



TANNKOSH

Even in hard times and poor weather, 1,000 flew in

By Geoff Jones

Despite abysmal weather nearly 1,000 aircraft made it to the small grass airfield at Tannheim, Bavaria, Germany for what has traditionally been called Tannkosh. I have attended for four years in succession and each year marvel at the informal, yet slick, organisation. The website gives clear arrivals instructions and the volunteer team of military air traffic controllers couldn't be more helpful. Arrivals from a northerly or westerly holding point are funnelled south towards the airfield and then onto base and finals, keeping clear of Memmingen's airspace to the south-east and onto Tannheim's single 09/27 3,353ft grass runway. The pattern is busy, but never frantic. Despite interruptions throughout Friday and Saturday for airshow intermissions, there is never a long delay for landing permission.

Farmers Max and Helga Dolderer founded the airfield at Tannheim in 1976 to promote their love of flying - it is one of the few public airfields in Germany that is family owned. The Tannheim flight school was opened in 1982 and it was from this and invitations to ex students and friends to visit Tannheim that in 1993 the first fly-in for ultralights was held.

By 1995 50 aircraft flew in as the event increased in popularity, topping the 100 mark in 1998. It was primarily an ultralight event because most airfields weren't welcoming to this kind of aircraft. With the gradual integration of ultralights into general aviation many and different aircraft types started to attend Tannheim. The catalyst to the present event was in 2003 when more than 500 visiting aircraft arrived and a German journalist coined the name Tannkosh (Tannheim plus Oshkosh) for the first time. 2006 was a record year, still not beaten, with 1,300 visiting aircraft.

The blessing of EAA President Tom Poberezny during a visit to Tannheim in April 2007 was the icing on the cake. Actually, it's a huge family party each July - moved this year for the first time to the end of August (27-29).

As in previous years, Tannkosh was dogged by bad weather over many parts of Europe. Autumn seemed to have arrived early over the UK and to the south it was impossible to cross the Alps. By nightfall on the Thursday evening prior to the official start of the event there were 350 aircraft and pilots already on the field that had beaten the weather. Visitor squeezed in during weather breaks on Friday morning but by the afternoon the sun was out

and aircraft of every conceivable shape and size were trundling down finals for runway 27. Visitors arrived from all over Europe - it is reminiscent of the great PFA rallies at Cranfield and Kemble. The 'Farthest Distance' award went to Victor Babaca who flew 900nm from Constanza on the Black Sea coast of Romania in his Thielert-powered DA-40, one of five aircraft from Romania attending. A few Scandinavian visitors arrived and despite the weather an assortment from the UK including a Diamond from the Inner Hebrides, two from Ireland, and a quartet of microlights from Weston Zoyland and the Bristol area.

The commercial side of Tannkosh continues to expand with every conceivable new product for the general aviation pilot from new FlyMaps, to cockpit sunshades and pilot clothing.

The diminutive twin tail boom Airport Starflyer prototype was displayed, just two hours flying time to its credit, powered by a pusher Bailey 175 engine as used on powered chutes. It is composite and available in a short- and long-wing version for €25,000. The Twinbee, not unlike an Italian Fly Sythesis Storch, was there, yet to fly. It has an extremely wide cockpit and uses a similar wing to the Zenair CH.701 - engine options are a Verner 133M or Rotax 912ULS.

The sleek, tandem two-seat retractable Shark was also on display at Tannkosh for the first time, yet another design from the Czech Republic although the airframe is manufactured at Senica in Slovakia. A similar concept to the Shark but with larger dimensions is the Millennium Master, an Italian design but with an anhedral on the horizontal

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Swiss-built 2-seat, composite aerobatic trainer, the Votec 252T has a 250hp Lycoming



These three Super Cubs, 'Bravo Lima Formation' flew together and dropped parachutists



No fewer than eight of these Platzler Kleibitz B2 biplanes attended



This Schulgleiter SG-38 1930s training glider was towed behind a car



The EADS Heritage Flight's Me 109 made one of several audience-grabbing fly-bys



Let-Mont TUL-01 Tulak Piper ultralight seats just one, despite its resemblance to the Cub

"FARMERS MAX AND HELGA DOLDERER FOUNDED THE AIRFIELD - FAMILY OWNED TO THIS DAY - IN 1976 AND BY 1998 A HUNDRED ULTRALIGHTS WERE ATTENDING THEIR ANNUAL FLY-IN"

tail. The Swiss-built composite, side-by-side two-seat Votec 252T was also debuting, having first flown in June 2009 at Birrfeld. This is a development of the Votec 322. A second Votec 252 is being built but with a larger 350hp engine, both being aimed at the aerobatic training market. The Aero Aviation Skylane, a small two-seat Cessna 182 lookalike was displayed, but didn't fly.

Contacts that the organisers have with the aerospace industry and others guarantee some interesting fly-bys. Tannkosh had a visit from a Lufthansa Airbus A380. Another fly-by was from EADS Heritage Flight's Bf (ME) 109 flown by Klaus Plasa. This aircraft spent time in the UK in the 1960s. A third was the Red



Bavarians love their beer and sausages and aviation too

Bull Douglas DC-6B from Salzburg.

Pilots such as Peter Besenyei, Nicolas Ivanoff and of course Matthias Dolderer are becoming household names thanks to the Red Bull air racing championships. All were at Tannkosh, plus many of their colleagues to ensure that some of the best aerobatics in the world were on show.

A huge variety of antique, classic and vintage aircraft were flown in. Since this is Germany, motor-glider types abounded. A 1930's SG-38 Schulgleiter was towed to the air behind a vehicle along the line of the runway.

As I said, this is my fourth successive Tannkosh - you bet I'll be there next year!