



September 2019 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

When David Beach was in Slovakia taking care of his Team Manager duties he was also maintaining a daily diary of the trip. This month David shares part 1 of his diary with us. Then David Webb shares his recent experiences as he gets F5J rolling up in the Pacific Northwest.

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Remaining Tour events this season



Reminder that the F5J USA Tour season runs from Dec 1 through Nov 30. Also please mark your calendars for the upcoming Tour 2020 season opener **F5J in the Desert in Phoenix on Dec 7-8**. This is hosted by [EVEF](#) and includes the **2019 Tour awards ceremony**. Don't miss it! An RC Groups info thread will be started for this event soon.

F5J in the Rockies, Sept 28, Longmont CO (Western region 2-day event). Info [here](#). This event is put on by RMSA in Denver and will be at the same field as last year's Team Selections. Their [pilots list](#) is pretty much set at this late date. Good luck guys!





First Annual North/South F5J Challenge, Oct 26, Visalia CA (Western region 2-day event). Info [here](#). Signups [here](#). CD is Sandy Smith. This event is open to all USA pilots. This is the final western Tour event of the 2019 season but it also is a competition between two self-selected teams: each pilot gets to choose their team when they register. More details in the article later in this issue.

East Coast Fall F5J Festival, Nov 2, Farmville NC (Eastern region 2-day event)

Info [here](#), signups [here](#). CD is Oleg Golovidov. This year they will have expert and novice classes. They already have an excellent pilots

list going so it should be another great eastern region event. And they will also be having catered lunches both days!



Trnava diary, Part 1

by David Beach, Team F5J USA manager

[Team Website](#)



F5J World Championship winner pics and results at [this link](#). Event was held on August 12-16, 2019 in Trnava, Slovakia

Editors note - This is Part 1 of a two-part article by David Beach, Team Manager for the USA WC F5J team. We are very fortunate to have David's daily diary of events from their team adventure. Part 2 will run in the October newsletter. Thank you David!

Prelude

Both Daniel Estingoy and Dennis Hesselius got an early start to the world championship by traveling to Europe before the contest with family. Lee Estingoy sent a photo of Daniel practicing at a flying field they visited, and the next day the team received a donation from Germany! Dennis and his family flew over early and got a brief visit with relatives in Hungary. Oleg Golovidov and his family arrived a few days before the event for some sightseeing in Vienna.

August 6th – The team gathers in Trnava

This was European arrival day for David, Jon, Skyler, Stoil and Dimitre. Oleg picked up a panel van for equipment storage in Vienna and met Stoil and Dimitre at the airport. Skyler was first to arrive in Budapest and had a long wait for David and Jon's flight to land. That wait proved frustrating for Skyler as he was unable to resolve his lack of phone service. Despite the lack of communications, the plan to meet at the van rental area worked out and eventually the Budapest contingent was underway.



A trip to the Decathlon Sports store in Budapest was next on the agenda for folding chairs and tables, no problem there. However, the stop at a local hardware store was more of an adventure – no English (at all). Our hardware shopping list included spikes and bungee cord for model hold downs. Spike? Nail? – nothing but a puzzled response. Even pictures didn't help. But the counter person was willing to let us browse the aisles

and pick and choose. The spikes were right under the front counter and the bungee cord was hanging on the wall. No luck getting a flagpole, but we had other stops to make. The tab for hardware came to empty-up thousand Hungarian forints but the attempt to pay by credit card was a no-go. Euros were eventually accepted, with change in forints. Unfortunately a major traffic jam getting out of Budapest resulted in no chance for that crew to visit the field.

The next Slovakian surprise was dinner in Trnava. The hotel restaurant had nice reviews, but it was not open as expected. Steak house for dinner? – Sure, let's go. Also closed! We did manage to get everyone in town fed by pleading with the staff at an Italian restaurant to keep the kitchen open for a large group of hungry travelers.

August 7th – Practice day and Trnava Cup registration



Thankfully all the pilots and their equipment made it to the field in working order. Our base of operations for the next 10 days was two large dome canopies complete with electricity. The first order of business was to unpack and inspect planes and radios. Aside from what appeared to be some 'heavy handed' TSA wing dents there were no repairs needed as a result of model transport. While the pilots got in test flights,

David went into town for more supplies and brought back lunch.

The Trnava Cup pre-contest is open to anyone. It provides an opportunity to make sure everything is in place and operational prior to the actual World Championship. The process to validate registration for 188 competitors was about as painful as you can imagine. Long lines, lots of grumbling (in many different languages). Thankfully Lee held his place in line for the team and we eventually picked up the registration packets and food tickets for everyone on the team.

That evening we asked the hotel front desk for dining suggestions. "Good food, but a bit expensive" was the recommendation for the Forhaus and it turned out to be a winner! The day also happened to be Oleg's birthday. Skyler made arrangements with our waiter for a birthday surprise. At the end of the meal



Oleg was presented with a birthday cake topped off by giant sparkler!

The walk back to the hotel after dinner was also exciting. An ominous sky with cool breezes turned into a torrential downpour as we headed back to the hotel. Thunder, lightning, wind and rain got us all soaked to the bone. Little did we realize the extent of the storm at the flying site.

August 8th – Trnava Cup opening ceremony and start of prelim rounds



Early arrivals to the field Thursday were greeted with a scene quite different from the day before. As bad as the prior night's storm was in town, it also wreaked havoc at the field. Many tents were ripped apart and broken. Others were intentionally dismantled as a preventative measure. By the time the US contingent arrived at the field our tents were already back up thanks to Team Brazil and others who started their day early by helping the other teams.

The light winds and abundant thermals of practice day were history as we were greeted by more typical windy weather for the field at the start of cup competition. Attendees were organized alphabetically by country for the opening ceremony.

The flying started right around Noon. Lee was the first up of the US pilots round 1, group 1, lane 3. Despite a conservative launch of 153 meters, he was a bit “too heavy” for the lift conditions and was on the ground at 4:53.





It takes a lot of open space to fly F5J with 18 pilots in a group. It also takes a lot of time to complete a round with 11 groups. We started at noon, flew until 7 PM and only completed two and a half rounds. Juniors and seniors flew in the same groups, but US pilots were organized as two teams making it easier to arrange callers for those who flew.

As team manager, David elected not to deal with the logistics of bringing a plane and instead focused on documenting the team's progress. Using a phone app developed just for this trip, you can get the flight-by-flight details from the team thread on RC Groups.

The low point of the day was Stoil's flight in round 2 group 7. During the launch he attempted to go to low power and get a thermal read, but the motor shut down! His valiant effort to save the flight was unsuccessful and he ended up with a zero for landing out of bounds.

August 9th – Trnava Cup preliminaries 9AM to 7PM

Friday's weather was windy, but with lots of thermal activity. It took a 119M launch to win the last group to fly on Thursday. Friday morning's first group got the granny with a 46M launch. Seven of the pilots in round 3 group 6 made their times with launches under 55M.

It was a good day for the team. Round 4 was complete by mid-afternoon. At that point Jon and Oleg were only 2 points apart in 6th and 7th places. Skyler was in position 19. The juniors were not doing as well, but Stoil was one of many other pilots looking forward to round 5 scores where their zeros would be dropped.



Stoil was up in round 5 group 1 and had a good flight. Oleg was his caller and said “It was not the lowest launch, but it will be OK”. Group 5 launches for the seniors were 48M for Jon, 46M for Skyler, and 58M for Oleg – all of them making their time and a good landing.



Round 6 got started at about 5:30PM and the launch heights crept up as expected. Skyler was last to fly turning in a 9:55 flight with a 40 landing and a 97M launch. His comment after the flight was “time for a beer and start packing”.



Robert Burson, in addition to flying in the cup, spent a lot of time behind the camera. Here he is joined by Vladimir Gavrilko (of Vladimir’s Models).

August 10th morning – Last day of Trnava Cup preliminary rounds

On Saturday we completed the last few groups of round number 6. Jon’s group launched around 9AM and he turned in a 9:58 with a 50-point landing and 80M launch. His only comment was “too high” and inspection of the scores bears that out. The group was taken by Lennart Arvidsson from Sweden with a 55-meter launch.



Round 7 was the final round for the Trnava Cup. This is where F5J gets really exciting and requires pilots to use all their skills to read the air and launch to the right place, at the right height. Pilots ‘on the bubble’ need to protect their position for flyoffs, while others ‘risk it all’ with low launches hoping to improve their position.

Oleg’s comment on his 9:57 flight, 50 landing and 71M launch – “It was an

easy read, but I wish I launched lower”.

Skyler, on the other hand, took a very low launch hoping to move up. He eventually found some lift, but it was too little and too late. He was way, way, way downwind and landed out of bounds. His quote was “I tried to do what I needed to do, but it didn’t work out”.

Jon barely made it back from retrieving Skyler’s plane in time for his flight in round 7 group 7. He got his time and a 40 point landing with a 63 meter launch but it was only worth 960 points. Joe Wurts was in that group and turned in his fourth 1000 point round of the contest that group with a 35 meter launch.



In the Trnava Cup contest junior pilots flew along side the seniors. There were no flyoffs for juniors, and after seven rounds Stoil Avramov stood at the top of the list of juniors. Well done!

USA standings after seven complete rounds:

Oleg 12 th	Stoil 1st place junior
Jon 19 th	Dennis 6th place junior
Skyler 29 th	Daniel 21st place junior

August 10th afternoon – Trnava Cup flyoffs

The USA pilots showed just how competitive they can be on the world stage in the preliminary rounds. They all showed great skill, but in a group of 188 pilots only 14 were selected to see who could be the ‘best of the best’ and Oleg was among them.

Three fifteen-minute rounds were flown in some of the calmest conditions of the trip. Oleg put in terrific flights with launch heights of 35M, 27M, and 37M! Great? Yes, but only great enough for a 4th place finish. He was just a somewhat disappointing six-tenths of a point off a podium finish.



What do you do once the contest is over? Celebrate, of course!



Stay tuned for Part 2 next month...

Tour Info

Pilot Standings

Got
F5J
?



Shirts

F5J in the Pacific Northwest--It's on!

by David Webb (RCG: webbsolution)

I am a member of the Seattle Area Soaring Society as well as the co chair of the MAAC Sailplane committee in Canada. I have been a long standing soaring contest pilot starting with TD in 2000. Time sure flies, I can still remember shaking like a leaf holding my 83 oz repaired Stratos during its first winch launch.

I have had the pleasure of attending several (8) F3J and F3K World Championships since that time and my passion for R/C Soaring has never diminished. Some things have however changed in terms of its focus. One of those changes was to move from FAI F3J to FAI F5J. My reasons for changing were mostly practical in nature. I wanted to practice as much as possible and I want to get to an elite skill level but found it nearly impossible to do withing F3J as you really needed a cohesive team that included your towers. Canada is a hard place to put a team together at best and F5J required far less team orientation in my opinion. There is also the fact that F3K and F5J fall on the same cycle which means only a single trip to Europe saving me roughly \$3000 every second year (or a free model!)



David Webb and his planes

So, last season I started the process of collecting all the technology to host my own F3K and F5J contests. We had the pleasure of hosting two F3K contests here in Canada where we have a large assortment of flying sites and a relative close group of pilots from Seattle and the surrounding Fraser Valley. Some small contest attempts really showed us where the weaknesses were in terms of power supplies, audio range and other factors. I owe much gratitude to the SASS club for their patience with me in this regard.

Once I got back from this year's F5J and F3k WC contests in Europe I set out to start the learning curve for hosting F5J contests and held a few "Funtests." These usually entail 6-12 pilots for some structured practice where we go through 5-6 F5J rounds, run the clocks, audio and scoring system. Our local pilots in Seattle are relatively familiar with ALES rules so making the change to F5J wasn't super complicated after everyone got used to running their F5J devices VS ALES.

We started everyone off with a no-pressure approach that basically said - "Hey if you are concerned about mid airs - we can put an extra lane out with more space....if you are still concerned and not worried about points - then wait 3 seconds to launch". At this point now after just 3 funtests we have no one who staggers their launches unless they have technical issue. The fear, uncertainty and doubt has left the building and all our pilots from new to old are starting to get the bug. Launches in the sub 42 meter range are relatively normal in Seattle now from more than a few pilots and the strategy for both calling air - launch height and motor selection is changing quickly as pilots see opportunities to capitalize on. I love watching the evolution of the contest scene in this club.

Planes!

The PNW pilots group are using an assortment of models currently. Everything from 2 meter built-up models to full on F5J contests ships. There are plenty of converted F3J ships and they are doing just fine within the task of F5J. I selected the Ultima 2 in part because I know the creators and I could obtain sponsorship for 2 classes (F3K and F5J) from a single sponsor. So I have been bonding with the Ultima 2 and I am loving that model. Above is a picture of my fleet in Slovenia where we found a tiny R/C aero tow field and used it for a full day of trim flights and shake down tasks.

Contest equipment and power considerations

Contest gear and power options were considered and tested for several months before I decided on purchases. The two approaches I considered were to use a generator or try and go green(ish) and use Solar power. I ended up with the latter which consist of 2

x 6V extended series batteries linked for 12V. using 2 batteries has a some advantages - I can get the capacity I want without having to lift something the size of a forklift battery...and using a battery system is silent so I can test everything at any point without having to run a generator. Of course there are all the actual green advantages of not using more fossil fuel etc.

I opted for a solar panel that deliver a little over 5 watts per hour and what I have found is that if I give the batteries a nice bump charge at 25 amps the night before and then hook them to my Solar panel, assuming some sun is available, I will have enough power for about 1 day without ANY solar power and with the solar panel I am good with even minimal light exposure for the entire weekend. The battery usually starts off at 13.4 volts - normalizes down to 12.7 fairly quickly and then stays around 12.5 for the whole weekend. Obviously some kind of power inversion from 12VDC to 110V AC is required and I am using a 12-110 inverter with 3x 7 amp ports. The laptop (surface pro), audio system and soon to be FM transmitter get 110 and the LED clock gets 12 volts from either a battery direct connection or a pair of 3000 mah lipos.

I was trying for a light and fast setup that could be packed away under a water tight canopy in minutes due to our changing PNW weather. This is where I ended up.



I experienced some teething issues with the Surface Pro - I'm not sure if its Windows 10 in nature or the combination of the Surface Pro's poorly designed Bluetooth hardware but Bluetooth apparently uses the port range the wireless serial radio (used for the LED time display) needs and so Bluetooth needs to be disabled....this was a minor oversight as I intended to use Bluetooth as the audio link. Now I use a cable. The second area of improvement was audio in nature as well. While the pictured audio source is 1000W RMS and is loud enough to have my neighbors call the cops on a weekend...its not loud enough to cover 10 lanes so I will be adding an FM TX and some smaller radios for the launch lanes. I have been working on a deal on refurbished Makita site radios because I have batteries and a charger for these already and that resolves having to purchase more landfill items from other manufacturers like Ridgid etc.

The end result is that this system can reside mostly in the back of this truck bed which has a waterproof cover and we can wait out rain and be setup in 15 minutes. That does not sound like a big deal unless you are from this area where we have months of the calendar year where we could fly but will invariably be interrupted as rain passes through. On the hand launch side we have been consistently rewarded with full contest days vrs cancellations by being prepared for rain. This was my approach and so far I think its working. If I had to do this all over the only changes I would make are a larger solar panel - because invariably people see your rig and want to chain off of it for all kinds of things...so while my panel works fine for my gear - if a few guys are hanging other things off of it, it starts to fall behind. The other things I would have added would be a second LED clock - but that was limited by the available funds for this project as I liquidated some F3J models to pay for this gear.

In any event - we have enough gear to run a local contest now and I intend to keep improving on this as time goes on and funds become available.

Fall has come in like a Tasmanian devil on sugar smacks - lots of rain, wind and generally non flying conditions but I am hopeful we can get out a few more times before it drops to single digit temperatures out here.

I intend to setup at least 2 F5J contests and 2 F3K contests on the coming 2020 season in preparation for Canadian F3K team selections in BC and F5J team selections in likely Quebec. There will invariably be more local F5J contests but it was my intent to get Seattle on the map for F5J. Now that we have a small and growing contingent, 2020 looks pretty good.

North/South F5J Challenge, Oct 26-27 2019

Fred Weaver's 1st annual North/South F5J Challenge is all about bragging rights. Each pilot signs up for the North or South team—pick your team regardless of your geographical location. The 2-day contest is an [F5J USA Tour](#) event that will count toward season points. No fly-offs, one discard spanning both days. The top 5 pilot scores from each team will be combined at the end to determine the winning team. A perpetual trophy goes to the winning team to be held for the season as proof that their team is The Best!



The genesis of the North/South competition goes way back in time to an RC soaring era where TD and winches ruled the day. Fred Weaver recently shared a picture from the 1982 North/South TD event in Visalia. Fred is the middle guy in front (yeah, a much younger Fred for sure). If you can name any others you might just be an OLD DUDE ☺



Event details:

When: October 26-27 2019

Where: CVRC field, Visalia CA (hosted by NorCal Electric Soaring)

Who: Open to all US pilots. You must be an AMA member. Planes and limiters must adhere to the [F5J USA Tour rules](#).

Cost: \$55 seniors, \$35 juniors. Fee includes Subway sandwich trays, chips, and water both days.

The North and South Teams: When you register you will be asked to select your team. Note there is no geographical requirement for signing up for a particular team—you pick the team you want to compete with.



FOR MORE INFORMATION:

[N/S Challenge Info](#)

REGISTRATION AND TEAM SIGNUP:

[Team Signup](#)

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](#).

