

Sport Aerobatic Club of South Africa



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LATEST SAC NEWS

February

2010

I have just returned from the UAE and had a super time at the Al Ain airshow. Well done to the Goodyear team of Dennis Spence, Glen Warden and Neil Trollip, as well as skydivers Graham, Ricky and Johann for flying the S.A flag with such distinction, certainly a highlight of the show!

DON'T FORGET TO UPDATE YOUR DIARIES for the new season. There have been some minor changes due to conflicts with Air shows. Contest dates are on the Website: www.aerobatics.co.za

Gauteng Regional Champs

The first contest of the year will be the Gauteng Regional Champs which will be held at Vereeniging this Saturday, the 20th February. All classes will be flown! We have more than 20 entries to date, including an International entry! Please enter by Friday the 19th. Remember to have all your paperwork ready. An important reminder to all Advanced Pilots: In preparation for AWAC the Advanced class will fly the Free Program and an Unknown sequence. Once again the council has not refilled the fuel tanks. We have a limited amount of fuel for sale so please tanker as much as you can. Also please encourage friends and family to support the Aerobatics.

Aerobatic Extravaganza and EAA Sun 'n Fun

Please note the change to our calendar. Due to logistical problems the EAA event planned for Tempe had to be moved to Klerksdorp. The flying club could not cater for two events in consecutive weekends so they approached us to move our contest so that the events could be held together. There has been some confusion regarding the date of the contest. The Extravaganza contest will be held on **Sunday, 21st March** with practice slots in the afternoon on Saturday 20th. I think this will be a great way for us to showcase our sport, and excellent for our sponsors and members to mix with the EAA and G.A Pilots. Please support this weekend as it promises to be loads of flying fun! Cliff Lotter is trying to arrange hangarage for Saturday!

IAC (USA) Aerobatic Magazine Article

During the Nationals in Oudtshoorn we had a visitor from the States along with Alan Fergus. He wrote a fantastic article on his experience flying here and of his thoughts on the state of Aerobatics in South Africa. Here is an excerpt from that article, a feather in the cap for our Members, Committee and Sport. Well done to you all.

Flying there is a freedom, but of course it isn't free. Aero clubs are the Norm as they are in most countries I have visited, helping to spread out the expenses all they can. I saw plenty of people out flying, some in homebuilts like RV-7'S and -8'S, some in Citabria's and of course the usual stock. It is about like it is here, accessible, but more to those that earn a good wage or those willing to sacrifice to afford it. This makes aerobatics a small part of the big picture, and participation in Aerobatic Clubs and Contests a bit thin. Sound familiar? The focus organization for Aerobatics in S.A is the Sport Aerobatic Club. These guys are no 'Sluffs". The Club sends a team to compete in the Advanced World Aerobatic Championships(AWAC) and is home to Chief International Judge John Gaillard. The club organizes annual contests and has a great system of classes. A beginner starts in

the basic class and cannot advanced until earning at least 75% score. There is a sportsman class to go to next and of course, Intermediate, Advanced and Unlimited. So you can see it is about the same as here, but after that it starts to differ a bit. These South Africans decided they were leaving a whole bunch of Pilots and Aircraft out of the loop by sticking to the standard rules. These guys scooped up a whole new group by simply designing a separate RV class. That's Right! They write a routine appropriate for the RV pilots/aircraft and give them all a chance to compete in their own Arena. Not to stop at that, the Club also has a class called the Classic category. This is a class for non inverted system airplanes to compete with like equipment. Cubs, Citabrias, Stearmans and all kinds of homebuilts get a chance to go for a trophy without being scored down for flying a bit of an arc in their rolls! I am sure this concept isn't new but what escapes me is why it isn't huge here in the states. With more RV's flying than Fire Ants in my yard, you would think a club like ours could double its size with an RV class. A classic class would round up, I don't know how many Pilots/Airplanes that could be getting their first taste of our great sport. Who could guess how many of those would move up to the more advanced categories. Flying just isn't cheap, buying a dedicated aerobatic competition plane is unattainable for a great many of us. The truth is: I would be less than comfortable flying in any contest, even Primary, when my non-inverted system airplane has to go face to face with an Extra while we're all being graded for perfect lines and symmetry. Getting my blood revved up to compete means I have a reasonable chance to go home with a trophy. A category that whittles the competition down to more even grounds sounds fun to me.

By Greg Koontz

Al Ain Airshow and Air GP

From African Pilot newsletter:

Aero GP held in conjunction with the Al Ain airshow

The Aero GP was held in conjunction with the Al Ain Aerobatic Show in the UAE. Six pilots from around the world including National Unlimited Aerobatic Champions from Britain, Spain and Hungary, European freestyle champion, European advanced aerobatic champion and Reno Racers as well as our own aerobatic and display pilot Nigel Hopkins. Qualifying rounds were flown on the first three show days with the finals on the main show day. The event forms part of the airshow displays and involves three disciplines:

- Aerial combat: The Aerial combat was a crowd thriller as two aircraft drawn to 'fight' flew head on at 800 feet before calling fight on at the merge. Stringent safety factors are imposed including a hard deck of 500 feet AGL and a minimum airspeed of 70 knots. In the end Castor managed to pip Zoltan for 1st place with Nigel in 3rd place.
- Freestyle Aerobatics to music: The freestyle aerobatics allowed the pilots the opportunity to show off their aerobatic skills to music. A combination of scores added up from an international judge for technical merit and from a panel chosen from the crowd to score showmanship saw Zoltan take 1st ahead of Nigel and Gerry.
- Pylon racing: The Air race was very exciting. Following qualifying, the fastest aircraft choose their starting positions and extra points are awarded for passing. However, the course was very tight so passing is difficult. Andy needed to make up points after the first two rounds so with a superior speed advantage hedged his bets on starting 6th and trying to maximize overtaking points. In the end Zoltan took the flag with Nigel 2nd and Andy needing a few meters more to get by.

This was a thrilling finale to an exciting GP. The final positions were: 6th Smokey Young USA, 5th Andy Bickmore UK, 4th Gerald Cooper UK, 3rd Castor Fantoba Spain, 2nd Nigel Hopkins SA and 1st Zoltan Veres Hungry.

Classic Sequence Modified

The classic sequence has been modified. The wingover which is on the OLAN program is not in the catalogue of approved figures so it has been replaced with a 180 degree turn. Please check the website and make the necessary adjustment before Saturday.

Please send your suggestions for the coming year!

"Happy and Safe Flying!"

Nigel
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