

Microlight Competition



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10TH WORLD MICROLIGHT CHAMPIONSHIPS

The US World Team that will represent the U.S.A. in Levrux, France at the 2005 World Microlight Championships has been selected. Perhaps selected is not the appropriate word. Perhaps a more descriptive word would be volunteered. You see, even though many individuals are qualified for this honored status, few are actually in the financial position to pay for the entrance fee, shipping their airplanes to Europe, as well as food & shelter while competing at the games. The participants are responsible for all costs. This could (and does) add up to several thousands of dollars of out-of-pocket expenses.

How Can I Help? To help defray the expenses for the team members representing the United States, USUA has set up an online method in which you can donate to this worthy cause. By using your credit/debit card, or by using the PayPal electronic payment system, you can provide the much-needed support for the US team, from the convenience of your home computer.

OK, But How Much Of My Donation Actually Goes To The Team? All donations received will be used for the World Team- minus any credit/debit card or other electronic payment transaction fee. USUA places the net amount into a special dedicated World Team Savings Account, and is distributed to the World Team as needed. Checks are also accepted, and because there are no transaction fees associated with processing checks, 100% of all funds donated in this manner are available to the team. USUA does not use your World Team donations for any other purpose- the team gets it all.

USUA encourages all ultralighters to support the World Team in their efforts. Without your support, the U.S.A. would not be able to show the rest of the world the strengths, perseverance, and dedication US ultralight pilots bring to the table of world-class competition.



USA World Team pilots Dan Grunloh (left) and Igor Kolpakchi prepare for a task at the 8th US National Microlight Championships.

**Support the US
World Team!**

**Donate Online At:
www.usua.org**

**Or send checks to:
USUA
C/O World Team Fund
PO Box 667
Frederick MD 21705**

[All Donations Are Appreciated](#)

**Don't Delay-
Donate Today!**

A Little Help From Our Friends...

By Dan Grunloh

In a little over two months several Americans will arrive in Levroux, France to compete in the 10th World Microlight Championships. The process and preparations to get to this event will have begun many months earlier. Our planes must be shipped via sea freight almost five weeks earlier. The challenges and the costs are daunting to say the least.

It is a rare thrill, and an honor to participate at the world level and to represent the USA at what can only be described as the Olympics of ultralight flying. Of course we want to earn points and win medals, but the most important goal is to serve as ambassadors to the rest of the world from the country that is the birthplace of aviation, and of ultralights.

When we were in England in 2003, one of our new British friends mentioned that the USA probably has more active ultralight pilots than all of the rest of the world combined. The low cost of flying here in the USA and the minimal regulations are a factor. He said that with such a large pool of pilots, we should be able to produce a full team of top pilots that could dominate the Championships, but that is not the case.

The Europeans understand how expensive and difficult it is for us to attend. The camaraderie of pilots everywhere easily overshadows any national differences. We were welcomed and treated warmly by everyone at the last championships. They appreciate the effort we have made to attend, and everyone seems interested in meeting the U.S. pilots.

Unfortunately this year, there are at least three top U.S. pilots who are already flying at world level tasks, but who cannot attend due to the cost. They wanted to go, but it is simply too much of a financial hardship for them, and their families. This is not the best situation. The richest and most powerful country in the world is not able to send its best ultralight pilots to the world championships.

Sport aviation and competition is a highly valued activity in many European countries. Often the pilots have generous sponsorship from their governments and from industry. Competitors from the USA are almost completely on their own when it comes to the organizing and cost of attendance. Due to the lack of advertising potential, we rarely receive any substantial sponsorship. The



purpose of this letter is to let you know that to rectify the above situation, we need "A Little Help From Our Friends".

The U.S. Ultralight Association is the official sanctioning body for internationally recognized records and competitions. The USUA maintains a fund for world team support which helps pilots traveling to these contests. There is usually not much money available and pilots must pay most of the many thousands of dollars it costs to attend. The contributions of members in past years has made a difference, and we need you to do that again.

The biggest single expense is the shipping of the aircraft. It can cost several thousand dollars for sea freight and then truck freight to go round trip to another continent. The total cost per pilot for the entire event is nearly double of that. The entry fee is 300 Euros. We expect to fly 25-30 hours during the week-long event and fuel will cost 2-3 times more than in the U.S. Each pilot will have a fuel bill of several hundred dollars.

If you can help us out with a donation to the USUA World Team Fund, I can assure you it will not be spent frivolously. It will not go for wine and cheese and fancy accommodations. It will go only for essentials. Competing at a world championship is fun and exciting, but it's no party. We sleep in tents next to the planes, get up early every day to prepare for the tasks, fly several long flights each day, and then collapse exhausted back in our tents at dark. It's not just a test of navigation, fuel economy and speed. It's also a test of your drive and stamina.

I can't fully describe the sense of pride we feel seeing our planes tied down in the spaces marked out for the USA pilots at such an event. It takes a lot of hard work, effort, and money to get there but the cost is trivial compared to that feeling of pride. You can make it a easier for us through your support of USUA and the world team fund. We need "A little Help From Our Friends".

---Dan Grunloh has been flying ultralights since 1986. He is the current national microlight champion having won first place at the U.S. Nationals in 2002, and in 2004. Dan is a retired scientist from the University of Illinois.

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