

# UTH Rotor News

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## ***R44 is Used to Break World Record***

*In an attempt to break the U.S. cross-country-and-back speed record, Johan Nurmi headed east from San Diego on a mild spring morning with a privately registered R44 and a team of new pilots.*

A team of four pilots rewrote the record books in April with a coast-to-coast-and-back helicopter flight that shattered the previous mark by just over 10 hours.



The World Record Helicopter Team, based at French Valley Airport in Southern California, launched their attempt from Brown Field Municipal Airport in San Diego. Their goal was to fly to Georgia's Savannah/Hilton Head International Airport and back to Brown Field in less than the existing record time (for the team's class of helicopter) of 70 hours and 19 seconds.

The attempt was sanctioned by the National Aeronautic Association and the Fédération Aéronautique Internationale, which respectively oversee and certify aviation records in the United States and globally. Group leader Johan Nurmi assembled his team of pilots from students who had completed helicopter flight training at his flight school: the USA Academy of Aviation in Murrieta, Calif. Roy Sciortino, Tyler Kim and Bill Laggner accepted Nurmi's challenge to make the attempt on the previous record — set by Nurmi himself in 2008, along with three other pilots, in a Robinson R44 Raven I. Sciortino provided his personally owned R44 Raven II for this attempt. The helicopter was not modified in any way, had only 420 hours since new and had received a fresh annual inspection. Said Sciortino, "What comes out of the Robinson factory is good enough to do the job"

A handheld Garmin GPSMap 696 was purchased to aid in navigation and weather assessment. Said Sciortino,

And, a sponsor, Night Optics USA, donated a set of night vision goggles, which were used by a non-flying pilot for observation. The team had no onboard tracking, instead choosing to make regular updates via cell phone to an Inter-

net site set up to allow visitors to follow their progress. With weather apparently in their favor, the team chose the morning of April 20 for their departure. Meeting at Brown Field, each pilot traveled light, with only a toothbrush, fresh underwear and minimal snacks, water and energy drinks. After final preparations and a thorough preflight, the team was airborne by 6:10 a.m. Originally, the flight plan called for a landing every 2.5 hours for about 30 minutes to refuel and change pilots. They had eight fuel stops identified, the first being Casa Grande, Ariz. Early in the trip, however, they realized the plan needed to be modified significantly. On the first leg, strong headwinds, soaring temperatures in the Arizona desert and increased fuel consumption forced the team to land earlier than planned. On the first leg, strong headwinds, soaring temperatures in the Arizona desert and increased fuel consumption forced the team to land earlier than planned. Said Nurmi, "We had to put away the flight plan we had made and start a new one with much shorter legs

Unexpected dangerous weather and dark of night forced course alterations as well. Thunderstorms with strong, unpredictable winds forced the team to divert from their original course. And, late one night, the team chose to pursue an indirect route to follow a well-illuminated freeway and avoid flying over large expanses of dark, featureless terrain in the Southeast. On the very last leg of the flight, coming home, the team had to contend with fatigue and 30-knot winds as they climbed over the mountains just 70 miles from Brown Field. But, they also knew the late afternoon weather at Brown was forecast to close in with coastal fog and mist, so they had to press on. At 6:08 p.m. on April 22, the team landed their R44 at Brown Field, unofficially breaking the record with a time of 59 hours and 58 minutes. Family and friends greeted the weary team with hugs, high-fives, and, of course, champagne. As the corks popped and celebrations got underway, the coastal fog rolled in over the airfield. Said Nurmi, "If we would have come an hour later, we would not have been able to land and our record would have been in jeopardy. While the team's effort was a record-setting success, it was not without its challenges. A minor hydraulic leak cost them time, but was finally remedied. Then, a late night fuel stop cost them an extra hour when the fuel was not immediately available. The team also made an unexpected landing in Abilene, Texas, to grab a few minutes much-needed sleep, but was airborne again in just over an hour. For three of the pilots, this was the first such effort they had been a part of; but Nurmi is a veteran of several records and record-breaking attempts. Currently, he holds four U.S. national helicopter speed records and two world helicopter speed records. Nurmi said he hopes to soon make a similar coast-to-coast record attempt, but with a turbine helicopter. When asked what his ultimate goal is, Nurmi said he dreams of one day assembling the hardware and sponsorship to make an attempt on the around-the-world speed record



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### June Birthdays!

- 6/13- Dave Rasmussen
- 6/15- Darren Telliho
- 6/20- John Perl
- 6/24 Chad Harper
- 6/26-Dustin Keller
- 6/29- Doyle Beck

### **IDA Location Part of States Largest FBO**

The Idaho Falls location of Utah Helicopter is found on the largest FBO in the state of Idaho. Located in South East Idaho, close to Jackson Hole, Sun Valley and Yellowstone Park. The Idaho Falls FBO recently built a 30,000 square foot hangar, the largest privately owned hangar in the state. Utah Helicopter operates out of the Historic Red Baron.



## U42 Spotlight: Scott Banning CFII

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Scott Banning began his helicopter training at South Valley Regional Airport (U42) in May 2007. Scott has always wanted to fly, and helicopters were the best way for him to join aviation for a good career. Scott's favorite maneuvers to perform are "Very confined commercial maneuvers, and of course Auto Rotations." Scott's most recent accomplishment of getting his CFII is his proudest along with taking his father, a WWII-fighter pilot for a helicopter ride. His dream job: "To Be in a position to do angel flights." Scott's most nerve racking experience :

" Well lets just say it was a dark night over Santaquin with a very large wind gust..." His favorite experience: " Flying with my parents, and flying about 150 ft above the beaches of West Palm beach "the buildings were higher than I was." When Scott isn't busy instructing you can find him spending time with his wife Greta and his daughter Danica, who is 18 months old.

He enjoys watching Redbull Air Races, Drag Racing and Football. ( He loves his TIVO) Scott hates reality TV shows. He enjoys reading Aviation and listening to World of War Craft Podcasts . Scott enjoys all kinds of music but is partial to country and classic rock. His favorite foods are homemade pizza, homemade stir-fry, or a good steak and fries. His least favorite foods are anything green (unless its in stir-fry) His favorite smell is Nitro methane or JP4, and his least favorite smell is fresh tar . .

Scott's hero is his dad " he was alive in the depression and remembers how things were, he became a fighter pilot in the U.S Army Air Force, then went on to many successful ventures. My father is law was in the Army during The Korean and Vietnam wars, he was a Command Sergeant Major over special forces for years. He retired after thirty years of service." Scott is a glass half full kind of

" To me, flying is JUST  
AWESOME!! "

guy. His personal quote is

" only you can compromise your integrity. " In Addition to aviation, Scott enjoys car customizing, snow machining, and World of Warcraft. Scott's final comment " I don't have one, I have probably taken up enough of your time now get back to studying or work " Scott is a great addition to the Utah Helicopter team we are glad he is a part of our team!!

Setting the standard  
for performance and  
Quality one pilot at  
a time

**Congratulations! Check  
Rides, Solos, and New  
Employees**

Ryan Packer- Solo

Rick Manning- CFI

Darren Telliho- Private

Trent Behunin- Instrument

Mike Hess- Instrument

## Jason's Jabber

*A message from Jason Foote, our Pocatello Director of Operations*



From the time you first had the thought of becoming a helicopter pilot to the point you are now, if you're a pilot in the industry, or a student pilot, most will agree that the financial aspect is the toughest part. Just like any other career, a pilot needs training and must learn the fundamentals in order to be employed. Here at Utah Helicopter we offer professional flight training and you will receive

the same level of technical training as if you were to attend a college for 4 years. The best part is you will always have an office with a view and most jobs you will work half of the year making as much or more than a college grad working a full time job! Once the financial aspect of flight training is overcome, its time to hit the ground running. Some students get past the tough part of getting the money and then slow down. They start taking their time, when they need to keep up their ambition ,push through their training and keep their heads held high. Everyone in the industry at some time, has looked back at his or her training and wishes they would have worked harder, made themselves more available to fly and work on ground.

I think we all need to learn from people that have gone before us and from their experiences. Once the school day is over, it's up to you to keep working hard, studying and reading. The time away from school can make or break your flight training, duration and the cost. Students that go home study, read, and go over their notes will most likely get through their training faster, as well as have a better knowledge and understanding. Learn from everyone that has been in your shoes and keep pushing, keep trying your best and make yourself available to get it done!