



The British Aerobatic Association

Who are we?

The British Aerobatic Association was founded on 1st May 1974 to represent the interests of all those concerned with aerobatic flying whether in a powered aircraft or in gliders, by promoting and organising all aspects of competition aerobatics in the UK, including progressive training, proper conduct, furtherance of the sport and arranging contests. The British Aerobatic Association Limited is a Company incorporated with its liability limited by guarantee and not having a Share Capital, and is recognised by The Royal Aero Club as the governing body of Aerobatics in Great Britain.



The association is comprised entirely of enthusiastic volunteers. Subsidies are non-existent, the modest annual subscriptions and contest entry fees are all the financial means available to the BAeA for its normal run of events. Benefits to members from the subscription include regular information on UK and world-wide aerobatic activities via a Newsletter, and the opportunity to attend all BAeA functions such as Contests and Training Events, Judging Schools, social functions, etc.

In any capacity, in the air or on the ground, the more involved you are the more enjoyable it is. If you would like to make a contribution to the Sport, learn more about it and attend aerobatic contests as a helper or spectator, membership of the BAeA is the first step.

We aim to provide an effective means of Communications between aerobatic pilots and other enthusiasts and a focus for the efforts of all those interested in aerobatics. We represent the interests of and express the needs of those involved in Aerobatics in the following main areas;

- International Competition
- National & Domestic Competitions
- Aerobatic Training

We also provide assistance and guidance in aerobatic training matters from the ab initio stage onwards. Since the inauguration of the BAeA, a series of competitions all over the UK have become well established annual events, and the Association now promotes a comprehensive range of annual contests for its members. In 1996, we worked with the British Gliding Association, to develop a recognised Glider Aerobatic badge scheme and now represent both power and glider aerobatics within the International sporting structure.

The Association is the FAI recognised national representative body for Aerobatic competition within the United Kingdom.

What do we do?

We run events ranging from aerobatic training camps and competitions to judging seminars each year with three National championship meetings. We constantly monitor pilot skills and ensure that safety standards are maintained to the required high level at all contests.

We run one day training courses to teach the principles of Aerobatic Competition Judging to novice and experienced aerobatic judges and pilots at all skill levels.

We work hard to maintain good public relations for the sport and assist national bodies like the CAA and GASCO (General Aviation Safety Council) to make 'ordinary' pilots aware of the unique requirements for safe aerobatic flying.

We try to encourage new members, whether or not they are pilots. There are always plenty of opportunities to get involved and help in ground support activities - who knows to where it might lead? Check our schedule of events and come along.

Why aerobatics?

Briefly, aerobatic training develops a pilot's flying skills to the ultimate. It demands a high level of dedication and investment in time and, at higher levels, money. In return it provides not only pleasure but also a real mastery of the art of flying in every attitude of flight that can be encountered in an Aeroplane. Perfecting one's aerobatic skills will inevitably lead to increased self-assurance in handling the machine and greater safety in the air. There is enormous satisfaction derived from the precision and artistry involved.

How does it work?

Pilots with basic Aerobatic experience, for example on their club Cessna 150/2 Aerobat, may well reach the stage of wishing to have their skills more objectively tested, possibly in competition with others. This can be achieved by flying the Beginners programme at a BAeA contest weekend. The beginners programme consists of five basic aerobatic figures put together into a sequence. The opportunity to fly this sequence, and receive expert critique, informally or under competition conditions is available at most BAeA events and Friday afternoon is usually given over to this aim.

Glider pilots are also catered for with single type (ASK21) contests and introductory training events.

Pilots wishing thereafter to compete more regularly usually move on to the Standard level contests. Rather more stringent standards of accuracy, positioning and presentation are required when competing in earnest.

There are then three higher levels to which a pilot may aspire - Intermediate, Advanced and Unlimited.

Ascending through each level requires a wider repertoire of the pilot and, progressively, more performance from the aircraft. Usually the standard Level contests are the most well attended with up to 30 competitors flying a wide range of aircraft such as the Stampe, Cap 10, Chipmunk, Cessna Aerobat, Yak 52, Pitts Special or Topsy Nipper. Despite the need for more capable aircraft at the higher levels, the intention remains that competition flights are a test of the pilot's skill rather than of Aircraft performance. To this end, the Association designates a 'minimum' aircraft for Intermediate and Advanced levels and designs sequences that can be flown safely and competently within their performance envelopes. These minimum aircraft are the Stampe SV4 and Pitts S2A respectively.

Once into the Unlimited category, pilots will be eligible for selection to represent Great Britain at International Championships, as well as competing as individuals in National and overseas events. International Standards are determined by the governing body (CIVA), and all National, European and World Championships are held under CIVA Rules. Normally there is either a World or European Championship in each alternate year; and Britain hosted the World Aerobatic Championships in August 1986. The programmes flown during a competition may include any combination of;

- **Known Compulsory** sequence published for the current season.
- **Free sequence** - The Pilot's own compilation of manoeuvres from the Aerobatic Catalogue, within parameters specified in BAeA rules.
- **Unknown Compulsory** - a previously unseen sequence of Catalogue figures performed unrehearsed.
- **A Freestyle Event ...**
 - 4-Minute Freestyle - a totally free non-catalogue sequence composed by the pilot to be completed in a time limit of 4 minutes, or (At BAeA contest only)
 - Masters/Apprentices - a short sequence of non-catalogue figures with additional Freestyle elements inserted at the pilots discretion.

International Competitions:

Great Britain wins Bronze at European Aerobatic Championships.

The British Aerobatic Unlimited Team performed brilliantly at the EAC 2004 in Kaunas, Lithuania and were rewarded with bronze medals. The team of 6 pilots (Tom Cassells, Gerald Cooper, Nick Onn, Mark Jefferies, Kester Scrope and Val Rahmani), managed by Alan Cassidy demonstrated that Britain is building a talented and competitive team of Unlimited level pilots and reinforced the growing international status of the British Aerobatic Team.

The team also put in a strong performance at the World Aerobatic Championships held in Burgos, Spain this year. Tom Cassells was the highest placed Britain achieving an excellent 14th place overall and Tom, Gerald and Nick won fourth place in the team event.

The BAeA extends congratulations to the team and wishes it good luck in future competitions.

The results from the National Championships at Sywell are used as the basis for selection of the international teams for 2006.



British Aerobatic Team (Unlimited): Bronze Medalists at European Aerobatic Championships 2004:
(l to r: Nick Onn, Gerald Cooper, Tom Cassells and Alan Cassidy, Team Manager)

More Information:

If you would like to know more, come to a competition and talk to us! Pilots will be happy to talk about aerobatics, although please be aware that they may not wish to be disturbed whilst preparing for a flight, but there will always be people around who are delighted to tell you more about this demanding, fascinating, compulsive sport.

For more information, including the results from competitions visit the BAeA website:

www.aerobatics.org.uk.

