

'Most successful' Fly-in may also be the last one

By KEN McLAUGHLIN

The 13th annual Antique Fly-in, perhaps Watsonville's last, was the most successful ever.

Fly-in chairman Chuck Allen reported that paid attendance exceeded 20,000 for the weekend, and thousands more stayed outside the gates to view the aerobatic show. The Northern California Antique Airplane Assn. (NCAA) registered 488 planes, breaking the old record of 428. In addition, about 1,000 planes flew in to Watsonville Airport to see the show.

Because of a dispute between the antique association and city officials, it is uncertain whether a fly-in will be held next year. The city council says it wants to be reimbursed for the cost of providing police, firemen and public works personnel. The Chamber of Commerce, which co-sponsors the event with the association, is willing to help pay the expenses but the NCAA is not.

"I feel that what the people here spend in the community should be considered," said Chris Matthews, treasurer of the NCAA. "That's certainly worth something."

Both council members and NCAA members, however, seem willing to work something out.

"Just to set the record straight . . . we want you to come back next year," Mayor Bill Johnston told a crowd of 450 antiquers at their awards banquet at the fairgrounds last night. He drew a round of applause.

The biggest applause at the aerobatic shows on Saturday and Sunday went to Bob Herendeen of Santa Monica. A former national aerobatic champion, Herendeen amazed the crowds with his breathtaking spins, loops and rolls.

Herendeen said the only time he gets nervous is before the show. "It makes me nervous just to sit here and wait," he told co-stunt pilot Amelia Reid before his turn came. "I'd rather be first."

The only danger in performing aerobatics, he said, is "if you go beyond your limitations."

Learning new maneuvers, Herendeen added, is the most tricky part of the trade. "At first it's just mechanical," he said. "You're taught which levers to move and all that." It takes a while, he said, before it

becomes any fun.

Most of the planes at the airport left yesterday afternoon and last night, but there were still about 100 on display this morning. The Pajaro Valley Lions Club was on hand to serve breakfast to those folks still milling around.

Taking the top honors in the judging this weekend was NCAA president Ernest Fillmore, of Los Gatos, for his 1936 Stinson SR-8B. The runner-up award went to G. Moxon of Newport Beach for his 1928 Fairchild 71. The award for the best homebuilt plans was given to O. A. "Oats" Tokle of Reno, Nev., for his "T-18."

Chamber of Commerce president John Payne said yesterday that he will try to arrange a meeting with city officials as soon as possible to find out if there will be a fly-in next year.

"We'll ask them (the council) exactly how much money they want," he said. It would then be up to the NCAA to decide whether to accept or reject the city's proposal.



Chris Matthews and Maryann Knodd during the past weekend's sunny three day fly-in.

Gathered in the shade of an antique airplane's wing, Hal Reynolds, Peggy Pettitler,

Register-Pajaronian

Watsonville, Calif.
Monday,
May 30, 1977
110th Year — No. 75
16 Pages — 15 Cents

Planning
1976-1985

WATSONVILLE