

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

February / March 2007

The

Mad Dog



"Growl"

Sometimes the bite is as bad as the bark



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TCAS Overview

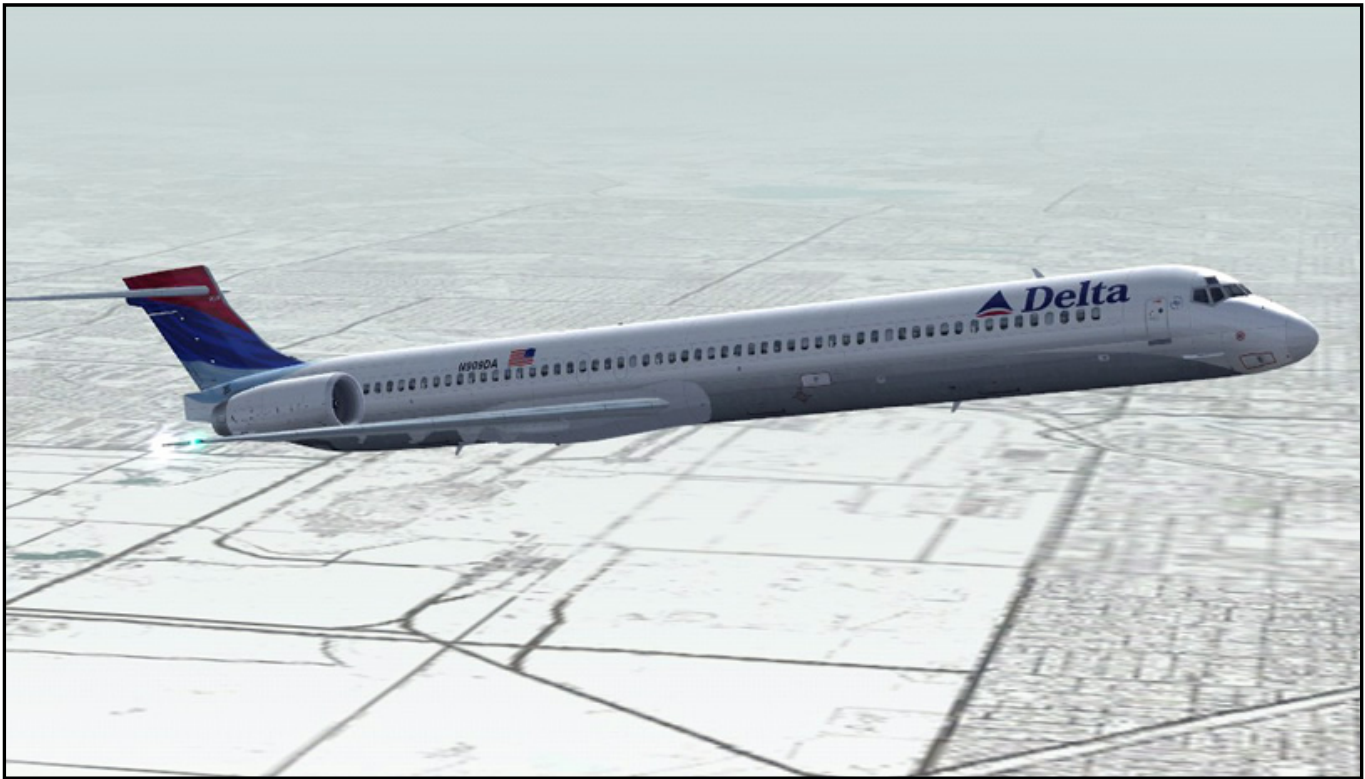
Cruising to Cowtown

Roger Pilgrem - 1700+

...and more!

Volume #3 - Issue #1





MD90 – Trevor Bair

February / March 2007

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Cruising to DTW – Larry Foltran

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- Larry Foltran
- Derek Bradley
- Trevor Bair

From the Editor

By: Larry Foltran

Welcome to, what I'm considering, the first official issue of 2007. To somewhat make up for last month's slim issue, we've tried to pack plenty of information into this issue of the Mad Dog Newsletter. As most folks are trying to slim things down in the new year, we're fattening them up!

We have tons of information for you this time around:

- MD-88 ACP Tyrone Weston, has contributed a great flight report for Skywest flight 3975. His article takes us from our Salt Lake City hub to Calgary (YYC). See how he fares this time around.
- This month, we're introducing a new feature to the Mad Dog Newsletter. Each issue, we will spotlight one member of DVA's MD-88/90 program as a type of "get to know you" feature. I felt it would be appropriate to kick things off with DVA's most frequent flyer...Roger Pilgrem. Many are already aware. But for those of you who are not, Roger currently holds the title for the pilot with the most flight legs flown at DVA (1805 at the time this was written).
- We're also covering the TCAS system in this issue and how to use it. This system has become invaluable to real world and virtual pilots alike!
- Following along on that theme, Derek Bradley (DVA2750 – 767 Captain) was kind to submit a very helpful article for those of you who use the fleet MD-88. There has been some frustration among pilots relating to the transponder on this aircraft. Derek clears up these questions with this article.

- Christmas time brings new FS toys to play with. Christmas '06 was not an exception. Read about my new addition and the headaches that came with it.
- Another day, another plane spotting trip for yours truly. This time around, I was joined by fellow DVA pilot Chris Robeson. The article describes this cold day of spotting at DTW and a very brief (thankfully) encounter with "the law".



Chris Robeson takes some time out from snapping pictures at DTW

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. Check it out!

* * *

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) to submit your idea. You will of course be credited for any information you send in.

* * *

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) 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.

December

Ryan Whitford (DVA3440) – Captain
Cooper Thompson (DVA3761) – Captain
Bervick Deculus (DVA3604) – Captain
David Rengifo (DVA2235) – Captain
Verne Tetreault (DVA3138) – Captain
Lance Ripka (DVA3789) – Captain

January

Dirk Bontink (DVA3602) – Captain
Alan Kosoff (DVA3843) – Captain
Matthew Gervais (DVA2996) – Captain
Martin Beltramo (DVA3497) – Captain
Ray Grimm (DVA3849) – Captain
Russ Manwiller (DVA3882) – Captain
Nick Harding (DVA3851) – Captain
Edgardo Rodriguez (DVA2928) – Captain
Ochuko Atavwigho (DVA3745) – Captain
Garry Shtofmakher (DVA3901) – Captain
Andrew Kaufmann (DVA3931) – Captain
Jacob Tishman (DVA3324) – Captain
Norm Hare (DVA3419) - Captain

February

Trevor Woolley (DVA3943) – Captain
Stephen Fritz (DVA3804) – Captain
Matthew Kosmiski (DVA1475) – Captain
Jerry Farler (DVA3778) – Captain
Ben Duva (DVA1814) – Captain
Simon Cervantes (DVA3694) - Captain
Christian Thomas (DVA3885) – Captain
Daniel Engles (DV4029) – Captain
Channing Hilliard (DVA3929) - Captain



TCAS

By: Larry Foltran

Although most of us recognize this acronym and have used this equipment during our virtual flights, the history and specifics of the TCAS go unnoticed. This computerized system adds another level of protection against mid-air collisions and keeps today's flight crews aware of other aircraft around them.

TCAS stands for Traffic Alert and Collision Avoidance System. It works separately from human air traffic control to warn flight crews of other aircraft that may pose a danger of collision. The system communicates with other transponder equipped aircraft in the area and determines each aircraft's position. TCAS tracks the bearing, altitude and velocity of each target in the selected range and determines if any danger exists. If there is the potential for a collision, the proper avoidance action is communicated to the aircraft's flight crew via the display and aural warning. The system determines which aircraft will need to deviate from their present path and which aircraft should maintain their route.

TCAS is a relatively new piece of aircraft equipment. The push to establish a collision avoidance system was made after the crash of Aero México flight 498 in 1986. This tragic event involved An Aero México DC-9 en route from Mexico City which collided with a Piper Archer over Cerritos, California. All on board both aircraft perished along with 15 people on the ground. This accident prompted the US Congress to act and put this collision avoidance system on the priority list.

Continuous Improvement

There are actually three generations of TCAS equipment. The first, TCAS I, is the least expensive of these systems. It is capable of monitoring up to 40 miles around the aircraft and informs the pilot of nearby traffic. This system does not offer a collision avoidance path, leaving the decision up to the pilot, and is used mostly on general aviation aircraft.

TCAS II is the second generation equipment and is what is found in the vast majority of

commercial aircraft. This system warns of any potential for collision and provides avoidance information to the pilot. As of January 1st, 1993, all turbine transport aircraft with more than 30 passenger seats are required to be equipped with TCAS II. Europe, Australia and Hong Kong implemented similar mandates in 2000. Requirements in Hong Kong are the most stringent, requiring TCAS II on all aircraft with more than 9 passenger seats or MTOW of over 5700kg.

TCAS III is actually the "next generation" of this equipment and is currently under development. This system will include horizontal maneuvering instructions for traffic avoidance. For example, if one aircraft is instructed to climb and turn right, the other would be instructed to descend and turn left, thus increasing the distance between both aircraft.

So you now know some of the highlights of TCAS history, but what do those colored dots mean? I'm glad you asked. ☺



The first step is finding this display. In some cases, the TCAS display is integrated in the navigation display of a glass cockpit. Such is the case in the 777 and many other glass cockpit equipped airliners. It can also be combined with the Vertical Speed Indicator (VSI) in one digital display. This is true on our MD-88s and MD-90s. Although the location can vary from one panel to the next in FS, on

the actual aircraft it is located to the right of the navigation display. For those of you who fly using the Lago Mad Dog panel, that is where you will find it.

System Modes



The TCAS on the MD-88/90 has a maximum range of 15 miles. The display ranges of 3, 5, 10, or 15 miles can be selected (normally shown in the upper right corner of the display). The

system also has several different modes that can be selected:

STBY – Standby is technically the off position for TCAS and the Transponder. When in standby mode, TCAS STBY will be shown in the lower left corner of the display and both systems will be considered in the off position.

TEST – Selecting the test mode will initiate a system test of the system. The display will show a test pattern followed by an aural message of either “TCAS System Test OK” or “TCAS System Test Fail”.

ALT OFF – This mode turns the transponder on, but leaves TCAS off.

ALT ON – Similar to ALT OFF, this mode also only activates the transponder. The only difference between ALT ON and ALT OFF is that altitude information is sent in this mode. The easiest way to illustrate this mode is by visualizing two aircraft in the same horizontal position, but separated by a couple thousand feet. If ALT OFF were selected on one aircraft and TCAS were fully activated on the other, the aircraft with TCAS running would receive a potential collision warning because the system has no way of knowing there is a difference in altitude. With ALT ON selected and the altitude information being sent, the TCAS active aircraft would receive that data and would not display a collision alert.

TA – This is the Traffic Advisory mode. In this mode, the display will change to show a potential danger and the aural warning will sound (“Traffic, traffic”). But no avoidance information will be given.

TA/RA – Traffic Advisory/Resolution Advisory mode provides everything and the kitchen sink. Any potential danger will be communicated both visually and audibly. In addition to the basic “traffic, traffic” warning, the system may issue a “climb, climb” or “descend, descend” instruction to avoid the conflict. With TCAS II, only one aircraft is issued a course deviation instruction.

Those modes are shown in the lower left corner of the display.

The TCAS panel also has a switch that allows the pilot to toggle between Above, Norm, or Below mode. Above will only display traffic above the aircraft and the exact opposite is true for Below mode. Norm will display all traffic in the selected range. This mode status is shown in the upper left corner of the display.

The Display

In normal circumstances, TCAS will display all aircraft in range with a diamond, a number representing vertical separation and possibly and arrow next to the target diamond. Aircraft near your position are represented by a filled white diamond and distant aircraft are shown with an empty white diamond. The vertical separation will be displayed with either a + or – preceding it. If a target has a +60 next to it, the other aircraft is actually 6000 feet above your own. If an arrow is displayed, it is indicating whether the other aircraft is climbing or descending. This symbol is only shown if the climb or descent rate is greater than 500 feet per minute.

That's the way we always want to see the TCAS system. Everything is wonderful if the targets are shown in white. But what happens when they're not? TCAS has a color coding system arranged in two stages. Keep in mind that these are both dependant on what mode is selected.



The first stage is a Traffic Advisory. In this phase, the target will be shown as a filled yellow circle and the aural warning "traffic, traffic" will sound. This conveys the potential for a collision.

The second stage is the Resolution Advisory. The target will be shown as a filled red square and the VSI will show the vertical rate necessary to avoid collision. This information is represented by a red and green arc on the VSI. Keep in mind that the resolution advisory arc will only display if TA/RA mode is selected. The pilot must assess this information and act as quickly as possible to avoid a collision. The system will also activate the aural warning "climb, climb" or "descend, descend". Once the danger of collision is eliminated, the system will report "clear of conflict" in an aural message.

Normal Procedures

In normal operations, the Mad Dog pilot will only use a few of these different modes as they are specified on the checklist. In most cases, TCAS will be in standby mode during the preflight check. There is a checklist item to test the TCAS during this phase of the flight. The next mode that will be used is the TA/RA NORM mode. This should be selected according to the checklist and is typically done prior to departing the gate. The next mode used is TA/RA BELOW. This mode should be used during the descent phase of the flight. At this point, the traffic above you is mostly irrelevant. To reduce the potential for clutter on the display, this mode is preferred.

I hope you agree that TCAS can be a very important and invaluable system to the flight crew. It gives the pilot a clear view of the traffic around the aircraft and warns of potential danger. It will be interesting to see how this system evolves throughout the coming years.

In closing, I have a pop quiz for you. Can you tell me the following info provided in the TCAS display to the left?

- What mode is the TCAS in?
- What is the currently set range?
- Is the nearby traffic above or below "your" aircraft?

We'll see how well you've been paying attention. →

Images and information used in this article were referenced from the [Lago Mad Dog user manual](#) and [wikipedia](#)



Answers:

1. TA – NORM
2. 3 nm
3. Above

Cowtown, Eh?

By: Tyrone Weston

Good Afternoon folks. Here we are once again, with yours truly, ACP Weston. Well we had planned on doing a trip into to KORD today, but our trip into KORD has been cancelled. So crew scheduling has other plans for us. Apparently SKW3975 (SkyWest) from Salt Lake City (SLC) to Calgary (YYC) is over sold by 70 passengers and we are going to take their place using our MD-90.

Our new flight number will be DAL1999, since no other Delta flight currently operates with this number. I walk into operations and review the release for our trip today.

IFR DAL1999/22 908 SLC YYC ALT N/A
MIN T/O FUEL 18000 RLS 22000

FP DAL1999 T/M90/F
SLC...TCH...DBS... HLN... VUCAN.VUCAN8
FL340
423KTS
ETE 1H47M
DEPARTURE TIME 303PM MST GATE C-6
ARRIVAL TIME 514PM MST GATE 28

DEPARTURE WX
SLC VIS 3/4 SN WIND 330/3 A2995

ARRIVAL WX
YYC VIS 42SM WIND 260/28 A2991



While my First Officer and I sit on the flight deck waiting as the last of the 120 SOBs to lumber onboard. We go over the routing and, because we are doing this flight on vatsim, we check to see if any ATC is online.

Unfortunately there is no ATC to call, so no frequencies this trip. Just good old 122.80 this time.

We will make our calls over unicom.

We will depart off runway 34L direct to DBS, climbing straight on up to FL340. If we should have an engine Failure or other issues, we may want to look at Idaho Falls Regional (KIDA) as our first alternate and Great Falls International (KGTF) as our second.

The flight attendant has called over the interphone to let us know we are ready to go. Current time in SLC right now is 2:53 pm. We will be pushing back ten minutes early.

Normally the First Officer would call ground control for pushback clearance, but no one is home so we notify on unicom.

"DAL1999 is pushing of Gate C-9 and we will be taxing to rwy 34L."

With the check list complete, I give the rampers the okay to push. Once the tow bar is clear, they can go inside and warm up...and thanks to them for the push.

Once the push back is complete and the tow bar is clear, I crank number 1. It's a good start, so we turn number 2. A few moments later, we get a good start also. We are under Winter Ops, so we taxi on both engines. Keep that in mind. As usual, pitot heat is activated and anti-ice will be used if needed.

We begin our taxi out to runway 34L and set the trim to +8. Flaps are set to 15 degrees and slats follow suit. Approaching the end of 34L, we announce our intentions over Unicom.

"Delta 1999 departing runway 34L KSLC traffic. Direct to DBS FL340."

We turn on the wing strobes, line up and set the brakes. We power her up, release the brakes and off we go. My First Officer calls out the V speeds. I rotate at 155 knots. Positive rate of climb and the gear are coming up. At 3100 feet climb, we rocket sky ward through the snow and clouds. Through ten thousand feet I chime the flight attendant to let her know it is now safe to use the

approved devices located in the in-flight magazine. At this time flaps and slats are pulled up to clean the plane up so I can accelerate to 300 knots.



I reduce the climb rate to 2500 ft/min and we are on course to DBS. Despite the fact that there is no traffic in

the area, I report over Unicom, "DAL1999 through 12000 for FL340 direct DBS". We are going to do a high speed cruise today, Mach 0.83 at FL340. Once we get up to cruise altitude, it's cloudy and bumpy.

So over Unicom:

"Delta1999 out of FL340 for FL360".

We receive no traffic replies so it is safe to climb up to FL360. I also keep an eye on the TCAS.

We are currently 78.5 DME inbound to DBS and on top of the clouds, but we're still getting bumped around. Looks like the seat belt sign will stay on for the remainder of the

Plan	Id	Location	Freq	Course	IAS	VSpeed	Altitude
Edit	▲ Fix01	N40°51.00' W111°58.91'	-	-	-	-	36000
Options	DBS	DUBOIS	116.90	342	290	0	36000
Help	●	Beginning of Descent	339	290	0	36000	
	▲ YQL	LETHBRIDGE	115.70	339	290	-1298	26709
	▲ VUCAN	VUCAN	314	290	-1289	15818	
	▲ YYC	CALGARY	116.70	313			
	▲ THIRD	THIRD	313	290	-1129	12003	
	▲ Fix02	N50°52.84' W113°41.13'	312	245	-1033	10053	

Time	Event	Distance	Time
22:53:01	Aircraft	327.1 nm	00 41' 01"
LETHBRIDGE			
23:20:23	VOR/DME	YQL	115.70
	341°	218.3 nm	00 27' 22"
	remaining:	108.8 nm	00 13' 38"
VUCAN			
23:27:19	ISEC	VUCAN	
	314°	273.7 nm	00 34' 18"
	remaining:	53.4 nm	00 06' 42"
THIRD			
23:29:50	ISEC	THIRD	
	313°	293.6 nm	00 36' 49"
	remaining:	33.5 nm	00 04' 11"
23:34:02	Arrival		

flight.

While we cruise along, I decided to play with the vatsim "dot commands".

.info KSLC

.COM1 122.80
 .COM2 122.80
 .XPDR 3001
 .X 3001
 .WX CYYC
 .METAR CYYC

Try them out if you don't already know about them.

Okay, at this time we are about 30 minutes ahead of schedule and coming up on YQL (Lethbridge VOR). 108 miles DME to go and we begin our descent to cross VUCAN at 15,000 feet. We will plan on a visual approach to runway 16 at Calgary.

The First Officer and I go over the charts for CYYC and chime the flight attendant to let her know we are starting down into Calgary and can begin handing out the Canadian customs forms to the passengers. They also need to get the cabin ready for arrival.



On 122.80, we notify CYYC traffic that we are leaving FL360 for 15,000 and planning a visual approach into Calgary's runway 16 Left. Slowing the plane to 260 KIAS, we start down into cowtown. The lower we go, the rougher it gets. I took some pics outside the plane, but the winds and a still pic does it no justice.

Coming over VUCAN and to the west is a small town called Okotoks. That confirms that we are getting closer to Calgary. The sun is setting as we near our destination.

As we reach 15,000 feet, we continue down to 11,000 feet, slow to 250 knots and turn on the landing lights. Now nearing THIRD intersection, we turn heading 360 for our downwind visual approach for Runway 16 at CYYC. I'm constantly letting everybody know

my actions over unicom. We continue our descent to 6000 feet and plan a 10 mile final.

We slow the plane to 200 knots as we see the skyline of downtown Calgary, a beautiful city, appear. Just up ahead, the airport comes into view. In just a few moments, we will slow down even more, descend to 5000 ft and turn base for runway 16 at CYYC



While turning from base to final, an aircraft on the ground states over Unicom that he is going to taxi to runway 34 for departure. I guess he didn't check the winds first. I announce that I am on final for 16 at CYYC, but receive no reply from him. I continue my approach and we land without incident. I clear the runway and notify CYYC traffic that runway 16 is clear.

The lead flight attendant gives her arrival greeting to the passengers, while we taxi to the gate. Flaps up and landing lights off. We pull on to the ramp and I cut the fuel flow to number 2 as we pull on to the J- Line. The First Officer notifies everybody to remain seated until the aircraft has come to a complete stop.



DING DING. The fasten seatbelt sign is off and there is a rush to get out of the seats in the back. The First Officer and I continue shutting the plane down and running through the checklist...

Current weather in CALGARY at time of arrival was:
Wind from the SW (230 degrees) at 18 MPH (16 KT)
Visibility 40 mile(s)
Sky conditions mostly clear
Temperature 32 F (0 C)
Wind chill 21 F (6 C)
Dew Point 12 F (11 C)
Relative Humidity 43%
Pressure (altimeter) 29.91 in. Hg (1012 hPa).

We grab our bags and passports and head to customs. We turn around and head out on our next adventure....

Thanks for coming along I hope you enjoyed the read. ➔

Plane Spotting at DTW

By: Larry Foltran

Back in early November, I joined fellow DVA pilot Chris Robeson on a Sunday morning plane spotting trip to DTW. Based on the fact that I live about an hour from Detroit-Metro airport, this is usually the major airport of choice for me. Although I've been there numerous times before, new spotting locations always offer a fresh experience.

We met up at around 8:15am and then drove to our first stop. Our first location was the parking lot of a Comfort Inn near the airport. This location featured a great spot to watch the aircraft approach for runway 22L and 22R. Chris, equipped with his handheld scanner, kept me informed of what to expect next.



As usual, the stream of Northwest Airlines aircraft is seemingly never ending. This morning, the traffic mostly consisted of CRJs and Airbuses, with an occasional SAAB joining the parade.

I filled up my 1gb card and switched over to my smaller card as I dumped the first set of images to my laptop. After spending about an hour freezing our tails off at this location, we decided to move to our next spot.

Our next stop was at the top of the Blue Parking Deck on the airport grounds. This location overlooks runways 22L & 22R. As Chris explained to me before arriving, the demolition of the once adjacent terminal resulted in an unobstructed view of these two runways. Although aircraft landing on 22R are still pretty far away, we were able to get

some great pictures of aircraft landing and departing on 22L. Unfortunately, construction of the new building has begun since our trip and this vantage point is now useless. Oh well.



Our day wasn't completely uneventful though. Let me set the scene for you. The clouds had finally given way to the sunshine. It was an absolutely beautiful day and it was actually starting to warm up. We're at the top of the parking structure just shooting away. I see some movement to my left and turn to see a police cruiser slowly driving towards. If you read my ORD spotting article, you'll understand why I began to sweat at the site of this car. As he approached, I slowly made my way to the car and said hello. His response was "so, you guys aren't up here acting suspicious or anything, right?"



Thankfully his comment was delivered with a smile. I simply answered that we were just taking pictures and he nodded, seemingly like he had come across others like us in the past. "Ok, have a nice one," he said as he began driving away. Much more relieved, I turned

and walked back to where Chris was still taking pictures. I'm not sure if the Detroit officers are more relaxed or if my lucky Delta hat played a part. I'm just happy we got to finish off our morning of spotting.



So after a couple of hours of staring into the sky, we began our trip back home. A quick stop at a local Applebee's for lunch rounded off the day of spotting. You can also see more pictures from this trip on <http://www.jetphotos.net> →



Roger Pilgrem – 1700 DVA Flights and Counting!

By: Roger Pilgrem

Hello there fellow aviators. First of all I would wish to say how flattered and humble I feel that I should be considered a suitable candidate for your first pilot profile feature. I do not consider myself to be anybody out of the ordinary, just fortunate that I have had and have the time and opportunity to indulge myself in "flight Simming".



I am English but I live in Spain by the sea in Roses, some 160km north of Barcelona. I have lived here for some 12 years

since I retired from my work. Presently my lifestyle is changing somewhat and in the future it is my intention to be spending more time in Brasil with my partner Carla.

I am 72 years old and was born in the last century before the DC3 was on the drawing board. My youth was spent in Nottingham, England, where I received my formal education and also served a 4-year apprenticeship in design and installation of central heating systems.

At the age of 21, I entered the UK Royal Air Force (RAF) where I served for 27 years man and boy retiring as a communications officer. The RAF gave me a very interesting career and I traveled extensively within the western European theatre. I also had my introduction to the United States with several visits to Washington DC and Norfolk, Virginia. I even embraced the Caribbean once.

Following my service life, I entered the commercial world and used my service experience to enjoy a further 8 years in the ever changing world of communications. As luck would have it, I also made several more visits to Washington DC but in a slightly different capacity.

My interests outside of Flt Simming are many and varied and they include bird watching (I have a wonderful natural park locally which attracts a lot of the migratory birds), walking, oil painting, cycling, philately (I specialise in New Zealand stamps), cooking, Egyptology, and travel.

My travel has allowed me to fulfill many of my childhood dreams. Travel to Egypt to see the Pyramids, the Sphinx and the "Valley of the Kings" being one of the most memorable occasions.

I have had the pleasure of visiting the United States on several occasions socially and a quick tally shows that I have visited 14 of the states.

Apart from gambling in Las Vegas, one of my favourite locations has to be the Florida everglades with its fantastic terrain's, beautiful birds and my favourite...Alligators.

This brief resume of my interests and activities brings me neatly to my principle pastime-flying the simulator. I would like to emphasise at this point that I consider Flight Simulation a game, albeit one which I take very seriously. At the most I am an enthusiastic amateur pilot with no pretensions of grandeur. I just like flying.

My introduction to the FS world was through an English friend, who is a hub captain for a UK VA. After he convinced me that I should acquire a computer, I purchased one, and then as a reward he presented me with a copy of MS FS98 together with the associated handbook. Armed with this, and having bought a joystick, I returned to Spain to begin my FS adventures, like so many other would be aviators, in a little Cessna flying out of Meigs airport Chicago (IL).

Now if you happened to be a sub aqua diving enthusiast exploring the waters around Meigs you would doubtless come across numerous bent Cessna's; I confess that I was responsible for a large percentage of them. Consequently I spent my apprenticeship flying out of and sometimes flying back into Meigs airport. During that time I worked hard to unravel the mystery of the Automatic Pilot, NDB's, VOR's and the ultimate joy ILS.

After several months and some 200 hours flying, I decided that I was proficient enough to explore the world of 2 engine airframes. At this time my English amigo suggested that I should fly the ATR-42 and when I was comfortable with it to apply to join his VA.

As a result I flew my first commercial VA route Manchester, England to London City, England and return on 25 Feb, 2001.

I flew 2,500 hours with this VA, graduating from ATR to the B747 and most airframes in between. After this I flew with other UK VA's. During this period I developed new hubs, routes and schedules for 2 of the VA's very interesting, extremely flying intensive and very satisfying.

At this time and looking for a change and a challenge I discovered DVA through searching the internet. For the record Luke Kolin "hired" me as a DVA pilot on Sunday December 14 2003, at 11:28!! I still have the email. So if you have any complaints blame Luke.

Although I am in the MD-88 programme, you will see that I have an affinity with the ATR-72 which I have probably flown every DVA route in the schedule. I generally fly out of Atlanta, GA.

So perhaps you all know a little bit more about me now.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank Randy King, who as interim chief pilot MD-88 many years ago gave me tremendous help, encouragement and guidance through my initial difficulties with DVA.

A further accolade if you will to your President Terry Eshenour who has for a long time put up with all my problems many self inflicted. Randy and Terry remain my very good friends. A thank you also to all the other unpaid staff who work with great diligence to maintain the DVA standards of excellence.

Should you wish to correspond with me at any time, please do not hesitate to make contact through my gmail. →



DVA Fleet Radio Stack

By: Derek Bradley

Fellow Delta Virtual Airlines pilots:

"I have witnessed countless numbers of threads in the water cooler dealing with the problem of "can't squawk normal". In the MD-88 and 757, when trying to squawk normal from the SB3 box, you will not be successful."

This is not a problem with the aircraft. It is just a different method of switching (the real way) the mode you transmit. Most individuals do not seem to take the time to search for past threads. Therefore after tiring of seeing the same question, I created a picture to show anyone who needs help how to work the transponder in the DVA fleet MD-88. I hope this helps.



In order to operate the MD-88 transponder/radio stack you must first open it up by toggling the switch with the green circle. The basic concepts of the transponder/radio stack (yellow) are simple once you understand how it works. However, beware that the radio stack is camouflaged with the autopilot. It took me about 20 minutes before I realized it was there. ATC, if online, will assign you a code. Ex. DAL2750 squawk 2602. For anyone who does not know, the transponder sends this code back to the ATC relaying such information as your aircraft ID, altitude, heading, and speed. The code (light blue) is input by clicking the



round knob on the light orange markings. The far left section of the knob will change the far left number and so forth. When on the ground you should be squawking standby, and when crossing the hold short line or when instructed by ATC, switch to normal. In order to squawk normal **right click** the knob with the **red** box around it. After landing, once clear of the runway, left click to return to standby. Whether you are on UNICOM or in an ATC's airspace, you must be squawking normal while in the air.

As for the radio, the pilot can only tune the radios using the right side (pink). Toggle the button (blue) to tune the desired frequency.

I hope this article will help anyone who is in doubt. If you have questions, you can email me at djb589@charter.net. →

CH Products Throttle Quadrant

By: Larry Foltran

I was pleasantly surprised to find a brand new CH Products Throttle Quadrant under the tree this Christmas. I had been using a Saitek X45 throttle for a couple of years, despite the fact that this type of controller is more suited for fighter type feel. Actually, my FS controller set up has changed considerably over the years. As was the case for most of us, I started using a basic joystick initially (we won't count the time I spent solely using the keyboard).

Desiring more realism, I "invested" in the Top Gun controller set made by Thrustmaster.

This package deal consisted of a jet fighter style stick, simple throttle and a set of pedals.



That served me well for a long time. But as I upgraded my computer equipment and OS, this set up and the drivers necessary became obsolete. Actually, I had purchased a game port to USB adapter at the local Radio Shack which proved unsuccessful for everything except the pedals. I shopped around and finally decided on the Saitek X45 throttle and stick combo package. For well under \$100,

this set was an outstanding deal. The stick controller looks like something out of Star Wars, but seems to be built solid and has plenty of buttons to program. The throttle is equally

solid and features a tension adjustment screw in the base to suit every preference. So I put together a hybrid set up consisting of my new Saitek controllers and the old Thrustmaster pedals and life was good.



To speed the story up a bit (I've digressed enough), a few years later I began to build my CH Products based set up. The yoke came first, followed by the pedals and now the throttle quad. Actually, I still use the Saitek X45 stick as my tiller wheel to control the nose wheel and have programmed the buttons to start pushback and activate the parking brakes.

For those of you who are not familiar with the Throttle Quadrant, it features six levers with interchangeable "knobs". It can be configured to control anything from a single engine Cessna with mixture and prop control to a 4-engine 747. It also features six toggle switches along the front of the base that can be assigned to most any FS command. The levers have a detent position near the bottom swing which can be used for the idle position. Behind that it can be configured to activate reverse thrust. Very handy feature.



I have chosen to configure two of the levers as throttle control for each engine independently, two levers to control the fuel flow valve, the left most lever to control the spoilers and the right most lever to act as flap control. At the time of writing this article, I have only assigned two buttons on the base. These I use to open the start valves. Those in combination with the fuel flow levers are used to start the engines. It's really nice to be able to do this with something other than mouse clicks.

Although I am now very happy with this controller, it did provide some frustration initially. Ironically it had more to do with the Lago Mad Dog panel I use for all of my flights and my inexperience with configuring controllers, than the hardware itself. If any of you use the Lago Mad Dog and plan to pick up this controller, I hope this info will save some frustration.

Following the directions provided, I installed the CH Control Manager software provided on disk after plugging in the controller. Each time I tried to calibrate the levers, the levers on the panel failed to move to their full forward position. The engines were also idling too high despite all of my attempts to configure them differently. It was around this time that received a tip from DVA pilot Trevor Bair. He had been using this controller for a little while and suggested I use fsuipc to configure the throttle axis. After a brief learning process of trial and error, I had the throttles moving full forward and idling normally. Home free, right? Nope.

I encountered the same problem Trevor had warned me about relating to the panel. Each time I would activate the auto throttle, the levers would sail off to their upper stoppers and my airspeed would race past the set speed limit. I would then have to shutoff the auto throttle and manually bring back the levers. Once I reached cruise level, I was able to set the auto throttles with no problem. Life was good until I began my descent and switched back from MACH speed to KIAS. As soon as I would set the new speed, off the levers would go. Quite honestly, manually maintaining speed isn't that big of a deal. But if you've got a system on board that will reduce your workload slightly, why not use it?

After a couple of test flights and two actual PIREP flights with this system, I decided to do a little more research. I posted messages on the Mad Dog forum, CH Products related forums and our Water Cooler. Charly Azcue and AFV's Michael Carter provided some great feedback that got me back on the road to success.

I basically had to reset the throttle axis from fsuipc and scrap that completely. Next step

was to uninstall the Control Manager that came with the controller and install the more updated version. I then re-calibrated the throttle quadrant using the new Control Manager. The top end of the lever range improved quite a bit. The idle position was still high, but more tolerable than before. I did need to make an adjustment to the detent value (250) and the deadzone (3) in the calibration window within FS. Also make sure the throttle sensitivity is set to max and adjust from there if needed.

The moment of truth was at hand. I lined up on the runway, pushed the levers forward and hit the auto throttle switch. Finally, back to normal. I realized that this may be one of those issues that I'll have to revisit in the future. But I was done with it at that point.

I sincerely hope that I haven't discouraged you from picking up either the CH throttle quadrant or the Lago Mad Dog panel. Both are great products and simply required some effort to help them get along. My hope is that the new version of the Mad Dog panel can handle the use of fsuipc more gracefully or that CH Products will release a version of their Control Manager that is as accurate as fsuipc.

In summary, at about \$150, I think the throttle quadrant is great if you have the budget for it. It adds a little more realism and puts some essential controls at your finger tips. The buttons on the base also provide plenty of custom options to suit most preferences. →