

GullWings

School Starts... The Gulls Come Alive

Torrey Pines Gulls Radio Control Soaring Society

September 2009

Report on the 2009 F3B World Championships in Ivancice, Czech Republic

August 20, 2009

Michael Smith – Team Pilot

From the moment the 2009 team was selected the work began. New planes, practice dates, fund raising, selecting helpers and the Team Manager all became things that we were consumed with. It really is a bittersweet feeling making a US FAI worlds team. The first and best reaction is “Yeah, I won. I am on the team”, and not too far behind is the thought “oh crap, I am on the team”.

For me, even though I do feel the “oh crap” feeling, it does not deter me from the endeavor. The chance to go compete at with the best pilots in the world is what it is all about. The rewards are real, and the learning that takes place, while painful at times is worth the price of admission.

The issue with flying to these European contests is one setback that all US teams have to deal with. For departure from the US, we had two groups leaving from two coasts. The West Coast Crew met at the Hacienda Hotel at LAX. This hotel is one of many that offers a park and fly program. If you rent a room for a day, you can park your car in their lot for up to 14 days.

Perfect for us since we needed a place to stage before departure, and “sleep” a bit before

heading to the airport at 4 in the morning. We met at the hotel, and began the bag distribution process. With today’s baggage fees and rules it was very important to try to be efficient, yet bring everything we could. We had 16 checked bags, and 10 carry-ons. One of the carry-ons was our tripod for our base A sighting device, and when we arrived in Prague, it was not with us. Likely it got left on the shuttle bus on the way to the airport. This would be our only shipping loss. After spending \$1,200 dollars for our excess, and overweight bags, we were on our way up to the gate to wait for the plane. We met Don and Mike at JFK airport in New York, and after a short wait we boarded a 767 for the 9.5 hour flight to Prague.



The group makes an impression with competitors!

People were asking me if I was getting excited as the departure date grew closer, and my honest answer was “well, no, not really”. I am always a little anxious when traveling with airplanes and equipment. If one thing gets lost or damaged,

we have a big problem. So, I hold my excitement until all of the stuff is safely off the plane, and loaded into the rental van.

Imagine my relief when all of our stuff, and our bodies actually did fit into our two vehicles. It wasn’t easy by the way. After taking the rear seat out of the van, turning it sideways, and loading in 6 winches, 4 sportubes, various clothing bags, and tool bags, and a v-tail box we were in. We turned on the GPS unit, and navigated out of the airport, onto the toll roads, and out of Prague. It took about 4 hours, but we finally arrived at our



Mike poses with a competitive F3B ship, Dave Klein's "Target".

hotel. We were there for a short bit, got our rooms, and were anxious to see the field, so off we went. We quickly realized we almost stumbled on the field while driving in, but we had turned around just short. It felt good to arrive finally at Czech Heaven. (Go to www.czechheaven.cz)

So, Thursday was our day to get set up, and do some flying at the WC site. We set up our winches, and tested them all to get their initial setting close. Then we did a little flying. We bought our launch lines from a very trusted source, EMV-Vega in Germany. We use these lines at home, and have become very familiar with them over the years. Due to the shipping issues and expense, we use the service offered by HB form EMC-Vega. He offers to meet you at

the contest site to deliver your order. We have done this in Switzerland, and it worked out just great. So, we had no reason to think we had any issues with our trusty speedlines. Flying on Thursday didn't really reveal any issues with the line as we were using new, dry line, and knew that after they soaked, they would start giving us the launches we were used to.

Friday, we were among a few teams to help the contest organizers ground crew get familiar with the equipment, and the event. So, it worked out to provide some much needed on field, on course team practice. For the most part, things went well. I



Equipment barely fit...where's Mike?

| Month | HLG | RES/TD | RES/TD Contest Director | (SC)2 TD | Other | Meeting Board/General |
|---------|-----|--------|-------------------------|--------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| Sept | | 13 | Tom Kiesling | 27 ISS | | 1/8 |
| October | | 18 | Keith Finkenbiner | 25 Encinitas | Visalia 3 & 4 | 6/13 |
| Novemb | | 18 | Dave Klein | 22 Rain Date | | 3/10 |
| Decemb | | 14 | Mike Smith | | | 1/8 |

Next General Meeting...

September 8 at 7:00 PM
 San Diego Aerospace Museum
 Balboa Park

The Torrey Pines Gulls
 Radio Control Soaring Society

A non-profit society whose primary purpose is to support and encourage the activities of its members engaged in radio controlled sailplane flying

Calendar dates subject to change. Please review the calendar each month and watch the TPGulls@yahoo.com list for updates.



"Organized chaos" Mike calls the distance task of F3B.

wasn't looking to win any rounds during this flying period, since it was about how we worked as a team. Things seemed to be clicking along nicely. There was still no reason to be worried about our launches. Saturday and Sunday brought the Brno World Cup. This is a two day contest that up to 100 pilots can enter, and from our team we entered 4. Mike L., Tom, Kyle, and I flew. Of the 4 of us, Kyle had the best result. He placed 10th I believe. The rest of us were down the list, but again, this was practice, and we wanted the errors, and hitches to get out of our system here, and not carry on to the WC's.

Monday the WC's began. We immediately saw that the German team was out launching the entire field, and on top of that, we seemed to be outrunning our launch line. The line did not seem to be springing back like it should. We thought that perhaps the lines were still too dry. We made some mistakes early on that would ultimately set the stage for a lack luster finish. On the first or second distance flight for the team, Tom Kiesling attempted a slow speed turn over winch row, and ended up crashing into the winches and coming to rest on the winch lines. The glider was bruised, and a 300 point penalty rubbed the salt into the wounded pride. We had a bit of a team talk about that, and decided that no matter what, if someone has an opinion as to the best option, you must let it be heard.

Simply telling Tom to land it, or even something like "dude you are going to slow" would have prompted a safe ditch landing outside of the penalty area. The very next flight for Tom was in speed. Since the damage included a broken control horn on the elevator there was some concern about the trim settings being off. Tom knew, and expected that the trims could be off a bit, and was ready to trim the model for his speed run. However, what he overlooked was that elevator trim affects all flight modes including launch.

Consequently the launches were a bit more exciting than he

anticipated. The first attempt saw the glider tip stall, and pinwheel on the launch line. Tom flew over, landed, and we relaunched. It happened again. With time running down, we went for yet another launch, and the line broke. Over to the other line of winches, and the 4th launch made it. We did not have a working time stopwatch, and Tom entered the course with about 16 seconds to go, and flew an 18 second run. This resulted in working time running out, and a zero for speed for Tom in this round. The working time really allows the pilot time to retry if things don't feel just right. There are risks, but relaunching is a big part of the strategy.

So by about the 2nd day, it was obvious that our line was defective. There simply was no spring in the line. It stretched out like the others, but on the spring back, it only gave about 50% of the return pull that the Germans were getting. Turns out some of our line was not up to spec. Big big lesson learned there. So, we had a battle in front of us. As for me, my Target was flying very well, and even though I was not launching as high as the front runners, my speed runs were clean and tight, so I was keeping up with the top 20% of the field. I was happy with that. But in distance, I made a couple of mistakes on the sticks that cost me a lap here, and there. I only won one distance round out of the 7 that we flew. I was getting beat by 1, and 2 laps each time out. It really hurts to lose points in distance. Darryl Perkins says that F3B is won in speed, and lost in distance. He is exactly right. Duration was the strong suit of the US team. We all did pretty well in duration with Tom missing only one flight that became his throwout. I ended up throwing out a 995 round, and kept 998's and 1000's. Duration is



A flock of "Ceres", another competitive F3B ship.

something we know how to do. The duration round is 12 minutes of working time to get a 10 minute flight with a spot landing. The landing points are normalized into the flight time to get your max. of 1000 points.

By the time the dust settled, Martin Herrig is the repeat World Champion, with Peter Huberts 2nd, and Christian Muller 3rd. I ended up in 12th place overall, Mike Lachowski was 33rd, and Tom Kiesling was 39th. As a team, we were nowhere near the podium. We ended up in 9th place with top honors going to Germany.

More than any other WC I have flown in, this one had the hottest and best competition. All of the pilots have gotten better, and the best have gotten better too. The gliders were all very competitive. Freestylers, Shooters, Ceres', Ceres Lifts, Tangas, and a couple of Targets rounded out the group. Craig Greening was our photographer. He posted many images of gliders and pilots on RCGroups. Go over to the F3X thread and have a look.

I have said it many times before, but it can't be mentioned enough. Your help with donations, and all of your support made it possible to get over to the Czech Republic and compete with the world's best RC Glider pilots. Thank you again for making this year's endeavor possible.

Good August Competition

Steve Condon, CD

Twenty one pilots came out on a sunny and beautiful day in August and enjoyed four rounds of thermal duration competition. We drew four times from a hat and ended up flying a 4:00, 7:00, 8:00 and another 4:00 minute task in that order.

Conditions were variable so it was interesting to see guys go to the moon on their 4 and scrape the tree tops on the longer tasks. It was a hard fought battle but Mario Scolari came out on top flying his new Explorer 3.8 meter ship. He loves the performance and it showed in the results. Rounding out the Master Class was Tom Kiesling in 2nd and our orange County competitor—Tom Watson in third.

Parviz topped the Expert class and our trusty Editor, Bill Eckles and his custom Oly III took the sportsman class.

Everyone had a nice time and we were out of there by 12:30. See you in September when F3B and F3J ace Tom Kiesling will be our CD.

September General Meeting

Bill Eckles, ed.

Tuesday will be our first general meeting following the summer break. Mike Greenshields will be the guest speaker and we expect an exciting presentation about Airtronics recent product developments.

Be there or miss the opportunity to hear a great, high interest presentation.

Moose will be gone, but John promises an abundance of good raffle prizes for the meeting so bring lots of cash.

September Board Meeting

Bill Eckles, ed.

A small quorum met last Tuesday to discuss "board" business at Denny's on Mirmar Road. We're all ready for the fall flying season and the facilities appear to be in good shape.

We'll be looking for new board members, so please don't hesitate to step up and offer your services. New talent is always desired and some old guard would be welcome, too.

Torrey Pines Gulls Board of Directors -- 2008

| | | | |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------|--|
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Trading Post

For Sale

Buy Sell or Trade

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Specifications:

Span: 14ft. 6in.

Area 2100 sq. in.

Weight 8 lbs.

Wing load 8.8oz./sq. ft.

Aspect 14 = 4:1

Airfoil E205

I have too many projects going on and I need to clear out my workshop.

Asking price is \$375. It is about 80 percent built. I started this a while ago and put it away for a while. I have all the necessary pieces to complete the kit. I am moving up to full scale now so I need to clear out the hanger.

I have pictures upon request.

Please call or email me.

619 246 2399 or email

Brzez11@cox.net

Good flying, Lenny