

SPORT

APRIL 2019

Aerobatics

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE of the INTERNATIONAL AEROBATIC CLUB



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To Be a Champion

Rob Holland

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COVER

On the cover: Rob Holland's version of posing for a photo with the St. Louis arch. Photo by Jessica Ambats.

Above: Rob touches down after a successful practice with the team in Kokomo, Indiana. Photo by Evan Peers.

The Quiz



BY JONATHAN APFELBAUM, IAC 433983

- 1 Rob Holland is the only pilot in history to have won eight consecutive U.S. National Aerobatic titles. He also holds two other unique "only pilot in history" distinctions. What are they?
- 2 Rob Holland learned to fly as a teenager, and began flying air shows in 2002. What type of aircraft did he use in his early days of competition and performances?
- 3 In 2018, Rob Holland was inducted into the Society of Honorary Snowbirds. What is this society?
- 4 The MX2 was based on what aircraft?
- 5 One doesn't usually think of warbirds and Unlimited aerobatic aircraft in the same sentence; however, there was a unique event that took place between a Supermarine Spitfire and an MX2 in 2008. What was the event?

LOOK FOR THE ANSWERS ON PAGE 30

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Progress in New Nationals Location

BY ROBERT ARMSTRONG, IAC 6712

THE WINTER WEATHER has refused to depart some parts of the country, but I hope that this pattern does not impact our members in getting out of the winter doldrums and warming up the season's fun flying. Our contest calendar has 22 events posted as of the middle of March, and more to come.

One big event recently added is the U.S. National Aerobatic Championships! If you have been keeping a very low profile and have not heard, the new home for the U.S. Nationals is Salina, Kansas (KSLN). The event will be taking place September 21-27, and the contest director will be Ron Schreck, IAC board member and RV competitor. There have been meetings with our new host in Salina, and the groundwork has begun on what will be a top-level event for everyone. The box will be located with the X-axis over the west runway so the airborne view will be very near the same as the former Sherman location. The effort coming from parties in Salina is incredible. Information regarding hotels, rental cars, and such will be coming soon. This will be a great contest!

In the IAC not much happens without volunteers. Our entire board has volunteered its time to make the IAC a place for everyone who has an interest in aerobatics to gather. As you know, there is more going on than just flying exciting airplanes. We have a number of members who go unnoticed who make the club work. These members are the judges, assistants, starters, boundary judges, tech inspectors, and so on that must exist before any contest can happen. I am thankful that we have such a great membership that these people step forward to make things happen so many times each year all across the country.

As president I desire to make the IAC a friendlier experience for all members. One project that is in motion is a task force to review *The Official Contest Rules*. No, we are not changing the rules without going through the normal process. We just think the rulebook needs some formatting and arrangement to make it easier to navigate.

The rulebook has worlds of information in it, but when the current format was adopted it was published as a print volume. Much of the content is not commonly referenced, often creating the need to search many pages to find answers. This task force will make recommendations to the board with ways to make our rulebook a much more navigable resource using electronic means. This will also make revisions much easier and has the promise of a set of rules that will never be out of date.

Last month's safety issue was tremendous. But safety is not a once-a-year event; it must continue every day. So let us continue to make flying safe. Have you looked at your seat belts lately? I mean from mount to mount. We tend to take some things for granted and not consider that they may have a finite life.

Have you checked that the off position on the mag switch is really off? This is a simple and quick check before the mixture is cut. Select off momentarily at idle and ensure that the engine does stop running with the key in the off position. That's pretty obvious. But before you finish climbing out to go see the great scores from the last flight, turn the key back to the on position and gently pull on it. The key should not be able to be removed except in the off position. If it can, you need to consider a new part soon.

When looking over the fleet of registered aircraft by type, I find that there are more than 900 Decathlons on the FAA register. For owners of Decathlons, what can the IAC do for you? We need our special interest groups to continue to grow. If the organization does not fulfill your needs, what changes could encourage you to be more active in the programs that IAC offers? Write to me or any director with your ideas.

Remember that all of the board members are yours to communicate with. We all need to know what our members are thinking and what you want the IAC to be.

Safe flying! **IAC!**

► Please send your comments, questions, or suggestions to president@iac.org.

▶ TOP STORY

Ron Schreck Selected as 2019 U.S. Nationals Contest Director

AT A SPECIAL TELECONFERENCE meeting of the International Aerobatic Club board of directors, Ron Schreck, IAC 433751, was chosen by unanimous affirmation as the contest director for the 2019 U.S. National Aerobatic Championships to be held in Salina, Kansas, September 21-27, 2019.

Ron is a member of the IAC board of directors and serves as the south-central regional director, a position he has held since he was elected in 2016. Ron lives in Gold Hill Airpark, North Carolina. He is an Intermediate competitor in his RV-8 *Miss Izzy* and a national judge. Ron was also a member of the aerobatic formation team of AeroDynamix where he was the flight lead. As a graduate of the U.S. Air Force Academy, with service in the U.S. Air Force as a fighter pilot for more than 20 years, and a career as a US Airways captain, Ron has an excellent background as an organizer.



Ron reported that he already has begun work on the foundation of the Nationals by arranging to meet with airport officials and Visit Salina, the Salina area chamber of commerce, in Salina on March 25, 2019. He will be joined by IAC Chapter 119 founding member A.J. Hefel of Wichita, Kansas, who will be Ron's on-site liaison in the coming months.

Ron has the full support and encouragement of the IAC board, and we are looking forward to a successful event in September.

Pat Ledford Gone West

BY BUDD DAVISSON

PAT LEDFORD, probably the second most important guy, outside of Curtis Pitts himself, in the history of the Pitts Special, died on the morning of February 22, 2019. He was 89. When some of the Homestead Munchins, as I called the group of guys that hung around Curtis, browbeat him into drawing up plans for the S-1 Pitts in 1962, Pat is the one who made it happen. Curtis had only a few scraps of plans because he'd lost the rest in a flood. So, Pat built an S-1 with Curtis looking over his shoulder, coaching him and drawing up plans at the same time.

Later, when Curtis decided to develop symmetrical wings for the Pitts, he tried them on Pat's airplane. The first set Curtis said did things he didn't know an airplane could do when stalled inverted, so he took them off and cut them up so they couldn't be used again. The next version worked fine and became the S-1S, although that first airplane only had two, rather than four, ailerons. That airplane was N8L and was recently purchased by Peter Diaz and put in his Pitts Museum in Chandler, Arizona. Pat and Curtis were inseparable, and in later years, Curtis depended on Pat to fly him around to various fly-ins. Pat was an indelible part of the Pitts legend.

NORM DEWITT RETIRES

LONGTIME INTERNATIONAL AEROBATIC CLUB director Norm DeWitt, IAC 13669, announced his retirement from the IAC board in February after more than two decades of volunteer service. Most recently, Norm served as the IAC board of director's liaison to EAA, championing both IAC's messages within EAA and vice versa. He wrote a personal note to the board and to all members, which we relay to you here:



Dear Members of the IAC Board,

I feel the time has approached for me to retire from the IAC board. It has been a great run. The doors that IAC has opened for me and the friends I have made over the last 23 years have been far beyond my wildest dreams. As I look back, I never thought that I would compete, but when I won a first place plaque at my first contest, I was hooked. That was neat, but meeting the fellow competitors, sharing information, learning at acro camps, and working on the board was even better. Going to camps with coaches like Alan Geringer, Sergei Boriak, Nikolay Timofeev, John Morrissey, Victor Smolin, and Elena Klimovich was beyond imagination. I will miss all of you, but the memories will never leave.

Best wishes to each of you, the IAC members, and the IAC.

— Norm DeWitt, IAC 13669

2019-29 RULE CHANGE CLARIFICATION

**Increased presentation K across the board
— what you need to know.**

ONE OF THE 2019 approved rule proposals changed the presentation K's for all power sequences. For this year only, the IAC board has authorized that anyone with a previously drawn and checked 2018 Free sequence does not have to have that sequence redrawn or rechecked by a judge. If you plan to create a new Free sequence, then you still have to have it checked by a judge as usual.

If you have a Free sequence from 2018 that you intend to use during the 2019 season, you must strike out the presentation K and write in the new K along with the updated total K on the A form. If the registrar notices incorrect presentation K at registration, they will ask the competitor to correct all their forms and turn them back in when they are updated.

As always, it is the pilot's responsibility to make sure their A/B/C forms are correct and up to date. This grace period extends only to this year's 2019 contest season. In 2020 all pilots will again be required to have their entire Free forms preprinted with the correct K and signed off by a judge.



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If at any time you need assistance in setting up your account or with any other questions, click the Customer Service tab for phone or email contact information. An IAC web store customer service representative from Promotional Designs will be glad to assist.

Enjoy the new IAC premium collection aerobatic merchandise web store! **IAC!**



2019 IAC Contest Season Calendar

DATES	HOST CHAPTER	NAME	REGION	LOCATION	AIRPORT
Mar. 28, 2019	89	Snowbird Classic	Southeast	Florida	X35
Mar. 29, 2019	25	Early Bird 2019	South Central	Texas	26R
April 12, 2019	36	Hammerhead Round Up	Southwest	California	Lo8
April 19, 2019	19	Mason-Dixon Clash	Northeast	Virginia	KFVX
May 3, 2019	23	Sebring 79	Southeast	Florida	KSEF
May 3, 2019	49	Duel in the Desert	Southwest	California	KAPV
May 3, 2019	24	Lone Star Aerobatic Contest	South Central	Texas	KBKD
May 18, 2019	61	Giles Henderson Memorial Challenge	Mid America	Illinois	KSLO
May 31, 2019	38	Coalinga Western Showdown	Southwest	California	C8o
June 1, 2019	12	Ben Lowell Aerial Confrontation	South Central	Colorado	KAFF
June 6, 2019	3	Mark Fullerton Memorial 2019 Bear Creek Bash	Southeast	Georgia	KRMG
June 14, 2019	67	Apple Cup	Northwest	Washington	KEPH
June 14, 2019	58	Wildwoods Acroblast!	Northeast	New Jersey	KWWW
June 22, 2019	80	Midwest Aerobatic Championships	South Central	Nebraska	KSWT
July 12, 2019	35	Green Mountain Aerobatic Contest	Northeast	Vermont	KVSF
July 12, 2019	77	The Corvallis Corkscrew	Northwest	Oregon	KCVO
July 13, 2019	12	High Planes HotPoxia Fest	South Central	Colorado	KFMM
July 13, 2019	88	Michigan Aerobatic Open	Mid America	Michigan	3CM
Aug. 3, 2019	78	Doug Yost Challenge	Mid America	Iowa	KSPW
Aug. 16, 2019	52	Kathy Jaffe Challenge	Northeast	New Jersey	KVAV
Aug. 16, 2019	AC3	Canadian National Aerobatic Championships	Mid America	Ontario	CNY3
Sep. 6, 2019	67	Apple Turnover	Northwest	Washington	KEPH
Sep. 21, 2019	-	U.S. National Aerobatic Championships	National	Kansas	KSLN
Oct. 5, 2019	5	The Clyde Cable Rocky Mountain Aerobatic Contest	South Central	Colorado	KLAA
Nov. 1, 2019	23	Sebring 80	Southeast	Florida	KSEF
Nov. 15, 2019	26	Foxy Figures	Southwest	California	KWJF
Nov. 15, 2019	62	Tequila Cup	Southwest	Arizona	KAVQ

IAC Nonflying Award Nominations Open

SHE GIVES COUNTLESS HOURS of her personal time for the betterment of IAC; he volunteered many hours mentoring and coaching behind the scenes; she has a firm understanding of all aspects of judging; or his products have made a tremendous difference to aerobatics.

Do these people sound like someone you know and would like to recognize for their contribution to the sport? Each year, IAC members nominate outstanding volunteers to be recognized for their contributions to the sport of aerobatics. This is an excellent opportunity to recognize outstanding IAC members who spend their valuable time volunteering for the benefit of many. Let's recognize our unsung heroes from 2018!

You can nominate your fellow IAC members for one of the five nonflying awards:

FRANK PRICE CUP: Recognizes the individual who has contributed the most to the sport of aerobatics in the previous year.

ROBERT L. HEUER AWARD FOR JUDGING EXCELLENCE: Presented to an outstanding aerobatic judge each year.

KATHY JAFFE VOLUNTEER AWARD: This award recognizes an outstanding volunteer.

HAROLD E. NEUMANN AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTION AS A CHIEF JUDGE: Recognizes an outstanding chief judge.

CURTIS PITTS MEMORIAL TROPHY: Recognizes an outstanding contribution to aerobatics through product design.

Detailed descriptions of the nonflying awards, as well as nominating forms, can be found at www.IAC.org/legacy/non-flying-awards. The deadline for nominations is June 1, 2019. Recipients will be recognized at the IAC Gathering of Members dinner during EAA AirVenture in Oshkosh on Friday, July 26, 2019, in the EAA Nature Center. **IAC**



Vibeke Gaard and Dagmar Kress
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► ROB HOLLAND



To Be a Champion

BY EVAN PEERS,
IAC 437277

IF YOU WANT TO KNOW what it takes to be a champion, there is no better person to talk to than eight-time U.S. National Aerobatic Champion Rob Holland.

I had a brief chat with Rob the other day. I wanted to find out what drives him and where he saw himself heading after this recently acquired record. I was really surprised at what I learned.

Many people know of Rob. If you've been around the International Aerobatic Club for a decade or more, you likely know Rob's story. If you are one of the many hundreds of members who have discovered aerobatics and the IAC since Rob's first championship title in 2011, here's a quick recap.

His story starts like the familiar pilot story — Dad takes son to an air show. Boy is in awe of the Blue Angels, the power and precision of aerobatics, and the whole spectator energy. Boy commits to being a pilot when he grows up. Boy grows up (a bit) and becomes a pilot.

There we go; the boy is on the road to becoming an airline pilot, an engineer, or some similar aviation endeavor. But this wasn't just any boy. Rob didn't just say he wanted to fly for a living, he said, "I want to fly upside down." At the Nashua Airport near Rob's childhood home in New Hampshire, Steen Skybolt owner Ned Crowley took Rob up for a ride. Upside down for the first time, Rob was convinced, again, that was what he was going to do.

Fast-forward through corporate and commuter, banner towing, and ferry pilot jobs, and Rob is now working for Mike Goulian as a flight instructor. Mike needs no introduction, but as a refresher — he, too, was a U.S. national aerobatic champion and a three-time member of the U.S. Unlimited Aerobatic Team, and has won numerous awards from competition and air show performances. At Mike's school, Rob taught aerobatics. Through that position, he stumbled upon competition flying by working with students who were heading to one competition or another, and eventually he drank from the fountain of Sportsman Kool-Aid himself.

"I kind of fell in love with it. It's like, this is really cool," Rob said about IAC competition. "I enjoy the discipline of it. I enjoy it as a way to measure my skills, and to try and be constantly better than I was the day before." This frame of mind continued to drive Rob through nearly two decades of success as an aerobatic competitor and as an air show performer.

"That's how I got into competition," he said. "But the initial inspiration to fly aerobatics came from air shows — watching the Blue Angels, watching Gene Soucy, watching Leo Loudenslager, and all the greats back then."

CHAMPION OF CHAMPIONS

At the top, the competition field is thin. For a competitive spirit, it could often become boring, frustrating, or unchallenging. But boredom is nowhere to be seen in Rob. The challenge of aerobatic competition is in the competition against oneself.

“Aerobatics is not a defensive sport,” he maintains. “There’s nothing I can do that’s going to affect how somebody else flies their airplane. I’ve never put the pressure on myself, like having to get so many wins or anything like that. Instead, I’ve always approached each day with a goal to fly better today than I did yesterday. That’s it. And then the next day I want to fly better than I did the day before. I love practicing. I love self-improvement. I love the discipline of all this.

“If I could just practice and do nothing else, and make a living at it, then that’s all I would do. But unfortunately life doesn’t work that way,” Rob continued. “There are other really, *really* good pilots out there. Goody Thomas, Craig Gifford, and Jeff Boerboon back when he was competing, for example. And they inspire me. I enjoy watching them fly because I’m a fan, a fan of their flying. And watching them encourages me to go and keep practicing. They keep practicing, and they keep getting better. And I keep practicing, and hopefully I get better. So, I go to the Nationals because it’s fun. I like the people. I like the camaraderie. I like having an actual mechanism to judge myself if I’m improving, if I’m doing better, to try to be better today than I was yesterday. And, I’ve been fortunate to come out on top.”

The Ultimate Biplane Rob flew before moving to the MX.



“I KNEW IT WAS OUT THERE”

You have to think that after you’ve strung up four or five consecutive championship titles, there starts to be pressure to keep it going. Even to target the record. For people who aim for the top, staying at the top often generates a lot of pressure. Here, again, there is no pressure to be seen in Rob as he approached, and then broke, Leo Loudenslager’s record of seven national championships.

“I knew it was out there. I guess when I got to six I realized wow, if I do this again I could tie the record,” he said. “But that wasn’t really the goal. People ask me all the time, ‘How much longer are you going to do this?’ And my standard answer, which is absolutely true, is ‘As long as it’s fun.’ And it’s still fun. So, I don’t keep competing to try to break any record, I keep competing because this is a part of my life, and this is what I enjoy doing. It’s fun! I guess it kind of became real right around the sixth win. I tried not to put a lot of pressure on myself for the seventh one. I was absolutely excited when I won.”

Unbeknownst to Rob, there was a surprise waiting in the wings in Oshkosh. For three and a half decades, Leo’s seven wins stood alone in the sport. Leo, unfortunately, is not with us today having died in a motorcycle accident in 1997. However, his two daughters, Kelly and Carolyn, were invited to the 2017 awards ceremony in anticipation that Rob might take his place alongside Leo in aerobatic history. They assisted in presenting the Mike Murphy Cup to Rob on stage.

“I was shocked when Leo’s daughters were there,” Rob said. “It was a real surprise; a real treat. Tim Just set that all up, and I didn’t have a clue. I’ve never met them before, so they could have walked in, shook my hand, and walked away, and I wouldn’t have known who they were. So, yeah, that was pretty neat. I really enjoyed that. And then this last time — breaking the record — I just showed up and did my thing. I tried to fly the best I could. I practiced to be the best pilot I could be. And it worked out.”



ABOVE: Rob's seventh national title, presented with the assistance of Leo Loudenslager's daughters, Kelly and Carolyn. BELOW: Receiving his eighth consecutive championship award from IAC president Robert Armstrong.



opposed to an air show where everyone just tells you how wonderful you are.”

Rob firmly believes the safety record of competition pilots who also fly in air shows speaks for itself.

“Everyone out there that has significant competition experience — that is, they’ve won a championship, they’ve been on a few teams, or they’ve been competing forever — generally speaking they’re all [still] here,” he said. “And then you look at all the people who do die in air shows; they either have very little or no competition experience. Even some of the greats like ----, ----, and people like that, who didn’t compete. They’re not here. Goulian is. Tucker is. Patty is. Matt [Chapman] is. Kirby [Chambliss] is. Gene is. Gene Soucy has been doing it for 50 years. To me, there’s something to that.

“Competition just gives you — any pilot, not just air show performers — the tools you need to stay alive,” Rob continued. “It gives you discipline. It gives you the ability to actually take critique from other people seriously, and take it as a learning mechanism and not as just a criticism. To me, that’s hugely important.”

ABOUT COACHES AND COACHING

In preparation for the new competition season, Rob went to a coaching camp — and then went to another camp to serve as a coach himself.

“One of the things I like most about the sport is, as much as everyone is willing to say you did this wrong, or you did that wrong, they’re also just as will-ing to come up to you and say ‘This is how you can probably fix that. This is how you can probably fix this,’” Rob said. “So, it’s really a sport where people are helpful and they pass on knowledge. Even though there is competition and everyone wants to do their best, everybody seems like they want everyone else to do their best also, which I really like and I really respect.”

Rob is equally willing to pass along his knowledge and said he enjoys instructing because it gives him the opportunity to watch other pilots grow.

INSPIRING PASSION FOR THE SPORT

“If I did not go to an air show as a kid and get inspired, I wouldn’t be an eight-time champion right now,” Rob said. “I got into aerobatics because of air shows, and then I discovered competition. I didn’t get into aerobatics because of competition.”

Rob is a strong believer in the synergy that air shows and IAC contribute to each other. One can often hear him discussing how air show audiences are part of the future members of IAC. Many air show performers — surprisingly, not all — have IAC competition in their history, either concurrent with or in preparation for their air show careers. And air show performers are the stars in these young audiences’ eyes. Rob, Sean D. Tucker, Mike, Patty Wagstaff, and all their peers — these are the Tom Bradys, Michael Phelps, and Shaun Whites of aerobatics.

DISCIPLINE AND COMPETITION

Apart from the inspiration, Rob also has a very solid perspective on why aerobatic competition builds the necessary skills for an air show career.

“I set out to learn aerobatics, and that was all geared toward being an air show performer, and being a safe one,” Rob said. “And IAC is the perfect place for air show pilots to learn to be better.

“Some people just want to fly [recreational] aerobatics. Some people do want to get into competition. Everyone has their own motivation, their own reason. And they’re all legitimate, because it’s all just personal desire. The reason to spend some time with IAC before doing air shows is because it offers a level of discipline, of learning the fundamentals, of flying in front of your peers and actually getting critiqued,” Rob said. “You grow up in a culture of critique, where people are telling you what you’re not doing right as



Rob flying knife-edge in his MXS-RH, which he lost in an incident last year. Watch for his newest custom MX slated to be unveiled later this year.

“I love teaching, and I love instructing. I don’t get to do enough of it because of time constraints,” he said. “But if you have knowledge, it’s nice to be able to pass that on to others. I’m just as excited at watching people I work with succeed and become better as I am about succeeding and becoming better myself. It’s nice to work with a student and see them improve or see them win a championship. It’s pretty fun; it’s pretty satisfying.”

COACH COCO

“Coco is amazing” were Rob’s first words about team USA and his personal coach, Coco Bessiere.

Coco is the 1990 World Aerobatic Champion, and was the longtime coach of the multi-gold winning French Aerobatic Team. In 2013, he mentioned to Rob that he would be interested in coaching him. Being the French team coach at the time, you would think that move to be a surprise. However, shortly afterward, Coco was no longer their coach.

“The next year, as we selected the next U.S. team, I still had his business card, and we needed a coach,” Rob said. “Our team agreed he’d be really amazing to have, if he’s willing to work with us. But why

would he work with us? I called and talked to him, and he said he would like to do it. And I said, ‘I have to ask you, what’s your motivation.’ His two word answer was: ‘To win.’ I liked that motivation!”

Thus, Coco became the U.S. Unlimited Aerobatic Team coach in 2015.

“I like his style. I love how he’s all about presentation. I like the way he works, he’s a good human being, and he’s funny,” Rob said describing Coco. “So, over the years I just continued to work with him, and he’s continued to work with the team. I work with him even when it’s not the team year. I try to get him over here three times a year and put a few small camps together with some other individuals.”



BEYOND EIGHT

It's hard to imagine what's next. Where is the focus? By now, I am suspecting that it isn't about a ninth championship, per se. Truly, Rob's focus is what it always has been: the next flight.

"I'm going to go to the Worlds this year," Rob said. "When we come back I plan on going to the Nationals. And, again I'm going to do my thing. It's not to try to get a ninth; it's just to be better than I was before. If I do get a ninth, obviously that's fantastic. I mean, nobody doesn't like winning. If they say they don't, they're lying. But, I've told a lot of people this: If you go into the sport with the right attitude, if you can land and truly say to yourself, 'You know what, that's the best I've ever flown,' then it's a win. It doesn't matter what everybody else does. If you flew better than you did before, it's a win."

THE 2019 WORLD AEROBATIC CHAMPIONSHIPS

There is one record that Rob holds that surpasses even his eight U.S. National Championships. It's his nine consecutive National titles in the 4-Minute Free.

Venturing beyond the borders, Rob has also succeeded in the international box as well. There are three individual champions named at the World Aerobatic Championships: the overall world aerobatic champion, the women's world aerobatic champion, and the Final Freestyle champion. Rob has brought home individual gold four times in the Final Freestyle, another record, in addition to his world Advanced gold from 2008. Rob currently holds 23 individual championship trophies from national and world competition.

But no matter what your standing is, nobody goes to the World Aerobatic Championships alone. As part of a team the synergy flows, the feedback circulates, and the camaraderie inspires. Again, Rob surprised me — I shouldn't be surprised at this point — with his perspective on his world competition goals.

"Over this time, he has really opened my eyes to the presentation side of aerobatic flying. It's not just about a perfect figure, it's also how you present that figure and how you present it in the box," he said. "Usually the difference between winning and not winning is the presentation, which a lot of people don't pick up on. I try to emphasize that with everybody I work with, but a lot of pilots are just about you do the hammerhead after the loop, not you put the hammerhead in this specific part of the box and present it this way. Coco is the master at that. He's changed the way I fly and the way I see flying in the box. I've learned an unbelievable amount from him. Hopefully, other members of the team have, too."

Rob Holland's Achievements

- ▶ **Eight-time U.S. National Aerobatic Champion (consecutive):** 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018
- ▶ **Nine-time U.S. National 4-Minute Free Champion:** 2008, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018
- ▶ **Four-time World Final Freestyle Champion (consecutive):** 2011, 2013, 2015, 2017
- ▶ **World Advanced Aerobatic Champion:** 2008
- ▶ **World Air Games Freestyle gold medal:** 2015
- ▶ **Individual World Advanced silver medal:** 2006
- ▶ **A total of 24 flight medals (11 gold) in international aerobatic competition**
- ▶ **Five-time U.S. Unlimited Aerobatic Team member:** 2011 (bronze), 2013 (silver), 2015 (bronze), 2017 (bronze), 2019.
- ▶ **Four-time U.S. Advanced Aerobatic Team member:** 2006 (silver), 2008 (gold)



ROB HOLLAND ▶ TO BE A CHAMPION

TOP: Coco Bessiere with Rob at the 2016 Nationals.

CENTER: Rob's medals from France 2015.

BOTTOM: Rob and Team USA 2015 march proudly in the opening ceremonies in Châteauroux, France.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY EVAN PEERS

“I’ve got a few goals. It would be fun — it’s not a requirement — it would be fun to win the Final Freestyle a fifth time, and just kind of round out an entire decade. That would be pretty cool — put that in the books. And I really just enjoy Freestyle. It’s one of my favorite events,” he said. “But I want to be there to be part of the team and come back with a team gold. I’d almost rather — no, I would rather — come back with a team medal than an individual medal. I think it’s more of a statement, and I love the teamwork. I love working with these people. I think we have exceptional pilots on our team. They’re friends. And as much as it’s an individual effort, it’s also a team effort. So I’d love that. And then, if I was ever fortunate enough to win the whole thing, that would be fantastic, obviously. But I just want to show up there, I want to do my part, I want to get no zeros, and I want to contribute to the team.”

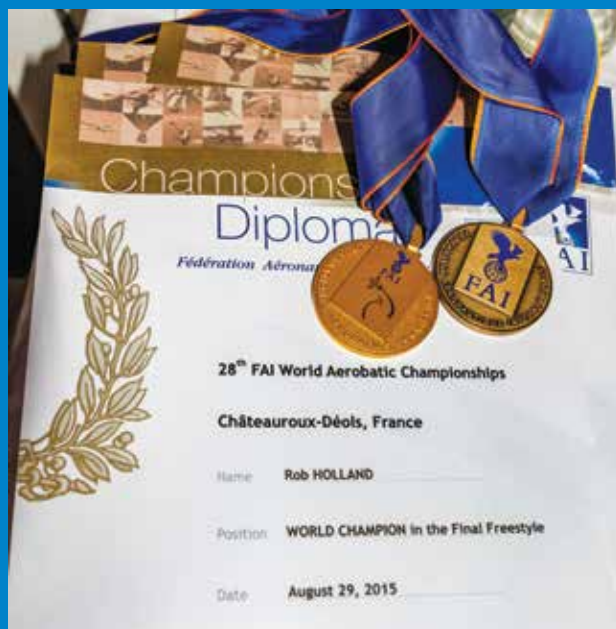
THE FOURTH DECADE

As you may be able to tell by now, Rob is relaxed and not in a hurry. Having fun along the way, flying safe, and inspiring others is far more important than a quick road to a prize. Roughly speaking, Rob has progressed through his career decade by decade. From achieving his private pilot certificate to air shows and competition — roughly a decade. From entering competition to his first U.S. National Champion title — roughly a decade. From that first title, bettering himself one day to the next to surpass the greatest aerobatic champion in U.S. history — roughly another decade.

It makes me wonder where Rob will be a decade from now.

“Still flying upside down,” he responded “Whether I’ll still be competing or not, I don’t know. I’ll just keep doing it until it isn’t fun anymore. I see myself still doing air shows. I see myself still being involved in IAC, whether I’m flying competition or I’m coaching. I would like to, at some point, transition more into coaching because I really enjoy trying to help other people become better. I often get asked that question — ‘What’s next?’ And all I can tell people is I’m just going to keep doing what I’m doing because I’m doing exactly what I want to do. I’m doing exactly what I’ve always wanted to do. And I’m enjoying it a lot. So, yeah, I’m just going to keep going.”

I left my conversation with Rob with an absolute understanding. Being a champion is not about winning a medal or a trophy. It’s about being better than you were yesterday. It doesn’t take a national or even a local championship title to win — only to have fun and to improve. And, it takes inspiration — to be inspired, so you are able to pass that inspiration to others. **IAC+**





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MIRROR, MIRROR

2019 Unlimited aerobatic team member Krysta Paradis getting to know her new Edge 540, formerly owned by her teammate Mark Nowosielski.





EMERGENCY MANEUVERS TRAINING

SKILLS FOR SAFE AND FUN FLYING

► BY KIMBERLY L. KANAPECKAS MÉTRIS, IAC 438342

“WHEN YOU’RE READY, put her into a two-turn spin and recover,” my instructor said. “It’s all you. Remember to keep that stick all the way back when you apply full rudder to initiate. Left or right this time?”

“Right,” I confirmed.

I lined myself up with the Santa Clara River Valley and put the 180-hp Super Decathlon into a spin. *Mountains, dry river bed, mountains, dry river bed. One. Mountains, dry river bed, recover.*

“Yes! Nice. Now, talk through each step as if you are teaching me the maneuver,” my instructor reminded me.

Initially, my mind could barely keep up with the land features to count turns, much less verbalize my inputs; it was all just a blur that looked like coffee and cream being stirred together. But soon, I was working on flying the maneuver as precisely as possible.

Like many, I earned my pilot certificate flying a 172. My aviation worldview quickly expanded when I transitioned to a tail wheel in a Citabria as a new private pilot, when I was first introduced to rudder control exercises, including rolls on a point, rudder or falling leaf stalls, and basic aerobatics. I fell in love with the exhilaration, freedom, and challenge of flying various attitudes with precision and passion. However, after I stopped flying for a couple years, I felt that the rust that accumulated on my skill set also affected my confidence. I was elated to learn that I received an aerobatic scholarship from CP Aviation given in the memory of Vicki Cruse, a remarkable woman, accomplished aerobatic pilot, and former International Aerobatic Club president based out of Santa Paula who died during a practice flight for the World Aerobatic Championships in 2009.

This award allowed me to visit Santa Paula Airport (KSZP) and take emergency maneuvers and upset recovery training in 2018. I packed my flight bag and headset and found myself headed across the country to sunny California in early June. After accidentally locking myself in the crew room with the newly installed door hardware and having to call the friendly airport manager Rowena Mason and her son, Sammy, to throw me a screwdriver over the wall so I could escape, I settled in before a solid week of training in Santa Paula.

I met my three flight instructors the following morning. My primary instructor, Rochelle Oslick conducted the Stall Spin Awareness module and most of the In-Flight Emergencies and Basic Aerobatics modules with me over the seven days we flew together. I worked with Rochelle further to practice recovery from various unusual attitudes she placed me in. Power, push, roll! There seemed to be a whole lot more attitude options available in a Super Decathlon than a Cessna 172!



TRAINING TO PROFICIENCY AND STAYING CURRENT ON RECOVERY MANEUVERS ALLOWS US TO PRACTICE USEFUL RESPONSES TO A POTENTIAL EMERGENCY AND NOT MAKE A SITUATION WORSE DUE TO STRESS, WHICH IS A FACT OF LIFE.

Judy Phelps was my instructor on Saturday morning, and she taught me how to half-roll the Super Decathlon to inverted flight and complete smooth aileron rolls (slow rolls) with minimum loss of altitude. We had so much fun flying upside down, and like any tailwheel pilot worth their salt, I worked to keep the coordination solid.

“Look at that — what a half-roll to inverted! How do you feel?” Judy asked me.

Whoa! I am flying this beautiful aircraft upside down!

“Fantastic! Absolutely surreal!” I came away from this course wanting a Super Decathlon so badly.

I caught on and soon designed and flew an aerobatic sequence within the limits of a typical aerobatic box, which was not only spectacularly fun but also a challenge providing unparalleled confidence in my flying.

Mark King instructed my last flight to complete the course, during which I flew my aerobatic sequence for him in addition to inverted turns, inverted Dutch rolls, and inverted spins. I think I was laughing that *entire* flight with Mark. What a brilliant time!

The Emergency Maneuver Training program, developed by Rich Stowell, bridges the gap between most of the

flight training for certificates and ratings and aerobatics. The first module is Stall Spin Awareness. Power-off and power-on full stalls, falling leaf, elevator trim stalls, and accelerated stalls. Spin dynamics, orientation, and aggravated and incipient spins are discussed on the ground and briefed before each flight. I learned how to put the aircraft into a spin left or right, and recover on heading after the previously decided number of spins. Rochelle asked me to demonstrate spin recoveries throughout our subsequent flights and verbalize the actions step by step as if I were teaching a student. The In-Flight Emergencies and Basic Aerobatics modules build on the foundation developed in the first part of the course. Returning from the aerobatic practice area after each flight, the landing is treated as a power-off emergency landing.

One of the elements that made a lasting impression on me was the In-Flight Emergencies module in which I trained for simulated control failures and engine-out procedures. Setting up for landing at altitude to figure out what you will need to find and do to get the airplane on the ground as safely as possible is eye-opening. Learning how to prepare for and survive a crash, including aircraft egress and parachute deployment, if so equipped, is invaluable.

Pilot error. Loss of control. These conclusions commonly appear in aviation accident reports. Awareness of the elements that contribute to different control loss scenarios and training for in-flight emergencies with an experienced aerobatic CFI could save your life one day. Beyond routine acronym memorization, I now know how I will respond if my aircraft enters a flight regime outside the normal envelope. Training to proficiency and staying current on recovery maneuvers allows us to practice useful responses to a potential emergency and not make a situation worse due to stress, which is a fact of life. As a scientist, I study impacts of stress as part of the adaptation process. Stress primes the body with the release of epinephrine (adrenaline) and cortisol

into the bloodstream to cope with a demanding situation. Our respiration, pulse, and blood pressure increase, and if excessively stressed, overstimulation of our nervous system can lead to panic and often to not responding in a useful way, so training for the appropriate response is important.

THE CONFIDENCE AND MOTIVATION I GAINED FROM THIS EXPERIENCE ARE INVALUABLE.

What I loved the most about this training at CP Aviation is that the instructor pilots — Rochelle, Judy, and Mark — truly have passion and talent for teaching. They are exceptional CFIs and inspired me to become a flight instructor who bridges the gap between initial training and aerobatics. Getting out of your head and learning to fly an aerobatic aircraft with precision is a valuable skill to expand your own flight envelope. I have found that proactive development of a training plan for proper responses to potentially dangerous situations in flight offers more than just increased safety — it builds confidence and proficiency and the desire to continue to learn more and teach more. I am also now absolutely addicted to aerobatic turns.

There are so many incredibly supportive pilots I either shared stories with or flew with while I was in Santa Paula for this course and a Ninety-Nines meeting with the Ventura County chapter. The confidence and motivation I gained from this experience are invaluable. I encourage pilots from any aviation background to take an emergency maneuvers course as part of recurrent training, to practice listening to your aircraft, and to train for emergencies with an experienced instructor until you are confident you can recognize a potential problem before it becomes one, or if not, respond appropriately without hesitation to correct it. Have fun and fly safe, y'all! **IAC+**



Scholarships

CP AVIATION EMERGENCY MANEUVER TRAINING SCHOLARSHIP IN MEMORY OF VICKI CRUSE

CP Aviation is a family-owned business located in Santa Paula, California. The company currently maintains a fleet of aerobatic airplanes ranging from a Citabria to a Pitts S-2B, and numerous Cessnas. CP is also home to Judy Phelps, master CFI-aerobatic instructor and the 2011 National Flight Instructor of the Year. For more information about CP Aviation please visit www.CPAviation.com. This scholarship aims to promote aviation safety through unusual attitude and aerobatic training. The scholarship includes three modules of the EMT course, which includes Stall Spin Awareness, In-Flight Emergencies, and Basic Aerobatics. The course will be taught in a Citabria and Decathlon.

Qualifications: The recipient must be a member of IAC and hold a private pilot certificate. Scholarship amount: \$3,100 (no cash value)

GREG KOONTZ AIRSHOWS AEROBATIC INSTRUCTOR SCHOLARSHIP IN MEMORY OF BOBBY YOUNKIN

This scholarship consists of an eight-flight training program at Greg Koontz Aerobatics. All required ground school is included as well as a four-night stay at Sky Country Lodge with its all-inclusive accommodations. The recipient would only be responsible for travel to and from the school.

Greg Koontz Aerobatics has partnered with the International Aerobatic Club to promote and administer the scholarship program. The program is not an initial aerobatic course. For that reason the scholarship is targeted at those certificated flight instructors who have some tangible experience in aerobatics and have demonstrated by their activities that they are interested in becoming involved in aerobatic instruction. A current instructor certificate, and a need for the financial support provided by this program are required at the time of the award.

Qualifications: The recipient must be a CFI with some tangible experience in aerobatics. Scholarship value: \$3,600 (no cash value)

THE DOUGLAS YOST MEMORIAL AEROBATIC SCHOLARSHIP GRANT

This scholarship grant is administered by Chapter 78 of the International Acrobatic Club. The scholarship is named for Doug Yost, an aspiring young pilot who worked as a corporate pilot and was also an aerobatic pilot and a rising star in aerobatic competition. The purpose of the scholarship is to promote aviation safety through aerobatic training. The recipient of this scholarship will receive payment of \$2,000 in the form of a check made payable to the aerobatic school where the recipient will be training. Training must be conducted at a facility approved by the Chapter 78 scholarship committee, and training must be completed within a 12-month period from receiving the grant.

The successful scholarship applicant must be well-rounded, involved in school and community activities as well as in aviation. The applicant's academic record should demonstrate that they could successfully complete the educational portion of aerobatic training. Flight instructor comment reports or letters of recommendation must indicate that the successful applicant has the basic flying skills and potential to benefit from this type of training.

HOW TO APPLY

All application forms can be downloaded from www.IAC.org. Follow the submission instructions on the application form carefully. Return the completed applications to iac@eaa.org. Applications received by June 30 are considered for this year's award. The recipients of the three scholarships are announced at EAA AirVenture Oshkosh in July (the recipient does *not* need to be present).



2018 L. PAUL SOUCY AWARD

► **LARRY
ERNEWEIN,**
IAC 12058

BY JIM BOURKE, IAC 434151

ABOUT THE L. PAUL SOUCY AWARD

The purpose of the L. Paul Soucy award is to recognize the pilot who achieves the highest scoring percentage at three or more contests during a contest season. To qualify, one of those contests must be the U.S. National Aerobatic Championships.

The 2018 winner of the L. Paul Soucy award is Larry Ernewein of Innerkip, Ontario, Canada. Larry is the first Canadian to win the award as well as being one of the oldest winners at 67.

INTRODUCING LARRY

Larry lives on a pastoral farm in Ontario between Buffalo and Detroit. You might have seen his place before if you watched the film *Amelia* with Hilary Swank and Richard Gere, as many scenes were shot at this location. Larry did all of the aerobatic flying for the film.

As a young person, Larry's initial interest was in music. His passion was so strong he quit high school to join a Canadian rock band called Truck. Several Truck members went on to great things in music, but Larry found the life wasn't for him. While he is still an active jazz musician, he has no regrets about leaving the rock 'n roll lifestyle behind.

He began flight training in the mid-1970s. He made his way in life as a flight instructor, his first real job. He was brought on to Air Canada as a pilot in 1979 and served there until earning his pension in 2011. He felt early retirement was best because his job was getting in the way of his hobbies.

Larry said his first contest was probably in Canada or possibly Marlette, Michigan, in 1986. Larry has been active in International Aerobatic Club Chapter 88 and Aerobatics Canada Chapter 3 ever since. He is a judge and contest director, having even directed the Canadian National Aerobatic Championships.

Larry and his wife of 36 years, Elaine, have three sons: Alex, Joe, and Andy. Elaine is an active glider pilot who attends soaring camps all over the United States and Europe, and Larry said Andy is by far the best aerobatic pilot in the family.

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THE STORY OF LARRY'S BÜCKER

Larry found his way into competition aerobatics during the 1970s, a period of tremendous growth in the sport. In 1986, having built a Pitts biplane, Larry began competing in Sportsman for a couple of years, then Intermediate, and one contest in Advanced. During that time he built new Ultimate wings for the plane and began working with Charlie Miller at Ultimate Aircraft, ferrying and building Ultimate biplanes. It was his connection with Charlie that turned him on to the Bücker. In 1993, Charlie built 10 fuselages and proved a good salesman. Larry couldn't resist the dream of such a gorgeous airplane so he sold his Pitts and set out on a project that would take 11 years to complete.

The Bücker 131 Jungmann and 133 Jungmeister are widely regarded as finely tuned aerobatic machines, but they are not for first-time builders. Larry describes building a Bücker as being similar to building a Pitts, but there are eight times as many parts to make. Whereas it may take a few hours to make the spars for a Pitts S-1, it will take the builder at least 10 hours for each of the eight spars in the Bücker 131 wing. The fuselage and every other component is similarly detailed. But regardless are the labor required to build them, the beautiful thing about these planes is that they are remarkably light and strong, and therefore nimble. The Jungmann does not have the fastest aileron rolls, but it snap rolls wonderfully. Larry said that is why the K-factors for snap rolls are so low: When these values were determined the Bücker made them easy.

Larry's plane, with 700 hours on it, is one of the few flying around on a Spanish Elizalde Tigre inline four-cylinder 150-hp engine. The vast majority of Jungmanns today are flying with Lycomings. Larry does all the work on his Tigre himself. He said that when the engine gives out he will probably go with a Lycoming. It's a shame what that will do to the lines of the airplane's cowl, but in 2019 it's the right decision.



▶ **ABOVE:** Larry participating in a formation flight of Swiss-liveried German aircraft.

LEFT: Ready to fly at the 2018 Nationals in Oshkosh.

THOUGHTS ON AEROBATICS

With more than 30 years of competition aerobatics under his belt (and maybe 45 or more contests flown), Larry has many valuable thoughts to share about the sport of aerobatics.

Regarding the popularity of the sport, which is not what it was in the '70s and '80s when Larry was building his chops, he said that the problem is that aerobatics, and even flying in general, are fundamentally difficult things to do. He said that people just don't want to do things that are hard as much as they used to. It's much easier now than before to entertain oneself passively.

Larry feels the most important way to begin a successful aerobatic career is to get good training. It's dangerous and wasteful to train yourself. A good instructor will make you safe, confident, and excited about pursuing your dreams.

Larry's greatest aerobatic memory is coming in first place at the U.S. Nationals in 2017. As a Canadian, Larry was not eligible to compete for scoring purposes, but he has no hard feelings about seeing the trophy go to someone else. He is thankful for the opportunity to compete in the United States as an hors concours entrant.

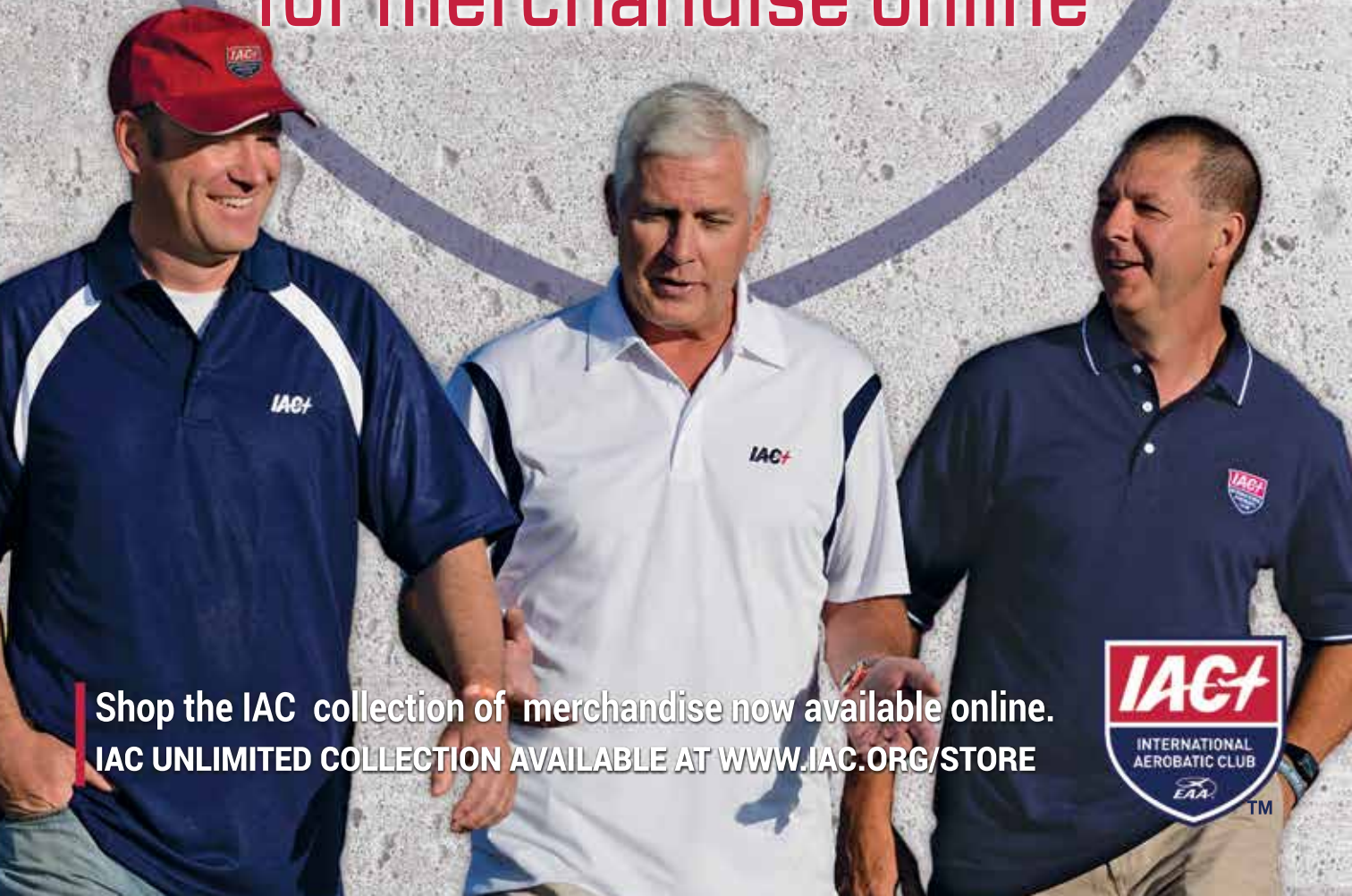
WINNING THE L. PAUL SOUCY AWARD

For the Soucy Award the competitor's two best scores plus the Nationals are averaged together. Larry took the Soucy fairly easily with several percentage points separating him from second place. His best score was at the Michigan Aerobatic Open with an amazing 91.77 percent. His overall average for the year was 87.62 percent.

Congratulations, Larry, for your well-deserved success! **IAC+**



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Long Live *The Acro Exploder*

BY SPENCER SUDERMAN, IAC 429636

AEROBATICS IS FULL OF conundrums. Such as why does the spin — one of the most basic maneuvers — disappear from the Primary Known sequence every few years? And why does *The Acro Exploder*, an ancient email distribution tool that is neither sanctioned nor supported by the International Aerobatic Club, thrive as one of the de facto communications outlets of the sport?

The often misquoted saying that those who fail to learn from history are doomed to repeat it applies wholeheartedly to *The Exploder* in its ancient glory.

If you have been involved for at least a few years, *The Exploder* feels like Groundhog Day all the time. The most repeated annual topics center around aircraft maintenance and upgrades, contest announcements and status, release of the Known sequences along with techniques to fly them, and ensuing rebukes of the IAC for category creep that always seems to favor monoplanes — I'm a Pitts pilot, so I had to get my two cents in on that topic.

Perhaps the attraction of the aptly named *Exploder* is how the lack of control enables free-flowing discussions that usually drift off topic to the simultaneous amusement and bewilderment of all. A recent thread titled “Canopy Reference/Tape Marks” started with the original poster innocently inquiring: “Any suggestions on what type of tape/markings device to use on the inside of the canopy to make reference marks?”

An interesting and innocent inquiry indeed, which was richly rewarded with a bevy of responses, some of which actually answered the question. Certainly, the recommendation to use thin strips of blue painter's tape or automotive pin striping were helpful. Other respondents admonished against the use of such “crutches” to avoid developing actual skills. Aerobatics is supposed to be fun, and it's become clear that some pilots have just as much fun behind the keyboard as flying their planes and won't put up with the mundane in either situation. It's not clear what toilet seats and competition pistol shooting have to do with aerobatics; however, both things entered the fray in this

PERHAPS THE ATTRACTION OF THE APTLY NAMED EXPLODER IS HOW THE LACK OF CONTROL ENABLES FREE-FLOWING DISCUSSIONS THAT USUALLY DRIFT OFF TOPIC TO THE SIMULTANEOUS AMUSEMENT AND BEWILDERMENT OF ALL.

particular discourse. It did become apparent that many people think the rear sight on a pistol is a distraction in competitive shooting — something new I learned on *The Exploder*.

A quick search of the IAC website came up empty when entering the terms “toilet seat” and “pistol shooting,” which wasn't surprising. Removal and re-introduction of the spins from Primary, however, has been discussed, argued, and vitrioled on every occasion that it actually happened, and yet there is no overwhelming agreement. Some arguments will never move past the agree to disagree stage.

Keep the dialogue going; I'll be watching.

Fly safe. *IAC*

► **EDITOR'S NOTE:** IAC does not operate the Acro Exploder. To join the group, go to www.googlegroups.com and search for the group 'aerobatics.'



A selection of posts from the aerobatic web.

#IAC #Aerobatics

#SportAerobatics #WingWag



Susan and I had a wonderful visit with three-time National Aerobatic Champion and IAC Hall of Fame recipient Clint McHenry. Clint is 92 years old now and happily living with his youngest daughter and husband Leigh McHenry Woodham and Brent in Belle Glade, FL. We were lucky to share our visit with daughter Karen McHenry Stephens and her husband John, Ed Potter and his wife Virginia. Although a bit frail, Clint continues to enjoy watching golf on TV and reading *Sport Aerobatics*. It's heartwarming to see the love and care the McHenry family provides for their dad and how Clint lights up when talking about aviation.

 @BRIANDBECKER



Pitts S-2S N8523E at Oshkosh or Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, 1982. I always liked this paint scheme on the Pitts.


 G.A.NOVACK > PITTS SPECIAL

Thanks to all for the responses on my question regarding the GPS antenna location. The net of the feedback corroborates what I thought I knew before I asked the question. The ground plane size seems to be the most debated aspect.

The Garmin GDL 82 data link requires an L Band ADS-B Out (the one already on the airplane for the existing transponder). The GDL 82 goes between the installed transponder and that antenna.

The GDL 82 data link needs position info for the ADS-B output, which it can get from an already installed GPS (which I don't have) or the internal GPS inside the data link unit. It needs a "top side" GPS antenna with unobstructed views up. My prior experience (G200 was carbon except for a fiberglass vertical stab for the internal antenna) and all subsequent feedback says that internal antennas are ok if the shell is fiberglass, but not carbon. Some anecdotal info I got says that some GPS antenna installations are ok even through a carbon shell. I think this is less predictable and desirable, but your mileage may vary.

The Garmin installation info recommends a 7.5" radius ground plane around the GPS antenna! Many people have questioned the need for this and a vast number of installations I've seen don't have any, or very little, ground plane for their GPS antenna. I think the big ground plane recommended by Garmin is a "best practice" recommendation to maximize performance and installation success rates. My plan at this point is to mount the antenna inside the cockpit with a sky view and very small ground plane. If this doesn't pass muster, it will have to be relocated to an exterior surface where I can add a big ground plane.

 BOB FREEMAN > AEROBATICS@GOOGLEGROUPS.COM



Brian Becker

BY GARY DEBAUN, IAC 4145

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Chapter affiliation:
 IAC 23 lifetime member

THIS MONTH'S PERSONALITY is *longtime* International Aerobatic Club member Brian Becker, and this is a *very short* bio of Brian's life-long aviation career. Brian soloed on his 16th birthday and has accumulated more than 10,000 hours in 163 different aircraft, including the Su-27 Flanker and the Russian AN-225 (the world's largest aircraft). He served for 11 years as an IAC director, was chair of the IAC Awards Program, secretary-director of the United States

Aerobatic Foundation, and a recipient of the EAA and IAC President's Awards, among *many* others. While Brian was president and chief pilot of Pompano Air Center, the world's largest aerobatic sales and service facility, PAC was instrumental in the development and marketing of Pitts, Extra, Air-Repair Stearman, and the worldwide distributor of the Russian Sukhoi aerobatic aircraft. Brian and his wife, Susan, who is also an IAC competitor, live in Vero Beach, Florida.

GD: BRIAN, LET'S START WITH THE USUAL FIRST QUESTION. HOW DID YOU BECOME INVOLVED IN AVIATION AND AEROBATICS?

BB: My father, John P. Becker, was a Barnstormer in the '30s, held three time-to-ground delayed parachute world records at the Cleveland National Air Races, was also a wing walker, Northwest Airlines captain, and owned the air carrier Modern Air Transport. I grew up around aviation pioneers and celebrities and knew as a child that a career in aviation was my destiny. Early on I attended many air shows and air races, including EAA, Antique Aircraft Association fly-ins, and OX-5 events, which helped to develop my interest in aerobatics. In 1973, I worked for J. Dawson Ransome, president of the Aerobatic Club of America (ACA), at Oshkosh as a fundraiser. In 1974, I started teaching aerobatics under the tutelage of air show performer Jim Holland at Pompano Beach, Florida. In 1976, with the help of my father, I started Pompano Air Center, which was a full-service FBO, flight school, and aircraft sales center for the first ever combined Cessna/Piper dealership. When we became a Pitts dealer and aerobatic flight school, we were lucky enough to have Clint McHenry join us, and that was the start of Pompano Aerobatic Center. Surrounded by such talent, I was able to work my way up to the Advanced category and enjoyed flying many different Pitts, Extra, and Sukhoi models.

GD: WHAT WAS THE FIRST AEROBATIC AIRPLANE THAT YOU COMPETED IN?

BB: My first aerobatics were in a Luscombe, Cessna Aerobat, and Decathlon. The first aerobatic airplane I competed in was a Pitts S-2A.

GD: WHEN AND WHERE WAS YOUR FIRST AEROBATIC CONTEST AND HOW DID IT GO?

BB: The first aerobatic contest I flew was in the late '70s at River Ranch, Florida, in the Sportsman category. It was a wonderful experience, and all went well. I don't remember how the rankings ended, but I remember Kermit Weeks and Linda Meyers flying the same category. Many of the terrific people I met in those early days remain friends to this day.

GD: YOU WERE INSTRUMENTAL IN DEVELOPING THE LONG-STANDING AND MUCH LOVED SEBRING AEROBATIC CONTEST. TELL US A LITTLE ABOUT HOW THAT STARTED.

BB: As aerobatic activity and interest grew in the '70s, River Ranch was no longer a viable venue for Chapter 23 to host. The contest was moved to Sebring, Florida, which was a perfect venue, having been a former B-17 military training base and home of the 24 Hours of Sebring road race. Many chapter members are responsible for its success and popularity over the 78 contests it has hosted. At its peak, the

Sebring contest had as many as 86 competitors from all around the world. I think the biggest part of Sebring's success was that we tried to include the entire family in the event and make it fun. Besides having a world-class marked box, excellent judges, and all the elements you would expect, participants looked forward to the evening programs: pool parties, square dances, karaoke, and costume parties, to name a few. The stranger and crazier they were, the more fun we seemed to have. I am so proud to see the tradition carried on by the current members of IAC Chapter 23. It is a daunting task to keep the momentum and excitement going for so many years.

GD: HOW DID YOU MANAGE TO BECOME THE WORLDWIDE DISTRIBUTOR FOR SUKHOI?

BB: In 1988, the international trading company for the Soviet Union, Aviaexport, along with American businessman, Jeffrey Barrie, had asked Mike Heuer for a contact in the United States who might be interested in importing Yakovlev sport aerobatic airplanes. PAC was then approached to fly to Moscow to discuss possibilities, but we were really only interested in the Sukhoi aircraft. At that time, PAC was the largest Pitts dealership, plus we were the exclusive Extra Aircraft dealer for the Americas, and thus already had a full plate. In spite of this, I arranged for the Soviets to participate in the Air/Space America 88 show in San Diego and for Clint McHenry to test fly the Sukhoi 26. That air show (the one-time U.S. attempt to rival the Paris Air Show) was the first appearance of the Soviets in the United States and was the start of an exciting era of perseverance and diplomacy with the West using Russian-manufactured sport aircraft. PAC later signed a \$12 million contract for worldwide distribution rights and established an international dealer network.

GD: WHAT ARE YOUR IMPRESSIONS OF FLYING THE SUKHOI?

BB: First of all, I love all airplanes. I am delighted that PAC played an important part in the sales and marketing of the Pitts, Extra, and Sukhoi aircraft lines and contributed to the excitement of the IAC chapter network. Each airplane has its unique capabilities and magnetisms. Flying the Sukhoi gave me the impression of flying a warbird. The sound of the nine-cylinder radial is unmistakable and one you can't ignore. To me the limiting factor of the performance, like all aerobatic airplanes, is the pilot.

GD: DID YOU HAVE A FAVORITE PRE-FLIGHT ROUTINE LIKE LISTENING TO CERTAIN MUSIC OR JUST GETTING AWAY ALONE FOR A WHILE?

BB: I had the privilege of training with many members of the U.S. Aerobatic Team when I was flying in the Advanced category. Clint McHenry, Bob Davis, Leo Loudenslager, and others instilled in me the necessity to have mentally flown the sequence and considered every factor, including wind, positioning, presentation, and performance prior to making the flight. Getting away and concentrating on those elements was key to their success. Not necessarily mine!

GD: DO YOU HAVE ANY ADVICE YOU WOULD LIKE TO GIVE TO OUR NEW AEROBATIC PILOTS?

BB: In addition to the factors mentioned above, I believe that being critiqued by a qualified coach or judge will save you a lot of fuel and time. What you think looks perfect in the cockpit most likely is not what the judges are looking for from the ground. The second is safety. The most dangerous aerobatic pilot is one who becomes overly confident in their ability and aircraft performance. You start to think you know all there is to know, but you don't!

"I BELIEVE THAT BEING CRITIQUED BY A QUALIFIED COACH OR JUDGE WILL SAVE YOU A LOT OF FUEL AND TIME."

GD: DO YOU HAVE ANY INTERESTS OUTSIDE OF AVIATION AND AEROBATICS?

BB: My wife, Susan, and I have been avid boaters for years and love to travel. Most of our interests are aviation-related, and we are still quite active in several local aviation organizations. These memberships have blessed us with many friends whom we consider to be more like family, and we are happy to spend most of our free time with them. I sold Pompano Air Center in 2001, and I like to say that I have just about used up all of my accrued vacation time! **IAC!**

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Welcome, New IAC Members

Members are the heartbeat of IAC, and our heart is beating at a healthy pace. In the last quarter, IAC greeted 63 new members into the ranks of aerobatic competitors, recreational pilots, and enthusiasts around the United States and the world.

In addition, we especially recognize the members joining or upgrading to a lifetime membership, demonstrating a commitment to enhance the safety, education, competition, and enjoyment of aerobatics.



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New Jersey
Herman Gene,
North Carolina
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OHIO

Michael Absten
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Rex Damschroder

OKLAHOMA

Joel Howard

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Walter Moeller

NEW ZEALAND

Ivan Krippner

TURKEY

Nur Dorak

UNITED KINGDOM

Trevor Dugan
Umberto Izzo

UNITED STATES

ALABAMA

Derek Boone

The Quiz Answers

1

He won four consecutive World Final Freestyle titles and nine total U.S. 4-Minute Free titles.

2

A Pitts S-2C that he also used to teach aerobatic instruction at his flight school. He upgraded to the Ultimate 20-300S in 2005, followed by the MX2 in 2007, and his current aircraft, MXS-RH in 2011.

3

The Canadian Forces Snowbirds Demonstration Team created the Society of Honorary Snowbirds to recognize individuals who have provided outstanding support for their team, demonstrating an "unwavering, whole-hearted, selfless and enduring commitment to the team and its mission." Inductees include: Bob Hoover, Sean D. Tucker, The Pietsch Family, Art and Judy Scholl, Danny Clisham, Julie Clark, and many other distinguished honorees.

4

The Giles 202.

5

It was a race around the Isle of Wight between the two aircraft to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the first Spitfire produced. The Spitfire won.



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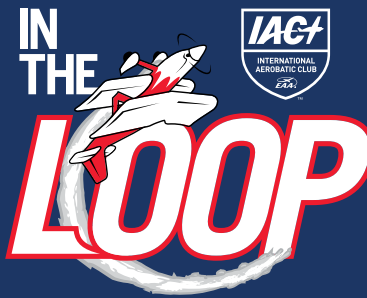
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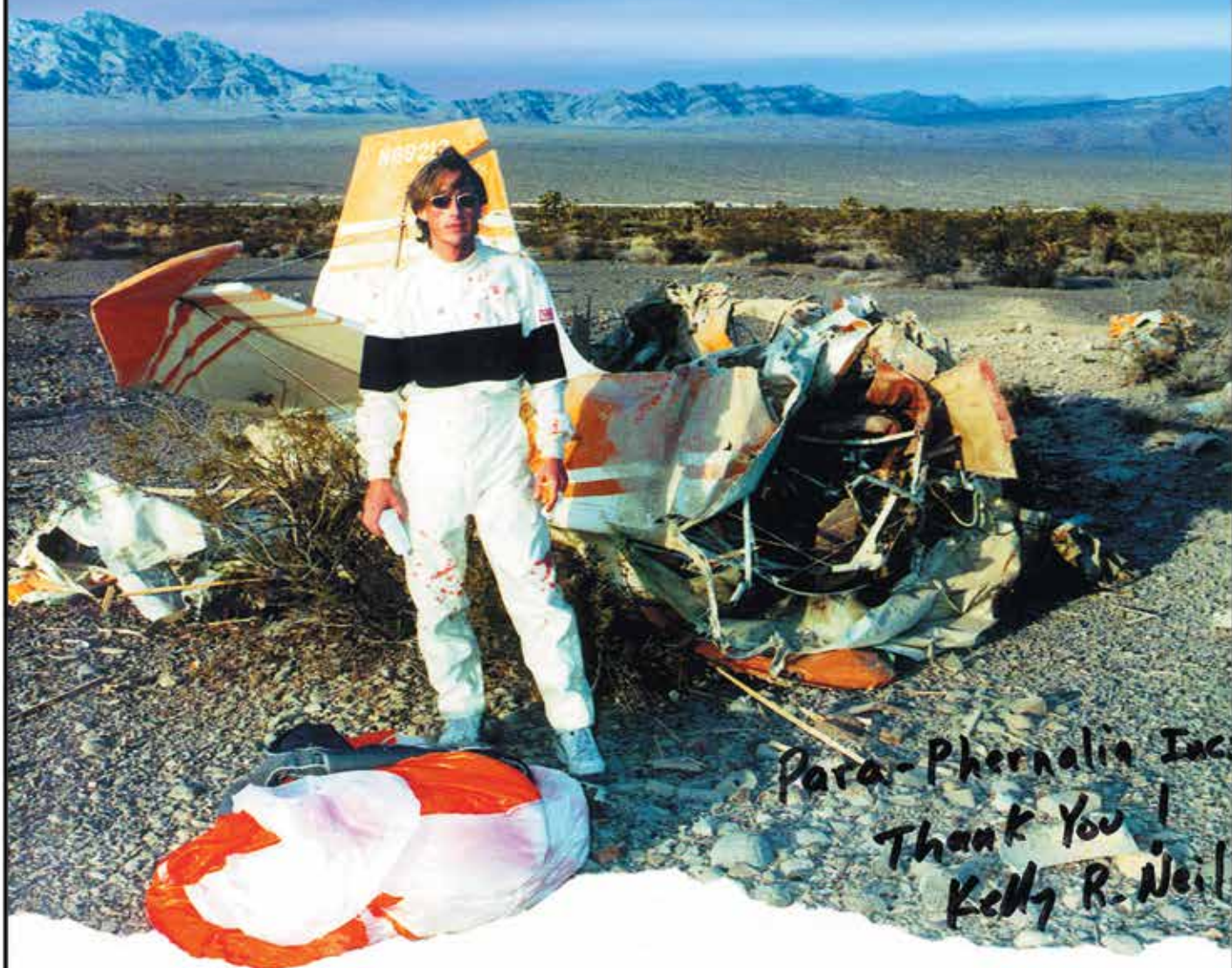
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