

The official publication of DVA's MD-88/90 Program

December 2006 / January 2007

The

**Mad Dog**



**"Growl"**

Sometimes the bite is as bad as the bark



***In this issue:***

***What Every Online Pilot Should Know***

***Plane Spotting at ORD***

***Runway Overview***

Volume #2 - Issue #8

***...and more!***





At the gate at PDX - Oliver Mcrae

**December 2006 / January 2007**

**Volume #2 – Issue #8**

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Final into Portland – Oliver McRae

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## From the Editor

By: Larry Foltran

Quite honestly, I can't believe we are well into (and almost out of) the month of December. I don't know about you, but this year has flown by. This being the last issue of 2006 and technically the first issue of 2007, I think it would be a great opportunity to take a quick look back on the Mad Dog program during '06.



During 2006, we saw a large number of new MD-88 pilots come into our ranks as well as plenty of promotions to Captain. Actually, we had 108 pilots get promoted to Captain. That's absolutely outstanding in my opinion. Many of these folks have moved on to become active members of DVA's stage 3 and 4 programs. I simply hope that their stay in the MD-88/90 program provided them with some of the basic skills and experience they now use on a regular basis representing DVA in our heavy aircraft.

Relating to this newsletter, we've enjoyed some new features and celebrated a couple of milestones. Back in the March/April issue, we helped celebrate DVA's 5-year anniversary. DVA has been a major force in the VA community and our pilots play a huge part in that.

August marked the one-year anniversary for the Mad Dog Newsletter. It was actually hard for me to believe that it had already been a year. We hope to continue this publication as long as there are pilots who read it.

Obviously, the main focus of this newsletter is to feature MD-80 related articles and information. Although DVA's MD-88/90 pilots are the target audience, we try to feature articles that can provide information to all members of DVA. Although each article is slanted towards the Mad Dog (and why shouldn't it be), many of the topics discussed

areas that pilots from all stages could benefit from. During the winter months we discussed anti-ice protection and procedures. We've covered emergency procedures and abnormal flight situations. Most recently, we've taken an in-depth look at one of the most popular MD-80 payware packages available today, the Lago Mad Dog panel. I think we've had a little something for everyone.

In my opinion, one of the newsletter's shining stars has been Tyrone Weston's, our program's ACP, flight spotlight articles. Tyrone has successfully been able to pull the reader into a specific monthly flight and narrate it from gate to gate. These articles provide a great snapshot of a normal flight scenario and give our readers some unique flight destination ideas. I look forward to reading Tyrone's article every month and hope all of you do as well.

So what's next? The new year will bring a lot of the same quality articles and hopefully more. We will continue to feature articles that will hopefully educate our pilots and make their virtual flying experiences a little more enjoyable. We will continue to spotlight the promotions and accomplishments of our pilots. We will continue to include all of the same type of articles you've (hopefully) been enjoying since the first issue of the newsletter.

Building on that, we plan to add some new features. I hope to include articles featuring a different DVA Mad Dog pilot each month, telling us about himself/herself and how they fly the cyber skies. We will also include more technically based articles to give our pilots a deeper look at the MD-80's systems. There are plenty of possibilities and lots more to come.

So with that, thanks for reading and I sincerely hope that you will continue to download and read the Mad Dog Newsletter in this coming new year. I'd also like to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a safe & prosperous new year!

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## MD-88/90 Program News

### **Mad Dog Resources**

As many of you may know, back issues of this newsletter and other resources are available for download at [www.md88online.com](http://www.md88online.com). Check it out!

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### **Guest Writers Welcome!**

Do you have an idea for an article topic? Would you like to submit an article for the next issue of the Mad Dog Newsletter? Please contact Larry Foltran ([delta1679@sbcglobal.net](mailto:delta1679@sbcglobal.net)) to submit your idea. You will of course be credited for any information you send in.

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### **Wanted – Mad Dog Screenshots!**

We're always looking for excellent and unique screenshots or photos. If you have one that we can use in the newsletter, please send it in. ([delta1679@sbcglobal.net](mailto:delta1679@sbcglobal.net)) All submissions must be your original work. Please do not submit screenshots you have not taken or photos from online aviation photo sites.

## Recent Promotions

Every month, we like to acknowledge our Mad Dog pilots who have completed all of the requirements necessary to wear the extra stripe. Congratulations to all on your promotion.

### October

Tom Housworth (DVA3572) – Captain  
Christer Johansson (DVA3407) – Captain  
Kevin Cowan (DVA3529) – Captain  
Dane Everitt (DVA3569) – Captain  
Charles Blackburn (DVA3328) – Captain  
Charles Martin (DVA2568) – Captain  
Tom Giovannelli (DVA309) – Captain  
Kusan McGill (DVA3538) – Captain  
Chris Sikes (DVA3161) – Captain  
Nick Hartkemeyer (DVA3636) – Captain  
Sean Jolivette (DVA3140) – Captain

### November

Alex Matt (DVA3670) – Captain  
Thomas Westley (DVA3630) – Captain  
Benton Wilmes (DVA3665) – Captain  
Aaron Nell (DVA3651) – Captain  
Axel Guillebastre (DVA3310) – Captain  
Guillermo Aguilar (DVA3305) – Captain  
Brody Jones (DVA3515) – Captain  
Greg Newton (DVA3528) – Captain  
Ed Haumschold (DVA3452) – Captain  
Dave Libby (DVA3709) – Captain  
Michael Merali (DVA3688) – Captain

### December

Donald Stockton (DVA3510) – Captain  
Matthew Oliver (DVA3591) – Captain  
Greg Newton (DVA3528) – Captain  
Austin Speaker (DVA3703) – Captain



## What Every Virtual Pilot Should Know...when flying online

By: Larry Foltran

Last month, we reviewed some of the basic general knowledge areas that virtual pilots encounter during every flight. Some of the items covered only effect your personal flight simulator experience. But others, such as speed restrictions and transition altitude, are visible to others while flying online. This time around, we are going to focus on the areas that play a part in flying online.

### **Transponder Functions**

The transponder on your aircraft responds to radar equipment and sends specific coded signal. ATC uses your transponder signal to track your flight progress. But when there are dozens of aircraft in the same area, ATC needs something to differentiate your aircraft from the others. This is done by dialing in an assigned 4-digit code into your transponder.

In our virtual world, if you are departing from a controlled airport, ATC will assign you a specific transponder code. This is normally done during your initial flight clearance and is the last bit of information given. Here's an example that will illustrate this:

**"Delta 123, you are cleared to Atlanta as filed, climb to 10,000, expect FL230 10 minutes after departure, departure will be on XXX.XX, squawk 1234."**

In this example, the controller has instructed the pilot to dial in "1234" in their transponder. As a further note, the pilot would only be required to read back the squawk code at this point. "Roger, squawk 1234. Delta 123." This greatly reduces the time needed for each clearance.

While we're on the subject of the transponder, I'd like to briefly discuss the different modes that you will encounter during a flight. The two most common are Mode "C" or Charlie and Standby. Both are used during a flight and if used properly, can make ATC very happy.

Let's walk through a basic flight for this example. OK, you've logged on at the gate (never on the runway) and you are getting ready to call for clearance. One of the first things you should do is make sure the transponder is in Standby mode. This reduces the amount of information that is displayed next to your target on the controllers screen.

You've been cleared and have taxied to the assigned runway. If instructed to "hold short", you should change your mode to "C" or Charlie once you reach the hold short line of the active runway. This will convey to the controller that you are ready to go. You'll usually still need to contact a controller at this point though.

So now you've taken off and have been cruising on your merry way. You are being handed off from one Center controller to the next Center. The "new" Center asks you to "Ident". The software you are using to connect should have an "IDENT" button. When instructed to do so, you should click on this button. This makes your information blink brightly on the controllers screen, helping him find your exact position.

The final situation is after the landing. Your wheels are on the ground and you've got it all hanging out to get that aircraft slowed. One of the first things I do once the aircraft has slowed is to put the transponder in standby mode. Get into the habit of doing this before or once you are clear of the active runway. Once again, it clears some of the clutter on the controllers screen and will make him a happy camper.

### **Unicom**

In my opinion, online flying into an uncontrolled airport can sometimes be more challenging than if that airport were controlled. When you have a controller organizing the approach of several aircraft, the pilots are following his/her direction completely. There's no guessing. When flying into an uncontrolled airport with several other aircraft, there are more variables there. Included in that list is varied experience levels, different general attitudes and a lack of the "big picture" around the airport. In this

scenario, pilots need to communicate and coordinate with each other. This is done on the radio frequency 122.80 or Unicom. If you are flying from a controlled area to an uncontrolled area, ATC will direct you to Unicom.

Communication between pilots is normally not necessary during your cruise. Inter-pilot communication is normally more important once the aircraft has entered the approach. Adding to that, communication is normally necessary when there are other aircraft approaching the same or airport near your final destination.

If you've noticed other aircraft in your vicinity on ServInfo or your TCAS, you should transmit your intentions on Unicom. Keep in mind that communication on Unicom is by text only. For example, you've noticed that there is another aircraft nearby that seems to be approaching the airport (ATL in this case) along the same STAR. In this situation, you can simply transmit "KATL traffic. DAL123 on the XXX STAR for runway XX." The aircraft now knows what STAR you are on and what runway you intend to land on.

Further down the road, you can transmit "KATL traffic. DAL123 on ILS for runway XX." Again, this tells the other aircraft that you are on your approach. Depending on the approach and the proximity of the other aircraft, I also like communicating when I'm on the base leg for the approach and once I'm clear of the active runway. Obviously, clear communication is the key when operating on Unicom.

### **Transition Altitude**

Transition altitude in the U.S. is 18,000 feet MSL. This is the point where the pilot switches the altimeter from local pressure to standard pressure during climb and from standard to local during descent. As an example, let's say we are taking off from Atlanta. ATC informs us t

These are just a few of the basic items that every virtual pilot should have in his or her knowledge base. We are all involved in a hobby that can be enriched and improved by a variety of things. New airplanes, scenery or

other add-on tools make our flights more enjoyable. Operating like the professionals do is included in this list for many of us. Making sure you know these "must knows" sets a good foundation for other skills you'll learn in the course of your regular flight routes or in the DVA Academy...how's that for a shameless plug George? ☺ ➔



## Plane Spotting at ORD

By: Larry Foltran



On a beautiful October Sunday, my dad and I made the 5-hour drive to Chicago to take care of some errands. We decided it would be a great opportunity to check out O'Hare International airport and snap some photos of aircraft at the same time. We did not regret our decision one bit.

After finishing up our other business, we made our way towards the airport around 1:00 pm CT. Our first spotting location was on the south-east side of the airport. We found a short road near Lawrence and Manheim roads that offered a perfect location for watching aircraft arriving on 27L and holding short 22L for take-off. Parked near the end of the street, our vantage point allowed me to take some great photos and watch as the airliners soared over our heads. I was very impressed with the variety of aircraft and airlines coming into O'Hare. During our time at this spot we saw Airbuses, ERJs, CRJs, Boeings and even a Gulfstream IV. Although we didn't get to see any Mad Dogs pass overhead, we did see a DAL MD-88 departing on 22L.



We spent about 10 to 15 minutes at this location before we were visited by one of Chicago's finest. Despite being outside the area labeled as restricted and doing nothing wrong, we were asked to leave. The officer was very polite and we felt there was no need

to push the situation into a bad direction, so we decided to simply leave and find somewhere else to go.



We made our way to Irving Park Rd and followed the southern edge of the airport. Driving around this field really gives you a sense of the immense size of this airport.

Coming up with nothing on Irving Park, we turned north on York. There we found a couple of business



parking lots on Pan Am Blvd, situated near the end of 32L. This location proved to be disappointing and after taking a couple of shots, we decided to scout for a new location.

We made are way back around to the approach side of the airport. Hoping that some local hotel parking lots would provide good locations, we began looking closely for a decent spot. Unfortunately, all of the hotel parking lots in this area have gates which require room keys to access them.





Our final location for the day was a hotel in the Rosemont area. Access to this parking lot was free if

staying less than 30 minutes. After a very short wait, the first aircraft came into site. Ironically for us, it was a Northwest DC-9. Compared to our first spot, any location would be sub-standard. But this spot wasn't too bad at all. We had a good view of the aircraft as they approached on 27R.



All in all, this wasn't a bad day of plane spotting at all. The brief amount of time we spent at the first location made the trip worth

it. Quite honestly, I could have spent all day there if we weren't asked to leave. As I've mentioned in previous articles, if asked to leave by the authorities, simply do so. It makes no sense getting into trouble you really don't want. It also gives folks a bad view of our hobby and what we do.



Actually, our chat with the police officer proved that to me. He mentioned a European plane spotting club that visits ORD quite often and tends to cause problems. It was pretty obvious to me that he doesn't hold this group in very high regard.

So after a couple of hours of staring into the sky, we began our long trek back home. Equipped with Google Earth and our mental notes, we've already begun plotting out our strategies and spots for next time. →



## Runways...Beyond the Asphalt

By: Larry Foltran

Whether your aircraft is leaving or arriving, chances are you'll be using a runway in the process. In reality, the amount of time we spend on the runway is minimal in relation to the entire flight. Aside from the giant painted numbers on either end of the runway, many of us fail to understand or even acknowledge the other markings that exist. That will hopefully end with this article.

Runways come in all kinds of different lengths, widths and are made of many different materials such as grass, dirt, gravel, concrete or asphalt. If you fly DVA routes exclusively, you will only encounter prepared runways consisting of concrete or asphalt. Runways at major airports can vary in thickness from as little as 10 inches to 4 feet.



Based on the fact that the vast majority of us have noticed the runway numbers, I'll start with a brief explanation of those. Runway numbers refer to their magnetic direction or

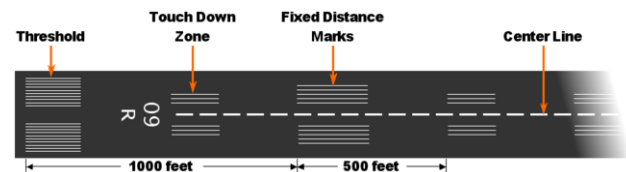
heading. These are rounded up to the nearest 10 degrees and the last zero is omitted. For example, runway 18 would have a heading of 180 degrees; runway 01 would have a heading of 10 degrees; and so forth. Keep in mind that each physical strip of runway is in fact two runways, one in each direction and 180 degrees opposite of the other designation. For example, runway 18 (180 degrees) is called runway 36 (360 degrees) when viewed from the other end.

Where there are multiple runways with the same heading, they will be designated as L (left), C (center) and R (right) accordingly. This example can be illustrated easily at Atlanta with parallel runways 27L & 27R and 26L & 26R, etc.

Now let's take a look at what all those markings mean.



1. The first area is the blast pad. This area is normally marked with yellow chevrons and is often not as strong as the main surface of the runway. This area is reserved, in a sense, for the jet blast during takeoff and can be used during an aborted takeoff. Pilots are not allowed to taxi, takeoff or land on them except in an emergency.
2. The second area is called the displaced threshold. This area is commonly marked with white arrows pointing to the threshold. This area can be used for taxiing and takeoff but not for landing.



That brings us to the threshold of the runway. This area is normally marked with a series of white lines spaced closely together and green lighting. This marks the actual beginning of the runway.

Following the threshold, you will find the runway designator markings as explained earlier. Next we find the touch down zone markings. The touch down zone is designated by a series of three lines on both sides of the runway centerline. These are repeated throughout the touchdown zone showing where the aircraft should touchdown. Please note that touchdown zone markings are not required on visual or non-precision runways.

You will notice that within the touchdown zone is a different group of white lines. These are called the fixed distance marks and they are 1000 feet from the threshold of the

runway. This is the point in which pilots aim to land during an approach.

Finally, along the center of the runway is the center line, designated by a dashed white line painted along the length of the runway.

Because painted runway markings are difficult or impossible to see at night or in limited visibility weather, runways are equipped with specific lighting schemes to help pilots. In general, runways are bordered in white lights as opposed to the blue lights found on taxiways. The centerline of the runway is also made up of white lights, spaced at 50-foot intervals. As you move away from the landing threshold, the centerline lights will alternate with red starting at the last 3,000 feet of the runway. This will continue for 2,000 feet until the last 1,000 feet where they will all be red.

As you approach during landing, you will see the green threshold lights at the beginning of the runway. These are followed by rows of white lights indicating the touchdown zone which start 100 feet beyond the threshold and extend to 3,000 feet beyond or to the midpoint of the runway, whichever is less.

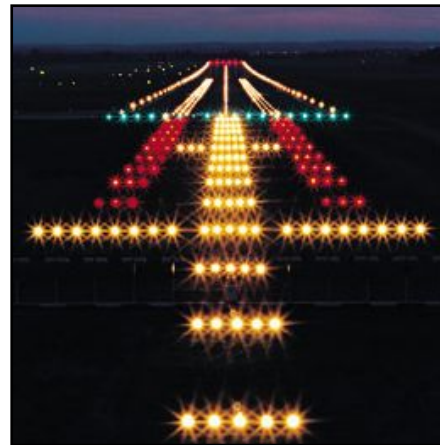


Runways also contain illuminated signs to convey information to pilots. One commonly used runway sign is used to show the remaining runway distance. The number shown is read in 1,000 feet increments. In the example shown, the pilot would read this as 5,000 feet until the end of the runway.



Another sign that you will see is the runway identification sign. This shows you what runway you are about to cross. The example shows that runway 09 crosses from left to right and runway 27 crossed from right to left. As mentioned earlier, both of these runways are on the same paved surface. These signs are considered runway hold points when crossing a runway. Pilots should only cross if they have received clearance to do so. If not, they are required to hold until clearance is issued. If ATC clears you to the gate after landing or clears you directly to a runway for takeoff, you can consider this clearance to

cross a runway that is in your path. Although, safety is always a primary and you should confirm with ATC if there is any doubt.



The final items we will be covering in this article are the lights on the approach end of a runway. I'm sure you've noticed the

flashing lights leading to the runway within Flight Sim. This group of lights is called the Approach Light Systems (ALS). This is the point in which a pilot transitions from instrument flight to visual flight for the landing. ALS are a group of lights at the landing threshold and extending into the approach area a distance of up to 3000 feet on a precision runway. These lights normally flash in a pattern that appear to move towards the runway in the direction of the approach.

Next, you may encounter either a Visual Approach Slope Indicator (VASI) or a Precision Approach Path Indicator (PAPI). The VASI is a system of lights arranged to provide visual descent guidance information while on approach. These lights are normally visible from 5 miles out during the day and up to 20 miles at night. These lights only provide vertical guidance during approach. The runway edge lighting should be used for lateral guidance.

The PAPI is similar to the VASI but are installed in a single row of either two or four light groups. Both VASI and PAPI systems can be arranged in various configurations but all provide the same general orientation information. You can simply do a Google search on either to find specific information about these systems and the other information explained in this article. →

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<http://treadly.thingoid.com/2006/06/16/night-landings-on-the-gardiners-creek-trail/>  
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Runway>