

## **La coupe des Alpilles – report of an ambitious young sportsman**

This competition, taking place in Salon Eyguière close to Marseille, France is the only one of the year organized in the South East of France. Since it is also the very first one of the year, it is an opportunity to see how others competitors fly compared to your own level.

This competition makes even more sense seeing how many competitors were participating. 33 pilots were flying and 15 in the category I was flying: “Espoir”. “Espoir” is the French equivalent of the “Sportsman” class but it has some G-limits that might penalize or even disqualify any pilot exceeding them.

I left Cochstedt the Friday in the afternoon in order to arrive the evening before the contest to register and complete all the paperwork necessary .The flight was marvelous especially when overflying the Swiss and French Alps. Over Switzerland the ATC asked me what kind of airplane it was, after responding them it was an XA42 the ATC told me “I don’t know how it looks like but it’s fast!”. At this moment I was averaging 220kts because of a bit of tailwind.



After 3 hours of flight I arrived in LFNE. Just a couple of seconds after shutdown people were already coming around to see the airplane.

Once the paperwork completed and people introduced, it was time to go to bed.

During the contest day I had a lot of people around the airplane who never saw it before. Some were flying other aerobatic airplanes like the CAP 232 or the Extra but they were all impressed by the finish quality of the XtremeAir. Once they sat inside they understood how I did 3 flight hours in an unlimited aerobatic airplane without making a stop. The seating position is so comfortable and the cockpit so ergonomic that flying 3hours non-stop is not exhausting or uncomfortable at all.

The contest consisted in flying to sequences: The known one, published at the beginning of the year that everyone can train before the contest and the unknown, which is given during the contest.

Unfortunately I did not have the time to prepare the known sequence and I placed 8 out of 15.

For the unknown sequence however, we were all at the same level since nobody had the opportunity to train the sequence before the contest.

Despite a very bad start with a spin out of the box the result of the Unknown sequence put me from the 8<sup>th</sup> position to the 5<sup>th</sup>. I did not have the result of the Unknown alone but to gain 3 places in one flight, the result might not have been so bad.

The overall score was just below 78%, which is over the 70% minimum score to go in the higher category and also higher than the 75% required to be able to present two categories in a single year.



To conclude on the event I think it was both nice for the competition even if the result does not lead to a podium and for the marketing. The XtremeAir is generating a lot of interest in France. Judges like the shape of the airplane in the air and competitors were amazed its overall performance.

