

THE HAMMERHEAD

March 2005

From the Pilot's Seat

By Steve Till

2/25/05

A Contest Proposal

Sheldon Apsell once suggested to me that each IAC chapter should maintain a Decathlon a Pitts and an Extra. Instead of us each bringing our aircraft to a contest we would all use those supplied by the sponsoring chapter. This would make winning the contest a matter of pilot skill, not superior aircraft.



There are all sorts of arguments to be made against this idea. The practical questions of providing insurance and how we would sequence contest flights with only three aircraft stand out. There are also “cultural” questions that come to bear on the situation. For instance-are we ready to give up our personal aircraft?

Between Sheldon’s idealistic dream and the way the sport is pursued lies a great gulf. Maybe it would be worthwhile taking a few steps into that gulf to see if we might achieve some of the benefits if the idea without having to sell off thousands of Pitts.

I have had some experience doing just what Sheldon suggested. I have flown in Contests throughout the Northeast, in Canada and at the Nationals in Decathlons owned by others. My costs per contest are much less than my compatriots who have to bring their mount along. I can travel by car or (gasp!) commercial airlines at relatively few bucks per mile. I don’t have to worry about weather enroute. I don’t have to pay the fuel bill to shlep a Yak to Pennsylvania. (The cost of the Yak’s oil alone would bankrupt Lichtenstein) .I pay rental for the time in the aircraft which often comes to less than an hour’s practice. When the Decathlon is ferried to the contest I pay my percentage of the ferry costs, which depends on how many pilots are sharing the plane. Because my costs are less I can attend more contests each year. Provided I can find a Decathlon to rent I can go to contests much further afield.

There are a fair number of pilots in Chapter 35 who aren’t airplane owners. Many of them flew their first contest in one of several school Decathlons. These regularly attend our two New England contests, Orange, and Springfield as well as the Kathy Yaffee Challenge Maytown, and Gatineau in Canada.

Because we all know each other the common use of these aircraft is easy to arrange and the instructors from the school can be comfortable with the skill level of their renters. When I went

to the Nationals, the school which rented me the Decathlon, required a check-ride with one of their pilots.

We could take a few simple steps to make something like Sheldon's idea possible. The first thing we could do is ask if aerobatic flight schools would be willing to open the use of their aircraft to people from other regions of the country. In those situations where the schools agree, the availability of the aircraft and a contact number for the school should be part of the contest information. This would give prospective contest pilots a chance to contact the school and arrange for a check ride when they arrive at the contest. Possibly if this practice catches hold we might work on a certification, which any aerobatic school could provide, which would shortcut this requirement.

There are also pilots who would allow visiting pilots to fly their craft with them as a safety pilot. This, of course, comprises a weight penalty for the competing pilot, but this is an acceptable burden if it allows you to fly another contest.

Sheldon's fantasy was based on an interesting idea. A way for more people to fly in more contests. We may not be able to make Sheldon's fantasy a reality but we can pursue our dreams one small step at a time.

Dues Are Due

It's time for dues to be paid!

As spring approaches and we ready our trusty craft for the season ahead, please remember to do your part to maintain the Chapter that provides you with so much fun.

Dues are \$35.00 (with the Hammerhead coming by mail) and \$25.00 (with the e-mail version of the HH).

Dues to-

Sheldon Apsell
20 Malubar Ln.
Newton, Ma. 02458

Your Emperor thanks you!

Volunteers Needed for Orange

As you all know, running an aerobatic contest requires volunteers to man several key positions. Without these key volunteers a contest can't happen. I currently need to fill the following positions:

Registrar – Needed Thursday through Sunday. The registrar handles registration of pilots and creates the pilot paperwork needed for the judging line.

Volunteer Coordinator – Needed Friday through Sunday. The VC coordinates volunteers so that contest flying runs smoothly.

Scorer – Needed Friday through Sunday. Takes scores from the judges line and enters them into the computer.

If you know anyone who might be willing to do any of these jobs, please contact me at 781-646-5038 or email rjpetit@earthlink.net.

Thanx

Rob Petit
Orange Contest Director

Have You Hugged Your Parachute Lately?

By Weston Liu

[This article was printed in IAC Chapter 35's March 1998 newsletter, "The Hammerhead."]

Has your parachute been sitting in the corner all winter? Have you just been using it as a seat cushion since the last contest that you flew in? When was the last time you thought about what you would do if you ever had to use it? Have you EVER thought about how to use it?

With Spring coming, its time to pull your parachute out of the corner and get safe and legal for the new season. First, don't just ship it off to your neighborhood parachute rigger for repack. Start the season by putting it on, sitting in your airplane, and going through a bailout. If you are in the middle of the box, you hear BANG, and the airplane stops going in the direction you want to point it, what procedure is going to get you out of the airplane and under an open parachute?

When "walking" through a bailout, the first thing I tell pilots is DO NOT UNDO YOUR SEATBELT. If the airplane is not flying straight and level, and the canopy or door is not open, then you need to be anchored down to work the handles. Step #1 is to open the canopy or door so you have a clear path out of the airplane. If your bailout starts with a loud BANG that leaves an obvious hole to dive through, then you can skip step #1.

If you wear a helmet with built-in communications, then step #2 is to unhook whatever cables plug you into the airplane. You don't want to be slowed down, or even get your neck snapped around, as you leave. I wouldn't bet my life on comm cords unplugging themselves or conveniently breaking when I wanted them to.

Now that you are ready to climb over the side, reach one hand out and grab something that you can use to pull yourself out of the seat and get yourself started in the direction you want to leave in. If the airplane is flopping around, or even just spinning, climbing over the side may be harder than you think.

Finally, undo your seatbelt with your free hand and get going. Grab and kick until you are in free fall. There are no style points awarded for being graceful. Once you kick off the airplane, look down at the silver ripcord handle, put BOTH hands on it, and pull it as hard and as far as you can. If the entire cable is not flopping free in front of you, you haven't pulled it far enough. The next WHACK! You feel should be your parachute opening.

Wondering what pulling the ripcord feels like? When you take your parachute to be packed, put it on and have the rigger catch the parachute as you pull the ripcord. Everyone should do this once a year. After all, if you wait until you have a big problem in your airplane before you try this, its not practice anymore.

“Red Book” Prints

Farrell Woods has some extra printed copies of the 2005 rules. If you would like to purchase a copy, drop him an email at ftw@adelphia.net. First come, first served.

Regional Series Results

The official regional series results were posted. Here are the results for the northeast region:

Weston Liu	Sportsman	Northeast	79.88%	1 st
Tom Parsons	Sportsman	Northeast	79.43%	2 nd
Rob Holland	Advanced	Northeast	80.52%	1 st
Alex Belov	Advanced	Northeast	79.00%	2 nd
Andy Cooper	Advanced	Northeast	69.41%	3 rd

Congratulations to all!

Announcing the 2005 New England Aerobatics Contest

The New England Aerobatic Contest will be held at Orange Municipal Airport in Orange, MA from April 29th through May 1st. This again is a little earlier than normal.

This will be a 5 category power (Primary through Unlimited) contest. Registration will be available and the box will be open for practice on Thursday April 28th.

Preregistration, directions and other details are below. We hope to see you there!

Rob Petit
Contest Director

PREREGISTRATION

Please do preregister, even if you might not show up. It helps us tremendously.

To preregister online, visit http://acro.aerobatics.ws/pre_reg_contest.html.

For registration by snail-mail, contact:

Rob Petit, rjpetit@earthlink.net, or (781) 646-5038

Be sure to include your name, home mailing address, daytime and evening telephone numbers with your request.

If you do, we will:

- Greatly appreciate it.
- Be able to run the contest more efficiently, meaning more flying time for you, the pilots.

Please don't send any payment until you show up at the contest.

PLANNED SCHEDULE

Thursday, April 28

0900 - 1900 Registration; box open for practice (optional for any competitor)
1900 Food on the field, TBD

Friday, April 29

0900 - 1200 Registration; box open for practice (also optional)
1200 Pilot's briefing ? Intermediate & Advanced
1300 - 1830 Contest flying -- Intermediate & Advanced
1900 Food on the field, TBD

Saturday, April 30

0700 sharp Pilots' briefing - all categories
0800 Registration (Primary and Sportsman)
0830 - 1830 Contest flying -- all categories
1900 Banquet

Sunday, May 1

0900 Pilots' briefing
1000 - 1400 Contest flying -- all categories
1430 Awards ceremony

HOTELS

The rate info here is a few years out of date but should give a decent indication of prices.

Colonial Bed and Breakfast, in Gardner. Great place. They were great about cancellations with the rainout in 2000, so probably deserve to be rewarded (expect a 48-hour cancellation policy). About \$95 with breakfast, \$90.00 without. (978) 630-2500. 20 minutes east of the airport on Rte. 2.

Wachusett Village Inn, in Westminster (where the banquet is). Very nice hotel, and they clearly want our business. May get discounted rates in the \$100-\$120 range. (978) 874-2000.

Super 8 Motel in Gardner, Mass. Their cancellation policies took a turn for the worse a couple years back, so inquire if that's a concern to you. (978) 630-2888. Standard room rate is \$75 for 1 or 2 people.

Executive Inn, Orange, Mass. (978) 544-8864.

The Hammerhead – March 2005

Quabbin Gateway Motel, Orange, Mass. (978) 544-2986

TRANSPORTATION

We'll provide transportation to & from any of the hotels above. If you fly in, you won't need a car. But if you want the additional flexibility, here are a couple places that have been willing to leave a rental for you at the airport:

Athol Ford (978) 249-3531
Enterprise (413) 774-5092

BANQUET

7:00 Saturday evening at The Old Mill restaurant in Westminster, Mass. What can I say. These guys are the greatest. Terrific place and everyone walks away happy and very well fed.

AWARDS

In addition to awards for the top 3 pilots in each category, we will award:

- * Jack Nolan Memorial Trophy (Best First-Time Sportsman Award)
 - * Chapter Team Trophy
 - * Pitts Trophy (Highest placing Pitts/Eagle driver)
 - * American Champion Award (Highest placing 7- or 8- Series pilot)
 - * Grass Roots Achievement Award
 - * Most Creative Freestyle Award (but only if it wasn't meant to be)
-

FEES

Contest registration
Primary \$60
Sportsman 70
Intermediate 80
Advanced 85

Hangar, per night \$20

Saturday evening banquet: \$35 per person

WHAT TO BRING

For the aircraft:

Copies of airframe and engine log pages showing current annual/condition signoff; airworthiness certificate; registration certificate; operating limitations; current weight and balance data, in-pack chute (<120 days) & pack card; proof of insurance (\$1 million minimum), tiedowns if you anticipate leaving your airplane outdoors.

For the pilot:

Pilot and medical certificates; IAC membership card; FAI license (Unlimited competitors only); ** 9 ** copies each of free style forms A, B and C, signed and dated by a current IAC judge (it is your responsibility to ensure your Free is legal for 2005); cash.

Photocopies of documents are permissible for IAC contest registration; however, FAA requirements may differ.

HOW TO GET THERE

By air: NY Sectional, Gardner (GDM) VORTAC 292 degree radial, 10.3NM. 42.34.04N, 72.17.28W. VOR and NDB approaches.

Runways 14-32: 4998'x150'; 1-19: 5000'x75'. Field elevation 555'MSL. Orange Unicom 122.8. Runway 1-19 will be closed during practice and contest flying. Expected NOTAMS: fly right traffic for runway 32, left traffic for runway 14. **Caution:** The aerobatic box is southwest and parallel to runway 32 and immediately over runways 1-19. Do not overfly the airport. No touch and goes.

By car:

From Boston: I-90 West to Rte. 128 (I-95) North to Rte. 2 West. Continue below.

From anywhere: U.S. Route 2 to exit 16 (U.S. Route 202, Amherst-Belchertown exit). Go left off the exit. Travel 1 mile North and turn left onto Partridgeville Rd. Travel ? mile West; find the airport on your left.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Contest Director: Rob Petit, 319 Lake St., Arlington MA, 02474, (H) 781-646-5038, (W) 978-858-9538, rjpetit@earthlink.net.

Orange Municipal Airport manager: Len Bedaw, W: (978) 544-8189

Calendar of Events

April 9th

Chapter Meeting/Practice Day

Mansfield, MA

April 28th – May 1st

New England Aerobatic Contest

Orange, MA

Chapter Information

President- Steve Till
779 North Road
Carlisle, Ma. 01741
(978) 369-8592 H
setill@comcast.net

Vice President- Janusz Becla
janusz1@eudoramail.com

Treasurer- Sheldon Apsell
20 Malubar Lane
Newton, MA 02459
617-332-4795 H

Chapter 35 - Web Site
<http://iac35.aerobatics.ws>

Newsletter stuff goes to:
Rob Petit at
rjpetit@earthlink.net

Chapter 35 mailing list signup (highly recommended):
iac35-subscribe@yahoogroups.co