



Missions for  
America

*Semper vigilans!*

*Semper volans!*

Publication of the Thames River Composite  
Squadron  
Connecticut Wing  
Civil Air Patrol

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Issue 14.06

04 February, 2020

### SQUADRON CALENDAR

11 FEB-TRCS Commander's Call  
15 FEB-2020 CTWG Cadet Competition-BDL  
18 FEB-TRCS Meeting  
22 FEB-CTWG Aircrew Meeting-HFD  
23 FEB-Special Olympics Service-P&W  
25 FEB-TRCS Meeting-Safety Down Day  
29 FEB-01 MAR-Squadron Leadership School  
03 MAR-TRCS Staff Meeting  
07 MAR-First Aid Course (tentative)  
10 MAR-TSRCS Commander's Call  
17 MAR-TRCS Meeting  
24 MAR-TRCS Meeting  
31 MAR-TRCS Meeting/Deadline AIAA Contest  
XX MAR-Water Safety Course-Date TBD  
17-18 APR-NER Aerospace Education School  
19 APR-NER/CTWG Conference-BDL  
May 14-15-CTWG Unit Commander's Course

### CADET MEETING

04 February, 2020

As is customary, attendance, drill, opening ceremonies and a communications check-in on the CTWG radio net were regular parts of the meeting.

The cadet staff updated the squadron on its activities

Lt Drost lead a session about leadership.

### SENIOR MEETINGS

04 February, 2020

#### *Monthly Staff Reports*

Maj Farley reviewed the calendar and discussed options for a first aid course and a water survival qualification.

SM Docker reported that the squadron finances were sound.

Lt Kopycienski reported that 33 of 36 senior and 21 of 30 cadets were ACUT qualified.

Lt Col Rocketto reported that 30 out of 35 seniors have earned the Yeager Award.

### PUBLIC SERVICE

#### *Golden Gloves*

Twice, the Squadron cadets assisted the Connecticut National Guard in the operation of the Golden Gloves competition held at the State Armory in Hartford. Cadets assisted in ticket collection, seating and scheduling the boxers.



*Cadets look sharp in squadron shirts as they await instructions.*

Some of the amateur boxers are aspirants for the Olympics, one from the Dominican Republic and male and female cadets from West Point.

Cadets and parents were treated to a tour of the Armory by Colonel Gerald Lukowski, Chief of the Joint Staff for the Connecticut National Guard. They were also allowed the use of the climbing wall, inspection of a WWII jeep, and testing their strength on an instrumented punching bag.



TRCS members attending the January 25th event were cadets Munzner, Skiles, Kelley, Bury, Dhillon, Jeznach, Martin, Rathbone and Race, seniors Thornell, Martin, Cantwell and sponsor member Rathbone.

On February 1st, Cadets Alexander, Bury, O Busher, J. Busher, Ceniglio, Dibler, Dhillon, Jeznach, DeVeau, Martin, Rathbone and Race, seniors Thornell, Martin, Cantwell, Ceniglio and sponsor Rathbone contributed their services.

## **CURRENT EVENTS**

### *Airline Flight Suspensions*

American, United and Delta Airlines has decided to cancel all flights into and out of mainland China. The curtailment of service is a reaction to the State Department's Level 4 Travel Advisory which recommends no travel to affected (and infected) areas suffering from outbreaks of the coronavirus.

### *Editorial Comment on the Kobe Bryant Crash*

by

*Stephen M. Rocketto*

The death of celebrities, even sports celebrities in airplane crashes is more common than one might suppose. Pirates Right Fielder Roberto Clemente was killed when his attempt to bring relief supplies to the victims of an earthquake in Nicaragua ended when the overloaded DC-7 crashed off the coast of Puerto Rico. Yankee catcher Thurman Munson died in Ohio practicing take-offs and landings in his Citation 1/SP. Corey Lidle, a Yankee pitcher struck a building on New York's East River waterfront. And I could name a hundred more celebrities, sports, entertainment, society and government whom have met the same fate.

Almost every one of these accidents were investigated and a probable cause or causes determined. But a 24/7 news cycle, voracious and quite often ignorant media and a public demand for an immediate "reason why" leads to unsubstantiated judgements.

The tragic death of retired basketball star Kobe Bryant and eight others when their Sikorsky S-76 went down near Calabasas, California is only one of a long line of celebrity-involved aircraft incidents. I can trace sports celebrity deaths back to 1911 when cricketer William Evans died when the Cody Floatplane in which he was riding broke up over Farnborough, England. Whole teams have gone down together: six U.S. universities teams and the U.S. Olympic figure skating team and boxing team.

That celebrities die in air crashes is not surprising. They have the money to fly and they must fly to meet their professional commitments. The Boston Red Sox do not go to Texas by stage coach or train. Bryant stated that he frequently used the helicopter service for short flights to save time by avoiding the traffic jams on the California freeways.

With almost no hesitation, the speculations cascaded from the presses and electronic media. A careful reading of these speculations causes one to suspect the ability of the fourth estate to deliver facts.

I read that the weather was so bad that the Los Angeles Police Department grounded its aircraft. This is without doubt true but there is the implication that the flight might have been unsafe or illegal. Even among the airlines, different conditions require flight limitations. A flight might be released or not released depending on crew experience, aircraft equipment, or the airport facilities. So what might be a higher standard for one set of flight circumstances or one flight department does not impose limits on others.

I read that the company did not have authorization to fly “in bad weather.” Not quite true. The company did not authorization to fly commercial flights under instrument flight rules (IFR) conditions. Once again, the vagueness of the term “bad weather” suggests that the flight was illegal.

The flight departed legally under visual flight rules (VFR) and, in fact, at one point was given air traffic control permission to continue under a special (SVFR) clearance. The Federal Aviation Regulations (FAR) and company operating specifications state what is allowable in a wide range of weather conditions regarding flight and runway visibility, ceilings, day or night, icing and even winds. Air Traffic Control communications indicate that the aircraft departed legally from John Wayne Airport with a SVFR clearance and may have been using the FAA Flight Following service indicating VFR conditions. One would expect the “wordsmiths” of the press to not only have a better grasp of the vagueness and ambiguity of terms but also has some basic knowledge about what the topics about which they report.

Recently, after the tragic crash of the Collings Foundation B-17 at Bradley, I was called by a reporter who asked me to explain some of the language used in the first reports. If journalism is a profession, then it must have ethical standards. I can vouch for that one reporter at *The Day* who

fulfilled my expectations of professional behavior by a member of the press.

And then of course, the Monday quarterbacks stated there should have been two pilots. Single pilot operation of the S-76 is legal and single pilot commercial operations are common. The British military have a long history of using one pilot in an aircraft both four engine bombers and helicopters.



*The helicopter was formerly owned by the government of the State of Illinois.*

And finally, charges were made that the aircraft was not properly equipped for instruments for the flight. Does any reader believe that a multi-million dollar helicopter was not properly instrumented for both VFR and IFR flight? And the usual suspects who never miss a publicity opportunity came out of the legislative chambers. Within four days, a California representative introduced the *Kobe Bryant and Gianna Bryant Helicopter Safety Act* to mandate Terrain Avoidance and Warning System (TAWS) for all helicopters which are turbine powered and carry six or more people. Should not one wait for the issuance of the National Transportation and Safety report to determine the cause of the accident and if TWAS might have made a difference?

There are many possible causes for the accident ranging from engine or airframe failure to pilot incapacitation to pilot error. My issue is that the commentators ought not to jump to conclusions, especially if the facts are not in and if, as I suspect, most of them lack any solid knowledge about the FARs and helicopter operations.

Two great American traditions were observed. The rush of the press to judgement, and the belief that no job is complete until blame is ascribed.

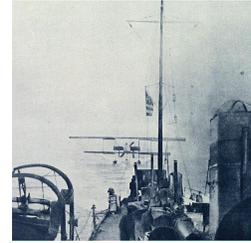
**MISSIONS, TRAINING, AND QUALIFICATIONS**

Maj Farley, Lt Spreccace, and Lt Col Rocketto flew an eastern ice patrol mission on the second of February. The Connecticut and Thames Rivers are ice free.

any damage. On their return to base, an engine failure forced them down in the Aegean Sea but they were towed in by the Greek destroyer *Velos*.

**AEROSPACE CHRONOLOGY**

Feb. 5, 1913 – The First Balkan War, a warm-up for The War to End All Wars. Bulgaria, Serbia, Montenegro and Greece take on the Ottoman Empire.



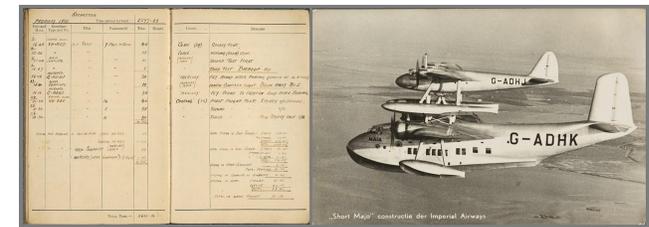
Feb 6, 1938– First successful in-flight separation of The Short-Mayo composite consisting of the modified Shorts S.21 *Maia* flying boat and the S.20 seaplane, *Mercury*.



*The Usual Cast of Characters from the Powder Keg of Europe. Can you identify the country leaders.*

Legendary Shorts Chief Test pilot John Lankester Parker commanded the *Maia* and Harold Piper flew the *Mercury*.

Greek military aviators, Lt. Michael Moutoussis and Ensign Aristeidis Moraitinis perform the first naval air mission in history.



*Parker's logbook entry of the flight and the composite aircraft.*



At that time, the British were attempting to start a commercial trans-Atlantic mail service but no aircraft could lift both a payload and the fuel needed. Their idea was to use a “mother” aircraft to lift the heavily laden mail carrier off the water and send it on its way.

The Ottoman Fleet was moored at Nagara in the Dardanelles Strait. The Greek aviators set out in a Maurice Farman MF.7 hydroplane to observe the size and disposition of the Turks.

Feb. 7, 1980– Death of Air Marshall Richard Williams, Royal Australian Air Force. Williams, the first military pilot trained in Australia served in both the Great War and World War II.



After completing the reconnaissance mission, they dropped four small bombs, none of which caused In World War I, during the Battle of Armageddon

in Palestine, Williams landed behind the Turkish lines and rescued a fellow pilot, Lt. Adrian Cole. Cole, a WWI ace, was wounded in WWII and retired as an Air Vice Marshall.

In 1926, Williams commenced a two month 10,000-mile round trip from Point Cook, exploring the South Pacific island archipelagos, the first international flight by an RAAF crew.



*Williams, on the right, and his crew, and their DeHavilland DH.50A equipped with pontoons.*

Williams is considered to be the “father” of an independent RAAF, the Billy Mitchell of the RAAF and also served as Australia's first Director-General of Civil Aviation

Feb. 8, 1913– The First Balkan War – Another First!

Russian pilot N. de Sackoff, flying for the Greeks, becomes the first pilot shot down in combat when his aircraft, most likely a Farman MF.7, was disabled by ground fire during a bombing raid on Fort Bizani in northwest Greece. He landed and assisted by the locals managed to effect repairs, take-off and return to his base.



*The Farman MF.7 with conventional landing gear.*

Feb. 9, 2004 – Death of Janusz Żurakowski, Polish Air Force and and Battle of Britain RAF pilot. He was awarded the Virtuti Militari, the Polish equivalent of the Medal of Honor.



After the war he worked as an experimental test pilot with Britain with the Aeroplane and Armament Experiment Establishment at Boscombe Down and Gloster Aviation. One of his most spectacular aerobatic maneuvers was the “Żurabatic Cartwheel.” performed in a Gloster Meteor. From a vertical climb, he throttled back one engine and pivoted through vertical turns before recovery.



*NF-11 Meteor*

He emigrated to the New World and went to work for Avro Canada where he became the first pilot to break the sound barrier in a straight-winged aircraft, a CF-100 Canuck.



*CF-100 Canuck*

“Żura” is best know as the test pilot who first flew the controversial and ill-fated CF-105 Arrow. He is lesser known for his habit of planting gardens at air bases at which he would only be posted for a short while. When friends pointed out that it was a futile effort since he would not be around to enjoy his efforts, he responded that the garden would still be enjoyed by others. Żurakowski, a flying Polish counterpart of John Chapman, “Johnny Appleseed.”

Zura holds a model of the CF-105



FAE SEPECAT Jaguar, Mirage, and Kfir

Go to You Tube: A Scattering Seeds: Straight Arrow: The Janusz Zurakowski Story  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mi3kBWQnsJg>

Feb. 10, 1995 – Alto Cenapa Border Dispute - A U.S. brokered treaty ended the Ecuadorian-Peruvian War of 1941 but Ecuador, unsatisfied with part of the settlement wait 29 years and in 1960, declares the treaty null and void. The spirit of *mañana* is a recognized characteristic of Latin culture so after a wait of 35 more years, hostilities resumed! The Peruvians had a larger air force but fewer operational aircraft due to an economic crisis which hobbled their fighter force.



FAP Dragonfly and Fitter

Ecuadorian Maj. Raúl Banderas and Capt. Carlos Uscategui flying Dassault Mirage F.1JAs claim shoot downs of two Peruvian Sukhoi Su-22 Fitters flown by Commander Victor Maldonado Begazo and Major Enrique Caballero. The Ecuadorian claim is disputed by the Peruvians who assert that anti-aircraft fire brought down their aircraft.

Feb. 11, 2000– Jacqueline Auriol, French aviatrix, goes West. She held a number of speed records. Auriol was one of the first woman jet test pilots. Old timers will remember her for his rivalry with American Jacqueline Cochran. From 1951 to 1963 they swapped women's speed records about a half-dozen times.



Banderis and Uscategui

On the same day, an Ecuadorian Israeli Aircraft Industries Kfir C.2 shoots down a Peruvian Cessna A-37B Dragonfly using a Shafir 2 missile.



Auriol in a Mystere 4B and Cochran on a Sabrejet