



ACE MAKER AIRSHOWS

The Pilot: Gregory "Wired" Colyer

A Native Californian, Gregory "Wired" Colyer took his first flight at the age of 7 in a Cessna 172 with Dr. Lee Schaller out of the Schellville airport in Sonoma, California. Hooked ever since, Greg has been licensed since the age of 18 after learning how to fly while serving in the U.S. Army from 1982-1987.

After leaving the service he spent 27 years with the FAA as an Air Traffic Controller at Oakland ARTCC, 1988-2015. His passion for flying never left him as he continued to fly as a hobby, mostly in Beech T-34 mentors, until he imported a Russian L-29 Delfin in 2003 along with a few of his friends.

After flying numerous other ex-military jet aircraft, it was flying Kay Eckhart's T-33 in 2007 that decided Greg's next aircraft. One of his favorite aircraft as a youngster, the Shooting Star held a special place in his dreams. So he set his sights on America's first operational Jet Fighter and Trainer, and his search began. He acquired his T-33 in 2008, and named it the "Ace Maker". Greg then promptly founded the 501c-3 non-profit T-33 Heritage Foundation to help in the preservation of the type.

He holds a Commercial Pilot certificate with instrument, single and multi engine ratings as well as being a Certified flight instructor. He is type rated in the Lockheed T-33 Shooting Star, Aero Vodochody's L-29 and L-39 Aircraft. Over 1000 hours in the T-33, an unrestricted, surface level aerobatic waiver and FAST lead formation card round out his qualifications.

Greg stays in shape for flying high performance aircraft by competitive cycling and an occasional Ironman Triathlon.

Greg would like to acknowledge and say thanks to his ACE Wayne Handley and Randy Howell of the Patriot Jet Team for their coaching, advice and support. A special thanks to Steve Hinton for his help, insight and expertise in the Shooting Star.

The Aircraft: Lockheed T-33 Shooting Star

On June 23, 1943 General Hap Arnold approved a letter contract for Lockheed to build the XP-80. The first XP-80, nicknamed Lulubelle, was built in the security of a temporary structure thrown together in 10 days from old engine packing crates. An entire machine shop was purchased so that the tools needed to build Lulubelle would not be taken away from the Lockheed assembly line currently in wartime production. 123 men, 23 engineers and 105 shop men worked 10 hours a day, 6 days a week to build the first XP-80. The head designer was none other than the famed Clarence L. "Kelly" Johnson. On January 8, 1944, just 203 days after the contract was signed the XP-80 lifted off the dry lake bed with Milo Burcham at the controls. Lulubelle flew! Top speed was 502 mph.

On November 8, 1950, the first jet-vs-jet aerial combat took place between a P-80 Shooting Star and a MIG-15 in the area in northwest Korea later known as "MIG Alley." Several days prior to the fateful day, MIG-15 jets had been encountered by U.S. AF F-51Ds on patrol near the Yalu River area. On the afternoon of 8 November, Lt. Russell Brown piloting his Shooting Star of the 16th Fighter Squadron, outmaneuvered two attacking MIG-15s, tacked onto the tail of one of them, and poured .50 caliber fire into him until the MIG exploded. It was the first of 827 MIGs to be shot down in Korea and the first jet-vs-jet victory ever.

Ace Maker Airshows is proud to present the T-33 Shooting Star. As America's first operational jet fighter and jet trainer, these aircraft represent a piece of American history that ushered us into a new generation, and have helped pave the way for the lives and freedom we enjoy today.

Visit us at: acemakerairshows.com for more information.

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