

# 1,907 sorties flown during WFE

By Kang Peng

From November 4 to 7, the 2017 FAI World Fly-In Expo (WFE) was held at Hannan General Airport. The aircraft had flown 1,907 sorties during the four-day performances and competitions, making the expo boast the largest air shows ever in China in terms of sorties and flying hours.

The 2017 WFE featured aerobatics, interactive activities, exhibitions, summits, business meetings, and activities to promote the world of aviation. Over 1,000 sportsmen, performers, referees, and officials from over 40 countries on six continents participated in aerobatics, parachuting, powered paragliding, and hot air ballooning.

A two-hour aerial show was staged at the opening ceremony. The Aviad from the U.S. and Spain's Doubleas Aerobatic Team led by Ramón Alonso with Jorge Alonso presented breathtaking aerobatic stunts.

## FAI president: Wuhan can be China's capital of aerospace industries

By Sue Liu

"The WFE is a very big and prestigious international event. Do you see the list of companies? There is a lot of new technology here." Frits Brink, president of Fédération Aéronautique Internationale (FAI), is impressed by the influence of the fly-in expo. "The expo brings people together, people from different countries now wanting to compete in China."

Brink said that FAI chose Wuhan over other cities as the site for the expo because of its combination of traditional and modern industries. He was impressed by the city's automobile and new equipment sectors in particular. And he has learned that the aviation industry and aero sports have actually begun in the city. "Wuhan is a typical example for me as it's interested in new industrial development related to aero sports and because it can be China's capital of the automobile and aerospace industries."

"WFE is not a local or regional thing; it's an international event. What happens here makes us want to take part in this. FAI is happy to be here and offer our help." Brink revealed that FAI is considering bringing in larger events and signing cooperative contracts with local companies.

The Baltic Bees in flight Photo by Zhan Song



## Aero contracts of RMB 145 billion signed

By Kang Peng

A project-signing conference was held on the first day of WFE. During the conference, 19 projects with investments worth RMB 145 billion were signed.

The projects mainly fall into the areas of general aviation manufacturing, assembly, maintenance, training, operations,

and satellite applications.

The Wuhan Economic & Technological Development Zone (WEDZ) signed an agreement with China Hongtai to establish a Comprehensive Aviation Industry Demonstration Zone. Zall Group will invest RMB 120 million in building an operation base which

will contain an aircraft maintenance plant and an aero club. With an investment of RMB 80 billion, Mingda Yihang Group will establish sports logistical bases and production lines for both general aviation and new energy vehicles. This group will also set up corporate jet manufacturing and

research facilities related to the production and development of Sino-German aircraft and engines.

The China Aero Supply Industry Investment Co., Ltd. will set up an assembly line and maintenance base for Vulcanair P68 aircraft in Wuhan.

## 45-man skydiving star formation

By Sue Liu

Parachutists from 10 countries broke a Chinese national record on November 4 when they created a 45-man star formation in the air.

The team consisted of both female and male skydivers whose ages ranged from 20 to 55. "We have a lot of world champions on our team and most of us have jumped thousands of times," said Ally Milne, a 33-year-old British parachutist. "For most of us, it's our first visit to China, the experience is great and we have enjoyed our time here." During the performance, team members jumped

from three planes at 13,000 meters and then came together and made a star formation. "We choose a star formation because it is the pattern that appears on China's national flag. We wanted to mark the team's first visit to China and show our gratitude for all the things that local people have done for us," Milne added. He and his partners had four color smoke bombs that were given to them by the Chinese parachuting team. This enabled them to spice up the performance by releasing smoke during their skydives.



## Hot air balloon wedding

By Kang Peng

One hundred couples set a national record for the largest simultaneous mass airborne wedding on November 6 during the FAI World Fly-in Expo.

Nick and Shane, from the U.K. Parachuting Team, were the 100th couple. "November 5 was our 10-year anniversary for being together. After participating in the 45-person

parachute jump, we were told that a huge hot air balloon wedding would be held the next day. We had always wanted to tie the knot, and this seemed to be the perfect opportunity, so we went immediately to the organizer to find out if we could be a part of the wedding. Very luckily, there was one last spot for us," Nick said.



## American team writes in the sky

By Hu Jingxian

Four red Van's RV aircraft and a navy blue Pitts Special biplane from the First General Aviation aerobatic team flew across the sky above Hannan

General Airport leaving a message made of special smoke: WELCOME TO WUHAN.

John Hornbeck, a member of the team, said that the

skywriting process was controlled by the leading plane via WiFi or GPS. After receiving signals from the lead plane, the other aircraft in the team were able to leave

trails creating the English letters, which were readable from 10 kilometers away.

## Spectator purchases aircraft for RMB 1 million

By Wu Qiuna

Mr. Chen is a 52-year-old man who spent RMB 1 million on an Aurora SA60L, a Chinese light-sport aircraft, during the aircraft exposition on

November 6.

"We can fly the aircraft after the flight route is approved by the Hubei branch of the CAAC Central and Southern Regional

Administration. The Aurora SA60L aircraft will be used mainly for daily and regular flights. Currently, it costs around RMB 100,000 for people to learn to fly

and get a pilot's license. The good news is that Hannan General Airport now provides aircraft custody services."