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The ACronaut

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President's Post

Brad Oliver



I write this to you as I zoom across the sky in a pressurized aluminum tube on my way to Los Angeles. Unfortunately instead of being in the cockpit at the controls, where I belong, I am crammed in the back in a seat so small it couldn't possibly have been meant for someone over the age of 10. This is my first flight in a Canadair Regional Jet,

and boy does this thing accelerate when the pilot pushes forward on those throttles....way cool!

On a more serious note, your Board of Directors has never been busier. The waivers on both of our Aerobatic boxes are up for renewal at the end of the month, and we have been busy discussing the lack of a spin in the 2002 Primary Sequence.

Unfortunately, I must tell you, our box at Tracy is in jeopardy. Encroaching development has brought many new residents to within a half of a mile of the airport (and box) and residents have been complaining about the noise. While I am positive that not all the noise complaints can be attributed to us several of the formal complaints have cited "aerobatic stunts" (not my words) as the source of the annoyance. Why should noise matter? Well let's just say that the FAA looks at our application for the box from many angles, and noise complaints don't help. As it stands, we are unsure if our application for the box at Tracy will be approved but if it is it might come along with some reduced hours of operation. Look for much more on this topic soon.

As I mentioned, the Board has also been busy discussing the 2002 Primary sequence, more specifically, around the removal of the spin from the category. Based on these discussions, we have decided that we will not be flying Primary at this year's contest in Paso Robles. I assure you this was not a decision anyone took lightly, and it was only made after many hours of discussion. The major reason for the exclusion of the category was safety. It has been argued that the removal of the spin from the category creates safety issues because it doesn't require a competitor to demonstrate their ability to recover from a spin, while other figures in the sequence puts them in jeopardy of entering a spin inadvertently. If you would like to share your opinions on the issue with me, please do.

Pause...

We are now approaching the LA area and with the marine layer fog I can see another four airplanes around us - all presumably with the same destination as us. Looks like a Falcon Jet 2,000 feet below, same heading. Let's just hope the guys in the dark room see both of us on radar. (*Or the Falcon doesn't execute a loop! Ed.*)

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FROM THE EDITOR

AN UNRECOVERABLE SPIN ?

On April 6, 2002, the Chapter 38 Board voted against sanctioning the **Primary** sequence at the Paso Robles contest. The focus of the controversy was the absence of a spin in the sequence. The majority-decision was based on two intertwined arguments: autonomy and safety. Should Chapter 38 support and adhere to decisions made at the national level? and What is a safe pilot?

The Primary Sequence

The entry-level category for IAC competition is the **Primary** with a sequence consisting of a loop, a wing-over, a half-cuban 8, a slow roll, and a 180 degree turn. The **Primary** category is new for 2002 and was introduced to the IAC Board of Directors as Proposed Rule 02-20. The rule was passed by the Board at their November 2, 2001 meeting. Seven members voted in favor of the rule and four members were opposed. No member abstained and the motion was carried.

Background

Rule 02-20 was submitted by IAC President Rob Dorsey and the proposed rule is consistent with his vision for the IAC. During the February 2001 meeting of the Board of Directors Rob stated that he would push for bold new initiatives to make IAC a more member-oriented and open organization and that he had a clear vision of the IAC being a club for all aerobatic enthusiasts at all levels of proficiency. The **Primary** category is intended to promote that vision and serves two purposes: 1) it provides a starting point for new competitors intending to climb the contest ladder, and 2) it provides a “permanent” home for a class of aircraft not normally attracted to competition. The **Primary** category was designed to attract new competitors and requires only basic aerobatic skills and minimal aircraft capabilities to successfully compete. A spin was not included in order to encourage new competitors and aircraft types. The absence of the spin was the point of controversy amongst the IAC Board.

The Spin

Some experienced competitors feel that the spin is the maneuver that should be used to evaluate the competency of a competition pilot. They believe that any improperly executed maneuver could result in a spin and that the spin, for recreational pilots and for **Primary** and **Sportsman** category pilots, results in attitudes that are the most difficult to recover from. The sequence that incorporates a spin provides some assurance that pilots can recognize and recover from intentional and inadvertent spins. Therefore, the argument concludes, to properly assess the competency of a pilot and to promote safety, the spin should be included in the Known sequences.

‘Round and ‘Round

Other knowledgeable aerobatic pilots question the wisdom of promoting aerobatic competition for aircraft that are not certificated in the acrobatic category. For example: a normal category aircraft, according to FAA requirements for spin testing, must be able to recover from a one-turn spin or a three second spin (whichever takes longer) in not more than one additional turn. Most would agree that an aircraft that re-

quires a one-turn recovery from a one-turn spin is not the aircraft that they would want to be in when in a spin close to the ground. The unpredictable loss of altitude during recovery could lead to an undesirable splat.

Chapter 38's Risk

The Board feels that the absence of a spin in the **Primary** category and the inclusion of aircraft that are not certificated for intentional spins results in lost opportunity for Chapter 38 to control risk at contests. The Chapter 38 Board determined that the risks associated with the 2002 Primary sequence are significant and that Chapter 38 would manage that risk by eliminating the **Primary** sequence from the Chapter 38 sponsored Paso Robles contest. The risks include:

- accidental death of a competitor and/or spectators during a performance of a **Primary** sequence,
- “bad” publicity associated with **Primary** sequence related accidents,
- possible loss of airspace due to **Primary** sequence related accidents, and
- personal liability for chapter officers.

Are the risks significant? The risks can only be properly evaluated by reviewing actuaries and by soliciting a qualified opinion regarding personal liability to officers acting under the protection of the Chapter 38 corporation.

Is Chapter 38 doing the right thing by refusing to sanction the **Primary** sequence? Should the Chapter support decisions made at the national level? Or should the Chapter only support those decisions and policies that it agrees with? Before these issues are explored let's see what the IAC does for us from a national point of view.

Growth, Sustainability, and Capital

What value do we receive from the IAC as competitors and as a chapter? Inarguably, we develop sustainable strength with increasing numbers – the more of us the better. Inarguably, there is freedom in diversity just as there are perilous hazards associated with specialization and exclusivity. A certain membership size is not only critical to our survival but is also required to attract capital. Diversity is also critical to our survival in a world that is increasingly risk averse and bureaucratic. We gain size, diversity, and power with membership in the IAC.

The Right Thing

Rule 02-20, the creation of the **Primary** category and sequence, was passed by a majority vote of the IAC Board of Directors (our elected representatives) in accordance with established procedures. In general, rules and policies adopted and approved by the IAC Board reflect the will of the IAC membership. Controversy is managed by the use of established methods and procedures that ensure that all voices are heard and that actual policy reflects the will of the interested majority. By excluding the **Primary** sequence at Paso Robles can Chapter 38 be likened to petulant children leaving the game when play does not go their way?

Is Chapter 38 doing the right thing by refusing to sanction the **Primary** sequence? Is Chapter 38 promoting the sport and is Chapter 38 encouraging growth? By voting to exclude the **Primary** sequence the Board may very well be challenged to demonstrate how they are, in accordance with Article III (Purpose) of the Constitution and By-Laws of the Chapter:

- 1) promoting safety and education in sport aerobatics, and
- 2) promoting and encouraging individual proficiency and competition in sport aerobatics.

Conclusion

There are many constructive ways for Chapter 38 to resolve the **Primary** sequence controversy and to promote our sport. One of the most valuable ways is to continue to affirm the Chapter's commitment to education and training. Spins are scary. Ask anybody who has not done one and ask anybody who has done *one*.

Now ask yourself – am I afraid of a spin that is performed at an altitude that is sufficient for recovery? The reason you said no was because that you had decided, at some point, to get the education and training necessary to control the aircraft in unusual attitudes and to recover from spins consistently and reliably – in all likelihood you actually enjoy spins!

Every pilot and every competitor has the capacity to gain that skill. Through education. Through training. Through the active encouragement and support that we give them. This serves our own interests in a number of ways. After all, how many of us would choose to fly in the back seat with pilots who do not have basic competencies in unusual attitude recoveries, including spins? And speaking of spins, how many pilots, after receiving spin training and performing a few rolls and loops, wouldn't like to do more? And where will these newly-minted aerobatic pilots go to find like-minded people? Chapter 38 - if we act with resource and responsibility.

Chapter 38 would do well to heed the words of Jerome Lederer when he observed:

Every accident, no matter how minor, is a failure of the organization.

Controversial IAC policy is not the creator of risk nor can it be blamed for unsafe behaviors. Ultimately, any aerobatic accident is the result of a lack of control that is based on:

- our own failure to be properly educated and trained, and
- our failure to pass our knowledge and skills on to others.

Policy at the national level should not be blamed lest we are willing to point our fingers at ourselves – we are responsible for our own game.

The issues associated with the **Primary** sequence are as complex as the dynamics of a spin. Chapter 38 has sent a message to the IAC community that not only expresses our concerns about the sequence but also reveals, through our behavior, who and what we are. While the outcome of this particular issue is uncertain, what matters most is how we, as a Chapter and as a Club, will respond to the challenges that are associated with our actions and how well we will govern our future actions—recovery is the only option.

Aviation Quote

An airplane is a three-axis, all-attitude vehicle, and it is possible for it to be flown in any attitude accidentally or on purpose. No pilot is ever really proficient and competent who has not learned and retained basic aerobatic skills.



— *Sammy Mason, 'Stalls, Spins, and Safety'*

Paso Robles Contest Update

2002 Contest Update

Chapter 38 is pleased to have member Jacquie Warda serving as Contest Director. Jacquie has big plans, and she is going to need all the volunteers she can get. If you are interested in volunteering or just need more information, please contact her at sky-ydnz@yahoo.com or (925) 831-2123.

If you would like to pre-register, please visit <http://www.iac38.org/pasoreg2.htm>.

**IAC38's Paso Robles Contest
June 7-9, 2002**

2002 Chapter Dues are Due!

Please remember to renew your dues today. The Board would hate to see your member privileges suspended. Renewing your membership keeps the chapter healthy and you flying in the box. Don't delay - renew now...if you have not done so February was your last month as an active member. You can use the form on the back of the newsletter or visit our web site to renew online.

Renew Your Membership Today!
\$25 – Single \$30 – Family
www.iac38.org

Arrivals

Friends and family: Wednesday night my awesome wife gave birth to a healthy baby boy! He's got a really big head and funny toes and everything in between is as it should be.

Samuel Joseph Hirschman
8 pounds, 2 ounces
21 inches
110 decibels

He's made us two of the happiest people on earth and we wanted to share our joy with all of you.

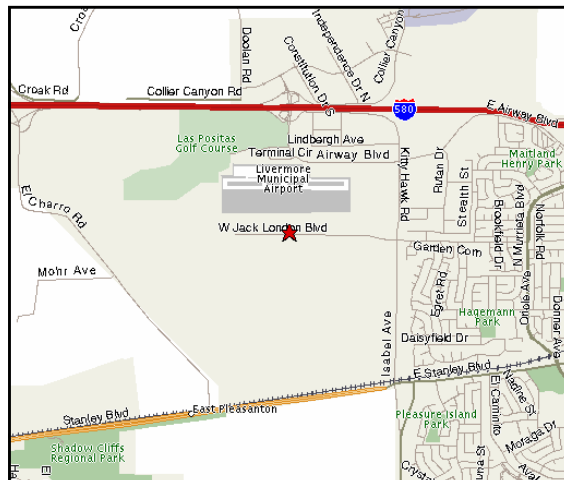
The Happy Parents

Loree and Harry

April Meeting Location !!!

When: Sunday, April 14th, 4pm
Address: Attitude Aviation
299 W. Jack London Blvd
South Hangars
Livermore, CA 94550
925-456-ACRO (2276)

Map:



Calendar of Events

April

12-13 Borrego Minifest — Borrego CA — IAC Chapter 36 — www.iac36.org

14 IAC 38 Chapter Meeting — 4pm — Speaker: Cris Flint — Topic: Free-styles

Mondays Aerobatic Ground School, Attitude Aviation, See ad below.

May

3-5 LA Gold Cup (Apple Valley) — Borrego CA — IAC Chapter 36 — www.iac36.org

11 Chapter 38 Young Eagles Day

June

6-8 Paso Robles Contest — IAC Chapter 38 — See page 5

August

30-9/1 Delano Regional Contest — Delano, CA — IAC Chapter 26

September

7 Chapter 38 Young Eagles Day

21-29 US Nationals — Texas




AEROBATICS - Ground School



Attitude Aviation in Livermore is offering an aerobatics ground school. Dr. Dick Rihn, C.F.I., an accomplished unlimited category International Aerobatic Club competitor, will be teaching the class for both introductory and experienced pilots. Come see what aerobatic contest flying is all about and learn how to control your airplane to win! **(You're competition will be there!)** The class is held at Attitude Aviation, Livermore airport on Monday nights at 7:00 PM.

Mondays, 7pm
Attitude Aviation
925-456-ACRO (2276)





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Chapter 38 Cap \$17 Each	_____	_____
Chapter 38 Sweatshirts \$35 Each <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> L <input type="checkbox"/> XL	_____	_____
Chapter Mouse Pad \$12 Each	_____	_____
FAI Printed Catalog \$10 Donation	_____	_____
Total	_____	_____

Make Check Payable to:
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Aerobatic Club

Mail to:
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1469 Sunset Dr.
Livermore, CA 94550



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IAC Chapter 38 Membership Application/Renewal Form

New Member

Renewal

Address/Phone Change

Name: _____ Spouse: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Work Phone: _____

E-mail 1: _____ E-mail 2: _____

IAC #: _____ EAA #: _____

Certificate #: _____

Judge: Regional National Newsletter: E-mail (Adobe PDF) Postal Mail

Competition: None Basic Sportsman Intermediate Advanced Unlimited

Aircraft: _____ N #: _____

Referred By: _____

Dues: Single Membership (\$25/year) Family Membership (\$30/year)

Send with check, made payable to "International Aerobatic Club Chapter 38", to:
Cris Flint, IAC38 Treasurer 1469 Sunset Dr Livermore, CA 94550



Kevin Crane
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Danville, CA 94506

Chapter 38 Meeting:

April 14th
See Page 5 for Location