



January 2021 Issue

Hi and welcome to the F5J USA Tour newsletter. For details and scores from past Tour events you can always find links from the [Tour Calendar](#) page. Good flying to you!

In this issue

It's been awhile since our last newsletter. Let's catch up!

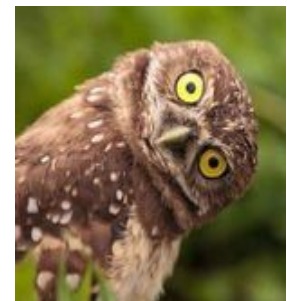
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2021 Tour events in the queue

[Tour Calendar](#)

Reminder that the F5J USA Tour season runs from Dec 1 through Nov 30.

Sunny and Warm Florida F5J, Jan 31-Feb 1, Morriston FL (Eastern region 2-day event). Info is [here](#), pilots list is [here](#). The event CD is **Michael Gardner** and is hosted by the *One Wing Low Squadron (OWLS)* club. This is part of a double-header event where Fri/Sat is F3J and Sun/Mon is F5J. Florida this time of year can be very nice and they have a good start on their pilots list. Sign up today and go join them!





Southwest Classic F5J, Feb 20-21, Stanfield AZ (Western region 2-day event). Info is [here](#), pilots list is [here](#). The event CD is **Darwin Barrie**, hosting club is the *East Valley Electric Flyers* (EVEF) of Phoenix. This is a very popular annual event with a history of great competition, great food, and great people. It is always well run. Time to clear a spot in your calendar for the Classic!

F5J at CVRC Visalia, March 27-28, Visalia CA (Western region 2-day event). The event CD is **Tim Johnson** and the event is hosted at CVRC's home field. Tim and the CVRC crew have been putting on F5J events since the very beginning of the Tour and they always do a great job. This popular field is definitely one of the *premier* west coast sites for F5J. Highly recommended!



Other Tour events coming include a brand new *Southern Cal F5J* in Riverside CA on April 24-25, and both eastern and western events in early June.



Flight line at last year's Southwest Classic F5J near Phoenix - Feb 2020

2020 Tour Financial Information

Following the end of each season we publish a financial statement (our ledger) that shows the Tour's sources and uses of funds. You can find our 2020 season ledger at the bottom of our [Financial Declaration page](#).



A brief summary is that the Tour started the 2020 season with a balance of \$868 and ended the season with \$1042 so we are in good shape. The only expenses we had were the Top 10 award plaques, shipping for 3 of them, and a \$100 donation to GliderScore.

Clubs, please donate to GliderScore

For those of you who used [GliderScore](#) in your Tour events the last season it's time to think about making a donation to **Gerry Carter** in Australia, the chief developer of GliderScore. Gerry works tirelessly maintaining and adding features to GliderScore that enable our F5J events to run better and more smoothly and efficiently. Things like smartphone scoring have made a huge impact and have reduced the labor required to CD and score our events.



There is no charge to [download](#) and use GliderScore. The cost of maintaining the program is 100% dependent on donations so please send a donation soon.

Thanks Gerry for all your work, and thanks to those clubs that take a moment to recognize his efforts with a donation.

The 2020 “Top 10” Awards

This was an exciting and challenging year for a variety of reasons, including the fact that Tour pilots are improving their F5J skills dramatically each year (understatement).

Rank	Name	Percent	Total (best 4)
1	BAGGS, Brady	100.00	4093.50
2	GOLOVIDOV, Oleg	99.86	4087.90
3	WEST, Randy	97.92	4008.50
4	WILLCOX, Steve	97.91	4008.00
5	KHANI, Ali	97.59	3994.80
6	TRUSSELL, Gavin	97.50	3991.00
7	ARMSTRONG, John	96.65	3956.30
8	WILLCOX, Steve Jr	95.18	3896.20
9	JOHNSON, Tim	94.70	3876.70
10	BAJOREK, Chris	92.31	3778.60



The 2020 season Top 10 awards ceremony was held in December at the 2021 Tour season opener in Phoenix: *F5J in the Desert*. At the end of day 1 we had the awards ceremony. Nice flying in 2020 guys!



2020 Awards Ceremony, F5J in the Desert, Stanfield AZ, Dec 2020 — Top L to R: #1 Brady Baggs, #2 Oleg Golovidov, #3 Randy West, #4 Steve Willcox, #5 Ali Khani– Bottom L to R: #6 Gavin Trussell, #7 John Armstrong, #8 Steve Willcox Jr, #9 Tim Johnson, #10 Chris Bajorek

(photo credits-Randy West)

In Memoriam - Fred Weaver

USA F5J has lost a great friend and pilot **Fred Weaver**. Fred passed away Saturday night (Jan 9) after battling a long illness. He has many many friends in the U.S. who are mourning his passing. Fred lived in rural northern California east of Sacramento and absolutely loved competing in F5J. I have many fond memories of F5J practice sessions and contests with Fred as part of our "NorCal F5J" group. Among his many admirable traits Fred had a great sense of humor that sometimes involved politics. He would often send hilarious emails that would brighten my day.



Fred was heavy into soaring competition back in the heyday of thermal duration (TD) contesting. He had especially fond memories of the "North/South" TD competition that pitted Northern Calif against Southern Calif. In 2019 Fred shared this pic that he said was from around 1982 at the "North/South Bowl."



Fred Weaver - middle guy in front row

So it was Fred's idea to try and rekindle the camaraderie and feeling of that, but this time with F5J. Thus was born Fred's *North/South F5J Challenge*. All through the summer of 2019 Fred mapped out what he wanted with his new team-oriented event. And Fred was really excited to hear that CVRC would let us host it in Visalia. Game on!

N/S #1 signups were good and the teams were even: 10 North and 10 South. As the contest progressed it was clear South was going to be tough to beat. After 8 rounds they were up by 300 pts, after 12 rounds they were up by 408 points. Then it was time for the last (13th) round. Here's **Bob McGowan** describing what happened:

[RCG post](#) by Bob McGowan

The Weav saved us!

What happened in that last round was the North's Fred Weaver flew out the full 10 minute slot while everyone else in the group landed at around 2 minutes. Wind was next to nothing and conditions had been excellent for the prior group. Everyone in the group launched low thinking they had a good read. Fred cut off at 30 meters, Ali at 33, and others just slightly above. When it wasn't working, Fred pushed out further and eventually hooked up but it was too late for anyone else to follow. This one dramatic flight group win by Fred catapulted the North forward by hundreds of points because Ali and Brad, key South front runners in this group, already had bad throw-outs. We, the North, were impossibly behind and it was only Fred's final round save that put us on top so it was decided that Fred would be the first holder of perpetual North/South Cup.

So Fred's gutsy miracle gave the first N/S F5J Challenge cup to the North, surprising everyone there. Here is a video starting as Fred conducts the team awards part. You can tell he was having fun.



Video: (click to play)

To say Fred was proud of his winning flight is an understatement--he was beaming all through the awards and picture-taking ceremony. And everyone could tell he was having a blast. That day will forever stick with me whenever I think of Fred.



Bob McGowan, Fred Weaver (center), John Armstrong

After that day Fred was only able to fly in one other F5J event: the June 2020 F5J at Visalia. After that our NorCal group didn't see much of Fred as his health continued to decline.

Fred, you will be missed but you will definitely not be forgotten. Thanks for being such a good friend to so many.

--Chris

2021 Team Selects - An Update

As a result of “virus rescheduling” the next FAI F5J world championships (WC) had been rescheduled to Bulgaria in 2022. That would have put the next USA Team Selects (TS) contest in this year (2021). However, with the ongoing uncertainty of international travel this may not happen. Here is a Jan 6 2021 update from FAI-F5 TS Committee member **Steve Neu**:

“Based on some recent discussion regarding FAI class 1 events on the schedule for 2021 by members of the F5 SC I would say there is considerable doubt that the current schedule will be possible based on the fact that international air travel is still not easily possible now and may not be for many more months. What that means is that events on the schedule for 2021 may not happen which will require the FAI to reshuffle the schedules again which likely would affect the 2022 schedules.

What this means is that planning can go on for a TS but expect the WC timing to change from 2022 to 2023. “

Recently **Steve Manganelli**, US FAI-F5 Team Selection Program Manager, re-activated the RC Groups thread on the 2021 Team Selection process. You can follow that discussion here:

[RC Groups 2021 TS thread](#)

To help you stay current with additional TS news and info we will be adding timely updates to the *TS & WC Info* web page:

[Team Selects & WC News](#)

2021 F5J Tour Rules Changes

Every year the Tour's Advisory Group (AG) discusses the FAI and Tour contest rules with the goal of improving and/or clarifying rules based on prior season experiences and feedback. This year we have added a Tour rule to clarify

RULES

landing tape positioning, as follows:

3. Tour Rules. 3A. Landing Tape Positioning – *The tape must be stretched out straight and flat against the ground. The tape may be pulled in any direction but must always be straight. No tape loops or folds are allowed. Penalty for violating this rule is a zero landing. Note that the intent of this rule is to prohibit placement of the tape such that it could be used to arrest a sliding plane. The CD has discretion in determining what is acceptable.*

While not an official FAI rule, previous F5J and F3J WC events have implemented a similar but more rigorous control of the landing tapes (when tapes are used). These include requiring the tape to be placed downwind and straight and not allowing competitors to touch the tape. One of the purposes of those local rules was to prevent using the tape to arrest landings. Some WC events have chosen to not use tapes at all and to use a measuring device (tape measure) that is placed on the ground after the landing. For the F5J USA Tour the AG did not want to take it to this extreme but wanted to follow the general principle of not allowing arrested landings.

Also FYI, after discussing F5J landing tape positioning with representatives of several European countries we learned that for the last decade it is widely accepted that landing tapes have to be straightened before landings.

Tour's rule change process

If you are curious about the Tour's rules change process, the Advisory Group is solely responsible for selection and implementation of the Tour's rules. Changes to the rules are discussed and voted on by the AG. Some rules changes are considered (in the AG's opinion) to be significant enough to warrant input from the community but not all changes fall into this category.

Since this is the start of a new season now is a great time to review all the rules that relate to Tour events. FAI rules, Tour contest rules, and Tour CD guidelines are all available from this page:

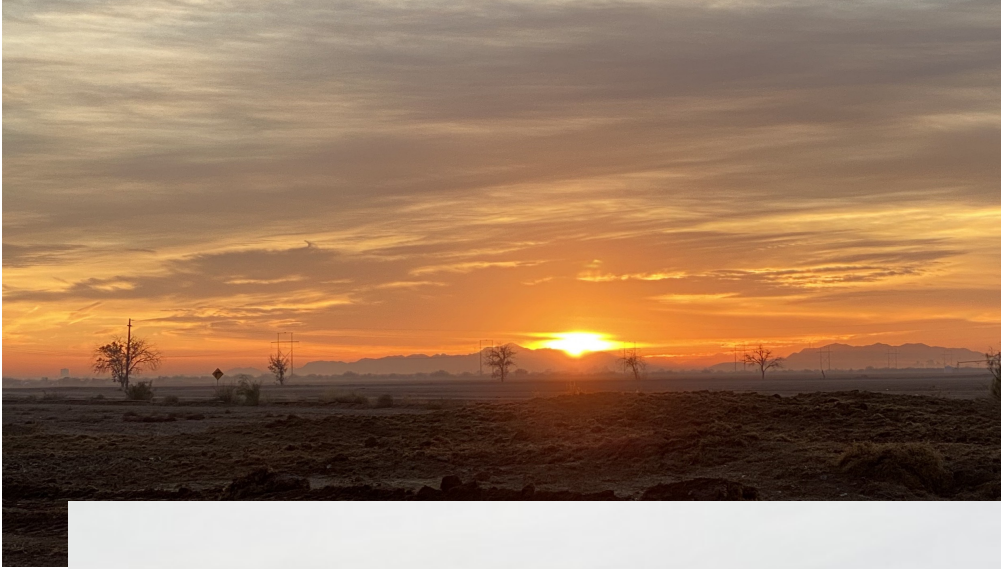
[**FAI & Tour F5J Rules**](#)



2020 Season: Looking back

The 2020 F5J USA Tour season turned out to be a good one after we got past the first part of the year. One of many bright spots was the first-ever NATS F5J that resulted in the second biggest pilots list (42) in the history of the F5J USA Tour (Vegas 2017 was 44). Thanks to all who participated in our 2020 season. Here are some pictures and videos from some of the events. Enjoy!

F5J in the Desert in Phoenix - Dec 2019



CD Lee Wolfe at the flightline

Southwest Classic in Phoenix - Feb 2020



Classic 2020 video (click to view)

Warm and Sunny F5J in Florida - Feb 2020



F5J in Knoxville (House Mountain) - June 2020



NATS F5J in Muncie - July 2020





Pits at the NATS F5J



F5J in Texas - September 2020



F5J in the Rockies - Colorado, September 2020



F5J in Knoxville (House Mountain) - October 2020



North/South F5J Challenge #2 in Visalia - October 2020



Video by Ali Khani - [Click to view](#)

East Coast Fall Festival in NC - November 2020



About the Tour's Advisory Group

This group is responsible for managing the Tour and includes the following key supporters and pioneers of USA-based F5J: Lee Wolfe, Steve Neu, Lenny Keer, Larry Jolly, Jim Monaco, David Beach, and Chris Bajorek. Each advisor brings significant experience and energy to this group. If you have suggestions or feedback feel free to contact any of us directly, or you can send an email to Chris Bajorek [here](#).

