

Observations of an Air Show by a 49.5

Putting on an air show for the masses was an experience. The planning started 18 months ago, with getting equipment ready that the military teams needed, different oils, both engine and hydraulic, servicing carts to include liquid and gaseous oxygen and high pressure nitrogen tanks, specialized towing equipment, etc .It all came together when the Dacy front crew arrived on Thursday to check the lay of the land, survey the air show box and start their set up. That day started at 7 AM for the Boreal Aviation crew. By about 7 that night, we had set up crowd lines (reminded me of a recent work weekend at OSH where we installed fencing to keep the masses in line), marked out vendor areas, and got all equipment lined up for support.

On Friday, which started about 7 AM, planes started arriving, all of the Dacy planes and support arrived, the KC-135, E2C Hawkeye, F 16 and 18 demo teams, T-38 and C 130. Vendors started arriving also to set up the food court. Army and Navy had simulators, there was also a full motion simulator that held 8 people at once and offered 5 experiences. We also had several light sport plane models on display as well as Cirrus. Dave Vandenberg put his Air Camper on display as part of the NMU display. At about noon, a media pre show started which was quite a performance by all demo teams. By 9 that night, everything had been bedded down and final preps done for Saturday.

Saturday morning started at 6 AM for me, as I had to set up smoke oil servicing, set up picnic tables and chairs, show the local EAA chapter how to set up the big canopy (too many chiefs on that project), and make sure all vendors and demo personnel had or found what they needed. Lynn Sykes, being in charge of the management duties, ticket sales, personnel, sign posting, and a host of other duties, was running around stomping out small fires that kept erupting.

By 10:30, fence hangers started showing up, and by 11, we opened the flood gates. by 12. we went from two ticket lines to 3. All the Boreal Aviation employees were running around on line duties while spouses helped at ticket and souvenir sales. At around this time, a T 34, Yak 52, Schweizer 269 helicopter, L-29 jet and Fed X Caravan decided to become show planes. Also, the local EAA chapter pulled their planes into line for display and to line up young eagle kids.

Our own Chrys Leveque gave the invocation and at around 1 PM, there was a parade of flight with local pilots flying by on low pass while the announcer read a short bio on each person with Lynn Sykes as "Flight Lead". As soon as this was over, the Dacy team took to the sky for the grand opening. As the person at Whiteman AFB had a problem converting local time to Zulu time, the B-2 flyover was delayed till after 2 PM. When it was ready to fly over (3 passes), all eyes looked skyward to see a very unusual plane. If you have ever seen one in flight, it is something to remember. The Airshow was over at around 5 PM and once again around 9 PM, all was quiet again, the crowd of about 3200 plus had departed. The unusual thing that happened on Saturday and Sunday which I won't soon forget was the formation flight of Vlado Lenoche P-51 and an Air Force F-16 on the WW II commemorative flight. When they took up flying and the bagpipe music started playing, the flight line went silent with everyone watching it in awe.

On Sunday, the Airshow was almost the same with a few other deviations from schedule thrown in. Crowd size was about half of the previous day (that was to be expected according to Dave Dacy). Once again, around 5 PM, the show ended. Planes serviced for departure, autographed pictures signed, and all closed down. One side note, 439's Dave Vandenberg somehow showed up in a period costume Saturday and Sunday, and answered questions about the old days of flying. I do have pictures, and if I can figure out how to put them in here, I will send.

Monday, was flight line clean up and tear down day, but that is another story.

Bill Landry