



Sport Aerobatic Club of South Africa

Sponsored by



LATEST SAC NEWS

April

2009

South African National Championships

WOW!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!! I expected the Nationals to be a big event and that the Suzuki sponsorship would make a huge difference but I certainly didn't expect it to be so amazing. The Guys and Girls from African Outdoor Group who run the Suzuki outdoor events certainly put on a show! We were all very spoilt by the wonderful hospitality especially during the launch on Friday evening. It is so satisfying to see Aerobatics finally getting the media attention it so rightfully deserves. I look forward to a long relationship with the dynamic team at Suzuki and it excites me to think of the new levels our sport can reach. It was also great to have a good international element to the Nationals, with a judge and pilot from the USA and Russia. We are certain that they will relay fond memories of our contest, experience and warm hospitality in S.A. I have to pay all the Competing Pilots a huge compliment, the standard of flying was superb, the conduct and professionalism was of the highest standard and you all helped to run a slick program. Well done to all the National Champions in the respective classes:

CLASSIC: Andrew Fletcher, scoring well over 70% flying a Grumman Trainer. Superb!

RV: Trevor Warner, flying his first ever competition. Great showing!

SPORTSMAN: Donovan Waite, Flying only his second contest. One for the future!

INTERMEDIATE: Elton Bondi, Very consistent flying. Well done!

This is what the Sponsor had to say:

Hi Nigel,

I would like to compliment you and your team from the Sport Aerobatic Club for arranging such a slick and exciting event this past weekend; as a sponsor it gives us a lot of satisfaction to know that our brand is in good hands with the Sport Aerobatic Club and we are looking forward to a long and happy relationship.

Well done!

Francois Van Eeden
National Marketing Manager
Suzuki Auto South Africa

From the Contest Director:

My job was certainly made easy by the unselfish, enthusiastic and talented support of our Sponsors Suzuki, the team from African Outdoor Group, the SAC committee, the Officials, the Potch Gliding Club, the Judges, the Pilots and all the supporters. Without you this event would not have been the huge success that it was. So I would like to say a special thanks to:

Francois Van Eeden: National Marketing Manager at Suzuki Auto for believing in the SAC and Sport Aerobatics and for making the Launch and the entire event a huge leap forward for our sport. We look forward to a long relationship with Suzuki.

Derick Lategan: From African Outdoor Group, to you, **Margaret, Jennifer, Dewald, Henning** and **Christo** for making my life as organizer so easy and for totally spoiling all of us for the duration of the Nationals. Your set up is magnificent.

Francois Viljoen: Potch Flying School owner and Fuel Manager for your generous sponsorship of fuel for the pilots.

William Scott: To you, Hitler and the team from the Potch gliding club for the delicious lunches and friendly Braai events.

Judges: John, Q, Trish, Helm, Valentina, Linda and Jenny and all of the supporters that spent hours on the line. Once again a world class performance.

Kathy Billing: Your efficiency shone through once again. There is no other contest in the world where the Pilots have their scores as they get out the plane. Thank You and we look forward to having you around at the contests again! Welcome back! A special

thanks to **Louise Warden** who helped Kathy in the office with paperwork and scoring. It is great to have you onboard.

Yvonne: Thank you for all your effort in getting the entries and pre registration done in the weeks leading up to the Champs. We know you have started a new job so the time spent on the SAC is greatly appreciated.

Harry De Villiers: ATC, Starter and task master extraordinaire! Thank you for your tireless efforts out in the Sun. Thanks to your precision timing it was without a doubt the slickest schedule at any contest.

Derek Hopkins and Grant Timms: for your navigation and bush clearing skills to get the box markers out. That was a huge load off.

Beamish Family: for driving the Suzuki Jimny up and down to the judging line collecting score sheets after each flight and generally running around on my behalf.

From the Judges Viewpoint:

For pilots, the National Aerobatic Championships is just a little bit more important than any of the other contests. This is the equivalent of the final year-end exams for any student, so pilots tend to put a lot of preparation into it. It's where your name gets engraved onto the trophy, which makes it all the more worthwhile to put in those extra hours of practice. And it shows. The high standard was yet again evident at this year's Nationals, with the Known program producing high scores from almost everyone, as it should. The Free program also entertained us with really good flights, notably from Mark Sampson and Glen Warden during the Intermediate Free, and newcomer Donovan Waite in Sportsman. I reckon these pilots are world champions in the making! Yasavi from Russia tried his very best to demonstrate a wheels up landing in the Yak 52, but was told off by Valentina in the strongest terms. It was a perfect set-up for the shoot-out in the Unknown program. And what a shoot out! Yet again the Unknowns provided a true competition, where not even experience could be counted on. There were zeros aplenty, and the shaky wing rocking proved there were some nervous pilots too! We could even hear Glen's comments on the ground during his mistake – "oh mother" was what I heard. I wonder what Barrie is kicking right now. Rob du Plooy impressed with his RV and made it look like an Extra during his unknown sequence. Will Allen, here all the way from Seattle, was very brave indeed, attempting the Intermediate unknown in a Super Decathlon. As always, the judges are up to their task and we even had some fun while basking in the sun. The judges' RI rankings – yes we do get scored – are a manifest to the good flying. Slick systems meant that pilots got their scores before they had even unstrapped. Facilities were good and the entertainment was just great, both on the ground and in the air. We always appreciate good and safe flying, and reward it accordingly. We also prefer Blue Label mouthwash... So, the judges get to see it all; the good, the bad, the funny and the sad. We fight and we laugh but we don't miss a thing. It is hard work and long hours, and we always come back for more... Thanks to Suzuki for the hospitality and to all those who worked so hard behind the scenes. Keep it safe!

Some Comments from the competitors:

Elton Bondi, National Champ- Intermediate:

For me this year's first stage nationals had all the triumph, tragedy, joy and disappointment of a larger-than-life movie drama. A national aerobatic competition is always a highly intense physical, intellectual and emotional challenge. The physical element refers to the pure handling skill required to accurately maneuver an aeroplane in three dimensions under G-load; intellectual refers to issues such as sequence design strategy, box positioning, energy management etc and emotional refers to the ability to remain focused under pressure. Against this multifaceted context I can categorically state that several of my fellow competitors at the 2009 Nationals have significantly more raw flying talent than I will probably ever have, I was just fortunate enough to make one less mistake than them on the day. All told, I felt privileged to be flying in the same contest as them. The involvement of Suzuki this year has definitely increased the 'sense of occasion' and status of the Nationals, and I hope and believe that they will benefit as much from aerobatics as we have from them.

Trevor Warner National Champ – RV, A first timer's perspective

It was with some reluctance that I sent through my entry for the 2009 SA National Aerobatic Competition for the RV class. One call to Nigel Hopkins decided it..... His enthusiasm is contagious. The preparation for me began formally about 2 weeks prior to the event which involved flying my sequence at FAVV. Simon Cowie and Allen Pharoah were there for us each to "crit" one another, and generally enjoy the day. One thing I didn't have was a parachute, but thanks to my good friend Simon that was arranged complete with current packing slip with just one phone call. I did need to build some temporary seat cushions to allow for the chute. After waiting for the typical Gutti fog to burn off in the Petit area I got airborne at about 7:30am on the Friday morning with a view to a rendezvous with ZU-API at "V Town". From Petit through to Potch in an RV 8 at 170kts is a whole 32 mins. I traded about 40 of those to join Simon in a formation with the Yak52. We arrived in Potch at about 8:15am for registration and briefing. The RV class comprised 6 of us. Nigel Hopkins as Contest Director left no doubt at the briefing that this was a well organized event where all were welcome. Safety was paramount and all aspects were thoroughly covered. Suzuki is fully involved in South African Aerobatics and their effort to make us all feel welcome and thoroughly spoiled was admirable. The contest involved flying a known sequence twice followed by an unknown sequence. So there were 3 occasions to have a go at this. Of course the known sequence had been on the web for some time and I had flown this 6 or 7 times. After flying the first sequence of the competition I was overwhelmed that I had hardly climbed out of the cockpit and Kathy was handing me the results for my perusal and signature. Man these ladies are on the ball!! The result reflects the assessment of 5 world class judges headed by John Gaillard. The first day ended with us being treated to some "spine chilling" display flying followed by a great spread of snacks and drinks laid on by Suzuki. The camaraderie and friendship amongst this group of people was noteworthy. I was struck by a maturity in this fraternity that all of us are on a learning continuum albeit

at very different levels. What worried me no end was the “unknown” sequence. However I was pleasantly surprised to see that this is made available 18 hours prior to flying it, hence some time to get ones head around it. I have come away from this great event realizing that sport aerobatics is not just for the real boffins, those of us who are beginners are welcome too and what a place to learn! This is true not only for the pilots but family members too. My 9 year old daughter was also part of the experience and spent much time assisting the judges. She will tell you with a huge smile what a half reverse Cubin is.....Will I be back? Without a doubt!

Alan Geldenhuys: “Great turnout of pilots and spectators. We are all very excited about the Suzuki sponsorship which will surely take the sport to the next level”

Graham Kew: “An awesome contest and great experience”

Charles Urban: “Great organization, refreshing to have an energetic and organized sponsor, great job by all”

Stan Oliver: “SUZUKI raises the bar, great flying, highly competitive, interesting variety of competing aircraft, professionally organized and great camaraderie”

Dave King: “The people, flying, organization and sponsors were all fantastic”

Pierre Du Plooy: “Very well organized and loads of fun, nice to see more RV’s getting involved. Thank you all and looking forward to the regional comps”

Cliff Lotter: Smooth running and well organized with Suzuki adding a certain Je ne se quois.....”

Andrew Fletcher: “Thank you SAC, Suzuki and the Potch FBO’s for a superbly organized, run and supported competition. Good flying, food and Camaraderie”

Theunis De Bruin: “My first! Awesome! Suzuki has become involved in the ultimate form of aviation in S.A and I am privileged to be associated with this professional crowd of man and woman”

Bertus Du Preez: “The organizing, sponsors and venue was great, a fantastic flying weekend”

Jason Beamish: “I had an awesome time. Good flying, and being there with S.A’s best”

Ian Billing: “F.. Lekker”

Rob Du Plooy: “Excellent venue, great weather. Well organized! Pity about the small box” – They are all that small Rob!!!

SUZUKI Aerobatic Showdown

The showdown will be held in conjunction with the Airforce Museum Open Day at Swartkops Airforce base on Saturday the 9th of May. The sequence has been published on the SAC website. This promises to be a thrilling event and even though it is the day before the Judges trophy at Brits I really want to encourage you to be there. Bring the family and all your friends for a fun day of flying. Suzuki will be there in full force!

The following Advanced Pilots have automatically qualified to fly the qualification round.

- Patrick Davidson
- Ian Billing
- Nigel Hopkins
- Mark Hensman
- Brad Bennetts
- Johnnie Smith
- Warren Haslam
- Bertus Du Preez

The following Intermediate Pilots will need to prove their worth and fly the sequence prior to the Qualification round:

- Barrie Eeles
- Glen Warden
- Mark Sampson
- Elton Bondi
- Charles Urban
- Stan Oliver
- Mark Sheperd
- Kevin “Cocky” Benecke
- Alan Geldenhuys
- Dale Humby
- Kobus Van Der Colff
- Larry Beamish

SAC WEBSITE

Well Quintin has put in a huge amount of effort revamping the website. There will be some great features including online entry for contests, a photo gallery that will be filled by renowned Aviation Photographer, Frans Dely, he has promised to post photos of our aerobatic aircraft and add links to his web where you can purchase high resolution pictures. Also the news letters will be posted on the web along with important news under

the Chairman's News banner. Q is working on a "Blog" section for you all to discuss aerobatic issues. We look forward to this new and improved site.

Don't forget to check out the Website: www.aerobatics.co.za

"Happy and Safe Flying!"

Nigel
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