

## SlopeAerobatics.com (3rd) 2011 Video Contest

Before you browse through my reviews, I thought I would provide a comparison with the review by Paige from Future Slope Designs who seems to know what he's talking about and has put a lot of time into assessing the videos. Likewise, the review of DawsonH, whose break-down of the judging I agree with entirely.

Browsing through the posts on the voting thread, the general consensus would seem to agree that the best video overall was Le Frog, not that there was much in it. Sorry Cliffhanger, not meaning to downgrade your video - it was a fine piece of flying. I am just trying to give an honest appraisal.

You'll note that in several areas my outcome was very similar to the comments on the voting thread. However, there was one review where we differed considerably. And that was with the video of *Cleansurf2*. Now I have to say that at first glance, *Cleansurf2*'s video did look a bit ordinary and I had him ranked in the lower half of the entries. But the more I watched it and compared it to the others, the more I realised that this video contained some spectacular flying, which in my opinion required more skill level than any of the other entrants. The off-putting part was the poor quality production including the unsteady camera work. But if you could see past this, for pure adrenalin-rushing, daring aerobatics content, *Cleansurf2*'s video had it all and deserved a high mark.

I thought that *Swiss Peter*'s independent award to *Jitter* was most appropriate. Not only was it an encouraging award for some good flying by a youngster but it was very skilful flying regardless.

### Comments by DawsonH

*I have tried to break down my vote into four categories: Aerobatic skills, Artistry (site, glider and music), Video quality (shooting and editing) and Entertainment value (creativity plus intangibles). I used a plus to minus grading system (no minuses recorded).*

*I scored top aerobatic marks to me, Dr. Phil, Le Frog, Chris and Roger. Roger got top marks for Artistry. Others were very close. I gave 1/pulsif top marks for video. This was ahead of everyone else. Top marks for Entertainment is a toss up between Le Frog and 1/pulsif. Others were very close.*

<p><b>Comments by Paige from Future Slope Designs</b></p> <p>Le Frog - 9.0 Excellent production and effects. Very impressive touch-n-go stuff. Very low to the ground and what appeared to be a different kind of slide drop (slip). Some very original stuff here along with a sense of 'confident control'.</p> <p>L1Pulsif - 9.0 Another true VTPR style. Excellent production (probably the best). Nice slow motion and other effects. This was a very creative entry demonstrating skills.</p> <p>Playininthepark - 8.5 Close in. Excellent! Demonstrates excellent control. Confident. Slow inverted. I was most impressed with how small the box was that the plane was flown in.</p> <p>Phil Taylor - 8.5 Really impressed with the flow here. Just excellent. Music was also good. This (and other) video are teaching me to appreciate 'big air'. Smooth rolls. Big 1/2 Pipe and some sort of death drop.</p>	<p>DawsonH - 8.5 Well, there is no secret that I am addicted to this style of flying. Highlights: Flow, tumbles (controlled exists), close to the ground and close in. Great stuff.</p> <p>Cliffhanger - 8.5 Excellent flow and wingovers. Saw a very nice 4-point loop - squared off nicely. This was some excellent 'big sky' flying demonstrating great flow.</p> <p>Jitter - 8.0 Nice wing stuff. Confident style of moving the stick around without fear and very close in stuff.</p> <p>Cvanscho - 8.0 True VTPR stuff here. Loved the slow technical rolls and inverted work. Very low to the ground rolls - very impressive.</p> <p>Fluffracker - 8.0 Tight loops - flow excellent. Liked the close in style. This video showed excellent control and a flat spin to boot. Enjoyed this one.</p> <p>Martini - 7.5 Great music. Excellent loops and a flat spin.</p>	<p>FWAL - 7.5 Very nice production and special effects. Loved the point rolls and flow.</p> <p>Big Gas - 7.5 Another style similar to my own. Nice tumbles and some very creative knife edge drops. Close in, and some 'snake-like' drop.</p> <p>Rsalar - 7.0 Great music and impressive flow. The inverted moves were excellent.</p> <p>Nuisance - 7.0 Very nice rolls, flat spin, point rolls. Liked the music too.</p> <p>Wakumann - 6.5 Nice inverted work.</p> <p>Bakke - 6.5 I was really impressed with how close in this flying was - even behind the pilot. This had 'fun' written all over it.</p> <p>Cleansurf2 - 6.5 Great energy and music. Fast.</p> <p>Homeocell - 6.0 Nice production.</p>
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<p><b>SlopeAerobatics.com Poll</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Cliffhanger 25</li> <li>* Le Frog 17</li> <li>* Playininthepark 10</li> <li>* DawsonH 9</li> <li>* L1Pulsif 7</li> <li>* Bakkie 6</li> <li>Phil Taylor 4</li> <li>FWAL 2</li> <li>Fluffracker 2</li> <li>Nuisance 1</li> <li>Big Gas 1</li> <li>Jitter 1</li> <li>Cvanscho 0</li> <li>Martini 0</li> <li>Rsalar 0</li> <li>Wakumann 0</li> <li>Cleansurf2 0</li> <li>Homeocell 0</li> </ul> <p>* Denotes comparisons between the top 6 entries from SlopeAerobatics Poll with Ian and Paige's votes in order from top to bottom.</p>	<p><b>Ian's vote in 4 groups</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Le Frog</li> <li>Cleansurf2</li> <li>* Cliffhanger</li> <li>* L1Pulsif</li> <li>* DawsonH</li> <li>Jitter</li> <li>Wakumann</li> <li>Phil Taylor</li> <li>Martini</li> <li>* Bakkie</li> <li>Rsalar</li> <li>* Playininthepark</li> <li>FWAL</li> <li>Nuisance</li> <li>Cvanscho</li> <li>Fluffracker</li> <li>Homeocell</li> <li>Big Gas</li> </ul>	<p><b>Paige's vote in 7 groups</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Le Frog</li> <li>* L1Pulsif</li> <li>* Playininthepark</li> <li>Phil Taylor</li> <li>* DawsonH</li> <li>* Cliffhanger</li> <li>Jitter</li> <li>Cvanscho</li> <li>Fluffracker</li> <li>Martini</li> <li>FWAL</li> <li>Big Gas</li> <li>Rsalar</li> <li>Nuisance</li> <li>Wakumann</li> <li>* Bakkie</li> <li>Cleansurf2</li> <li>Homeocell</li> </ul>
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### Videos judged by Ian Cole - AKA Ian Downunder

Judging these types of contests is always going to be difficult when the rules do not give specifics on how to judge. This is also a sore point in slope aerobatics events we have here in my home state, where judges are not given any guides to go by despite being offered sensible and logical guidelines which I have developed over a number of years. You can see these on my website at [slopesoaring.com/competition/australian-official-rules](http://slopesoaring.com/competition/australian-official-rules) Look for the Guides & Templates Manual.

But getting back to this contest, there are several ways this can be looked at, remembering first and foremost that this is a **slope aerobatics contest**. So we should expect to see plenty of aerobatics.

So, do we judge a video:

- on the overall presentation? i.e. good aerobatics, great music, flawless performance, nice venue, daring and skilled flying.
- if it is an exceptional production, even though it may not contain much in the way of aerobatics?
- purely on its aerobatics content but not necessarily on how well the manoeuvres were performed?
- if predominantly disciplined aerobatics only are performed, i.e. strictly controlled well-known aerobatics manoeuvres linked together by turns as opposed to non-conformed aerobatics, better known as freestyle aerobatics?
- if it was filmed at a fantastic venue which had great scenery that made the production stand out?
- because it had mind-boggling, heavy metal music which made your hairs stand on end?
- which contained manoeuvres that required incredible skill and daring, even though the rest of the video may not necessarily have been well-edited or have had great music to match?
- because it contained lots of well-linked aerobatic manoeuvres performed flawlessly, even though the rest of the video may not necessarily have been particularly well-edited?

While all of the above had to be taken into consideration, the point that stands out the most for me and the one in which I based my assessments on (as well of course taking into consideration some of the other points) was point 8. L1pulsif's video was an exception to this rule, as I explain in his assessment.

Though I have noted some changes to the 2012 contest regarding additional categories, unless the online poll is scrapped and replaced with in-house judges, a fair and proper outcome cannot be guaranteed, no matter how many categories you have.

I thought long and hard about marking all 18 videos from 27 down to 9, using Cliffhanger's vote of 25 set as the benchmark for all the others. But somehow this didn't seem fair because the distance between the top and bottom videos I felt was not 18 points, bearing in mind that there were 18 entries. So I picked the 6 most outstanding videos to give a mark, then put the rest in 4 other categories.

### Below are the sequences of judging which enabled me to produce a fair outcome

- Stage 1:** View all videos individually and exactly as presented. Mark each video as an overall performance as seen for the first time. This included the music.
- 2:** View all videos in pairs with the music muted and judge purely on the aerobatics content, i.e. view the highest scored video alongside the second highest video without the music, then the second highest video with the third highest video and so on. In doing this, one sees each video from a completely different perspective and several positional changes occurred during this viewing.
- 3:** View the lowest scored video with the music muted and compare it with all the other videos from the bottom up. With the judge's brain (that's me) now finely tuned and very familiar with the videos, more positional changes took place at this point. The more I watched the videos, the more aware I became of the things that were important to look out for.
- 4:** View all videos again individually as presented with music, comparing each video with the one above and the one below. More positional changes were required.

Some of the 4 procedures above were repeated several times during the judging process and overall, each video was viewed 6 to 10 times. The whole judging period, for this the 2011 aerobatics contest, took approximately 10 hours over a period of about a week.

<p><b>Entry:</b> Le Frog <b>Video:</b> Drawings in the Sand <b>Venue:</b> Unknown <b>Model:</b> Le Fish <b>Music:</b> Unknown</p> <p><b>Judging:</b> Unique introduction, very clever and different to the others. If a video could be defined as free-flowing aerobatics or if you like, freestyle aerobatics, then this is it. While it was slow flying off sand dunes, this routine was beautiful to watch. The touch and goes were impressive. This video was like watching a ballet performance with music to suit, both scripted to near perfection. The timely use of the sunlight was excellent and the blending of the raw footage was exceptional. Very pleasurable viewing and deserving of scoring the highest mark.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(SlopeAerobatics online poll score - 17) <b>1<sup>st</sup> place - score = 27</b></p>	<p><b>Entry:</b> Cleansurf2 <b>Video:</b> Scratch Built Slope Soarer Mini Plank Wing <b>Venue:</b> Unknown <b>Model:</b> Mini Plank <b>Music:</b> Unknown</p> <p><b>Judging:</b> Very fast flying for a wing with upbeat music to match. It's always hard to keep up with very small, high speed gliders, be it a separate cameraman or with the pilot wearing a headcam. This was noticeable in parts but overall quite acceptable. Not the smoothest video nor the longest. But for pure adrenalin-rushing, heart-stopping, daring freestyle aerobatics, this had it all. The skill level in Cleansurf2's performance was demanding and would have required immense concentration from a sharp, quick-thinking mind. This video is what free-flowing or freestyle aerobatics is all about. A great performance.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(SlopeAerobatics online poll score = 0) <b>2<sup>nd</sup> place - score = 26</b></p>
<p><b>Entry:</b> Cliffhanger <b>Video:</b> Jedi in the Welsh Mountains <b>Venue:</b> Brecon, Beacons, South Wales, England <b>Model:</b> 2.4 Jedi Homebrew <b>Music:</b> Coldplay</p> <p><b>Judging:</b> Clear video, spectacular background, great music, nice clean routine. The overall package is why I scored Cliffhanger so highly. Cliffhanger's routine had remnants of the disciplined aerobatics contest he entered in 2009 in which I ran. Not that there's anything wrong with this. But the performance was flown safe for the most part - nothing too risky with a couple of exceptions. Camera work was good all the way through, in that the model was in clear view most of the time and as close as possible to the pilot without being in your face or out of focus. The perfect day for filming was chosen. The pilot was able to generate loads of momentum which resulted in a very smooth and polished routine. This video, which scored 25 votes in SlopeAerobatics third contest, was set as the benchmark for all the other videos I judged in this contest.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(SlopeAerobatics online poll score = 25) <b>3<sup>rd</sup> place - score = 25</b></p>	<p><b>Entry:</b> L1pulsif <b>Video:</b> Oxid - Double Dose <b>Venue:</b> Unknown <b>Model:</b> X-Tazi <b>Music:</b> Steely Dan</p> <p><b>Judging:</b> This video was quite difficult to judge because it was very different to all the others, in that it concentrated more on video production rather than the flying. It had a very interesting introduction. The footage was fabulously synchronised with the music which resulted in an excellently produced video that must have taken many more hours to edit than the others. Certainly the best entry regarding video production. However, out of the two and a half minutes of filming, there were only about 60 seconds of actual flying which was over-edited to the point whereby I found it difficult to appreciate how much was skilful flying and how much was designed as an illusionary effect to try and convince the viewer that the flying looked a lot more difficult than it really was. Nevertheless, this video could not be denied a high ranking because of the professional-like production and it did have some exciting and daring freestyle aerobatics, albeit only a few which were not seen in the other videos. Nice job.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(SlopeAerobatics online poll score - 7) <b>4<sup>th</sup> place - score = 24</b></p>
<p><b>Entry:</b> DawsonH <b>Video:</b> Flip Fantasia <b>Venue:</b> Ledges, Seaside, California, USA <b>Model:</b> Le Fish <b>Music:</b> Cataloop</p> <p><b>Judging:</b> Clever introduction and quite different to the others, i.e. tape reversed, model flies backwards into the hand, then tape forwarded for normal launch. Very clear video. Nice routine. Minimum aerobatics but free-flowing and enjoyable to watch, though repetitive in parts. Many similarities to Le Frog's video. Interesting landing. Fascinating to watch.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(SlopeAerobatics online poll score - 9) <b>5<sup>th</sup> place - score = 23</b></p>	<p><b>Entry:</b> Jitter <b>Video:</b> I Can't Fly Straight <b>Venue:</b> Unknown <b>Model:</b> 3 Unknown Flying Wings <b>Music:</b> Unknown</p> <p><b>Judging:</b> Jitter chose to use 3 models. Nice close-in flying but not particularly smooth. Nevertheless, one could appreciate the high degree of skill required to perform this routine. Perhaps the pilot tried to fit a bit too much in and not spend enough time planning the routine. Spontaneity is fine if you can pull it off but there is nothing like a few practice sessions to perfect a great routine. The camera work was a bit unsteady. The position chosen to film made it hard to keep up with the flying. Music was a bit sedate for the style of flying. A more upbeat rhythm to match the flying would have added to the performance. Plenty of aerobatics to be had though, which is why I rated this video so highly. Well done.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(SlopeAerobatics online poll score - 1) <b>6<sup>th</sup> place - score = 22</b></p>

### Commendable

<p><b>Entry:</b> Wakumann <b>Video:</b> Coastal Cliff Soaring <b>Venue:</b> Coastal Cliff <b>Model:</b> 60" Crunchie <b>Music:</b> Michael Bublé <i>Come Fly With Me</i></p> <p><b>Judging:</b> A very nice and clear video with an appropriate soundtrack, though somewhat repetitive in parts. Not many outstanding aerobatics but nevertheless pleasant to watch.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(SlopeAerobatics online poll score - 0)</p>	<p><b>Entry:</b> Phil Taylor <b>Video:</b> Voltij Aerobatics <b>Venue:</b> Unknown <b>Model:</b> Voltij <b>Music:</b> Unknown</p> <p><b>Judging:</b> Phil used his headcam to film this. Nice routine but the model was too far away for the most part to give a real appreciation of the performance. It was a bit repetitive in parts. This had remnants of the 2009 disciplined aerobatics contest I ran. The disc was rather sedate and did not add to the routine.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(SlopeAerobatics online poll score - 4)</p>	<p><b>Entry:</b> Martini <b>Video:</b> Slope Aerobatics <b>Venue:</b> Coastal Cliff <b>Model:</b> Slope Fox <b>Music:</b> Wick</p> <p><b>Judging:</b> Poor quality video which took a lot away from the slick flying a Fox can do and did do in this video. The music was a bit boring. I felt that a more upbeat soundtrack would have considerably added to the routine. A bit repetitive in parts but otherwise a nice performance.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(SlopeAerobatics online poll score - 0)</p>
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### Well done

<p><b>Entry:</b> Bakkie <b>Video:</b> Weasel Short <b>Venue:</b> Port Elizabeth Slope, Port Elizabeth, South Africa <b>Model:</b> Weasel Short <b>Music:</b> Unknown</p> <p><b>Judging:</b> Quite a different routine to all the others. Fixed camera position is okay in short bursts but for a 3 minute video the flying in this particular film became very repetitive. This seemed to be a spur of the moment video. In other words, had more time been spent planning the routine, setting up the camera a bit better and choosing a more appropriate upbeat soundtrack, then I think we could have seen a much better result.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(SlopeAerobatics online poll score - 6)</p>	<p><b>Entry:</b> Rsalar <b>Video:</b> Weasel Grooving to Steely Dan <b>Venue:</b> Cape Cod, Massachusetts, USA <b>Model:</b> Inverted Weasel <b>Music:</b> Steely Dan</p> <p><b>Judging:</b> Always a problem when flying small slow wings off shallow dunes. You really have to pull something out of the bag to impress the judges, as was seen in the first place-getter's performance on a similar slope and in similar conditions. The routine was consistent, although it's always hard to give very small models high marks due to their limitations, unless you can provide some spectacular flying as was seen in the third place-getter's performance. As a guitarist in another life, I reckon the particular sound track chosen of Steely Dan has some of the best lead guitar work ever but this video needed a bit more upbeat music to compensate for the routine which was repetitive at times.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(SlopeAerobatics online poll score - 0)</p>	<p><b>Entry:</b> PlayinThePark <b>Video:</b> Mad Slidin 2.wmv <b>Venue:</b> Unknown <b>Model:</b> Unknown <b>Music:</b> Unknown</p> <p><b>Judging:</b> As mentioned in other videos, it's always a problem when using a fixed camera position to perform a wide range of quality aerobatics and keep them in view. But this performance did provide some highly skilled flying and very daring aerobatics, particularly towards the end. However, due to the narrow window of the filming, the aerobatics were limited to mostly axial rolls and variations of these. Hence, after the first 30 seconds or so the routine became rather repetitive, until just before the finish. The music matched the overall performance, in that it was rather monotonous. I'm sure next time around, if the camera was not in a fixed position, the pilot could improve on his performance immensely with this type of flying using a wider area of the sky.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(SlopeAerobatics online poll score - 10)</p>
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### Good effort

<p><b>Entry:</b> FWAL <b>Video:</b> Flyday <b>Venue:</b> Unknown <b>Model:</b> Unknown <b>Music:</b> Unknown</p> <p><b>Judging:</b> This was a rather basic performance with few aerobatics. It appeared to be a routine flown by a beginner trying out aerobatics for the first time. Nevertheless, if this was the case, it was a good effort but not deserving of a high mark. Some interesting special effects but not nearly enough to make a significant impression. The manoeuvres were not particularly smooth in their execution. The footage appeared to be filmed on different days or if not, at different times of the day when conditions were overcast and a bit hazy. This had a negative effect on the production. Also, at times the glider was flown too far from the camera.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(SlopeAerobatics o/p score - 2)</p>	<p><b>Entry:</b> Nuisance <b>Video:</b> Le Fish @ MG <b>Venue:</b> Mother Grundy <b>Model:</b> Le Fish <b>Music:</b> Unknown</p> <p><b>Judging:</b> A consistent routine but the model was too far away to really appreciate the flying. With limited aerobatics on offer, this performance became a bit repetitive. The headcam needed refinement and it was not helped by the distraction from the pilot's straw-brimmed hat which got in the way at times. With the model at a distance for the greater part and the camera work not particularly smooth. These factors hindered the overall performance.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(SlopeAerobatics o/p score - 1)</p>	<p><b>Entry:</b> Redux <b>Video:</b> Redux <b>Venue:</b> Unknown <b>Model:</b> Unknown <b>Music:</b> Slightly Stoopid <i>I would do for you</i></p> <p><b>Judging:</b> Unfortunately, this entry was marred by poor quality footage in which the camera could not adequately adjust to the variable light conditions. As a result, a lot of the performance was lost in the poor light. While there were some good aerobatics performed, they were not particularly smooth in their execution and were mostly that of slow axial rolls.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(SlopeAerobatics o/p score - 2)</p>	<p><b>Entry:</b> Cvanscho <b>Video:</b> Voltij at Slieve Mish <b>Venue:</b> Slieve Mish Mt'ns <b>Venue:</b> Tralee, Ireland <b>Model:</b> Voltij <b>Music:</b> Unknown</p> <p><b>Judging:</b> Some neat flying but nothing out of the ordinary. The manoeuvres were mainly axial rolls which became monotonous after a while. The camera work was not very steady. It looked like it was taken by the pilot's headcam which is always a challenge trying to keep it steady while trying to fly at the same time.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(SlopeAerobatics o/p score - 0)</p>
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### Room for improvement

<p><b>Entry:</b> Homeocell <b>Video:</b> Mallorca Slope Soaring <b>Venue:</b> Mallorca <b>Model:</b> Vuelo Ladera Plank 1400mm <b>Music:</b> Unknown</p> <p><b>Judging:</b> Good introduction which was very different to the others. Rather sedate flying, though one could have been foaled by the very upbeat music. In other words, great adrenalin-rushing music which did not reflect the flying. Not much in the way of aerobatics. Overall, a well-edited video and pleasant to watch.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(SlopeAerobatics online poll score - 0)</p>	<p><b>Entry:</b> Big Gas <b>Video:</b> Le Fish VTPR <b>Venue:</b> Unknown <b>Model:</b> DWA Le Fish <b>Music:</b> Unknown</p> <p><b>Judging:</b> Interesting effect with the 180 degree stabiliser. However, this performance was noticeably not well rehearsed, resulting in a not so smooth performance and not too many spectacular aerobatics. The day seemed very misty or perhaps it was just a poor quality camera. In either case this did not add to the performance. Very nice upbeat music.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(SlopeAerobatics online poll score - 1)</p>
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