

The replacement Manfred Strössenreuther Trophy

After the unexpected death of Manfred Strössenreuther in spring 1986, the South African Aero Club, represented by Peter Celliers, donated the Manfred Strössenreuther "Freedom of Flight" Trophy to the German Aero Club at the 1986 World Aerobatic Championships at South Cerney in Great Britain. This became a floating CIVA / FAI trophy, and was first awarded to the winner of the Final Freestyle programme at the 1986 WAC - in this case to Petr Jirmus of Czechoslovakia.

Sadly this lovely trophy became lost after presentation to US pilot Zach Heffley at the 2007 World Championships at Grenada in Spain. Despite wide-ranging searches no trace of it has ever been found.

A "Replacement Manfred Strössenreuther Trophy" online fund page launched almost three years ago unfortunately was not successful in attracting funds from contributors. At the 2018 Plenary Conference in Warsaw however CIVA VP Castor Fantoba indicated that it would be possible to obtain a replacement trophy from a well-known manufacturer in Spain and asked plenary for its consent to spend just over 6,000 EUR from CIVA's reserve funds to make this happen. This approval was swiftly given, and it is very pleasing to report that the magnificent new trophy and the first of a small number of miniature replicas were delivered to Chateauroux just in time to be awarded to the Final Freestyle winner of the 2019 World Aerobatic Championships. As you can see from the results posted at the CIVA Results website, US pilot Rob Holland was once again able to win this prestigious event, this amazingly being the fifth consecutive time that he has beaten all other competitors to take this title.

Past Freestyle World Aerobatic Champions have been:

- 1986 - Petr Jirmus, Czechoslovakia
- 1988 - Patrick Paris, France
- 1990 - Jurgis Kairis, USSR
- 1994 - Jurgis Kairis, Lithuania
- 1996 - Patrick Paris, France
- 1998 - Roland Dominique, France
- 2000 - Peter Besenyi, Hungary
- 2001 - Klaus Schrodtd, Germany
- 2005 - Klaus Schrodtd, Germany
- 2007 - Zachery Heffley, United States
- 2009 - Renaud Ecalte, France
- 2011 - Rob Holland, United States
- 2013 - Rob Holland, United States
- 2015 - Rob Holland, United States
- 2017 - Rob Holland, United States

