

Team Manager's Report US Advanced Team 2025

- Advanced Team: The Advanced Team members that represented the US in Hungary were Kyle Collins (Captain), Craig Gifford (Coach and team member), Brittanee Lincoln, Marty Flournoy and Stan Moye. Britt received a P3 silver medal (Free Unknown 2). Craig, Britt and Kyle received a bronze team medal, as the top three scoring US team members, with a percentage of 75.72%.
- Coaching: Craig Gifford graciously volunteered to coach the team on top of being a team member. His skills as a pilot and multi-worlds team member were invaluable to everyone, including myself. The team greatly appreciated his time and effort because there was a lot of it.
- Attrition: We started strong with a team of 8. For personal and professional reasons, three of our team members had to withdraw. I communicated with the additional three pilots that met the percentage criteria to be on the team had space been available. They were enthusiastic but again, personal and professional reasons kept all three from being able to join the team.
- Additional Members: We had the privilege of having two additional “team” members that contributed greatly. Raul O’Brien volunteered and very successfully managed the social media accounts for the team. He did an excellent job photographing, videoing, and sharing so our fans at home could follow all our adventures and misadventures! Peter “Kjell” Ballard volunteered as team physician. He assisted the team with hydration, pre-flight stretching, mental and physical preparation, and so much more. And he traveled with the most amazing first aid kit I’ve ever seen!
- Organization: Though a bid wasn’t received and accepted for WAAC until January 2025 and the dates overlapped with the 2025 US Nationals, herculean rescheduling efforts were made for team members to be able to attend WAAC and Nationals. Nationals were pushed back allowing team members time to get back to the US and transition to Kansas. The WAAC organizers struggled to make up for lost time having started so late, but they did and were very helpful and responsive throughout the entire process. The accommodations and events were very well thought out and enjoyable. The combining of WAAC and WIAC (World Intermediate Aerobatic Competition) meant less opportunity for Advanced to fly, which is why P4 was cancelled.
- Aircraft: Craig and Britt were able to rent a European registered aircraft from Poland. With some additional parts and a lot of tweaking, they managed to get their rented Extra into fighting order. Stan had a new Extra SX at the Extra factory in Germany that Kyle planned to fly. Stan also shipped his Extra 300 to Germany for assembly for he and Marty to fly. The Extra 300 was so delayed by customs that Kyle, Marty and Stan were all forced to share the Extra SX for the competition. All the team members did an impressive job of hopping into unknown aircraft and flying the wheel pants off of it!
- Insurance: Insurance was difficult to obtain and incredibly expensive for the N-registered aircraft. There were no US insurance companies willing to cover aircraft in Hungary, for much the same reasons as experienced in Poland in 2024. We were able to obtain insurance through the same French company that was used for the 2024 Poland contest.
- Licensing: Only two of our pilots required special licensing for Hungary, as the other three were flying N-registered aircraft. While it was an agonizing wait for the organizers to figure out and explain what the process was going to be, an open book test was created to satisfy the necessary requirements.

- Special Thanks: I, and the Team, would like to give special thanks to a few people that helped to make this training year and contest a success. Britt Lincoln, once again, for taking on the task of designing and ordering the team uniforms. Without Britt, they would be wearing velour track suits. Mike Cappiello for graciously offering his waivered box in Wauchula, FL, for camps and assisting the team with radio management, airport liaising and anything asked of him. Monique Hartmann for assisting at every Florida camp. She helped cook, ferry pilots, set up and take down, and coordinated with Sebring and Wauchula for practice. Her assistance was invaluable and very appreciated. Alice Johnson for sharing her vast knowledge of all things Team with me. Chris Rudd for being a parts and people runner from Germany to Hungary and back.

It has been my honor and privilege to be Team Manager for this Team. It was an adventure I never expected but loved every minute of (well, almost every minute!).