

# Radio Controlled Soaring Digest

October 2010

Vol. 27, No. 10



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**Front cover:** Phil Herrington of Boulder Colorado converted a Great Planes .60 size fuel power Lancair kit (fiberglass fuselage, built up wings) into a slope glider. It is flown at Point of the Mountain flight park (south side) in Draper Utah during the Soar Utah 2010 event. Photo by Dave Garwood  
Canon EOS 40D, ISO 200, 1/640 sec., f8.0, 160mm

### 3 *RC Soaring Digest* Editorial

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José Carrion pilots his 7 meter home made Nimbus 4 for a fly-by at La Muela, near Madrid, Spain.

### 5 **Uncle Sydney's Gossip Column** **Seventh F3J World Championships 2010** **USA, New Zealand and Slovakia** **triumph in France**

Sydney Lenssen provides complete coverage of the event together with a critique of the event organization and a few concerns about the future of F3J itself. Photos by Nick Kidd.

### *Stratojet* **WB-47E 51-7066 walk-around 16**

Refitted for weather reconnaissance, this B-47E is now on outdoor display at the Museum of Flight, Seattle, Washington. This walk-around includes 46 photos detailing the exterior, a data table, and a brief history of the variant.

**Back Cover:** Ken Kearns and his 1/3 scale Slingsby Skylark 1. Photo by John Godwin  
Canon PowerShot A650 IS, ISO 80, 1/500 sec., f6.3



# R/C Soaring Digest

Managing Editors, Publishers B<sup>2</sup> Kuhlman

Contributors Sydney Lenssen

Photographers Dave Garwood  
John Godwin  
Pierre Rondel

Contact rcsdigest@centurytel.net  
Web: <http://www.rcsoaringdigest.com>  
Yahoo! group: RCSoaringDigest  
AIM screen name: RCSDigest  
Microsoft Messenger: rcsdigest

R/C Soaring Digest (*RCSD*) is a reader-written monthly publication for the R/C sailplane enthusiast and has been published since January 1984. It is dedicated to sharing technical and educational information.

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*RC Soaring Digest* is published using Adobe InDesign CS5

## In the Air



Sydney Lenssen's column, covering the world of F3J, has appeared in *RCSD* since September 2002. Uncle Sydney's Gossip, originally written for a newsletter put out by the UK F3J League, has been published by other organizations as well, notably the British Model Flying Association *F3J News*. *RCSD* began reprinting Sydney's column as it appeared in BMFA *F3J News*, but more recently the column has been sent directly to *RCSD*.

The column has of course followed the evolution of F3J over the years. Sydney questioned the viability of measuring flight times to 1/100 sec. in his initial *RCSD* column and followed all of the various controversies and rule change proposals, notably the staking issues and the landing point system.

In this, his last Gossip column, Sydney outlines his hopes for the future of F3J and suggests readers communicate their own ideas to appropriate officials at FAI.

We're going to miss you, Sydney!

The front cover of this issue serves as a prelude to complete photo and text coverage of the Soar Utah! event by Fred Maier and Dave Garwood. We have several photos already in hand and are eagerly anticipating the opportunity to share this material with *RCSD* readers.

The *RCSD* email address is now <[rcsdigest@centurytel.net](mailto:rcsdigest@centurytel.net)>. Time to build another sailplane!



José Carrion pilots his 7 meter home made Nimbus 4 for a fly-by at La Muela, near Madrid, Spain.

Photo by Pierre Rondel  
Canon EOS 10D, ISO 400, 1/750 sec., f6.7





# Seventh F3J World Championships 2010

*USA, New Zealand and Slovakia triumph in France*



*2010 F3J WCs senior and junior flyoff pilots plus towmen and spotters*

Sydney Lenssen, [sydney.lenssen@virgin.net](mailto:sydney.lenssen@virgin.net)

Brilliant photos courtesy of Nick Kidd

Daryl Perkins is the new F3J world champion. Brendon Beardsley is junior world champion. Brendon together with Connor Laurel and Michael Knight became junior team world champions, all three having reached the flyoffs. So the seventh F3J world championships held in August 2010 in Dole-Tavaux saw Team USA triumphant.

Big cheers also for New Zealand who won the senior team contest, all three of their pilots Joe Wurts, Scott Chisholm

and Les Stockley winning places in the flyoffs. As Joe said as the results were taped to the score-board, "This success is beyond my most optimistic dream." Deservedly he and team manager David James were bursting with pride.

Top marks for Slovenia's Primoz Rizner, Bojan Gergic and Jan Hlastec for their second place in the senior teams, beating the German team into third place. As team manager Pavel Prhvac proclaimed: "That makes us top

European team as we prepare for the European championships next year in Bovec."

RC glider pilots world-wide will be pleased at Daryl Perkins' success, his fifth world championship win, four times at F3B and here for the first time, simple F3J thermal champion. What a fight he had and what a show of dedicated determination. At what stage in the future will he surrender his reputation as the world's best RC glider pilot?



*Daryl Perkins is 2010's world champion F3J pilot and wins a Pike Perfect -not certain that he will choose to fly it -flanked on the left by Benedikt Feigl, 2008 world champion who placed second, and on the right by Carl Strautins.*



*Team New Zealand, 2010 champions: TM David James, flyoff pilots Scott Chisholm, Les Stockley and Joe Wurts. Joe spotted for them all and deserved the surprising well merited win.*

Brendon Beardsley's junior win is also remarkable because earlier in the preliminaries he had been penalised 100 points for flying in the "no-fly zone." Yet he still made the flyoffs. He definitely did fly in the banned area, but he must have been at least the 30th pilot to do so. Before he was punished, dozens of other pilots had been warned off but not penalised. US team manager Michael Verzuh protested at the unfairness and had some rude things to say about the

jury's verdict, but sooner or later action had to be taken.

The "no-fly zone" was a painful nuisance and could easily have spoiled the world championships completely. With hindsight, this airfield was unsuitable for such an important FAI event. Half the sky was out of bounds! Had the wind direction swung through 90 degrees the contest would have become a farce with everyone compelled to fly upwind or downwind. And the grassed area

available was not wide enough to turn the safety corridor anyway without encroaching on a recently cropped and ploughed part of the field.

## Contest starts a day late

The first day, Monday, was abandoned due to processing and rain. So the world championships started on the second day with the organisers eager to press on with 12 preliminary rounds for both juniors and seniors, in time for the flyoffs





*Senior team winners New Zealand, Slovenia and Germany as they wrestled to maintain balance on the podium. Congratulations all.*

to close by Friday evening. The schedule for each day was to impound the non-2.4 GHz transmitters at 07.00 hrs with the first slot starting at 08.00 hrs, a punishing

schedule when flying continued until after 19.00 hrs and once 20.00 hrs.

Camping at the airfield was not allowed and teams stayed in campsites, gites or hotels up to 30 minutes away. There



*Party drinks after the opening ceremony was interrupted by a violent storm which flattened most of the team tents and particularly the bar. Valiant efforts next morning quickly saw most facilities back to normal.*

was no official break for lunch. The tasty meals had to be consumed at any convenient break. Little time was left for socialising over the whole week, which is such a pity. A more cheerful and sociable contest could have been managed if the number of preliminary rounds had been reduced. The ambience of F3J championships is important. The rigid disciplines and hectic rigours of F3B events are best avoided.

## Preliminary Rounds - how many required?

The leader board for pilots always becomes exciting as the contest approaches the end of the preliminary rounds and the flyoff places are won and lost. But how many rounds should there be? At every championship I have attended, the organisers announce the number of preliminaries as a target. If weather or other matters cause delays, then the contest director, usually in consultation with team managers and the jury, cuts the number to suit time remaining.

At Dole-Tavaux after Round 9, the top 15 places were occupied in descending order by Benedikt Feigl, Carl Strautins, Daryl Perkins, Philip Kolb, Ricardas Siumbrys, Joe Wurts, Arend Borst, Cody Remington, Tobias Lammlin, Paulius Vezelis, Les Stockley, Kristof Pavel, Jan Hlastec, Jo Grini and Marlon Luz. Separating the top 15 were 31 points from the 8,000 possible.

Three rounds later when the preliminaries were over, Daryl Perkins had climbed to top place, now above Carl Strautins, Joe Wurts, Benedikt Feigl, Ricardis Siumbrys, Arend Borst, Philip Kolb, Tobias Lammlin, Kristof Pavel, Jo Grini, Les Stockley, Jan Hlastec, Maron Luz, Primoz Risner and Scott Chisholm. The margin between top and last place in the flyoffs was 55 points from 11,000 possible.



*How high can you get within the first second with massive line tension, technique, and mighty towmen? Rockets!*





*Study of concentration in the sun as Brendon Beardsley pilots himself, with a little help from his friends, into top spot as junior world champion.*

Only two pilots lost their flyoff places as a result of flying three extra rounds. In fact, if the flyoff places had been decided after Round 6, only three further pilots would have been affected. The top six senior pilots in the flyoffs had all established themselves as leaders in the preliminaries after six rounds.

Of course, if pilots, helpers and supporters have travelled from all over the world for a contest due to last for five or six days, then it is not unreasonable to have as many flights as possible. But there is no intrinsic merit in insisting that

at least nine rounds are held. If weather interferes, then end the prelims after six rounds allowing one dropped score. Pilots already recognise how vital the first six rounds are!

## **Flyoff considerations**

The decision I applauded most at Dole-Tavaux was to run only four of the six flyoff rounds for seniors and juniors on Friday afternoon. The preliminary rounds had finished by 12.30pm that day, which could have allowed enough time to finish all the flyoffs.



*Max Finke, the remarkable German junior, who you cannot keep out of flyoffs*

The contest organisers' thinking was that if the contests were over by the end of Friday, then many teams would leave for home and miss the prize-giving fixed for early evening next day in the town's parade square. The organisers chose to leave two rounds for seniors and juniors for the Saturday morning, then followed by a coach trip round the wine producers, leaving the prizegiving and banquet to round everything off.

My reason to applaud splitting the flyoffs was that an early start on Saturday would challenge any pilot who chose to



launch in one or two seconds. Should F3J world champions be determined in kind thermally weather -a simple launch and land competition? In my view - no!

Friday afternoon turned out to be launch and land. All the top eight pilots flew out the full 15 minutes and scored top landing points. Out of the 60 senior flights -four rounds of 15 pilots -only 10 flights did not make the full 15 minutes. Four points separated the top four pilots.

For the juniors it was much the same. Let me applaud the skills and performance of all the junior pilots. Let me especially applaud the youngest, Max Finke, soon to be 11 years old. He reached the flyoff in the Jura Cup, in the junior WCs and also the following weekend in Hollandglide. There is next to no difference in standards between juniors and seniors.

Overnight the pilots were left to decide how they would fly in the early morning calm, light wind and clear sky at 08.00 hrs, when the full 15 minutes would probably be impossible. At last spectators would be treated to a clear view of most models for the total time, as opposed to 14 minutes of trying to follow dots in the sky with only the pilots and spotters able to identify who's who!

To everyone's credit, nine of the flyoff pilots in Round 5 flew for more than 10 minutes. Nobody seemed to gain any height, though some obviously slowed their rate of descent. The delicate floating was a joy to watch. Then Kristof Pavel and Primoz Rizner found some gentle lift keeping them up a little longer, not enough to finish the slot, but enough to turn the leader board almost upside down. Top time was Kristof with 13:13.9.

Up climbed Primoz Rizner into top place rather than eighth, Philip Kolb moved from sixth place into second. Daryl Perkins moved down one place to third, Bendikt Feigl dropping three places to fourth. The champion's place was all up for grabs again.

Then another surprise decision, rather than running senior Round six straight away in the difficult air, the junior flyoff Round five would take place. That meant another 30 minute delay, and by that

*Right: First step in the Wurts self-launch procedure is to make sure he can reach the back line with a tension of 40kg.*

*Below: Second step is to start dancing and signal two seconds before the hooter.*







*Above Left: Sebastian Feigl with his laid back launching style which almost paved the way for a second world championship win for brother Benedikt.*

*Above right: Karl Hinsch about to launch in the Jura Cup which was flown on the Saturday and Sunday before the WCs started. The picture shows the ploughed field from which the last three starting positions launched and landed.*



*Left: Yet another style of launching as Cody Remington eases back just before hurling the winning Icon 2.*

time the sun had begun to work its magic and thermals were there to be found.

The last round of seniors was back to launch and land conditions. Daryl Perkins knew what he had to do. The fifth difficult round would be dropped for all the top pilots. He had to catch up one point on Benedikt Feigl and make sure he kept Carl Strautins and Joe Wurts behind him. He and Joe launched in a second plus a little -not two seconds. Both landed fractionally before the bell, and Daryl nailed the 100. He was champion. Another ambition fulfilled.

And his reaction a moment or two later? "Now I'll need to go to South Africa to make it two!"

## The future for F3J Championships?

Every world and European F3J championship I've seen - and I have only missed two Euro Champs - has become ever more competitive, with winning margins often down to one decimal place. In 2010 the margin was 3.8 points. But that is not the real measure of competition. Nor is the fact that Daryl Perkins dropped only 5.4 flyoff points from his possible 5,000.

What 2010 has shown is that the height of launches will not by themselves win today. What is often more vital is to get off the line between one and two seconds of the start signal. Both

Benedikt and Daryl managed to score times of 14:58.9 in round one and three respectively, with Benedikt scoring 100 landing points and Daryl a mere 99, which placed him second in his round to Joe. Most of the flyoff pilots were going for bust from the start. So another lesson for those who advocate shortening the towline length to separate the top scores is simply: that will not work!

Let's say that a good flyoff flight is 14:55.0, which needs a high tension start and allows insufficient time to get full towline height. Let's say a reasonable landing would be within 60cm from the spot, a 98 or more.

2010 flyoff timesheets show that in Round one, nine of the pilots scored more than the 55 (which is what top pilots say for 14 minutes 55 seconds) and seven of the pilots scored more than 98 landing points. In Round two, ten pilots scored 55 plus and eight had 98 or more landings. In Round three, 12 pilots scored better than 55 and 13 pilots had 98 plus landings. In Round four, nearer the end of the afternoon, nine pilots had 55 plus and five managed 98 plus landings.

Round five was supposed to sort the men from the boys in the early morning slot. Nobody flew out the slot and best time was 13:13.9. Five pilots managed 98 plus landings including Kristof. For all the leading pilots this became the throw out score.

Round six saw a return to launch and land with eight pilots returning 55 plus and 11 achieving 98 plus landings.

Now to the reason for asking Gossipers to wade through all that data. F3J championship competitions, and indeed many of the Eurotour contest flyoffs have reached a standard where to win you must be able to rocket launch with split second precision, with huge line tension and mighty towmen, find your thermal no matter how windy it is or how far the lift, and then spear your landing with consistent accuracy.

What started 20 years ago as a homely comfortable RC thermal glider event, without the far more demanding strain of multi-task F3B challenges, without the need to buy lots of reels of line and an efficient regulated winch, has today evolved beyond the average and even skilled pilots. Those who enjoy seeing models go up instead of down and are stimulated by the adrenaline rush which competition induces, are left in sheer wonderment that there are pilots in this world who are in another league.

Can this be good for F3J? I suspect not.

Even the champions of this world need other competitors to fly against. You cannot hold much of a contest with only a handful of rivals. To thrive F3J contests need lots of entries.

There are about 400 F3J pilots who fly in Eurotour events each year, most only



fly in one or two and the serious ones perhaps five or six. Across the Atlantic the number of competition F3J pilots probably number 250 or less. Across the world there maybe another 250. As the competitions are framed at present these numbers seem sure to dwindle. I see no evidence of numbers growing anywhere.

The rules need to be changed so that mere mortals can catch the bug and participate, so that high risk and -for most people dangerous - styles of flying are not required to have any chance of success.

How to change the rules to achieve that, I do not know. A weak link in the towline, banning speared landings, both have been mooted and rejected so far.

But I encourage you to send suggestions to Tomas Bartovsky, CIAM and your national aeroclub to ponder. Most of FAI model classes, freeflight and RC, develop into more and more specialist requirements attracting fewer participants. To its credit, F3J has up to now attracted large numbers who want to fly, compete and be friendly, to enjoy the socialising. That's worth every effort to maintain.

## **Name the flyoff pilots!**

Hardly a minute had passed after the preliminary rounds and people were asking who had won Gossip's flyoff guessing competition. Not so many

entries this year and sadly my entry went badly wrong, only three of my list made it, although I limited guesses to 12 this time, not the 15 who were in the flyoffs. My antennae also went awol in placing Cody Remington as the new world champion; I warned him not to peak too early - small compensation for him to win the Jura Cup. Top guesser was Scott Chisholm of New Zealand who named eight of the successful pilots, including himself but not Les Stockley, a bit brazen. Congratulations.

## **Bricks and bouquets**

By far the biggest brick has to be the restrictions placed by the French authorities on flying at the Dole-Tavaux Airport under which a "no-fly zone" was imposed along the taxiway which divided the team tents and contest administration area from the flying site. Effectively this meant that half the sky was out of bounds.

Had this been recognised when the French proposal to stage the world championships -three years ago -Dole-Tavaux would surely have been ruled out. As it was, the four page judicial letter to the organisers banning flying over the taxiway and the adjacent main road some 50 metres further back, was issued only two weeks before the start of the contest.

The same letter also imposed restrictions to the access for the public. They had to

be held back some 200 metres from the flight line where it was almost impossible for anyone to see what was going on. What a crass decision. Posters all over the town advertised the championships and admission was free. On the first couple of days hundreds of spectators turned up and enjoyed the festival. Then officials moved in and spectators were strictly controlled and held back.

The "no-fly zone" would have wrecked the competition if the prevalent wind direction had switched through 90 degrees. It almost spoiled the Jura Cup and the WCs because dozens of pilots flaunted the ban to continue circling in lift, sometimes unnecessarily but at other times in desperation. Announcements in most slots asked, pleaded and then demanded that the offenders should turn back and fly out of the forbidden zone. Yet at the same time no official with a sighting device was installed to define the boundary with precision.

In the end after two days of continuous badgering, a pilot was penalised 100 points and the protests began. The penalty was unfair in that the US junior was only the latest of many transgressors. Having said that, the contest director had no alternative but to penalise because few pilots were heeding repeated warnings.

No official or jury wants to penalise any pilot. In my experience they do their very best to avoid reducing the chances of



*Set to be the next hostess and contest organiser for the 2012 F3J World Championships in South Africa, Michelle Goodrum, flanked on the left by husband Craig and in front with their young daughter, star of Dole-Tavaux.*

security, in-coming and outgoing aircraft, coping with the opening and closing ceremonies.

Acting contest director, Serdar Sualp, did a magnificent job in keeping the competition going fairly despite hiccups with the weather and arrangements. The competition ran well and was fair to all. He asked my opinion on how things were going on the third day. My reply was that the pilots and helpers were keeping things going and competing properly. He replied: "It's a good job that they aren't aware of what's going on in the kitchen."

Star of the show was Yannik Faivre who handled the timing system and the announcements, ending each with his unique way of pronouncing "Thanks." Top marks to the independent timekeepers, who were not always F3J flyers, against whom I heard no complaints, which is unusual. And a big thanks to the young students from local schools who helped in all sorts of tasks including serving meals and drinks and spoke a variety of languages.

Commiserations to Dave Hobby, twice F3J world champion, who had an eye infection which spoiled his vision and was forced to retire, and then had the sad news that his mother had died. Also to Larry Jolly who had done so much preparation with the Turkish team, only to be ill shortly before the event. Reinhard Vallant made a hardworking and worthy replacement coach.

any pilot. But somebody had to draw the line, no matter how unreasonable it was to impose such a "no-fly zone". I am at least thankful that the penalty did not harm Brendon's quest and he did win in the end.

The event issued a lesson for CIAM. When bids to run championships are submitted to Lausanne, then they must detail any restriction imposed by the site. That surely is the most important question for any location. Of course, unanticipated limits could still be demanded by the authorities at the last minute, if there were to be a terrorist alert, for instance. In the case of Dole-

Tavaux then it should be asked why the zone came at such a late stage and when was official permission sought to hold the contest.

Nobody worked harder over the ten days of the Jura Cup and the world championships than Stephane Champanhet, his daughter Maite, who was sometimes reduced to tears, his wife and their large team of helpers. Every day saw organisational problems, sorting out difficulties with the computers and printers, the scoring software, WiFi shortcomings, dealing with the aftermath of the storm which flattened most of the tents, listening to the demands of airport





*Tomas Bartovsky and Raymond Pavan, two of the jury at the 2010 F3J world championships in Dole-Tavaux last month. They would welcome any feedback on how the F3J rules might be modified to encourage more pilots to participate.*

Overall the seventh WCs organisation was poor. Pilots and team managers were kept waiting for information or help, little use was made of notice boards where times for different happenings could have made it all clear. No mains electricity was laid on and batteries went flat.

The opening ceremony was a shambles. The prizegiving ceremony was held in a large parade square in the town, ideal for purpose, with a wide bank of seating for spectators but not enough seats, the podium and flags were 60 metres away with everyone squinting into the evening sun, the podium pedestals suited single people, and for team awards, twelve people had to wrestle with their prizes and medals. Food and drink at the dinner was tasty when you got it, the cabaret during the banquet came pretty close to Parisian splendour and delighted all but the most prudish.

When I sent a copy of this latest Gossip column on the 2010 F3J world championships to Tomas Bartovsky who chairs CIAM's RC-soaring sub-committee which has responsibility for the rules of all FAI classes dealing with silent flight, he replied with the e-mail below. I hope that his comment encourages everybody interested in the future of F3J to write to Tomas with any suggestions on how to improve the rules so that the class continues to attract large numbers of pilots.

From: Tomas Bartovsky <Tomas.Bartovsky@vscht.cz>  
Subject: RE: WCs Gossip

Dear Sydney,  
Thank you very much for the Gossip.

You hit the point and I would sign every word in your text.  
Best regards  
Tomas

## Sad announcement

This Gossip column will be the last written by Uncle Sydney. I hope that someone else will carry on. It has always been good fun for me and I am extremely grateful to everyone who has helped with information and ideas.

The column started 11 years ago by accident when Colin Lucas and the Jacksons ran the UK F3J League and Colin started a newsletter giving competition results and future dates. After contributing a couple of news items, I was promptly told to write an "Uncle Sydney's Gossip" column every issue.

Others who have proved vital for me are Tony Beckett who ran the BARCS website, Jo Grini in Norway whose newsy websites provide information and photographs from all over the world, and of course Bill and Bunny Kuhlman who do such a high quality job with *RC Soaring Digest* on-line every month. My patient wife Brenda reads each column to ensure that it makes some sense. Without them all my words would not have reached you.





A total of 1,341 B-47E models were produced; 691 were built by Boeing, 386 by Lockheed, and 264 by Douglas.

On display at the Museum of Flight in Seattle, Washington, this B-47E-75-BW is a standard B-47E, built in 1951 at Wichita, Kansas, and converted for use in weather reconnaissance.

All offensive and defensive weaponry and support systems were removed to reduce weight, from 230,000 lbs for the SAC version of the E-model down

to 174,000 lbs with cameras and air sampling equipment installed. This work was done by the Lockheed facility in Marietta, Georgia.

The WB-47E was roughly twice as fast as the B-50D it replaced, and while the B-50D usually flew at 18,000 ft, the WB-47E could fly at altitudes up to 40,000 ft.

WB-47E missions included sorties for the US Atomic Energy Detection System (AEDS), hurricane and typhoon

reconnaissance, and standard synoptic weather tracks around Alaska, Hawaii and Guam.

51-7066 flew the last WB-47E USAF weather mission on October 29, 1969. The next day it left McClellan AFB and landed at Boeing field.

This aircraft is on loan from the National Museum of Naval Aviation at Pensacola, Florida, and is located close to where Bob Robbins made the first flight of the XB-47 on Dec 17, 1947.





**SPECIFICATIONS:**

SPAN 116 Feet, with wings swept at 35°  
LENGTH 108 Feet  
HEIGHT 28 Feet  
WEIGHT 174,000 lbs (Operating weight with max fuel load)  
ENGINES 6 General Electric J-47-GE-25 turbojets with 6,000 lbs thrust each, capable of 7,200 lbs thrust each with water injection

**PERFORMANCE:**

MAXIMUM SPEED 606 MPH CRUISE SPEED 557 MPH  
RANGE 3,000 to 4,000 Miles (Altitude Dependent)  
SERVICE CEILING Above 40,000 Feet  
CREW 3 - Pilot, Copilot, Navigator











































































