined with a Siemens Halske Bravo, a seven-cylinder radial of 150 hp, then finally 160 hp. Its climb performance was an improvement over the Bu-131.

The jury is still out for this writer on snap capability, although the Bu-133 is somewhat easier to stop exactly on point. Both are incredibly nimble, and one ride will spoil you forever. The Bu-131 seems to roll slightly faster, owing to its larger ailerons, but g-loads in the 133 seem almost nonexistent, even to +6g's and -4g's.

The Jungmann and in particular the Jungmeister have a very colorful history in the early days of competitive aerobatics as they were the winners of more world-class contests than anything even today. The people who flew them were of nobility in their native lands, and accounts of their exhibitions truly excite the imagination. They certainly were every bit as colorful as their counterparts here. There is a book by the name of Die Bückers [now out of print—ed.], giving us a glimpse of their exploits. If any of their sequences still exist, it should make for some interesting new freestyle or air show routines.

Many thanks to Count von Meyer for this article. Bill is truly an aerobatic connoisseur; he owns a Bu-131 Jungmann, Bu-133 Jungmeister, and not to mention a super clean Pitts S-1S. Bill was last seen at the airport trying to figure out which of his lovely beauties he was going to fly. Must be rough, Bill.

IAC



Remembering Henry Haigh

A champion in IAC

BY MIKE HEUER
IAC 4

The aerobatic world lost one of its greats in May with the death of Henry Haigh. Henry was a member of the “greatest generation” and one of the finest aerobatic pilots of all time.

My first contact with Henry Haigh was just after the IAC was founded in early 1970. In those first months, the membership applications were rolling into EAA headquarters in Hales Corners, Wisconsin, by the dozens as there was an enormous amount of pent-up interest in aerobatics and the IAC offered something new—an organization devoted to “grassroots” aerobatics. Once EAA was finished with those pieces of paper, they were forwarded to the Heuer home in Maple Park, Illinois, where we kept them on file and could see who was joining.

It was quite a surprise when we received Henry’s membership application. People were asked to fill in the aircraft types they owned, and on his, he listed a Bücker Jungmann, a

Pitts S-1S, and a Zlin 526F. We didn’t know very many people at the time who had such a large stable of aerobatic airplanes—all great machines as well. Though Henry lived in the Midwest and the aerobatic community was a very small one, we had not heard of him before and were delighted to see someone who had this dedication and interest come on-board the IAC.

My first personal contact with Henry was at the IAC Championships in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, in 1970. I was flying Advanced in a Pitts S-1S, and Henry showed up to fly Advanced in his Zlin. It was the first time I had seen one of these beautiful Czech aircraft fly, though we had heard about them and they were flown by many competition pilots in the World Aerobatic Championships. Ultimately, I took first place that year, Bill Thomas was second in a Jungmeister, and Henry was third in his Zlin. Both Bill and Henry later

went on to become U.S. Team pilots.

Henry was born in Michigan in 1924 and at the time of his death was 89 years old. What a life! During World War II, he enlisted as a cadet in the U.S. Army Air Forces and was trained on the B-24 at first but later transitioned to the B-29 after the war in Europe came to an end in May 1945. He never made it into combat as the war with Japan ended a few months later. After the war, he went into business, which consumed his time for most of his life, but never gave up flying. His first aerobatic flights in the civilian world were in a Ryan PT-22 he purchased. He was also an early member of EAA, and when its own aerobatic division was formed and the IAC announced it was taking membership applications, he joined and became IAC member 114.

It wasn’t long after joining the IAC and flying Advanced that he made the move up to Unlimited in



1976 U.S. Aerobatic Team. Standing (left to right): Don Taylor, Bill Thomas, Leo Loudenslager, Bob Davis, Betty Everest, Henry Haigh, Clint McHenry, and Alan Bush (note: pilots are in dark blazers). Sitting (left to right, ground support crew): Terry Tubb, Dr. Champe Poole, Casey Kay, and Bob Carmichael.

his Pitts S-1S. There was no World Aerobatic Championships in 1974, and he qualified for the U.S. Team in 1976 and accompanied fellow team pilots Clint McHenry, Leo Loudenslager, Bill Thomas, Bob Davis, and Betty Everest (later Stewart) to Kiev, Ukraine, USSR, that year. WAC 1976 was probably one of the most trying, difficult, and discouraging experiences in the half-century history of world aerobatics for the Americans, as the trip into the USSR was difficult and the contest marked by rampant bias and attempts by the Soviets to skew the results in their favor. Not surprisingly, a Soviet pilot won the competition. Though it was his first time out, Henry was the highest-placing American at the WAC that year, coming in 13th place.

Despite the problems and obstacles, the U.S. Team remained undeterred and determined, and Henry and his colleagues returned to the WAC two years later despite the experiences in the USSR. CIVA reformed its rules and introduced the Tarasov-Bauer system for scoring and which was the precursor to the Fair Play System (FPS) used today in world competition and the U.S. Nationals.

A strong supporter of IAC regional competitions, Henry went on to fly in more than 100 IAC contests in the United States. In all, he won first place at 60 of these contests. This provided a strong base of ex-

perience for his flights on the world scene, and he was a master. Anyone who ever saw Henry Haigh fly in a strong wind marveled at his ability to handle it and remain in the box. He always said the keys to winning a contest were, “No zeros, no outs.” This advice remains valid today.

By the time he ended his aerobatic competition career in 1990, he had flown in eight World Aerobatic Championships. He later transitioned to his Super Star monoplane and in his last competition in Switzerland in 1990, flew an airplane of his own design, the Ratsrepus—a monoplane powered by a six-cylinder Lycoming.

Henry hit his peak in 1988 at the World Aerobatic Championships in Red Deer, Alberta, Canada, and took home the Aresti Cup and title of World Aerobatic Champion, flying the Super Star. His flying was precise, steady, and almost free of error. He deserved the top prize. By 1990, he had accumulated five gold, seven silver, and five bronze medals. What was also amazing about his performance at the WAC in 1998 was the fact that he was 64 years old when he won the world title. This was back in a time when airline pilots were required to retire at age 60—a fact that always amused him.

Something else deserves mention and should be appreciated by members today. When the IAC was

first founded in 1970 and in the early years of competition, there were no “off the shelf” American-manufactured Unlimited aircraft available until Curtis Pitts began a limited production of his S-1S at his home base in Homestead, Florida. Pilots built their own or modified existing types, such as the de Havilland Chipmunk or various antique aircraft. In order to succeed in competition, most pilots had to be pretty handy mechanics and builders as well. Henry was one of these. He was not afraid to get his hands dirty, and the Pitts, Super Star, and Ratsrepus he flew in competition were modified, built, and improved in his own shop during the winter time. The famous Haigh tail wheel was also his invention. A very small tail wheel using a tubular spring, it was lockable rather than steerable, and those who mounted it on their airplanes always gave it rave reviews for improving the handling of the Pitts on landing.

In addition to being part of the greatest generation—and an early member of the IAC—Henry was someone I would call the “John Wayne of aerobatics.” He was tall, ruggedly handsome with a large, firm jaw, strong handshake, self-confidence, and with loyal friends and family. The IAC and aerobatics are better for him having played such an important part. **IAC**

Looking Back

Getting started

BY BOB HEUER
FIRST IAC PRESIDENT, IAC 2

(Reprinted from the August 1980 issue of Sport Aerobatics magazine.)

It seems like such a short time ago that Jim Dees, Don Taylor, Jim Lacey, my son, Mike, and I were sitting around my dining room table in Maple Park, Illinois, planning the future of a very young aerobatic club. It was a future that was not at all a certain one. In early 1970, we only had a handful of members and \$100 in the bank that was lent to us by the EAA. But

we were chock-full of ideas and anxious to implement them.

Basically, our goal was to form an organization using the many lessons EAA had learned over the years. Namely, make it open to everyone . . . all who had an interest in aerobatics were welcomed. Also, make it an effective organization at the local level, thus the chapters were formed. Provide fair and equitable contest rules that encourage competition at all levels, not just the top. Get a good publication

going that provided the vital information everyone needed. You must remember that in the late 1960s, the number of people competing and doing outside maneuvers was pretty small...we wanted to see that expand, safely and fairly. Lastly, we wanted an organization that was run fairly and democratically. Everyone should have a voice. All board of directors meetings would be open to all members, and the club would be truly controlled by its membership. Overall, I think



Bill Dodd, the man who took the first step toward getting an aerobatic division of EAA started as far back as 1966.



Bob Heuer, founder and first president of IAC.

we accomplished those objectives in the early years.

EAA's interest in aerobatics dates back to the early days of the organization. Prominent IACers like Duane and Marion Cole were very active in the early days of EAA, and both were subsequently active in the aerobatic division. Bill Dodd of Prairie View, Illinois, a prominent air

show and competition pilot in the Midwest in the 1960s, was the man who took the first step, however, in getting something organized. Bill very much wanted to see an EAA aerobatic contest in conjunction with the annual fly-in at Rockford, Illinois, and communicated his desires to Paul Poberezny. Paul subsequently made Bill the chairman of

the EAA precision flying division, as it was then called, in 1966. Our first EAA contest was held at Harvard, Illinois, that year, which was just to the northeast of Rockford. Beyond that, the division really had no activities, no membership cards, no officers. But the need for a more formal organization became more and more evident each year.



L. Paul Soucy, the first of those consulted in 1970 before the first IAC Rule Book was printed.



Verne Jobst, left, presents Duane and Marion Cole with IAC Special Award for serving ably as IAC Directors.

Subsequent EAA contests were held at Harvard in 1967, 1968, and 1969. Jim Morgan, a longtime family friend and TWA pilot, took over the reins of the division the last couple of years. Jim lived in nearby Crystal Lake and was a real devotee of the sport. It was in those years that the division became known as the EAA aerobatic division. Jim's enthusiasm was infectious, so we became more interested and involved. By late 1969, my sons and I were flying the Pitts we had completed in May that year, N442X, and we were very interested in competition. But we saw many areas lacking and decided to do something about it.

In late 1969, our original group and I approached Paul Poberezny to really get things moving. He agreed and gave us carte blanche to do what needed to be done. There was no limit. So we set to work. We incorporated IAC in the state of Wisconsin in January 1970. Fritz Reidenbach, an attorney in Milwaukee, helped us write the original bylaws, which were fashioned after EAA's own.

The biggest project, though, was the first rulebook, and our committee worked solid over the holidays in 1969 and 1970 to get it done. Then my son, Mike, home from college on Christmas break, did the typing, drawings, and rewrites to make it "camera ready" for the printer. But before going to print, I decided that consultations with some of the people I respected most in the sport were in order, to get their comments on our rules. Thus, our trip in early 1970 around the country to visit these people took place. So on January 2, 1970, my sons Mark and Mike and I took off in our Beech Bonanza toward the south. Our first stop was in Louisville, Kentucky, to visit L. Paul Soucy. Paul and Tom Poberezny were also there along with Paul's son, Gene. We spent about a half day going over the new rules. Later we flew to Atlanta, Georgia, to meet with Frank Morgan, later president of IAC Chapter 3, and then onto Okeechobee, Florida, where we met with Bill Dodd and Cotton Hodges. We subsequently flew to New Orleans to meet with Roscoe Morton

and Bill Shepherd; Monroe, Louisiana, to meet with Marion Cole; Rancho, Texas, to meet with Frank Price; and lastly to Kansas City to meet with Dale Drummond. That trip was most worthwhile and ended on January 13, 1970. From there it was to the printer's for a personal visit to get our rulebook printed. It came out in the spring. Our first IAC-sanctioned contest was held at the Chicago-Hammon airport just south of Chicago, Illinois.

It was also in that year that EAA decided to move its operation to Oshkosh, Wisconsin, and it was Paul's suggestion that nearby Fond du Lac might make a good location for the aerobatic division's annual contest. We agreed. IAC named Duane Cole to be our first contest chairman. Forty-one contestants ultimately competed that year, and it went well. It is interesting to note that in the ensuing years, even though the contest has gotten more sophisticated and larger (and more expensive), it has not lost its essential "small town" and fun flavor.



Roscoe Morton, respected in the sport, with his wife at FDL '77.

I left office in August 1973 and turned the reins of the IAC over to the capable and enthusiastic Verne Jobst. I am proud of the record we established in those early years. The first issues of *Sport Aerobatics*, also ably handled by Verne Jobst, the foundation of the achievement awards program, formation of many chapters, the expansion in the contest schedule, and the establishment of a good set of rules and bylaws were the keystones. Without that strong, original foundation, and all the people who helped so much in the beginning, we would not have an IAC as we know it today.

It wasn't easy to be a "pioneer" in aerobatics in those days. There was virtually no information available on the subject then, and you were really on your own. My special thanks are extended to Duane and Marion Cole who inspired me in the early '50s with the famous Cole Brothers Air Show. I'll never forget their early flying. Also, Duane and Marion were instrumental in getting competition aerobatics going again here in the United States. Duane with the Nationals in Reno, and Marion with his contest in Monroe, Louisiana, one of the first regionals.

My best wishes to all of the IAC officers, directors, and members who have been supporters and friends over the years.

IAC

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MEMBERSHIP – MAKING IT HAPPEN IN 2014!!

By Doug McConnell, Chair of Membership
President Emeritus
IAC 862

Well, thank goodness WINTER IS BEHIND US . . . YEAH! That was one for the books! The wonderful thing, now, is that we can get back into flying and back into aerobatic sync—mind, body, and soul...and aircraft!

As we enjoy this fresh flying season, we also hopefully embrace generally better times. The prolonged recession has had an impact on all of us, on flying, and on the IAC membership as a whole. So it is really great to think about the positives that lie ahead this summer—renewed activities, fly-ins, contests, judges schools, good weather, aerobatic lessons, new friends, chapter events, and another great AirVenture . . . hope you can make it!

You, as an IAC member and reader of Sport Aerobatics magazine, are aware that the IAC total membership has declined during the past 15 years from a high of 6,200 members to the current 3,650 (Don't graph it; it will scare you!). But IAC's recent focus on

membership marketing initiatives has really helped, and it is essential that we, together, turn this membership trend around! We owe it to ourselves and to the next generation of "crazies" to preserve a vibrant and healthy organization. And when we say "we," we mean "YOU!" Yes, in 2014 the IAC is continuing to focus on membership marketing, but we also must focus on current members (YOU) as our front-line sales team... just like Uncle Sam says, "We Need You!" We must all work together with our 3,000-plus sets of friends and acquaintances and skills. Working together we can advance and expand the IAC and the sport of recreational aerobatics. Just think, if we each brought just one new member into the IAC, the organization would instantly double in size, nearly back to its record high of 6,200 members!

As the title above states, we come in all shapes, sizes, types, and personalities. We bring a full spectrum

of talents and experiences and interests. IAC members come with a common trait, though: an abiding love for flight, and in particular, aerobatic flight. Together we are so blessed to have the IAC where we can pursue our love for aerobatics and enjoy the camaraderie of other airplane-crazies just like us!

Think about this, there are a few thousand IAC members, but there are tens of thousands of other crazies like us who take aerobatic lessons, own aerobatic aircraft, love air shows, attend special aviation events, and learn as much as they can about sport aerobatics. So who are they and how can we throw a net around them? Generally speaking, they are the people we/you already know!

The challenge for all of us is to focus on the need to get our aviation-minded friends and acquaintances involved with the IAC!

The IAC is doing its part toward finding, contacting, and inviting aer-

obatic-minded enthusiasts to join the organization. Just so you know, this includes:

- Offering a 50 percent discount on first-time membership (six months free).
- Rewarding members who “get a member” with a personal incentive benefit/reward.
- Enhancing our “welcome” procedures with new members to make them comfortable and introduced to local members/chapters.
- Placing advertising in selected publications to create IAC awareness and to provide an avenue for sign-up.
- Coordinating with flight schools, independent instructors, and acro sales outlets to promote IAC membership.
- Promoting/expanding the intercollegiate competition program.
- Sending direct-mail solicitations to owners of aerobatic-capable aircraft.
- Exploring strategic alliances for possible affiliation benefits that could promote organizational growth.
- Taking full advantage of Air-Venture in Oshkosh with daily forums, aircraft displays, canvassing of visiting aircraft, special members headquarters, registration volunteers, and new-member promotions.
- Sending direct-mail solicitations to recent past members of the IAC.
- Providing a most educational and entertaining monthly magazine—*Sport Aerobatics*, a really positive asset!
- Providing the colorful and professional monthly e-newsletter *In the Loop*. (If we don't have your e-mail address, please send it to us ASAP! You don't want to miss this!)
- Presenting a modern, fully functional website (www.IAC.org) with a multitude of helpful programs, educational facilities, forums, schedules, and references. (Check

it out; it was totally revamped and enhanced in the past year!)

- Featuring 32 U.S. regional chapters located throughout the country (see Chapter List on our website) and a sizable international membership extending to 22 countries.
- Offering aircraft insurance with all the special coverage required for recreational aerobatics, competition and practice, air show performances, flight schools, and more.
- Scheduling of fully sanctioned regional and national competitions and practice sessions.

As was mentioned in a similar report to you last year, we are all in this together and cannot wait for headquarters to take care of the membership growth priority, because they can't do it without you, our 3,600-plus partners with many thousands more friends and acquaintances. As you can see from the list of pro-active initiatives above, IAC headquarters is doing all it can to find potential new members, but there is a fully manned battleship out there positioned to take decisive action . . . that being the current membership operating from hundreds of airports and organizations in many countries.

Let me provoke your creativity and thinking with the following checklist:

- ✓ Have you called a new member in your area to welcome them and invite them to a chapter meeting/event?*
- ✓ Have you called a non-renewing member to urge them to remain with the IAC?*
- ✓ Have you called an inactive member to see how they are and to encourage their participation in chapter activities?
- ✓ Have you placed an IAC poster on bulletin boards at your local airport?
- ✓ Have you approached an aerobatic owner at the gas pump to suggest IAC membership? (There are IAC

membership brochures available for that purpose; your chapter should have some in stock.)

- ✓ Have you placed an IAC membership brochure on parked aircraft? Or on hangar doors?
- ✓ Have you arranged to present a talk at a local EAA chapter meeting? They are great targets for membership because they already are paying the EAA dues, so the IAC add-on is small.
- ✓ Have you approached the gas attendants, shop mechanics, and flight instructors with a pitch for IAC membership? Remember, 50 percent discount on all new memberships!

Don't be timid. You represent a mature and successful organization that has a lot to offer—a commitment and responsibility to safety and excellence in every aspect of our sport, and a 40-plus year history with the EAA.

IAC

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like Patty Wagstaff
as shown here
with her
Extra 300S!!



Super Decathlon



Pitts Model 12



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*Every IAC chapter receives a current list of new members and renewal-delinquent members every month so that personal contact can be made.

KIEV

Vignettes

38 years later

BY DON BERLINER
EAA 5654

PHOTOS RICHARD HOOD AND ANDREW RIGHT

I was invited to be on the U.S. Team going to the World Aerobatic Championships (WAC) '76 in Kiev, Ukraine, USSR, for two reasons: I had been a full-time professional writer for most of my adult life, and I was an experienced IAC regional judge who had already attended WACs in England and France, and had been on assignments behind the old Iron Curtain. The trip turned out to be even

more interesting than I expected, with the non-aerobatic part being the more interesting. I was on the team to observe and then write about the expected misbehavior of the Soviet contest officials, but the 2,500-mile drive through communist Eastern Europe was absolutely fascinating, and my memories of it have remained vivid even after 38 years. When I got home I wrote articles for *Sport Aerobatics* and a couple of newsstand magazines. But until now, I had been unable

to find an editor interested in the other part of the trip.

FBI AND VISAS

My first duty as part of the 1976 U.S. Aerobatic Team was to get visas for all 18 team members, as I was the only one living in the Washington, D.C., area, where the foreign visa offices reside. After getting everyone's passports, visa applications, and photos, I took them to the Czech visa office, got the needed transit visa stamps in





Re-assembling the airplane in the spacious Lufthansa maintenance hangar at Frankfurt, West Germany, prior to heading into uncharted territory.

the passports, and then repeated the process at the Soviet visa office. There were no hitches and everything happened on schedule, much to my surprise.

Then things started to get interesting with the visit to my apartment by an FBI agent who had been alerted to my presence at the Eastern European offices by one of his fellow agents, who manned a camera in a rented room overlooking the parking lot of one of the two offices. I explained my rea-

son for being there, which he accepted, and he then asked me to file a report on anything of interest I saw or heard while in Czechoslovakia and Ukraine. Having read of American correspondents being similarly invited, I made it clear I was a reporter, not a spy. He explained he was not compiling a file about me, but I later learned that someone had other ideas. I much later got a copy of my FBI file, less thousands of words that had been blacked out.

DIXIELAND BAND

Following the flight from JFK to Frankfurt, the training session at Peine, West Germany, and the drive to and through the Czech border, we arrived at our first stop east of the Iron Curtain. We got into Prague shortly after noon, as we had allowed for more than the minimum time to untangle the border red tape. We got settled and set out to find a restaurant, which turned out to be a short walk away. It was stark. No decorations, just



The drive to Kiev wasn't always pleasant.



The latest in farm equipment.



This was shot at a railroad crossing, which we later learned was illegal. But who could read the signs?

tables and chairs and a few diners who were so quiet they could have passed for furniture.

We ordered, and as we waited a few musicians arrived and set up on a raised platform at the back, or maybe it was the front. In no time, we were engulfed in some of the best Dixieland jazz anyone had heard. We responded enthusiastically, and the band responded to our reactions. The Czech couple sat there expressionless, having learned to keep their feelings locked up during years of Nazi occupation and then Soviet domination. It was our first real contact with the “human” side of communism.

BY ST. THOMAS

Later in the day, we got in touch with Jiri Kobrie, former Czech aerobic champion and friend from previous world championships. He took us to a basement drinking spot and international gathering place called By St. Thomas, as it was next door to the old church of the same name. It was known for “black beer,” which turned out to be quite good very dark lager. As we enjoyed ourselves and were recognized by our U.S. team jackets, two young men entered with musical instrument cases.

From these emerged a guitar and a banjo, both made with expert craftsmanship by what turned out to be very good bluegrass musicians. After they had played a few tunes, the manager stopped them, as they were not on the day's official schedule (nor was anything else, as far as we could tell). Despite (or perhaps because of) the audience's enthusiasm for their music) they replaced their instruments and came over to see us. It turned out that between them they knew just three words of English: “Flatt and Scruggs.” If you aren't familiar, Flat and Scruggs is one of the best-known bluegrass musical groups. Our second meeting with the “glories” of communism.

LITTLE WHITE CAR

The next morning we continued our drive eastward, watching the colors of everything becoming increasingly gray. The loud speakers atop tall poles at the edge of the road were later explained: They broadcast martial music and political speeches. Elevator music no longer seemed quite so annoying.

At last we were at the border with Ukraine, meaning the intimidating Soviet Union. As we waited and worried in a short, but very slow, line for immigration and customs procedures to begin, our own translator (a stock broker from Fort Lauderdale who grew up in a Russian-speaking home) got out of our Volkswagen seven-passenger bus and spoke with a machine gun-toting teenage guard. Joe returned, shaking his head. The youngster had told him not only that he wished our team luck in the coming championships, but hoped we would win! Was he expressing dissatisfaction with life in the glorious People's Republic, or simply carrying out his orders of friendliness to an extreme? We never learned.

EASTWARD, HO!

While we were driving across Czechoslovakia, our pilots were flying their amateur-built, single-seat biplanes and joining up with teams from France, Italy, and elsewhere for the entry into Soviet airspace, where nary an amateur-built airplane had flown. Other teams joined the loose formation until more than 20 airplanes of varying sizes, shapes, and colors were finally picked up by a hefty, slow, cumbersome Antonov biplane that served as their official Red Air Force escort. They had already penetrated Soviet airspace to the tune of 200 miles, but as their mission was peaceful, their hosts no doubt suspected that most of them probably weren't spies.

One American pilot—an industrialist by profession—saw a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity,

dropped down to 50 feet altitude, and proceeded to inspect farms at close range. He reported that of 10 checked, none had a paved road access, and only half had power lines nearby. The few tractors he saw had obviously not moved from their parking positions in months. This fit with the writer's observation that farming methods dated back to the 19th century: weeds being pulled by hand and wagons pulled by horses.

The man chosen to
handle the money and
pay for gas, landing
fees, hotel rooms, and
meals on their trip was
co-owner of a chain of
supermarkets inher-
ited from his father.
This, however, had not
prepared him for
international finance.

HOW TO SPEND MONEY ECONOMICALLY

The U.S. Team's business manager, "Casey" Kay, was an airline pilot, not a financier, so I agreed to help him out if he got into a bind, as I had once been an accountant. The first and only cry for help came soon after we met our pilots who had just arrived at Chaika Airfield from Germany. The man chosen to handle the money and pay for gas, land-

ing fees, hotel rooms, and meals on their trip was co-owner of a chain of supermarkets inherited from his father. This, however, had not prepared him for international finance. At a night stop in Czechoslovakia, he had been approached by an illegal currency trader outside the hotel and talked into buying money at far below the official price.

As a result, he ended the trip with more money than he had started out with! What to do? I recalled an experience I had in my brief business career and suggested the extra money be reported to the IRS as "income from illegal foreign currency transaction." This sounded like an invitation to prison, but I assured Casey it was okay, as it didn't involve the U.S. in any official way. In the several decades that have passed, none of us has heard a single cell door clang.

OPENING DAY AIR DISPLAY

While the air show, heavily publicized to draw a crowd aimed at impressing the visiting teams, began conventionally and included world championship-caliber aerobatics by the U.S. Team's teenage mechanic, the highlight for those of us who had seen scores of American air shows, was several Antonov An-2s towing soldiers at the end of very long ropes! As landing with them might have proven uncomfortable, each was allowed to complete his part in the display via parachute. The most memorable part of the show was the sound of the announcer whose booming, dramatic voice would not have been out of place if he had been announcing the biblical parting of the Red Sea.

A ROOM IN THE HOTEL UKRAINA

All the teams were put up in the same hotel, perhaps so the KGB could conveniently keep an eye on us. My room was basic but reasonably comfortable, with a table and



Our plush team headquarters on Chaika Airfield. The sign says "USA" in Cyrillic letters.



Pilots and wives sitting around when nothing much was happening.



Morning briefing. One day there was a movie camera crew in action. When they were shooting, the briefing had to stop as the camera made so much noise no one could hear the briefer.

chair, wide bed and bathtub, though on my return from the airfield one day, the latter had been left with the water running and the plug out and was full of dark green water.

Even more discomfoting was trying to leave after the first night's sleep and finding I had been locked in. A few hard knocks on the door brought one of the floor ladies, who explained (as best I could interpret her frantic motions and unintelligible orders) all residents are supposed to lock themselves in. When checking it the previous night while I slept, she found it unlocked, took the key that was on my table, and locked it from the outside. It was all too easy to imagine a fire during the night, the inability to escape through the doorway, and the discovery that there was no fire escape.

A BUG IN THE PHONE

On the way to Kiev, we discussed what we might encounter in the way of being spied upon. As none of us had ever been employed by the federal government (aside from brief tours in the military), we had no secrets to reveal, and so agreed that we wouldn't worry about people surreptitiously poking their noses into our business. For my part, I decided to search for bugs in my hotel room, the goal being taking at least one home as a souvenir. The first step was to look into the telephone, and so I began to take mine apart, only then realizing I didn't know what a Soviet bug, or anyone else's bug, looked like. By then, however, the phone was in pieces, and resisted all efforts to reassemble it. It could hardly have gone unnoticed, but no one ever said anything, which was kind of disappointing.

You Are Cordially Invited . . . I was shown on the entry forms as the U.S. Team's assistant something-or-other, but was there to observe the expected misbehavior of the Soviet contest officials. As I didn't want to be in the position of

an unregistered journalist, someone the Soviets feared greatly, I reported to the press center on my first day at Chaika Airfield, only to discover that they had known about me all along. Maybe I wasn't quite as smart as I thought.

After registering, I was the recipient of a formal invitation to a press conference, presented by the press director, who, I later learned, was assumed to be a KGB colonel. I accepted the rather crudely engraved invitation and soon discovered that the press conference had been held the previous day. Clearly, the efficiency of a massive dictatorship could be impressive in some ways and not in others.

YOUNG PEOPLE AND CAPITALISM

All the teams ate in one large hotel dining room, with assigned tables decorated with their country's flag, another effort on the part of someone to make it easier to keep an eye on us. The first evening, two of us were the last to finish at our table, as we had been table-hopping to greet old friends. We were suddenly joined by three young locals: a woman in her mid-20s, her young friend, and her still younger brother, who spoke good English and was there to translate. Their goal was to buy records and clothes in a brazen display of pure capitalism, something one would think might attract the disapproval of anyone spying on us.

As neither of us had brought along anything to sell, the older girl suggested we go to the Intourist Hotel, which had been built solely for visitors from the West. Locals were forbidden by law from entering the hotel, but our new friends casually ignored this. We took a modern elevator up to a fair imitation of a hotel bar, which was in the "dollar bar" category, as patrons could spend any type of money except Russian rubles. The boy seemed fairly outspoken, so I asked him why they were will-

ing to pay what for them was a lot of money (e.g., \$50 for a worn-out pair of blue jeans).

He responded emotionally, "Because they're modern! We have nothing that's modern!" That, along with other remarks he made, convinced me that his generation had little if any interest in communist dogma or the continuing worship of everything related to their winning the "Great Patriotic War," which is known elsewhere as World War II. I couldn't help but wonder how great an impact they would have in their country's government and economy, once the old men died off.

SAY "CHEESE!"

One of our pilots, once he had heard descriptions of our fascinating drive from West Germany to the Ukraine, decided he wanted to join us for the return trip, and let one of our mechanics fly his airplane back. This required a change in his visas, and that required more visa photos. I drove our VW bus to a photo studio, with our beloved guide, Andy, providing directions. We found the place, walked in, and could see no one who looked like he belonged there.

A man sleeping on a couch turned out to be the photographer and ushered us into the large studio, where he parked our pilot on a chair while he set up the large wooden pinhole camera. This was an ancient device that few of us had ever heard of, let alone seen. He told his subject to hold perfectly still for 60 seconds while the shutter was open. Like the many farms we had driven past, this was 19th century technology . . . but we had to admit that it worked. The visa photos we picked up a couple of days later were more than sufficient.

CONVERSATIONS

Once we realized that most young people had a working knowledge of English, thanks to several years of required study,

we jumped at the opportunity to talk to some of them. Sasha Savchuk was a translator of English language aviation magazines into Russian, and so had an opportunity denied most Ukrainians to learn about the West. As he and I were both photographers, we had a common interest that opened a door to honest conversation.

We had an interest in each other's camera, so we briefly swapped them, at which I point I almost dropped his, as it was so much heavier, being built from less sophisticated materials. Sasha mentioned that he saw a lot of news clips from America, always negative views of American life, such as terrible traffic jams on Los Angeles freeways. Then he added, "But all we see is all those beautiful new cars! We have learned to read between the lines, as you can't believe the lines."

He also said that his main hobby was building plastic models of military vehicles, and as all that were available were Russian Army vehicles, he had built most of those. He asked if I could send him kits of other countries' tanks and such, and he would send me things of equal value, so he wouldn't feel like a charity case. His first request was for a kit of a World War II Jeep, as his father "had driven one and was in love with it." We exchanged kits and Ukrainian folk art for a couple of years, and then I decided to test the ability of the postal censors to detect a little harmless trickery.

One of the latest kits was of the Soviet Air Force MiG-25, in which Victor Bilenko had defected to Japan. I bought a kit, repackaged it in the box for a similar-looking American fighter, removed those parts of the instructions that mentioned the defection, and sent it to Sasha without letting him know it was on the way. Not long afterward, I got a letter from him saying he had built the Bilenko MiG and gave it the place of honor on his bookcase. We had won a minor victory.



The officiating was so biased that sometimes all you could do was watch and wonder.

Another interesting person was Yuri, an assistant in the press headquarters and a graduate student. He explained that his was a special way of life, his father being the No. 2 man in the communist party in the third-largest city. "We have about all that one can expect: a large apartment, a nice car, and a color TV. What I really want to do is to go to America!" I commiserated with him saying, "But things are certainly getting better. Years ago, we could

not have stood here and talked like this." He agreed, adding, "But no matter if the bars are made of gold, it's still a cage!" How sad to feel that way about your own country.

AUSSIE PARTYING

If the contest organizers won't entertain you, you entertain yourselves. One evening, the Australian Team threw a party to celebrate their climbing all the way up to 11th place. To those from Austra-

lia this was apparently all that was needed to get dozens of people to cram into a small hotel room. That, and lots of bottles of cheap Ukrainian champagne. As the booze flowed, Andy, our guide, interpreter, and now friend, found a guitar and began to play songs typical of all the countries represented in the room.

For reasons I seem to have forgotten, he launched into "Hava Nagila," even though there were no Israeli pilots flying. I got up and merged into the circle dance. On one side of me was a West German, and on the other, an East German . . . both dancing better than I, even though I had learned it as a youngster at summer camp. So much had changed in Germany, and for the better. Another good sign among the many disappointing ones.

VOLLEYBALL, ANYONE?

World Aerobic Championships offer some of the finest flying to be seen anywhere, but they are slow and, from an uninvolved spectator's viewpoint, pretty boring. As it can be as much as two days between a pilot's flights, such events



The World Volleyball Championships . . . almost.

can be dull for the participants, as well. To fill the empty gaps, the organizers should provide some recreational facilities, something that escaped the Soviets' attention. So, it was up to the team members to do it on their own, something that the mass-oriented communists didn't seem to understand. A few of us from the U.S. Team hit upon the idea of jerry-building a volleyball court from bits and pieces lying around.

It wasn't pretty, but it worked, and we proceeded to have some fun. As none of us was a true volleyball player, we clowned around, hitting balls far out of bounds and being cheered for it. Two of the Soviet women pilots watched, obviously baffled, as they had been taught that you play sports to win. Seeing us cheer for play that would have made them embarrassed, they whispered to each other and watched some more. Finally, they caught on to the idea of playing a sport for fun, and joined in. One of them served a ball straight up and had to move aside to keep it from landing on her head. The other rushed over and clapped her on the back, and we all cheered. Not for the sport, but for international friendship. It was the most encouraging experience on the entire trip.

ICE CREAM, GET YER ICE CREAM HERE!

One afternoon it got almost hot, so I took orders for ice cream and walked over to a shaded area in front of the press headquarters where a babushka was selling ice cream novelties from her ancient and wobbly bridge table. I bought a selection of cups and bars and then offered her two one-ruble notes. She pushed her forearm across the coin-laden table, gathered them up and handed them to me for change. I put them in an otherwise empty pocket, distributed the goodies to team members, and began to count the coins. The change for two rubles amounted to more



This young lady stood by the side of the road all day long, tending her family's precious pair of cows.

than two rubles. A lesson in communist economics. She obviously didn't have to show a profit or even account for anything. Hmm . . . I wonder if she works for the local Toyota dealership?

JUST A COUPLE OF LITTLE STAMPS

When you go to a place as exotic as the USSR, you have to send postcards, especially when you are descended from grandparents who once lived there. Each morning I visited the tiny office off the main lobby of the hotel where a nice lady sold postage stamps. I handed her three completed postcards, she calculated the money I owed her on an abacus, and showed me the total. Each day the amount due was different, though everything else had been the same. I was reminded of one of the definitions of insanity: doing exactly the same thing repeatedly and expecting different results. The entire system was nuts!

GUMA, GUMA!

As we drove from the Czech border to Kiev, we kept seeing youngsters by the side of the road pointing toward their mouths and crying, "Guma! Guma!" As we had heard that most popular substance was especially craved by young people and wasn't pro-

duced in their country, we figured the kids were begging for it, having spotted a foreign vehicle. We had brought along a limited amount, which we needed during the competition. After it was over and we headed home, we were pulled over by a traffic cop in Kiev and had visions of hours wasted in the police station while someone tried to figure out what to do with us. As it turned out, the cop merely was hustling us for a pack or two of Wrigley's spearmint gum, and so should have been happy with most of our original carton that hadn't been doled out.

A VILLAGE GROCERY

Nothing we saw epitomized the abject failure of the entire Soviet system as much as the small town grocery we stopped by to pick up stuff to nosh on during the trip. After learning it was the sole grocery for the town, we were amazed not by what we saw, but by what we didn't see. There was no fresh meat, no fresh vegetables, no fresh fruit, even though we were in the middle of farm country. There was a single small wedge of unappetizing cheese, and some canned goods whose thick layer of dust suggested even the locals weren't interested. But the bakery section was another matter: all shapes and sizes and



Soviets sure knew how to build memorable detours. Driving over 5 mph risked wrecking our vehicles.



Heading westward toward home out of Kosice, Czechoslovakia, on the first decent road we'd seen in weeks.

textures of breads. We bought a variety, and every one was delicious. For a few hours, this was great. But imagine it as a regular diet. Fortunately, most farms had well-tended gardens, where the stolen seeds and fertilizer ended up and satisfied the farmers' needs that the economic system ignored.

A BLACK SEDAN

On the way to Kiev, we were led by a tiny white car carrying a KGB agent, our assigned interpreter and soon-to-be-friend Andrus "Andy" Brodi, and another guy

whose function wasn't known. They found filling stations that would have remained hidden if not for their knowledge of the system and restaurants that were, under the circumstances, quite acceptable.

Since we were relieved of the need to navigate, we soon got bored. In one small town, they pulled to the side and parked, signaling that all three of them needed cigarettes. As none of us smoked, we decided to have some fun with them, driving past and cheerfully waving "Goodbye!" This

produced panic which over-rode their nicotine craving; they jumped back into their little car and came tearing after us.

As we were headed into the USSR and certainly not trying to escape, we felt secure in teasing them. Moreover, the only time we saw any paved crossroads we could have turned into was in the few big cities on our route. They caught us, as we didn't speed up, and only Andy appreciated our attempt at humor.

OLD MCDONALD'S

After a very long drive westward after the end of the competition, we finally cleared the Czech border post and re-entered West Germany. For almost three weeks we had eaten nearly tasteless food, and so we were more than ready for something appetizing. Being in Bavaria, almost any restaurant would have sufficed, but the guys were set on something American style. One of the guys was familiar with the Nuremberg area, having lived there when he was in the Army. He particularly recalled a McDonald's restaurant, and with the support of all but one of the ground crew, headed for it.

My objections were easily over-ridden, and I saw no point in arguing, though it still seems like a good idea to have searched out a classic Bavarian restaurant. We arrived in front of a familiar sight, and ordered the usual Big Macs, fries, and chocolate shakes, while I mused about Wiener schnitzel á la Holstein und pickled cabbage.

Was I wrong! One bite of the thick hamburger produced a deluge of tastes: meat, cheese, lettuce, pickle, relish, ketchup, and even the bun. Never before had my long-deprived taste buds experienced such a cacophony of flavors. Added to their holiday celebration were the French fries and the thick chocolate milkshake. The rest of the drive to Frankfurt was made in a haze of culinary satisfaction. **IAC**



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IAC Chapter 12 Spring Kickoff Party

What a success!

BY TOM LARKIN

Our first and only contest for the year is coming up in just one month, so we decided to have a Spring Kickoff Party to get everyone back in the game after a long winter here in Colorado. The activities included a board meeting (our first meeting with our new president, Doug Jardin), a general meeting with lots of new folks, a burger/hot dog cookout (FREE for whoever flew in to the meeting), and last but not least . . . a critique session for any brave soul who dared fly in front of a crowd after a long winter.

The day was an absolute success! We had several people show up in their first acro plane. Jeff Bowman showed up at his first meeting with his first acro plane—a beautiful SIAI Marchetti. He's going to have a fun time trying to stay in the box with that one. Dan Peterson came out in his new Pitts S-1, painted in orange and blue. (It's affectionately called the "Bronco Pitts," although it was painted by a previous owner who didn't live in Colorado). Erin Kelly flew in with a gorgeous open-cockpit red, white, and blue Pitts S-1E. That would be cool enough, but that's only the beginning. It seems Erin's dad built this airplane a long time ago when he was just a kid, and then sold it later in life. His mother actually designed the paint job. Last year, Erin went about finding the owner and purchasing the aircraft from him as his first acro plane. What a great way to show up at your first meeting!

Don't we all wish our kids would do this down the road!

So why have a
Spring Kickoff
Party? Why not!
The IAC is not just
about contests—it's
about people and
relationships.

Tom Edwards flew in from an airpark to the east in a highly modified Laser 300. It turns out that Dan Peterson's grandparents built the house on the runway that Tom now lives in. In fact, Dan carved his initials in the basement of his grandparents' house, and Tom said those initials are still in there today. What are the odds? On another note, Jim McKinstry came for a visit and graced us with some wisdom from his many years of flying contests, air shows, and warbirds. Jim was recently inducted into the Colorado Aviation Hall of Fame. Congrats, Jim!

So why have a Spring Kickoff Party? Why not! The IAC is not just about contests—it's about people and relationships. Many of our members, myself included, don't even have a plane yet or are in the process of building their first one. Having social events like this

mixed with flying and food builds lifelong relationships that go well beyond the box. And if you have events like this at different locations, you will find that just the presence of these planes will start conversations and attract future competitors and members.

How was the party? It was a HUGE success. We had 11 planes and 28 people arrive, we ran out of burgers, and we had several new members show up. On a competitive note, we had three people view airplanes out in the practice area that have never seen a critique session before, and we had five different people fly and get critiqued.

Favorite airplane? That's hard to pick. The SIAI Marchetti was absolutely beautiful, but so was Doug Jardin's Sbach 342...and it can "g" your lips off! However the best takeoff had to go to Thomas Shpakow of G3i with his Silver Lindy award-winning "supercharged" Acroduster. Facing a density altitude of about 7,000 feet, he was off the ground and climbing through 1,000 feet and going the opposite direction on downwind in a chandelle-type departure . . . without ever going past midfield! Everybody needs an engine like that!

If your local club needs a shot in the arm, I would urge you to consider an event like this. It's a great excuse to dust off the plane, make a new friend, and get a burger or two to adjust your CG aft for the upcoming season!

Fly safely!

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Twelve Stall/Spin Myths Exposed

Excerpted from the book *The Light Airplane Pilot's Guide to Stall/Spin Awareness*

BY RICH STOWELL
WWW.RICHSTOWELL.COM

Myth 1: Flying too slowly causes stalls.

Reality: Astute as the brothers were, even Orville and Wilbur Wright erroneously believed that stalling was related to slow airspeed. Angle of attack is the defining parameter for the stall; thus, airspeed by itself is useless as an indicator of our margin to the stall. Yet the airspeed myth persists, often being reinforced by the simplistic, wings-level, 1g stalls practiced repeatedly for checkrides.

Myth 2: Stalls cause spins.

Reality: Two elements must be present in order for an airplane to spin: stall and yaw. By themselves, neither stalling nor yawing results in spinning; however, simultaneously stalling with sufficient yawing always results in a spin.

Myth 3: All cross-controlled flight increases your stall/spin potential.

Reality: Cross-controlled flight comes in two basic flavors: skids and slips. Skids tend to have a greater stall/spin potential than coordinated flight. Slips, on the other hand, tend to have a lower stall/spin potential than even coordinated flight.

Myth 4: If you inadvertently stall or spin, just let go of the controls.

Reality: Aerodynamics, human factors, and the practicalities of the situation can conspire to make this advice suspect.

Some light airplanes might be able to self-recover from the early stages of some stall/spins; however, letting go of the controls a bit later in the process, or under a different set of conditions, may not result in recovery at all.

Letting go of the controls during a surprise stall/spin is not a natural instinct—clutching the stick or yoke even tighter is a more common reaction.

The majority of stall/spin accidents occur at or below traffic pattern altitude. Even if the airplane can self-recover and the pilot is capable of instantly releasing the controls, more altitude will likely be consumed compared to a prompt application of precisely choreographed recovery

controls.

Myth 5: During recovery from upright spins, the elevator control should not be moved forward until rotation ceases.

Reality: Although opposite rudder alone may effect recovery in some airplanes in the early stages of some spins, it may not be sufficient by itself for recovery from fully developed or aggravated spins. Therefore, pilots should not rely on opposite rudder alone during spin recovery. Pilots should always expect the need for full opposite rudder followed by forward movement of the elevator control to terminate spinning, regardless of the airplane or the type of upright spin encountered.

Myth 6: During spins, the slip/skid indicator shows spin direction.

Reality: The slip/skid ball is totally unreliable when spinning.

Myth 7: The longer an airplane stays in a spin, the more airspeed it gains and the faster it rotates.

Reality: The spin is a high drag maneuver. Consequently, airspeed will not continue to increase but generally will stabilize at a relatively low and constant value. And once the spin develops (usually two to four turns), rate of rotation will stabilize as well.

Myth 8: The longer an airplane stays in a spin, the greater the chance of structural damage.

Reality: The spin itself is a relatively low-g maneuver. For example, a normal upright spin imposes essentially 1g on the pilot and the airplane. It is during the pullout following the spin recovery where significant g-load could be generated. It's up to the pilot to manage the g-load to stay within design limits during the pullout.

Myth 9: Since most accidental spins occur too low for recovery, spin training is a useless exercise.

Reality: This myth might be true if pilots were suddenly waking up and

finding themselves spinning in an airplane. The typical stall/spin accident is not a sudden, random event devoid of pilot participation. Instead, it is largely a pilot-driven process that culminates in a stall or spin prior to ground impact. Stall/spin accidents evolve as a chain of events with warning signs that, if recognized and corrected, can be broken before reaching the spin. Proficiency in the elements of a comprehensive, scenario-based stall/spin training program should provide pilots with the awareness and skills to prevent an accidental spin departure in the first place.

Myth 10: Pilots with more experience are better at avoiding fatal stall/spins than pilots with less experience.

Reality: If "more experience" means "higher flight times and more advanced certificates/ratings," then this assertion is false. A study by the AOPA Air Safety Foundation revealed that student pilots, who made up 15 percent of the active pilot population during the years 1993 to 2001, were involved in just 4 percent of the fatal stalls/spins—a better showing than even airline transport pilots. Private and commercial pilots, on the other hand, made up 61 percent of the active pilots but were involved in 83 percent of the fatal stall/spin accidents.

Myth 11: As a whole, flight instructors are well qualified to teach stalls and spins.

Reality: Even though flight instructor applicants receive logbook endorsements certifying that they are competent to teach spins, published studies and anecdotal evidence reveal that flight instructors nationwide tend neither to be well trained in stall/spin dynamics nor to have sufficient hands-on experience with spins to be able to provide meaningful spin training.

Myth 12: Spins can be hard on an airplane's gyro instruments.

Reality: This claim is often cited as

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the reason why a particular instructor or flight school cannot provide spin training in an airplane approved for spins. However, according to senior gyroscope technicians at TGH Aviation in Auburn, California—an aviation instrument and overhaul facility with more than 50 years and several hundred thousand gyroscopes of experience behind it:

In general there would be no additional wear factors on either an attitude gyro or a directional gyro caused by spins. While the attitude gyro—if not caged and of the type not designed for a full 360 degrees of movement—would hit the mechanical stops and would experience gimbal lock, this would not result in any appreciable additional wear beyond what is normally expected...As for the turn coordinator, we have seen evidence that this instrument can realize negative effects in an aircraft that has experienced excessive flat spins. As not many pilots are purposely inducing flat spins on a regular basis in airplanes equipped with turn coordinators, such negative effects would be a rare occurrence. **IAC**



NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING

Friday, August 1, 2014

The International Aerobatic Club will hold its annual meeting of members on Friday, August 1, 2014 in Nature Center Event Tent #1 on the EAA AirVenture Oshkosh convention grounds in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. Doors will open at 6:00 p.m. The meeting will begin promptly at 6:30.

The meeting agenda is:

- **Receive the President's Report**
- **Receive the Treasurer's Report**
- **Conduct old business**
- **Conduct new business**
- **Receive the results of elections for President, Secretary and three Directors**

There will be ample opportunity to socialize with fellow IAC members. Complimentary food and drink will be served.



BETH STANTON
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Ode to 168 Landings

"Success consists of going from failure to failure with no loss of enthusiasm."

—Winston Churchill



I almost quit halfway through flight training. Apparently, I did not have the talent for flying. About a year prior to this dilemma, I woke up with the bright idea that it would be cool to be a pilot. You have to understand, I had never even been in a small airplane before. This made absolutely no sense, yet the impulse was startling in its ferocity.

Learning to fly turned out to be way more than I had bargained for. I had no idea of what I was getting myself into. I knew nothing about airplanes and how they worked. Every topic from aerodynamics to weather to navigation was a giant mystery to be solved. Now I was stranded upon the landing plateau. I despaired of ever flying a stable traffic pattern and landing the plane so that you could use it again. When I compared my hours of flight to my number of landings, I was landing an average of every 29 minutes. And I still wasn't getting it.

One evening, I declared to my boyfriend that this was too hard and I should just hang it up. He looked at me squarely and said, "Are you going to give up now, when you are this far in?"

"No," I sighed in an annoyed voice.

"Look," he said, "when I was in graduate school, it wasn't the most talented students who succeeded, but the most persistent."

Huh.

Of course, I had it all set in my mind: solo at 20 hours and checkride at 40 hours. Ha! Here I was in my mid-30 hours of training fumbling around the pattern like a drunken sailor on shore leave. In frustration, I had become focused upon all my mistakes. I made a revolutionary choice. I decided to get off my own back, release the self-imposed arbitrary deadlines, and enjoy the process.

This was a pivotal turning point. It turned a grind back into an adventure. It felt so much better and was way more fun. I knew without a doubt that with enough practice and avgas, I would eventually get it. I was learning to fly! How awesome was THAT? I wrote this poem to celebrate:

Ode to 168 Landings — February 24, 2011

*Holes burned in the pattern while practicing landings,
Learning this skill set is proving demanding.*

Too high, too low, too fast, too slow.

Flaring late, flaring early, base to final is squirrely.

Saint Ralph in the right seat pulls tricks from his bag

Offering tips as I zig and I zag.

Here's hoping that one day I'll get it just right,

Then look to the sky, see my spirit take flight.

Tailwheel training was a buffoonery-rich endeavor that still has my landings-to-total hours ratio hilariously high. In the process of getting this en-



dorsement I flew nine different airplanes with seven instructors. It was a ton of fun. I wouldn't trade this experience for the world.

I've had many opportunities the past two years to put my "enjoy the process" philosophy into practice: learning spin recovery, hammerheads, downlines after one-and-a-quarter turn spins, rolling turns...the list goes on. I guess this is going to just keep happening every time the difficulty level gets bumped up.

It took exactly a year, a month, a week, a day, and 91.4 hours in my logbook to get my private pilot certificate . . . the proudest accomplishment of my life. I decided that if I could learn to fly, I could do anything. I have high hopes that one day I can gracefully land a Pitts. **IAC**

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Budd is one of the best instructors I've ever flown with. He has more knowledge to share about the Pitts, and flying in general, than anyone. -Mike Melvill

...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 investigators said that my fundamentals saved me. Thanks my friend. -Maynard H.

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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.

IAC Open East Championship – Ohio Aerobatic Open 2014

Friday, June 13 – Sunday, June 15, 2014

Practice/Registration: Thursday, June 12

Rain/Weather: Sunday, June 15

Power: Primary through Unlimited

Location: Bellefontaine Regional Airport (EDJ):

Bellefontaine, OH

Region: Mid-America

Contest Director: Chris Keegan

Contact Information: 614-890-9711

E-Mail: sdavis_1985@yahoo.com

Website: iac34.com

Lone Star Aerobatic Championships

Friday, June 20 – Sunday, June 22, 2014

Practice/Registration: Thursday, June 19 – Friday, June 20

Power: Primary through Unlimited

Location: North Texas Regional (GYI), Sherman, TX

Region: Mid-America

Contest Director: Kathleen Kyer

Contact Information: 972.365.8767

E-Mail: Kateflies8@aol.com

Midwest Aerobatic Championship

Friday, June 20 – Sunday, June 22, 2014

Practice/Registration: Friday, June 20

Power: Primary through Unlimited

Location: Seward Municipal (SWT), Seward, NE

Region: Mid-America

Contest Director: David Moll

Contact Information: 402-613-5422

E-Mail: davidmoll66@gmail.com

Apple Cup

Friday, June 27 – Saturday, June 28, 2014

Practice/Registration: Wednesday, June 25–Thursday, June 26

Power: Primary through Unlimited

Location: Ephrata Municipal Airport (EPH), Ephrata, WA

Region: Northwest

Contest Director: Jerry Riedinger and Larry James

Contact Information: 425-985-9469

E-Mail: JRiedinger@perkinscoie.com

Website: www.applecup.org

Michigan Aerobatic Open

Saturday, June 28 – Sunday, June 29, 2014

Practice/Registration: Friday, June 27

Power: Primary through Unlimited

Location: Jackson County Airport (JXN), Jackson, MI

Region: Mid-America

Contest Director: Brian Roodvoets

Contact Information: 810-667-0642

E-Mail: redfoot@usol.com

Website: iac88.eaachapter.org

Green Mountain Aerobatics Contest (GMAc)

Friday, July 11 – Sunday, July 13, 2014

Practice/Registration: Thursday, July 10 – Friday, July 11

Glider Categories: Sportsman through Unlimited

Power: Primary through Unlimited

Location: Springfield Hartness Airport (VSF), Springfield, VT

Region: Northeast

Contest Director: Bill Gordon

Contact Information: (802) 585-0366

E-Mail: wsgordon@earthlink.net

The Best Box in Texas Open

Friday, July 18 – Sunday, July 20, 2014

Practice/Registration: Monday, July 14 – Thursday, July 17

Rain/Weather: Sunday, July 20

Power: Primary through Unlimited

Location: Jackson County (26R), Edna, TX

Region: South Central

Contest Director: Gary Walker

Contact Information: 832-656-8314

E-Mail: gawwalker@aol.com

Doug Yost Challenge

Saturday, July 19 – Sunday, July 20, 2014

Practice/Registration: Thursday, July 17 – Friday, July 18

Power: Primary through Unlimited

Location: Spencer Muni (SPW), Spencer, IA

Region: Mid-America

Contest Director: Dan Pichelman

Contact Information: 612-386-0352

E-Mail: dan.pichelman@swivivity.com

CanAm Challenge

Friday, July 25 – Saturday, July 26, 2014

Practice/Registration: Thursday, July 24

Power: Primary through Unlimited

Location: Cut Bank International (CTB), Cut Bank, MT

Region: Northwest

Contest Director: Christopher Branson

Contact Information: 503-501-1496

E-Mail: flyhran@aol.com

Hoosier Hoedown

Saturday, August 9 – Sunday, August 10, 2014

Practice/Registration: Friday, August 8

Power: Primary through Unlimited

Location: Kokomko 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

Upper Canada Open

Friday, August 15 – Sunday, August 17, 2014

Practice/Registration: Friday, August 15

Power: Primary through Unlimited

Location: Tillsonburg (CYTB), Tillsonburg, Ontario

Region: Mid-America

Contest Director: Bjarni Tryggvason

Contact Information: 5198517887

E-Mail: bjarni.tryggvason@rogers.com

Beaver State Regional

Friday, August 15 – Saturday, August 16, 2014

Practice/Registration: 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

Kathy Jaffe Challenge

Friday, August 15 – Sunday, August 17, 2014

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

Power: Primary through Unlimited

Location: South Jersey Regional (VAY): Lumbarton, 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

Friday, August 22 – Sunday, August 24, 2014

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

Power: Primary through Unlimited

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

Region: Mid-America

Contest Director: Audra Hoy

Contact Information: 920-203-9000

E-Mail: audra_hoy@yahoo.comWebsite: www.iacchapter1.org**Rebel Regional**

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.comWebsite: www.iac27.org**IAC Open West – 40th Annual Happiness Is Delano Contest**

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.orgWebsite: www.IACChapter26.org**Hill Country Hammerfest**

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.netWebsite: <http://www.iac107.org/>**Harold Neumann Barnstormer**

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: Halfreverscuban8@gmail.comWebsite: www.iac15.org**The Bill Thomas U.S./Canada Aerobatic Challenge**

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, New York

Region: Northeast

Contest Director: Pat Barrett

Contact Information: 716-361-7888

E-Mail: cbpbmb@aol.comWebsite: IAC126.blogspot.com**Salem Regional Aerobatic Contest**

Saturday, September 13 – Sunday, September 14, 2014

Practice/Registration: Friday, September 12

Power: Primary through Unlimited

Location: Salem-Leckrone Airport (KSL0), Salem, IL

Region: Mid-America

Contest Director: Bruce Ballew

Contact Information: 314-369-3723

E-Mail: bruceballew@earthlink.net**Rocky Mountain "OYSTER" Invitational Aerobatic Contest**

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**2014 US National Aerobatic Championships**

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: Matt Tanner

Contact Information: 719-359-6381

E-Mail: mtaviation@gmail.com**AEROBATICS**

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MEET A MEMBER

BY GARY DEBAUN, IAC #4145

Sheri Wegforth Davis

IAC 24185

Chapter affiliation: IAC Chapter 34 (and Chapter 88)

Occupation: Technology consulting - software engineering & project management

E-mail: sdavis_1985@yahoo.com

Age: 46



GD: Sheri, I know you've been around the IAC for quite some time, so tell us a little about how you got an interest in competition aerobatics.

SD: The first time I ever did anything but straight and level flight I went up with a friend from Morris, Illinois, in a BT-13, and we did barrel rolls and wing-overs. Prior to that I thought that flying straight and level was fun—but going inverted and doing acro...this rocked my world! I had later been introduced to IAC Chapter 34 by a friend. The world of aerobatics excited me, and I was hooked!

GD: You are one of several “regulars” in the sport that does not fly competition aerobatics but chose to volunteer as a judge, contest director, and many other positions. What drives you to stay in the sport?

SD: Helping out with IAC events enables me to be out where the action is, even if I am not actually flying. It allows me to be in a position where I don't have to be “on the other side of the fence.” I enjoy the camaraderie—the people involved in aerobatics are a great bunch of people and a lot of fun to be around.

GD: At some point in the future, do you see yourself as a competitor or are you satisfied with your volunteer roles?

SD: I certainly am open to the idea of competing someday, but right now that is not really an option, due to financial constraints. To say that I am “satisfied” with where I am at and what I am doing within the IAC would be an understatement...I have been accepting various roles that require increasing responsibility, and this is something that I enjoy. I look forward to the diversity in the duties that I have had the opportunity to engage in and the challenges that they offer. The activities in which I now take part are things I never even dared to dream about. I used to not believe that this was really “my world.” Today, I know . . . this is what I do!

GD: Would you like to be a national judge at some point?

SD: I took my written exam for my national judgeship in early July, and now I simply need to find a couple of current national judges to administer my oral exam. All of the other prerequisites are complete (judging a certain number of flights, assisting the chief, etc.), and I am indeed on my way to acquiring my national judgeship.

GD: What's the hardest figure for a judge to score?

SD: I do not know that there is any basic figure that is necessarily difficult to judge. It is what is included with the figure that makes things more difficult. Certainly, judging an Unlimited sequence is by far the most difficult. It is not the basic maneuver that makes it a challenge—but everything that is included with it. For example, one can take a plain vanilla humpty or hammer, and that in and of itself is fairly simple to know what to look for. However, if you add in a snap or two or a roll and any derivation thereof on the up- or downlines, you have more things to look for. A big part of my ability to judge a figure properly has to do with the competency of my assistant judge. I routinely go over the sequences with my assistant before each flight so they may know how I would like each maneuver called—this is critical in my ability to judge a maneuver accurately.

GD: You put on a very good contest at the Ohio Open this year. What was your biggest challenge?

SD: *smiling* Probably the biggest challenge for me is dealing with and adapting to the unforeseen circumstances that will inevitably arise. I am a perfectionist, so when I have all my “ducks in a row” and something comes along to prevent things from going as planned, I sometimes get a bit frazzled. It is all a learning experience, though, and I welcome the challenges and the opportunity to overcome them.

GD: Who in the sport has inspired you the most?

SD: When I first became active with IAC back in the

'90s, Ken Hadden was an inspiration to me and Brian Howard was a positive influence, as well as numerous others in the aerobatic community. However, in the last couple of years I have spent endless hours with our current Chapter 34 president, Jeff Granger. Shortly after meeting him, the word "can't" was removed from my vocabulary! The time he has given me, so selflessly, has changed my life! In addition to the fact that I have had the opportunity to go flying with him in his Extra 300L (more than I have fingers and toes to count), he has always provided support and encouragement that has enabled me to succeed in nearly everything that I do. He has opened my eyes to a world of aviation I never conceived I could be a part of, and he is a big part of the person that I am today.

GD: What is your impression of "after contest banquets?" Are they really necessary?

SD: I think "necessary" is a subjective word. In my opinion, I think that the banquets provide an opportunity for us to get to know each other in a different light. I enjoy finding out that "...the Intermediate competitor I was judging today is a nuclear physicist and that he works just miles from the area in which I grew up." I like the socialization factor and getting to know the folks that I work with and that compete—but that's just me.

GD: What are your thoughts on "clinkies" that are

given for the top three from each flight?

SD: Once again, I think this is just a matter of opinion. The certificates and awards that I have received over the years are something I am proud of, and I enjoy looking at these things just to remind myself of my various accomplishments. When I look back at the certificate I was given for completing judges school back in the '90s, I think about how far I have come and all of the people I have met in the last couple of decades that have been an integral part of my growth within the IAC. Although I have not ever received a "clinky," a medallion or a plaque for competing in a contest, I still treasure the progress I have made, and these "awards" are representative of this.

GD: What other interests do you have outside of aviation?

SD: I enjoy helping others, and "volunteerism" has always been an important part of my life. I have been a "literacy volunteer" with various agencies over the past 30 years, assisting individuals in obtaining their GED and teaching ESL classes. I have also been a hospice volunteer, and this has provided an unmeasured amount of reward to me in that I am able to support individuals and their families in the latter stages of their lives. On a personal level, I like to participate in tae kwon do, aerobics, and yoga, and enjoy gardening and going for leisurely walks in the neighborhood parks and nature areas. **IAC**



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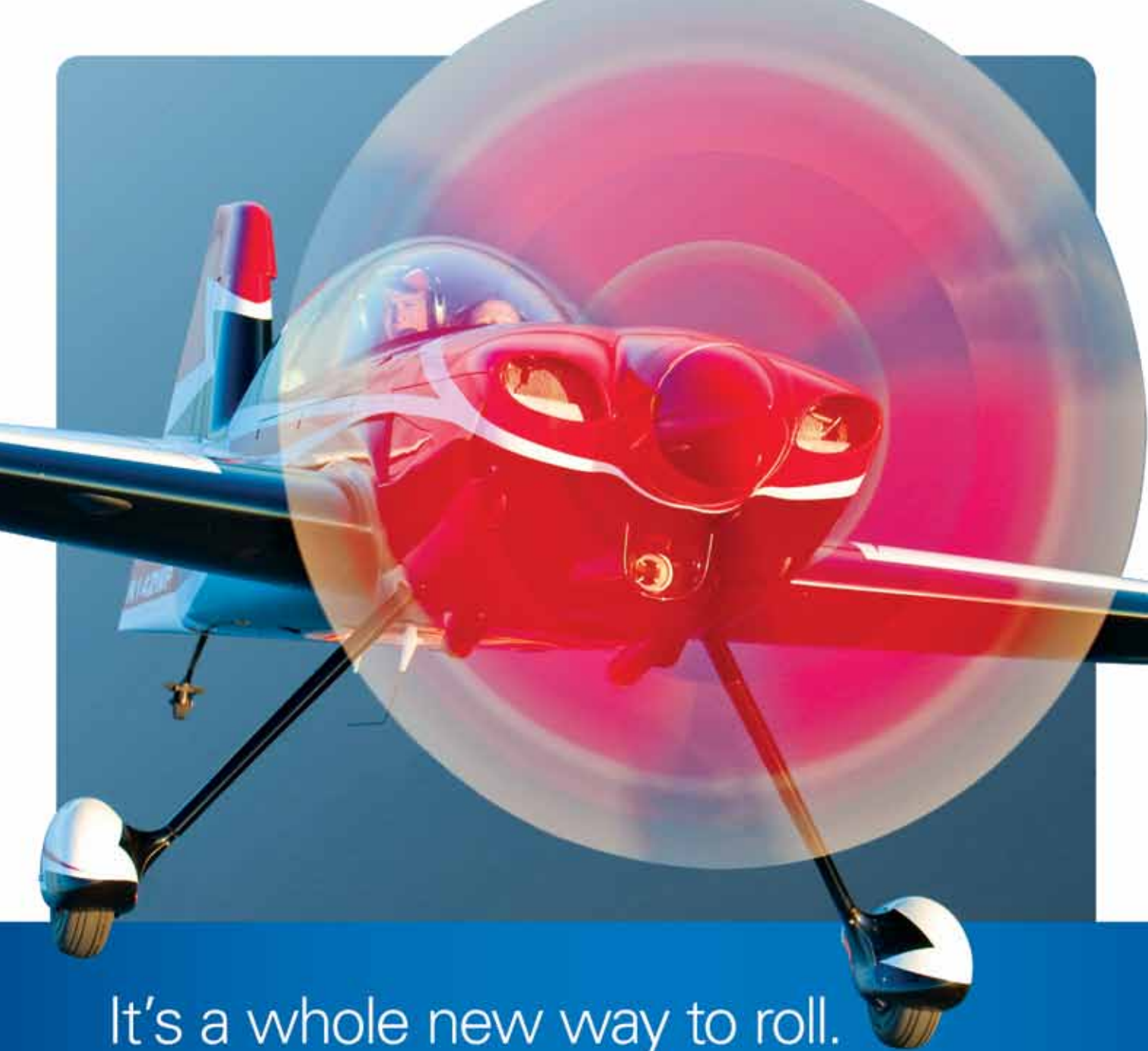
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