



33rd FAI World Aerobatic Championships

Genesee County Airport (KVGQ)

August 24 - September 2, 2026

WAC Planning Update

Shad Coulson, Contest Director

Delegates,

I am honored and humbled by the confidence entrusted to me and our team by the plenary and the members of our aerobatic community. I am excited to serve as the contest director and our team is eager to organize and execute a truly world class event.

Planning for WAC 2026 began almost immediately following the acceptance of our bid at last year's plenary. We have assembled a great team of volunteers, many of whom serve as members of the key volunteer group that organizes and hosts the U.S Nationals, which saw 117 total competitors this year. These individuals are instrumental to the success of our national championship and will play crucial roles in ensuring WAC'26 is a resounding success for all in attendance. Our team is hard at work organizing and finalizing various elements of the contest. Below is a short summation of those activities to date.

1. Contest Website – Has been built and contains useful information on the contest, amenities, and local area. The contest website will be live no later than January 1st. We are in the final phases of adding video, pictures, and other media to elevate the website, which plays a pivotal role in the promotion and fundraising efforts of the contest, which are highlighted later in this report
2. Registration – Is scheduled to open in conjunction with the website going live. We anticipate registration to officially open no later than 1 January, though we have already been in communication with several teams to assist with their planning and participation efforts.
 - a. Presently, planning activities are being conducted with the expectation for 20-30 participating pilots. We will be prepared to adjust appropriate elements of our planning if attendance is higher or lower than currently expected.
3. Bulletin 1 – Is currently being drafted and will be released in conjunction with the website and registration opening. Much of the bulletin has been drafted and is ready for release. I am waiting on a few minor elements to be finalized and am withholding publication to ensure we do not miscommunicate important information.
4. Facilities – We are working in conjunction with the Wings over Batavia airshow, which will follow the conclusion of WAC'26, to ensure facilities exceed the needs and expectations of our competitors, their support personnel, contest officials, and the contest volunteers. Adequate aircraft storage and office space has already been arranged for the contest administration. The primary effort now is centered on maximizing the comfort and elegance of the competitor village and team spaces.
5. Communication – The contest website and social media channels will be the primary means of information dissemination leading up to the contest. Additionally, official contest emails have been established with dedicated personnel monitoring these emails to ensure timely responses and assistance is provided to teams and competitors. Onsite communication will be conducted using WhatsApp.
6. Jury – I look forward to the appointment of the contest jury and encourage them to contact me as soon as possible so we can begin working with them to ensure the success of WAC'26.
7. Chief Judge - I look forward to the selection of the contest judges and encourage the Chief Judge or grading judges to contact me as soon as possible so we can begin working with them to ensure the success of WAC'26.
8. Livestream – We are grateful for the ability to livestream the world championships. The IAC has found significant benefit to this effort, both in monetary support for the contest and general

awareness/viewership of our events. Our production team is comprised of several industry professionals, who produce the IAC Nationals livestream along with coverage or broadcast of other sporting and news events at local and national levels. We are dedicated to ensuring this broadcast is professional in all respects, highlights the skill of our pilots, and the camaraderie of our events.

9. Outreach – Several WAC’26 social media accounts have been secured. Additionally, we are working with Race Grade Media and Eyes and Ears Creative to produce high level social media content to promote WAC’26, CIVA, and competition aerobatics. A review of the IAC’s social media channels will showcase the excellent work these organizations do.
10. Local and National News – Capitalizing on the large membership body of the IAC, we are working to garner local and national media coverage of WAC’26.
11. Box Layout – Our facilities and logistics personnel are finalizing the box placement at Batavia (KVGQ). Great effort is being given to guaranteeing the box coordinates ensure optimal marker and judging zone placement. The box will be professionally surveyed to ensure the accuracy of the marker placement. These coordinates, along with graphics of the box layout will be provided on the contest website and in Bulletin #1.
12. Hospitality – Our hospitality team, led by Doreen Hillard, is focused on ensuring a comfortable and friendly environment is provided to all competitors, officials, and volunteers.
 - a. Hotels – Contracts for the official contest hotel are being finalized. Due to bid acceptance so far in advance of the contest, we had to wait until the reservation window for the contest period opened. Reservation information will be provided on the website and within Bulletin 1.
 - b. Meals & Dining – Are being arranged and will exceed the requirements outlined in the GCO. We hope to provide a sampling of the broad cultural diversity seen in local and national cuisine.
 - c. Team Village – Will be arranged in a manner to ensure competitors are provided adequate space to rest and prepare for their contest flights. As previously referenced, our facilities team is already working to ensure the village and facilities exceeds expectations.
13. Medical Support – A board certified emergency doctor and prior combat medic will be onsite to assist with all minor/major medical concerns, as well as first response in the event of an incident/accident. Local fire and medical personnel will also be staged to provide support, if required.
14. Competitor Liaison – Our competitor liaisons have already begun communication and coordination efforts to assist teams with securing rental aircraft. They stand ready to assist in any manner possible to all competitors and teams leading up to WAC’26.
15. Contest Box – Once the location is finalized in the coming weeks, the contest waiver application will be submitted to the FAA. This application has been drafted and is awaiting the final coordinates of the box and associated supporting information before submission.
16. Practice Boxes – Waivers have been submitted for the four practice boxes (locations below). The information on these practice boxes will be available on the website and we working to ensure these are marked. The waivers were submitted requesting access to these boxes 30 days ahead of the contest dates to ensure teams have time to arrive, assemble shipped aircraft, familiarize themselves with rental aircraft, and to trim aircraft ahead of the contest.
 - a. Practice Box Locations
 - i. Bethany (8NK4)

- ii. Geneseo (D52)
 - iii. LeRoy (5G0)
 - iv. Perry-Warsaw (01G)
17. Volunteers – The Key Volunteer Group has been finalized, and we are working to assign personnel to the various other supporting roles. We have had a significant and positive response from IAC members and local community personnel who want to volunteer and support this event.
18. Fundraising – We began organizing and working sponsorship & fundraising opportunities immediately following award of our bid. Several sponsors have already pledged or confirmed support, and we are able to capitalize on numerous IAC members who perform at airshows around the country to connect us with potential sponsors. Our goal is to deliver on the elements contained within our bid and to provide a world level competition that meets CIVA requirements, excels in hospitality, and is overall an expectation-exceeding experience for competitors, officials, and volunteers. These goals cannot be accomplished without adequate fundraising and sponsors. We have a team of dedicated personnel working these items, two of which do so professionally for other non-profits and competition sports.
19. Ceremonies – Planning for the opening and closing banquets along with the awards ceremonies has already begun. Our hospitality and events team is committed to ensuring the expectations for elegance and revelry are met or exceeded during these events. They will appropriately celebrate the achievements of the competitors/teams and the camaraderie we share through competition aerobatics. Venues, catering, and entertainment are being researched currently.

We thank you again for the opportunity to host the 33rd FAI World Aerobatic Championships. Please feel free to contact myself or Mike Gallaway with any questions or concerns regarding the event.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Shad Coulson", with a stylized, flowing script.

Shad Coulson

Contest Director

33rd FAI WAC