

WWW.AIRSHOWSREVIEW.COM

June ♦ July 2013
Volume 4, Issue 4

The Magazine



- ✈ Visiting the Ramex Delta Team in France
- ✈ MCAS Yuma Air Show
- ✈ NAF El Centro Air Show & Open House
- ✈ The Austrian Air Base Vogler at Linz-Hörsching
- ✈ 2013 TICO Warbirds Air Show



WATERLOO AIR SHOW

JUNE 1 & 2, 2013



June 1st and 2nd

REGION OF WATERLOO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

- Featuring the Canadian Forces Snowbirds and CF-18 Demonstration Team, Jane Wicker Wing Walking, aerobatics, historical aircraft, a jet car, pyro and more!
- Additional static aircraft to explore up close, photograph and speak to the crew
- Aviation exhibits and vendors
- Kids play area and activities
- Performers autograph tent
- Food vendors and licensed areas



There's something for the whole family at one of southwest Ontario's best events!

Buy tickets
online and
SAVE!

www.waterlooirshow.com

WWW.AIRSHOWSREVIEW.COM

The Magazine
June - July 2013 Volume 4, Issue 4

Features:

- 4 2013 MCAS Yuma Air Show
- 10 2013 NAF El Centro Air Show and Open House
- 16 Base Visit - Linz Hörsching / Air Base Vogler, Austria
- 22 2013 TICO Warbird Air Show
- 28 Visiting the Ramex Delta Tactical Display in France
- 70 More from Istres and spotting at Base aérienne 115 Orange
- 84 A-4 Skyhawks over Germany

Editorial:

- 2 Staff & Contact info
- 3 Behind the Lens

Cover: Ramex Delta Tactical Display at Base aérienne 125 Istres - Le Tubé, France photo by ASR Media LLC.

Index page: Capturing the moment on the tarmac, photo by Jonah, Ramex Delta 1.



© 2013 ASR MEDIA LLC

amazon.com
and you're done.

Millions of items



Top Laptops,
Tablets and Desktops



The BEST cameras
and lenses!



Click on ad to shop
amazon.com

Help to keep
The Magazine
FREE



ASR Media LLC.

130 Madison Ave. 2nd floor, New York, NY 10016 USA

info@airshowsreview.com



Publisher and Editor: ASR Media LLC

The Magazine is published 6 times a year and it is available for a free download from our website www.AirShowsReview.com. Please note we do not accept any unsolicited articles or images for publication.

Advertising:

Please contact G.E. DeVries , Advertising Manager g.e.devries@msn.com

Contributing photographers:

Canada: Steve "Hornet" Bigg

USA: Ricardo von Puttkammer, Dan Adams, Joe Osciak, Stefan Seville, Norman Graf, Aaron Rumfallo

Europe: Peter Thivessen, Wolfgang Jarisch, Ray Pace, Paul Kolbe, Michele Giardini

Far - East: Takeshi Shinoda, Yoshiaki Wakana

If you are interested in becoming one of our contributors, have a DSLR camera, capable of taking quality images, are located in Russia, Australia, Japan or Asia feel free to contact us: editor@airshowsreview.com Please note: none of our staff are paid, they all are volunteers and are responsible for all costs that occur to attend air shows.

The Magazine
join & follow us
on facebook



Copyright 2013 ASR Media LLC. The Magazine may not be edited, or sold without prior written consent. However, you are free to distribute it at for at no charge, as long as it is back linked to our site. All trade names, trademarks, manufacturer names, photographic images and textual works used in this publication, are the property of their respective owners. While ASR Media LLC., strives for factual reporting of events ASR Media LLC., is not responsible for the accuracy of the content or for the opinions expressed by authors of their respective articles and reports.



From the Editor: Behind the lens and to the point...

Welcome to our environmentally friendly June – July 2013 on-line issue of *The Magazine*.

The 2013 North American air show season started off with a slue of cancellations due to the sequestration budget cuts. Furthermore, events which decided to go on with air shows suffered from drop in attendance, as a result.

The U.S. Navy has cancelled the remaining 2013 performances of its Blue Angels Flight Demonstration Squadron. This is one of many steps the Navy is taking to ensure resources are in place to support forces operating in forward areas now and those training to relieve them. According to a statement issued "The Navy intends to continue aerial demonstrations in the future as the budget situation permits."

There are a number of shows that are committed to holding their events this year, with or without military support in the USA, they are: the Vidalia Onion Festival Air Show in Georgia; Chicago Air & Water Show; Vectren Dayton Air Show; California International Air Show in Salinas; Wings over Houston Air Show; Thunder over Louisville; OC Air Show in Ocean City, Maryland; both the Vero Beach Air Show and Stuart Air Show in Florida; ShrinersFest Air Show in Evansville, Indiana; Thunder over the Boardwalk in Atlantic City, New Jersey; Wings over North Georgia in Rome, Georgia; Bethpage Federal Credit Union Air Show at Jones Beach in New York; Lauderdale Air Show in Florida; Thunder over Michigan near Detroit; Quad City Air Show in Davenport, Iowa; Amigo Airsho in El Paso, Texas; Wings Over Gillespie in El Cajon, California; Wings Over Wine Country Air Show in Santa Rosa, California; Virginia Beach Patriotic Festival in Virginia; Chennault International Air Show in St. Charles, Louisiana; CAF AIRSHO 2013 in Midland, Texas; Owensboro Air Show in Kentucky; Battle Creek Field of Flight Air Show and Balloon Festival in Michigan; SeaFair in Seattle; Dubuque (Iowa) Air Show and Fireworks; Sun n Fun in Lakeland, Florida; National Championship Air Races in Nevada; Thunder over the Valley in Santa Maria, California; Memphis Airshow in Tennessee; and EAA's AirVenture in Oshkosh, Wisconsin.

Canadian air shows will be much sparser too due to the lack of USAF, USN, and US Marines aircraft, they will feature mainly the CF-18 and the Snowbirds.

We will continue to attend air shows which have not been cancelled in the USA, Canada, Europe and from Japan furthermore, we shall concentrate on museum visits and other special assignments like the one we are featuring in this issue from France. While we may attend less air shows in 2013, the quality and variety of our reports will continue to differentiate us from the rest.

I

N

D

Y

TRANSPONDER

IDENT

SBY

OFF

ON

ALT

TST

CLICK ANYWHERE

Aerotainment News
www.IndyTransponder.com
Air Shows ★ Air Racing ★ Aviation Heritage



©2013 Norman A. Graf

UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS AIR STATION YUMA ARIZONA



51st Annual Airshow
Report by Norman A. Graf with photography as noted.

©2013 Norman A. Graf

MCAS Yuma held its 51st Annual Air Show on March 9, kicking off what will most likely be a very spartan 2013 air show season in the US. Despite the cancellation of essentially all USAF participation at shows this year, and uncertainty regarding Navy and Marine resources, the show did go on. The Marines put on full tactical demonstrations of both the MV-22 Osprey and the AV-8B Harrier and had a static lineup with almost the complete inventory of Marine Aviation aircraft. The highlight of the static lineup was, without question, the F-35B Lightning II, on display for the first time at an air show.

The show began with a performance by the Marine Drum and Bugle Corps. “The Commandant’s Own” played a series of songs, culminating in the National Anthem as the Military Freefall School parachutists flew in the flag. Greg Colyer began the flying with a series of very nice aerobatic routines in his T-33 “Ace Maker.” This ended in a race with Bill Braack in his jet car. Steve Stavrakakis then put on a nice show in his rare Romanian-built IAR823. MCAS Yuma is home to VMFT-401, the only Marine adversary squadron. The “Snipers”, flying F-5N aircraft, provide other units the opportunity to engage in dissimilar air combat training. A flight of four aircraft, in three different camouflage patterns, took off in sections and made a number of formation fly-bys





©2013 Aaron Rumfallo



©2013 Norman A. Graf

before breaking dramatically to land. Kent Pietsch then put on the first of his three aerobic performances of the day. His comedy routine has to be seen to be believed. He “invades” the closed airspace, playing the part of a complete novice with no flying skills whatsoever. His aircraft soon begins to shed parts such as an aileron, a tire, and a roll of paperwork which he manages to shred on its way down. It takes incredible skill to fly so erratically so close to the ground, including his signature wing-scrape. The announcer finally talked him down, whereupon he was apprehended by three Marines. It’s a pleasure to watch, whether you’ve seen it before and are in on the joke, or are watching it for the very first time and think the FAA is going to throw the book at Kent.

The theme of this year’s show was a salute to Korean and Vietnam War veterans, so the next act was a recreation of a Korean War air engagement. An AT-6 Texan, in the role of a Forward Air Controller called in an F4U-1 Corsair and F8F Bearcat to provide air support for troops on the ground. The planes made several passes, both in formation and individually. Many of the passes were strafing or bombing maneuvers, accompanied by simulated machine gun or bomb explosions provided by the Marine EOD squadrons. A pair of P-51D Mustangs, “Man O’ War” and “Spam Can,” provided top cover and made a number of very nice photo passes. Suddenly a MiG-15 appeared in the sky. A T-33, playing the part of an F-80, was scrambled and a dogfight between the two jets soon ensued. It was a very nice aerial demonstration and thanks go to the CAF, Planes of Fame Museum and Greg Colyer for providing the planes and pilots. Then it was time for one of the marquee performers, the MV-22 Osprey. The full tactical demonstration began with a vertical takeoff followed by a high-speed pass with the engine nacelles fully forward in airplane mode. As the aircraft circled for its next pass, the nacelles were rotated 90° and the Osprey returned in helicopter mode to perform the hovering portion of its demo. The aircraft overshot air show center, slowed, then backed up to stop. It then rotated 360°, swayed left and right, bowed to the crowd and landed vertically. It then departed with a rolling takeoff, circled and landed. It was an impressive demonstration of the tactical capabilities of this tilt-rotor aircraft, performed by a crew from VMM-165 “White Knights” out of MCAS Miramar.



F8F-2 & F4U-1 ©2013 Norman A. Graf



T-33 & MiG 15 ©2013 Norman A. Graf



MV-22 ©2013 Norman A. Graf

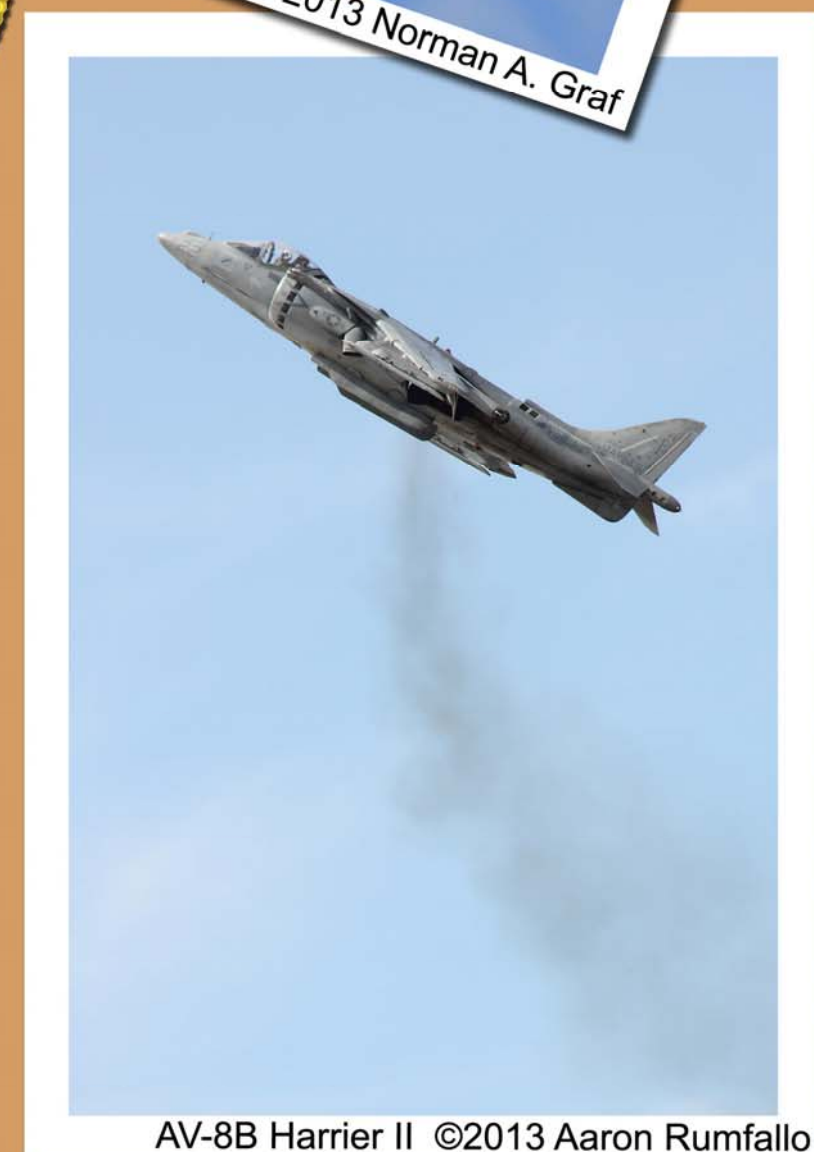


HH-1N Huey ©2013 Norman A. Graf

The unmistakable “whomp, whomp, whomp” of a Huey announced the start of the Search and Rescue demo, put on by the MCAS Yuma SRU. The helicopter hovered at show center as a corpsman rappelled down, then departed as the victim was being tended to. After returning, a cable was deployed and the corpsman, with “Rescue Randy,” was winched up, waving to the crowd as they departed. The final act of the day was the AV-8B Harrier II tactical demo, put on by MCAS Yuma’s own VMA-214 “Blacksheep.” It began with a very loud and steep rolling takeoff, followed by a very high-speed pass. This was followed by a number of hovering maneuvers very similar to that of the Osprey, but much louder, ending with a vertical landing. The final takeoff was vertical into a hovering position, then a high-power climbing departure very different from demonstrations seen in the past. It would be a shame indeed if more people were not able to see this new and exciting routine. Unfortunately, due to the budget sequestration, the USAF’s F-22 Raptor demonstration was cancelled. An extensive array of static aircraft representing almost the entire current inventory of USMC aircraft was on display. The Navy had two SH-60B Seahawks and a beautiful F/A-18E Super Hornet CAG bird from VFA-11 “Red Rippers” out of NAS Oceana. Yuma Proving Grounds provided a colorful Lakota and a Cessna Caravan. Many warbirds were on display, including those of the CAF’s AirPower Tour. However, the highlight was the first appearance at an airshow of the F-35B. The aircraft was fenced off, but viewers could get very close to the aircraft, and no limits were placed on photography. The “Green Knights” of VMFA-121 are the first operational Lightning II squadron and crew members and pilots were on hand to answer questions.

An estimated 25,000 people attended the show, down considerably from last year’s 60,000. Some of this decline must surely be attributable to the cancellation of the F-22 Raptor demo and uncertainty over whether the show would even take place. ASR Media LLC would like to express our thanks and sincere appreciation to the Public Affairs Office for their hospitality and assistance during the Air Show. Captain Reidinger did an excellent job of setting up and organizing the media access, and Gunnery Sergeant Dunk and Corporal Waterstreet provided invaluable assistance during the day.

For more details please visit our review of the event on our [web site by clicking here.](#)



AV-8B Harrier II ©2013 Aaron Rumfallo



2013 NAF El Centro Air Show and Open House

Report and photography by Norman A. Graf



NAF El Centro held its annual Air Show and Open House on March 16, 2013 under what would normally be perfect conditions: severe clear skies and temperatures in the mid 90s. And yet the dark clouds of the current budget sequestration hovered over the field. Uncertainties as to whether the show would be held at all, or if held, whether the Blue Angels would be performing, were not resolved until almost the last minute.

But the show did go on, and over 50,000 faithful air show fans showed up to see the inaugural performance of the 2013 Blue Angels team. After 120 practice flights during the past three months, it would have been a disservice if the Navy's flight demonstration team had not been allowed to perform at its winter training station. In the end, the only performance to fall out of the schedule was the Super Hornet tactical demonstration team and, of course, the accompanying Legacy Flight. Nevertheless, the "Flying Eagles" of VFA-122 out of NAS Lemoore were sorely missed. The normally broad and diverse field of military static aircraft was, however, reduced to a shadow of its former self. Kudos to the organizers for arranging the MV-22 Osprey tactical demo on such short notice and for making up in quality what was not possible in quantity in the static lineup.

The Open House began Friday evening when visitors were welcomed on base to an entertainment and food festival which ended with a spectacular fireworks display. The complete 2013 Blue Angels Team was introduced to the public and they, along with other performers, mingled with the crowd. The air show opened promptly the next morning at 0800, with a long line of cars already waiting at the gate. Parking was close-in and handled very efficiently. Security was thorough but quick, resulting in plenty of time to stake out a spot along the long fence line and return to view the aircraft on static display.

This year's lineup was reduced in numbers, but featured several special aircraft. Just inside the gates were three of the highlights. To the right was the "Medal of Honor" F/A-18B Hornet of VMFAT-101 "Sharpshooters." This aircraft is painted white and honors four Sailors and Marines who received the Medal of Honor for their actions in Iraq and Afghanistan. The port side honors the Marines CPL Jason Dunham and SGT Dakota Meyer, while the starboard side is dedicated to the Navy's MA2 Michael Monsoor and LT Michael Murphy. The citations for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity are painted on the sides of the aircraft. Reading these accounts is a sobering experience and brings home in stark detail the sacrifices made by our servicemen. To the left was a beautifully painted, colorful CAG F/A-18E Super Hornet of VFA-147 "Argonauts" from NAS Lemoore. It bears the name of CAPT Mannix, who was the Commanding Officer of the Blue Angels during the 2007-2008 seasons. Sandwiched between these fighters was a CAG Osprey, bearing the high-vis markings of VMM-163 "Evil Eyes" from MCAS Miramar. An adversary F-5 from VFC-13 "Saints", a Ch-46 Sea Knight of HMMT-164 "Knightriders" and a British AH-64D Apache completed the modern military statics. A number of warbirds (B-17, B-25, P4Y-2, C-47, P-51, AT6, SNJ, T-28, etc.) were also in attendance.

For a more detailed review of the El Centro Air Show and Open House please visit our site by clicking [here](http://www.airshowsreview.com/2013_ElCentro.htm) or by typing into your browser www.airshowsreview.com/2013_ElCentro.htm

ASR Media LLC would like to express our thanks to Kris Haugh of the Public Affairs Office for arranging the media access during the air show and to all the sailors and volunteers who made this air show such a wonderful experience.



- NAVY SAR demo, above.
- British Army AH-64D Apache Tactical Demonstration, below left.
- The Blue Angels, right top.
- Fat Albert, right bottom.





Bill Cornick, Pitts S-2C, above.



"Medal of Honor" F/A-18B Hornet, VMFAT-101 "Sharpshooters", MCAS Miramar

REACH A GLOBAL AUDIENCE

just like we do at *The Magazine*



Over **222,835** readers in over 124 countries have downloaded*

The Magazine

It makes a **world** of sense to
advertise in *The Magazine*
Partner with us to reach our
growing readership globally!

To place your advertisement at very competitive rates
contact us: INFO@AIRSHOWSREVIEW.COM



ASR Media LLC 130 Madison Ave. 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10016

*Source: Google and 1&1 Site Analytics dated 01/31/2013



Base Visit - Linz Hörsching (LOXL) - Air Base Vogler

Report and photography by Wolfgang Jarisch

Air Base "Vogler", located north of Linz, is Austria's largest Air Base and has a long history. Established in 1938 as Fliegerhorst (Air Base) Hörsching, the Air Base became Hörsching US Army Base after the end of the Second World War. From 1948 through 1955, it was US Camp McCauley, headquarters for the Land Upper Austria Area Command, US Forces Austria Zone. After the end of the Allied occupation in 1955 it became an Austrian Panzerkaserne (Tank Base) before finally reverting to Fliegerhorst Hörsching in 1957. Ten years later it assumed its present name to honor the memory of First Lieutenant Walter Vogler. ASR's good connections with the Austrian Air Force allowed us to make a base visit, which is usually not an easy task to do in Austria. What follows are photos and a report on our visit, with some background information on the base's namesake.

A reminder of the base's past greeted us as we approached the main gate: a perfectly restored Saab Draken J35OE (N°11). Retired from active duty in 2005, the few survivors are spread throughout Austria. N° 12, N°09, N° 08 "Ostarrichi" and N° 21 "Dragon Knights" are stored in Zeltweg, N° 07 and N° 06 are in Graz, N° 13 can be found in the Technical Museum in Vienna and N°17 is in the middle of a roundabout in Tulln.



Saab J29F Tunnan, above.



Walter Vogler was born in 1904 in Heiligeneich, Lower Austria. After officer qualification in 1928 he earned his wings at the ÖLAG-Fliegerschule (Österreichische Luftverkehrs AG - flying school) in Graz-Thalerhof, Styria. In 1934 he attained the rank of First Lieutenant in the newly formed Austrian Bundesheer (Armed Forces) and assumed command of the Nahaufklärungsstaffel 1 (Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron 1) which was part of Reconnaissance Squadron 2. Two years later he was given the command of Bomber Squadron 1 which was part of Flight Regiment 1 in Wels, upper Austria. Vogler's final flight was on a training mission in a three-engined Caproni-Ca-133 bomber. Two hundred meters above the city of Wels the aircraft suddenly burst into flames and threatened to crash into residential areas. Lieutenant Vogler immediately turned the burning aircraft away from the vulnerable urban area and gave the crew orders to bail out. Lieutenant Ing. Romanl Steczyn survived, despite deploying his parachute at a height of only about 100 meters. Engineer Master Corporal Adolf Wawrin remained on board to fight the fire, abandoning the aircraft at a height of only 40 meters. His parachute did not deploy and Wawrin died of his injuries. Walter Vogler went down with his aircraft, crash-landing in a field near Wels-Oberland in an uninhabited area. The formal burial took place on 20th June 1936. Fliegerhorst Vogler now bears his name.



Film strip to the left: Walter Vogler, first two and Adolf Wawrin last image.
Film strip above: Walter Vogler in the middle.
B&W images are courtesy of Military Archive from Upper Austria of the Com-mando Air Support, "Archiv MilKdo OÖ & Kdo LuU"

Soon I was met by my base contacts, First Lieutenant Matthäus Trigler and Warrant Officer I Anton Mickla. After a warm welcome we drove to see the Saab J105OE's and the Hercules. I was allowed to walk inside the hangars and was able to watch the pre-flight preparations of a C-130 Hercules.

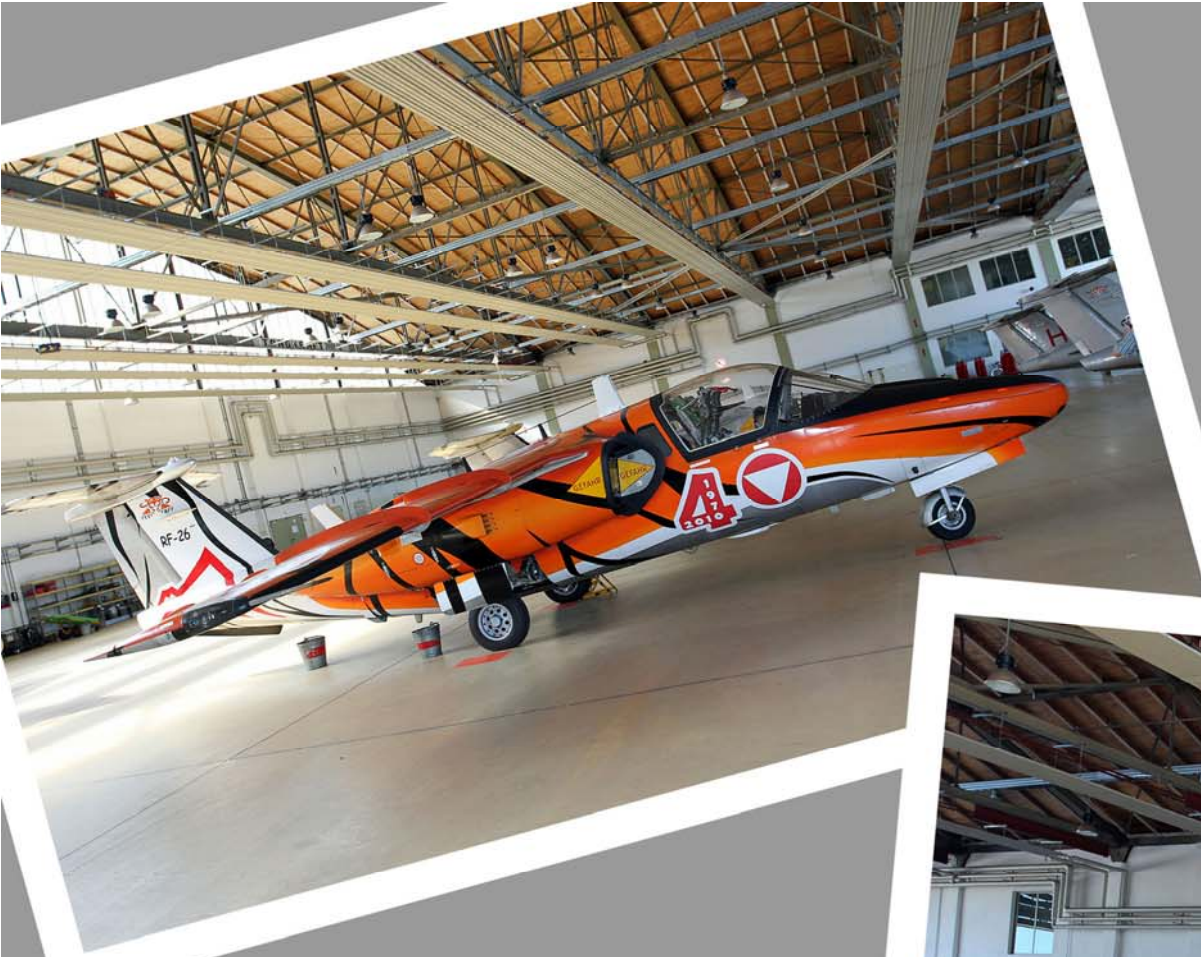
The Austrian Air Force has three Hercules in service, bought second-hand from the United Kingdom. The three aircraft are constantly deployed on missions around Europe and sometimes in Northern Africa, so it is almost impossible to see all three together at their home base.

It was very interesting to walk inside the hangar of the Saab 105's. Only two countries use this old glory, and the Swedish Air Force uses a less-powerful version (although they have started an upgrade program for their aircraft). Forty entered service with the Austrian Air Force in September 1970. Since that time twelve have been lost in accidents. In light of the tight defense budgets in Austria, this type will most likely stay in service for many years. A pole-mounted Saab J29F Tunnan (M yellow 29443) hearkens back to the thirty aircraft which served from July 1961 until July 1972.

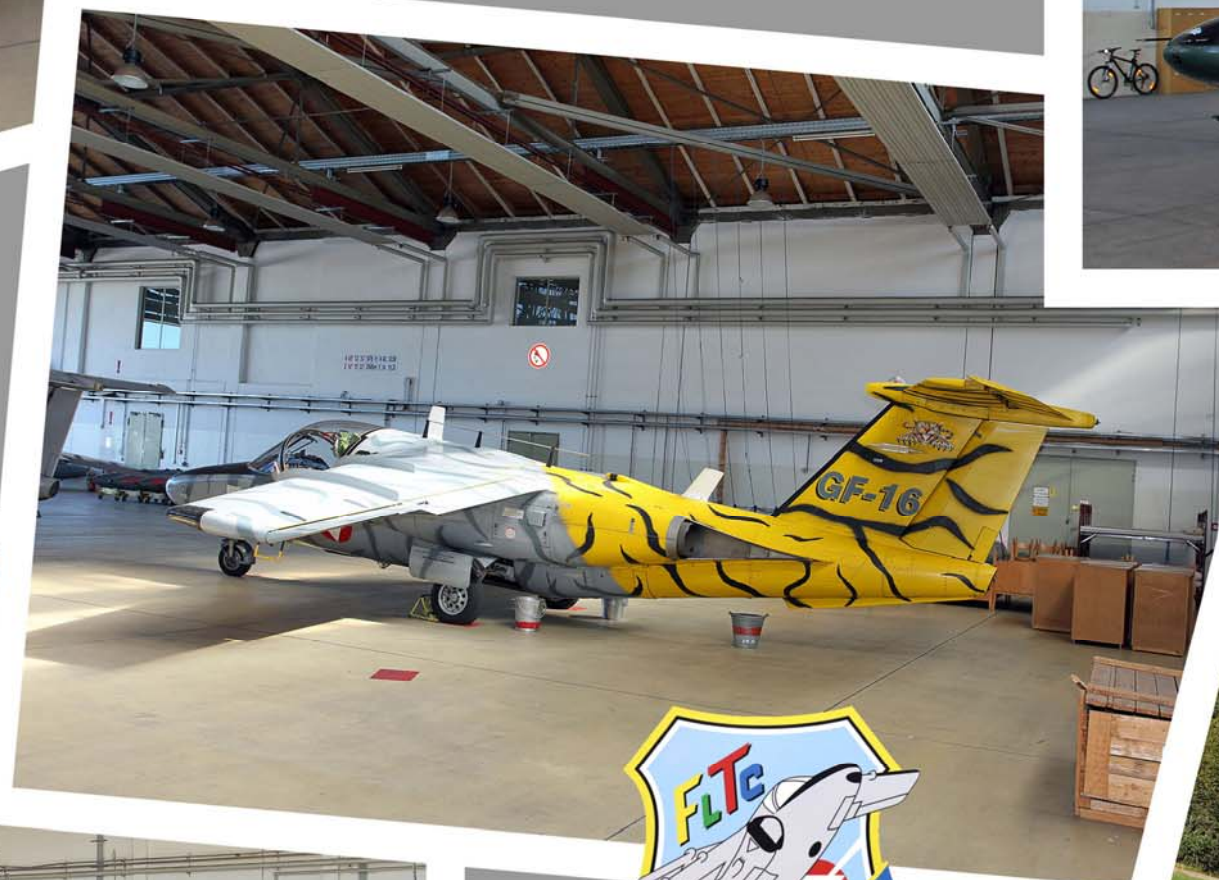
The next stop was the hangar of Light Transport Helicopter Squadron 1. They are equipped with the Agusta-Bell AB 212, which is the workhorse of the Austrian Air Force. Twenty four aircraft were delivered starting in May 1980; three were subsequently lost in accidents. Most of the helicopters from this squadron are at the moment not in Austria but in Italy undergoing an upgrade program, during which they will get new avionics and a glass cockpit. If there is a natural disaster or need for humanitarian aid, the AB 212 and the well-trained pilots are always there. These helicopters, together with the Alouette III, are involved in almost all international operations in which the Austrian Air Force participates. The last hangar which I was allowed to visit was that of the Second Squadron. I was not able to visit the maintenance hangar of Fliegerwerft 3 (Air Maintenance Squadron 3), as it is off-limits during operational days.

All in all, this was a very nice day at the Air Base Linz-Hörsching, and I drove home with many interesting pictures and a lot of impressions. ASR Media would like to thank First Lieutenant Matthäus Trigler and Warrant Officer I Anton Mickla for their assistance and Warrant Officer I Jakob Dinier for the historical background during this fabulous day at Air Base "Walter Vogler" in Linz-Hörsching.





Saab 105OE Tigers, above and in the center, while regular paint schemes on the rest of the Saab 105OE, below.



Agusta-Bell AB 212 from the first and second light transport helicopter squadron.



Draken for firefighters (07 is a false number. This is a Swedish Air Force Saab J-35F2 with Serial Number 35607) The Austrian Air Force 07 which was in service is in the Museum in Graz.

2013 TICO Warbird Air Show

Report and photography by Dan Adams

The Valiant Air Command (VAC) Warbird Museum held its 36th annual air show March 22-24, 2013 at Space Coast Regional Airport. This year's theme was the 70th anniversary of the 25th successful mission of the Memphis Belle during World War Two.

While the VAC always puts on a spectacular air show, this year's show was particularly noteworthy as it was the last air show performance for the USAF Thunderbirds for the rest of this year, if not longer. As mandatory federal budget cuts have decimated the 2013 air show season, with air show cancelations being announced on an almost daily basis, the TICO show's timing was fortuitous as it fell out just before the cuts took effect on April 1. It is likely that the attendance numbers (estimated at close to 50,000 for all three days) were bolstered by the fact that this was the public's last chance to see the Thunderbirds for the foreseeable future.

As always, the Valiant Air Command's extensive aircraft collection made up the vast majority of the show's static display. From modern jets such as the F-14, F-18 and F-4 to WW2 aircraft such as an F4F Wildcat and a TBM Avenger, the static displays covered an impressive spectrum of aviation history. Due to budget cuts, there were no active duty military aircraft on display.

The gates open at 8:30 to give spectators an opportunity to walk up and down the flight line to get up close and personal with the aircraft and pilots that will be flying later in the show. In addition to the flight line, visitors can take in realistic WW2 reenactments, memorabilia vendors and choose from several different food options. There were also two helicopters from the Sky Soldiers Demonstration Team (a UH-1 Huey and an AH-1 Cobra) giving 15-minute rides for a fee. Once the flying begins, the pace is relentless as aircraft are continuously in the air. From a WW1 dogfight (Fokker Triplane and Sopwith Camel), to WW2 trainers and bombers (PT-17, SNJ, B-17 and B-25),

(through Vietnam (T-28, F-104 and A-4) and the modern age (Thunderbirds in their F-16s), this air show has something for everyone. The bittersweet spectacle of the Thunderbirds performing their last show for what could be an extended hiatus just added to what is already a special air show. It's important to remember as the 2013 air show season limps on, that there are many reasons to attend an air show besides military participation.

At TICO, the modern military was only represented by the Thunderbirds, yet there was plenty of jet noise and warbird action courtesy of the privately owned aircraft that flew in the show. Hopefully folks will keep that in mind and remain supportive as the air shows that do not cancel, are forced to carry on without military participation.

We would like to thank Colonel Terry Yon, USA (Ret.), Public Affairs Officer, for his invaluable assistance throughout the show.



- A-4 Skyhawk, left.
- F-104 Starfighter, above.
- A4 Skyhawk with the P-51D Mustang, below.





- The Thunderbirds performed their Swan song performance for 2013 at TICO, above and to the right.
- Matt Younkin's Beec 18, left bottom.
- B-17G "Chuckie's" menacing nose, center bottom.





© Adc Alain Courtilat, Armée de l'Air



The Tactical Display of the Armée de L'Air

Special report by the Editor with photography as noted.

Mission:

To introduce this mysterious French Team to our readers worldwide who most likely never heard of them by visiting Ramex Delta at their home at Base aérienne 125 Istres-Le Tubé, Salon de Provence, France. The base is also known as the Base aérienne 125 "Charles Monier".

0735 Tuesday:

We arrived in our silver Peugeot 308 at the visitors' parking lot, just to the right to the main gate of Base aérienne 125 "Charles Monier", to meet our host the Leader of the Tactical Display, "Jonah Δ 1" at 0745. We had a bit of time to look around as we were waiting so our conversation turned to the weather; with rain looming at 40% for the day, from the low and dark clouds. It rained during the night, and it was quite chilly in the morning. We wondered what happened to the sunny weather that the south of France is famous for! Murphy's Law at work: a couple of days prior to our arrival the forecast stated sunny weather for the duration of our visit.

Precisely at 0745, we heard "Welcome to France" from behind us and as we turned towards the direction of the voice we saw Jonah in his flight suit and with a huge smile. We went inside to the Security Office, where we filled out the mandatory paperwork and we received our Visitor's I.D. cards in exchange for our Passports. We were now set for our three day visit.

We followed Jonah's car, and drove several kilometers to the designated parking lot of the 2/4 La Fayette Escadre. On our way in, we saw several old aircraft on display of which we wanted to take photos later in the day. Base aérienne 125 "Charles Monier" at Istres, is the largest air base of the Armée de l'Air and one of the oldest.

The Base is named after Charles Monier, born in January 1920. He was a mechanical engineer and was educated at the Bréguet school. At the declaration of WWII he joined the air force and received his military pilot's license in March 1940 and joined the Avord fighter school.



The Armistice was declared before he had seen active service. He then joined the Free French Air Forces in England from where he was sent to the fighter detachment No. 1 on the Libyan front. Monier, nicknamed "Popoff," then joined the Alsace group which included all the French fighter pilots of the Middle East. Monier defended the El-Alamein sky during the major battle that decided Egypt's fate in the Spring of 1942.

Monier then took part in campaigns in the European theatre, and in January 1944, he volunteered to join the Normandy GC 3 fighter group aka "Normandie-Niemen" which was operating on the Russian front.

After the war, Monier became interested in civil aviation, and after passing his test pilot engineer's licence he joined Dassault in 1947. Monier was involved in the development of the Ouragan, Mystère II and Mystère IVA aircraft. He lost his life on 3 March 1953, during a tank jettisoning test on a Mystère II 01 aircraft. There is a memorial dedicated to Charles Monier and other fallen airmen just inside the Air Base entrance.

Memorial to the left and the Mystère II below.
All images ©2013 ASR Media LLC



The history of the Air Base is quite fascinating; it was built prior to World War II. Istres Air Base was first used by the Armée de l'air during the early part of the war, and after the 1940 Battle of France and the June Armistice with Nazi Germany, became part of the limited (French: Armée de l'Air de Vichy) air force of the Vichy Government. It was attacked on several missions by Allied bombers based in England while under German control after November 1942. It was seized by Allied forces during Operation Dragoon, the Invasion of Southern France in August 1944 and was repaired and placed into operational use by the United States Army Air Forces XII Engineer Command, being turned over to Twelfth Air Force on 27 August 1944.

With the end of the war, the Americans used Istres as a staging point between Occupied Germany and Morocco for air transport of personnel back to the United States. It was returned to full French control in October 1945.

More than 5,000 personnel work on the base and the tenants include:

- Strike squadron 2/4 La Fayette equipped with Mirage 2000N.
- Tanker squadron GRV 02/091 Bretagne equipped with KC-135 Stratotanker.
- Air Defense squadron 01.950 responsible for the base air defense.
- 25th air engineer regiment, a technical unit.
- Guard detachment Fusiliers Commandos de l'Air responsible for the base security and ground defenses.
- Test facilities for DGA, Dassault Aviation, SNECMA, and Thales.
- Some aeronautical units of the French Navy.

Istres was also utilized by NASA as a contingency landing site for the Space Shuttle in the case of a Transoceanic Abort Landing (TAL). The base's runway is 3,750 meters (12,300 ft) long and 60 meters (200 ft) wide. An additional overrun area 1,200 meters (3,900 ft) long was built for Airbus Industries in 1992. It has the same characteristics as the runway, making it the longest runway in Western Europe and thus suited to Shuttle landings.

Once parked, we walked through an additional fenced off electronically controlled security gate, and another manned by armed security who looked at our I.D.s. Behind the guard house was a SEPECAT Jaguar as a gate guard.

Jonah at first took us to the 2/4 La Fayette squadron's heritage area, located on the upper level of the hangar building, that featured the nose and cockpit section of a SEPECAT Jaguar ground attack jet, hanging off the wall, the only squadron heritage room we have seen so far with a real aircraft nose and cockpit. We were welcomed by the other Ramex Delta members as we were introduced. This base was the new home of the Escadron de Chasse 2/4 La Fayette, which dates back to WWI with a very rich heritage.

From the beginning of war in Europe in August 1914 many Americans travelled to Europe and offered their volunteer services to Britain and France in the war against the German and Austrian-Hungarian Monarchy. On 18th of April No.124 was established. Many American volunteers chose to enlist with the French Air Service. The French government sanctioned an American Squadron on 4th November 1916, Escadrille des Volontaires was born. On 6th of December 1916 it was renamed Escadrille La Fayette No.124, after Marquis de La Fayette, who went to America to fight against the British and served as a major general alongside George Washington, in the American Revolutionary War.

Initially commanded by the Frenchman Capt. Georges Thenault, No.124 comprised seven American pilots: Victor Chapman, Elliot Cowdin, Bert Hall, James McConnell, Norman Prince, Kiffin Rockwell and William Thaw. Its inaugural flight mission took place on 13 May 1916 and the Escadrille's first aerial 'kill' occurred five days later, when Kiffin Rockwell claimed victory over a German two-seater L.V.G., in October 1916. A Seminole Indian head was chosen by Capt. Thenault, changed to a Sioux sometime later, as the symbol for Escadrille Lafayette No.124. As their fame grew worldwide an increasing number of American volunteers sought service with No.124. Although not all the applicants became members of the No.124, many of them nevertheless passed through the Lafayette Flying Corps. About 200 Americans eventually passed through the French Air Service's training program.

After America's formal entry into the war the Escadrille passed into American hands in February 1918.

The history of the La Fayette Escadrille did not end when the squadron was incorporated into the American Air Service. From 1920 to 1939, The French Ministère de l' Air (Air Ministry) assigned the title Lafayette Escadrille in recognition of the American flyers, and to carry on the tradition, among them:

- In 1920 7th Squadron of the 35th Aero Regiment, and its planes carried the Sioux head insignia.
- In 1933, the Sioux Squadron was joined with the other elite group, Cigognes (the Storks) to form the Groupe de Chasse 2/5, the Escadron La Fayette. This unit flew the Dewoitine 500, at various bases throughout France during the 1930's and was stationed at Toul-Croix-de-Metz when the Second World War broke out in September 1939.

At the beginning of WWII, the La Fayette unit was re-formed in North Africa where it flew with the Free French Air Force. Initially outfitted with Curtiss "Hawks" they were soon upgraded with the superior P-40F "Warhawks." Over the course of the War, the Groupe 2/5 flew in the North African, Italian, French and German theatres. In April 1944, the P-47D became the unit's aircraft which it flew until 1949. In January 1945, the Group 2/5 returned to the Luxeuil Air Base, the field from which the first La Fayette Escadrille had flown in 1916. During WWII, Escadron Lafayette flew 8,531 sorties, 1,452 missions and was credited with 103 victories.

In July 1947, the Groupe 2/5 was reorganized as the Groupe de Chasse 2/4 La Fayette. In the following years, the unit saw combat action in Indochina flying Spitfire Mk IX's in 1947-



1948, and later in Algeria, flying North American T-6G's.

In 1949 The Escadron La Fayette entered the jet age with the DeHavilland DH100 "Vampire" in 1949 then in 1953 the French built Ouragan. From 1954 they began flying the Republic F-84F "Thunderjet" which they flew until 1966 when it was replaced by the Dassault-Breguet "Mirage IIIE". In July 1989, the "Mirage 2000N" armed with ASMP-A nuclear cruise missile, began service with the Groupe 2/4. The unit has been a part of the French Strategic Air Command and was designated as a Tactical Nuclear Strike Unit. Initially the La Fayette Group, consisted of three Escadrille: Escadrille No. 124 Sioux, Escadrille SPA 167 Cigognes, "The Storks" (wings up) and Escadrille SPA160, les Diabls Rouge, "The Red Devils."

La Fayette Group was moved from Base aérienne 116 Luxeuil Saint-Sauveur to Istres, in September 2011 and merged with the Escadron de Chasse 2/4 Limosin, thus 2/4 remaining the only Mirage 2000N operating squadron.

After our introduction we were offered some non-alcoholic refreshments, and we had a chance to look around in their heritage room which had a bar, a billiard table, several couches, a large projection screen, and lots of memorabilia hanging on the walls of the 3/4 Limousin intermixed with the 2/4. Jonah briefly outlined our daily itinerary:

- **Tuesday:** Meet the Boss, tour of the operations room, lunch at 1200, at 1430 flight display, any time in between is for photography of interests, and after the display flight meet the Base photographer for additional images that we require, and we cannot take, due to lack of opportunity.
- **Wednesday:** Meet at 1100 at the gate, lunch, fly the Mirage 2000 simulator, more photos and opportunity to learn about the base, and later on meet for a dinner with the Ramex Delta crew.
- **Thursday:** Meet at 1100 at the gate, lunch, drive to runway for second display performance weather depending, and depart.

We were taken to the Ramex Delta office, and we dropped off our camera gear before we were taken to be introduced to the Commander of the 2/4 La Fayette Escadre, Lcl. David "Mc Fly" Marty, who had to approve our visit. Lcl. Marty wished us a pleasant visit and we briefly went over the rules that we must follow: no real names, no images of ID cards, faces of personnel, unless specifically approved, no photos of the WSO backseat area. Apart from that we were free to take images, and if in doubt just ask our escort, who was to be with us during all times during our base visit.

After meeting with the Commander, we continued to the operation room, which consisted of several partitioned areas, for security reason we were not allowed to take any photos. On one side of the wall there was a huge whiteboard with the daily activity schedules, on which Airshowsreview's name appeared too, and adjacent to it several large topographical maps of France on sliders stacked on top of each other, showing flight routes etc. We were briefed on the operations scenarios, and how daily missions were planned and downloaded to a flash drive, which is then inserted into the data port of the aircraft's navigational computer and uploaded.



- SEPECAT Jaguar gate guard in the La Fayette compound, above.
- Spa 96 insignia to the left, with a 70th Anniversary Mirage 2000 tail fin of the former escadron de chasse 03.004 LIMOUSIN.
- Crash sitting in an ejection seat in the Heritage room top mid, with other images to his right of the Heritage room with memorabilia.
- Insignia of SPA 167, mid center.
- Low visibility La Fayette Ramex patch below it; worn in combat.
- Listening to our Base visit itinerary.



All images unless noted ©2013 ASR Media LLC

© 2013 Ricardo von Puttkammer

© 2013 Ricardo von Puttkammer



All images unless noted by ©2013 Ricardo von Puttkammer



On the way back, we could take photos of the maintenance hangar from the elevated corridor, with several aircraft below us on the ground level of the hangar. After some time we had an opportunity to go down to the ground level and take some more hangar images as well as go out to the tarmac. Here we took photos of a Mirage 2000N with a special 95th Anniversary paint scheme, celebrating the existence of the La Fayette Escadre. However, the aircraft was no longer operational it was only a shell, with engine and other equipment stripped from it.

The tarmac was still wet and the sky was still dark, but we could see that there were some breaks forming in them and it may clear partially for the display flight. After taking sufficient images, we walked towards some hardened shelters to take photos of parked aircraft. During our visit, again Murphy's Law was in effect, many of the 2/4's aircraft were away at Base aérienne 115 Orange – Caritat, due to security reasons that had nothing to do with our visit.

By 1015 we had some time on our hands, and we asked our escort named "PP" WSO of Ramex $\triangle 1$, to drive us out to the gate guard aircraft and the others on display which we saw on our way in.

As we were driving towards the gateguard we saw an Antonov AN-124 100, parked in the logistic/transfer area, and a recently landed C-17 from the RCAF, on loan to France to help transfer equipment to and from Mali. Thus we stopped to take photos of them, once we got clearance to walk out to the tarmac for close up photos. While we were out on the tarmac we saw a couple of aircraft land, one of them being a CASA CN 235-200. As time was getting closer I wanted to take images of the other aircraft that we were initially on our way to. Thus, we walked back to the car, and continued to the Mirage IV P, parked in front of the Base Commanders building, the Mystere II gate guard and memorial to Charles Monier, and to the interesting object named Chariot Fusee SE 1910, essentially V-1 German buzz bomb mounted on a carriage, that broke some speed records.



Mirage 2000N with a special 95th Anniversary paint scheme. All images ©2013 ASR Media LLC





SOCATA TBM 850



Antonov AN-124-100



CC-177 aka C-17ER Globemaster III from Canada



CASA CN 235-200



- Something very different! Chariot Fusee SE 190, top left and above.
- Dassault Mirage IVP (Penetrator) supersonic nuclear stratgic bomber left and below.



All images ©2013 ASR Media LLC



At 1150 we drove to the Officer's Club House where the lunch was served. We were joined by Jonah and the rest of the Ramex Delta Team. I must say that we have eaten at some USAF bases before, and by far this was the best food served in an air base. After lunch we went across to an adjacent room for some coffee, and tea in my case, and sat down to chat a bit.

We learned that the "Ramex Delta" name was derived from the call sign of the 2/4 La Fayette Escadre. The first part "Ramex" is the call sign as in Ramex 1, Ramex 2, Ramex 3, etc during their flight, and the "Delta" derived from the delta wing shape of the Mirage 2000N. The Tactical Display team has only been together officially since 2012, although they have flown displays before for several years without any particular designated name. In 2012 they attended 3 military events and 6 air shows for a total of 9, one of them being at [Ostrava, Czech Republic](#).

Around 1315 Jonah and the rest of his crew departed to get ready for their first validation, prior to the beginning of the season. A two star general was scheduled to review the display. In order to participate in air shows they are required to pass two validations, this would be the first. The weather improved a bit, there were a few patches of blue in the sky and a few streaks of sunshine now and then.

At 1400, we were driven by one of the La Fayette squadron members to the Control Tower, flanked by two Mirage wrecks on which the fire brigade practices pilot rescues. We looked around for a good spot in front of the tower, where we were joined by the Base's photographers, and a few minutes later by the general and the 2/4 La Fayette commander. Around 1430, the Mirage 2000N jets of the Ramex Tactical demo took off one after another in quick succession and demonstrated their precise routine that lasted about 15 minutes. As they landed, we were introduced to the general who welcomed us and wished us a good visit. We headed back to the squadron's HQ, where we started to review our images to see what we had captured. The two pilots Jonah $\Delta 1$ and Gabi $\Delta 2$, along with their WSOs by now had parked their Mirages and were in a debriefing meeting. As soon as they came out of their meetings, they wanted to see if we had captured any vapour shots. The air was quite moist during their performance and produced a couple of vapours, both Jonah and Gabi were very curious if we had captured any of the resulting condensation clouds. We did, as can be seen in the images above and to the right.







Soon after that we were driven to the Base photographer's office, to get some air-to-air images of the Mirage jets that we asked for to include in our report. The photographer asked us what we had in mind and soon he showed on his monitor examples from which we could pick several of them. After burning the images to a CD we all returned to the Ramex Delta HQ.

The day was over and before we left we made a request to Jonah if we could visit the KC-135FR refuelling squadron located just adjacent to the La Fayette squadron. Jonah promised that he would try to get permission from the Tanker squadron GRV 02/091 "Bretagne", Commander for either tomorrow or for Thursday. Close to 1730 we walked to our car and departed for the day.





RAMEX DELTA 2
©2013 Ricardo von Puttkammer



1100 Wednesday:

We were met by PP Δ 1 WSO, right on time by the parking lot in front of the main entrance to the base. The day's gorgeous, blue sky with just the right amount of puffy cumulus clouds was perfect for flying and of course for photography! But not today! Although it was originally scheduled for today months prior to our visit, on the day before we left for France, we received an email that for reasons beyond Jonah's control he had to attend some meetings etc. There will be no display flying on Wednesday, instead come to the base on Tuesday (a day earlier) for the display flight. Today's main event after lunch will be flying the Mirage 2000N simulator at 1400.

The lunch was good, we sat in the table reserved for the 2/4 La Fayette Escadre, where we met several other pilots. Jonah joined us a bit later while we were eating our lunch. After lunch the usual coffee, tea, and a bit of time to relax, but today we went outside by the garden, of the Officer's Club, as it was pleasant and sunny. We chatted a bit about our photographs taken yesterday and other images at other events. Our experiences with the B-1B simulator at Dyess AFB, in Texas, also surfaced.

1400 we that is Crash, Jonah, Camille and I, were driven by Gabi to the building housing the simulator. The Thales simulator was much different from the one at Dyess. It was not a full motion unit mounted on Stewart platform nor the Collimated type with a huge curved mirror in front of the cockpit. Inside the dark building where the simulator was housed there were two levels. On the ground level was the actual cockpit for the pilot and the WSO, or the instructor, with projections of the countryside (mission) on large screens in front of the cockpit by several meters. By taking the stairs to level two, we entered the actual operation room where the scenarios could be dialed in and the performances of the pilots were measured and monitored.

I was the first one to take the flight, my instructor in the backseat was Gabi, Ramex Δ 2, pilot. Camille Ramex Δ 2 WSO, gave me instructions about the controls. I was a bit perplexed by the amount of information that I had to absorb in a few minutes. Any how ready or not, it was time to close my canopy, and to start my flight. Taking off was not difficult, but finding the landing gear control to pull the gear up, was something else. I could not find the switch being totally in a foreign environment: inside the cockpit of a Mirage 2000N. Someone from the upstairs control room had to come down, open my canopy and set the switch to the up position, (it turned out that I was not shown where it was). Back to flying, did several quick, and slow barrel rolls, a couple of loops, and low level flight, and landed with a bit of wing waving this time on the runway without skidding off like I did with the B-1B.

It was now Crash's turn, his backseat instructor was Jonah, Ramex Δ 1, pilot. I took a couple of photos of Crash in the cockpit, and went upstairs to see his performance. It was entertaining to all, as I am sure my own produced a lot of laughs too by all. We could hear Jonah telling Crash – "now I understand why you are called Crash!" as he flew above Mach 1+ very low and almost earned his nick name once again! "Pull up, up, up" was heard several times, but this time Crash did not crash which was a good thing. Time flies when you have fun, and our simulator time was up, we thanked the simulator staff and left the building around 1500. As we were walking towards the car, Jonah said that he has a surprise for us, but we have to be quiet.

We arrived at our destination building, it was the Base Falconry; this was the surprise! Now we could see flying experts capable of pulling up to 20Gs, as they dive and turn in pursuit of their targets. We were introduced to the Falconer, who explained the different types of birds they had, and we had a chance to take lots of photos of falcons. We spent a good 45 minutes at the Falconry, and we drove back to HQ of the 2/4 La Fayette Escadre. After our arrival, the Ramex Delta Team grabbed their helmets and we headed off to get some Team shots at one of the parked aircraft. Unfortunately, we could not move one of the Mirages out from the shelter, so we did our best shooting inside. When done we returned to HQ to look at our photos, and chatted about the simulator, falcons etc, for a while. Jonah had to leave but made arrangements with Gabi to pick us up at our hotel at 1845 for dinner in a nice French restaurant. We left shortly too, to get ready for this friendly invitations.



All images except as noted ©2013 ASR Media LLC



At 1845 Gabi picked us up at our hotel IBIX, near the Base (only 5 minutes away by car), and drove us to Salon-de-Provence. Salon-de-Provence, is a very ancient city, it dates back to the Roman period, but the earliest mention of the place under its familiar name is of the ninth century, as Villa Salone. It has fascinating architecture, quaint narrow cobblestone streets in the old part of the town. It is interesting to note that Nostradamus spent his last years and is buried here. His house is maintained as a museum and became a tourists attraction. The Fontaine Moussue is another famous attraction, at Place Crousillat has existed since the 16th century. During the 20th century, limestone concretions and vegetation developed, giving the familiar mushroom aspect. Since 1964 Salon-de-Provence is also the home of the world famous Patrouille Acrobatique de France or PAF, at the Base Aérienne 701 Salon-de-Provence. We picked up PP, near the base's parking lot as he had some business to take care of earlier.

Before dinner we sat down at a local pub on the outside for a beer for us, pineapple juice for Crash, and waited for Jonah and Mc Fly to show up. Jonah arrived shortly, but Mc Fly, called in his condolences, as something else came up at the Base, and he could not make it. After our beers and cheese tasting, we walked to a real French restaurant that featured authentic home style cooking according to Jonah.

The dinner and the local red wine were excellent, not to mention the company. After dinner we walked around in the old part of the city which was very charming place to be in. Near midnight we said our good-byes and Gabi drove us back to Istres to our hotel. And, it was a good thing, as we would have never found our way back from Salon-de-Provence, or to get through the locked gates to the hotel. Gabi had to speak to someone in French via the intercom to open the locked gates at 0100 in the morning. Another fine day was over.



Thursday 1100:

Our final day at the Base has arrived. It was raining, once again, with low dark clouds, far from ideal for another flight display. We were met by Gabi Δ 2 pilot, and we followed him to the Officer's Club for lunch. There were several selection as always, but this time Gabi, Crash and I picked the pasta: it was different, I think I should have picked the same as what Jonah selected.

1330, after our lunch and coffee/tea we drove back to HQ of the 2/4 La Fayette Escadre, as Jonah, PP, Gabi, and Camille had to get ready for their flight. It had stopped raining, so they would try to fly and do a low performance versus the regular one. We asked in advance to see if we could change our photo shoot location, and it was agreed that one of us will go towards the infield to shoot towards the tower and the other one would stay near the control tower.

At 1400 we were driven out by a member of the 2/4 La Fayette Escadre, to the tower with a surprise. One of us could go up to the balcony of the control tower. Since I had already picked the infield location (in a sunny day it would have been better with the sun behind my back) Crash ended up in a superior position as it started to rain, once again. One of the base photographers joined me as we sat in the car with the "FOLLOW ME" sign that was allowed to be on the runway and infield. We drove across the runway and settled right across from the tower infield. Everything was fine except for the cold wind, that picked up, and the rain. Because of the wind the Ramex Delta Tactical Demo took off from the opposite side of the runway, not from the direction that was used on Tuesday. It was raining quite hard by now, and the take off resulted in spectacular rooster tail spray effect! Due to the rain, wind shear on the lenses and the darkness our images were not as good as on Tuesday. But it is what it is, the weather was beyond anyone's control, and we were actually quite surprised that the Ramex Delta flew period. We been to many air shows, where the pilots did not flew in much better conditions. As soon as they landed, the weather changed to on and off sprinkles. We drove back to the tower, met with Crash, and we were driven back to HQ, so we could take photos of the pilots in their gear; we succeeded in this.









© 2013 Ricardo von Puttkammer

INDEX



© 2013 ASR Media LLC



Ramex $\triangle 1$ above, Ramex $\triangle 2$ below, and in their aircraft too.



© 2013 ASR Media LLC



All images © 2013 Ricardo von Puttkammer



© 2013 Ricardo von Puttkammer

At 1700 we shared some beverages, Crash had some juice as usual, and said our good-byes. We were given heads up info of several Mirages returning from Base aérienne 115 Orange – Caritat, of which we could take photos next day if we got there in the morning, as Jonah and Gabi with their WSOs would be flying them back. We did (see page 70). Around 1730 Jonah just before he had to escort us out to the front gate security office to hand in our Visitor's I.D. cards in exchange for our passports, took our photo by the SEPECAT Jaguar gateguard. We thanked Jonah for their hospitality and we were off to our hotel. Another successful base visit was over.

Ramex Delta will appear at the following public air shows in 2013:

26/05 at Salon de Provence Airforce Base: 60 ans de la Patrouille de France
 14-15/06 at Völk: 100 years of Royal Netherland Air Force
 21/07 at le Luc en Provence: Meeting de France & Free Flight World Master
 28-29/09 at Cognac Air Base: Meeting de l'Air

ASR Media LLC, would like to thank all the people involved in our visit, namely: Lcl D. Marty, Commandant de l'EC 2/4 La Fayette, Jonah, Gabi, PP, Camille and the rest of the members of the 2/4 La Fayette Escadre, who welcomed us with such friendliness, and showed what French hospitality is all about!

The Aircraft:

The Ramex Delta Tactical Demo Team flies the Dassault Mirage 2000N without any special paint schemes on their aircraft, as the aircraft they fly are combat ready aircraft. For their displays they fly without any armament and with the external tanks empty.

The Dassault Mirage 2000N is a variant of the Mirage 2000 designed for nuclear strike. It is a fourth generation fighter/strike aircraft. The Mirage 2000D is its conventional attack counterpart. There are some differences between the two types of aircraft: The Mirage 2000N is the nuclear strike variant which was intended to carry the Aerospatiale Air-Sol Moyenne Portee (ASMP) nuclear stand-off missile. The strike aircraft had strengthened wings for low-altitude operations, as well as low-level precision navigation/attack systems, built around the Dassault/Thales Antilope 5 radar, which was designed for the strike role and featured a terrain-avoidance capability.

The Mirage 2000N carries two R550 Matra Magic or the two MBDA MICA air-to-air missiles for self-defence on the two outboard under wing pylons.

The Mirage 2000N has a top speed of Mach 2.3+ powered by SNECMA M53-P2 afterburning turbofan with afterburner of 21,400 lbf thrust.

All the Mirage 2000N are scheduled to be replaced by 2018 with the Rafale in the nuclear role.



© 2013 ASR Media LLC



Additional from Istres and spotting images from Orange Air Bases

PHOTOGRAPHY AS NOTED

We took hundreds of images while at Istres AB, but not all of them related to our featured visit, but some were interesting enough to share. Here are several of them .



Several Boeing KC-135FR of the Groupe de ravitaillement 2/91 "Bretagne"

©2013 Ricardo von Puttkammer



A Canadian CC-177 heavy hauler on loan to France due to the Mali conflict, from 429 Transport Squadron, CFB Trenton.

©2013 ASR Media LLC





©2013 ASR Media LLC



HAMILTON AIRSHOW

June 15 & 16
Father's Day Weekend

SAVE 10%
& AVOID THE LINEUPS

Purchase tickets in advance at
hamiltonairshow.com

CANADIAN WARPLANE HERITAGE 2013

Special Guest Appearance by
Mikey McBryan
from ICE PILOTS

ICE PILOTS

NWT

QR code and social media icons (Twitter, Facebook, YouTube)



- Boeing C-17 Globemaster III from Sq 99 RAF Brize Norton, UK, taking off, above.
- The same aircraft taxiing below for the take off, with one of the Ramex Delta's Mi-rage 2000N waiting for the C-17 to taxi by after landing in the rain, below.



©2013 ASR Media LLC



Spotting at Base aérienne 115 Orange – Caritat was quite interesting as we could see Mirages from the FIGHTER SQUADRON 02005 "ILE DE FRANCE" E.C.: Mirage 2000C left top and middle, Mirage 2000B left bottom, and our friends from 2/4 La Fayette flying their aircraft back to Istres. We could even see that they wore our patches to “honor” us. What a great bunch of guys!





2 Mirage 2000Ns from 2/4 La Fayette flying their aircraft back to Istres.



Mirage 2000C landing from E.C. 2/5 based at Base aérienne 115 Orange – Caritat .



- Mirage 2000C from E.C. 2/5 based at Base aérienne 115 Orange – Caritat , above.
- AS555 Fennec 2 Helicopter that flew above us, from the Helicopter Squadron 05067 "Alpilles", based at Orange, below.

©2013 Ricardo von Puttkammer

GREAT LAKES INTERNATIONAL
AIRSHOW
2013

**JUNE 28-30
 2013**

**ST. THOMAS
 MUNICIPAL AIRPORT
 ST. THOMAS, ONTARIO**

Presented by **Ascent™**

"and support from our community partners"

ST. THOMAS MUNICIPALITY OF CENTRAL ELGIN ELGIN COUNTY Progressive by Nature LONDON CANADA LONDON INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

**FEATURING THE
 Royal Canadian Air Force Snowbirds
 Air Demonstration Team**

**Tickets available at the gate, on-line
 and at participating Libro Financial Branches**

**For more information visit our website at
www.greatlakesinternationalairshow.ca**

Raising funds for the St. Thomas Elgin General Hospital Foundation, St. John Ambulance,
 Military Family Rescue Centre (London), Cadets and The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society of Canada

A-4 Skyhawks over Germany

Report and photography by Peter Thivessen

Since 2001 BAE System provides six Douglas A-4N Skyhawks as target tugs for the German Luftwaffe. The A-4Ns are stationed at the German Airbase Wittmund.

The Skyhawks are operated by the BAE subsidiary E.I.S. Aircraft GmbH at Wittmund Airbase. This is also the homebase of Jagddgeschwader 71 Richthofen (JG 71 "R") with Phantom F-4F.

The Skyhawk A-4Ns all have civil registrations:

- N431FS (all are white with a blue stripe)
- N432FS
- N434FS
- N437FS
- N262WL (ex Israeli camouflage pattern)
- N268WL (grey).

The A-4N Skyhawks are part of the contract with the Luftwaffe to supply visual target training for the F-4F Phantoms, soon to be retired, and Eurofighter Typhoon multirole fighter.







The Magazine

BY WWW.AIRSHOWSREVIEW.COM



As close as you can get without being at an air show!



© 2013 ASR MEDIA LLC
WWW.AIRSHOWSREVIEW.COM