

We won!!

We didn't complete the challenge though, a few human errors stopped that. We arrived at the comp ready after a very late night re configuring the airframe - I only received the 9 XTends during the week prior and hadn't used them. On arrival we passed the safety inspections and were ready for the flight demonstration. The other teams weren't ready and were busy sorting out problems.

The flight demonstrations were done early in the morning the next day. We were pretty nervous as the plane had never flown with the safety system and the 9XTend (AV Tx and 9XTend operating at 1W) the takeoff and flight went well, in AP mode the acft [UNAV3500FW] was on rails and flew the course around the airfield exactly as planned, I hit abort and it came home and circled overhead at 200', that impressed the comp officials. The first real autonomous circuit in the competition. We breathed a sigh of relief that it worked with everything onboard.

The short time I had for development (5 weeks in between work trips) meant that my experience operating the plane was low. The other team member and rc pilot on the day (Aaron Donaldson) had not flown the plane at all before the competition demonstration and the mission flight was the second time had had flown it.

We launched on the [Search & Rescue] mission, climbed to the target height and speed, straight and level and then engaged AP mode. The aircraft tracked off to the search area WP but began a descent below 200'. We tried again a few times and it kept descending, I was baffled. We took off and landed another two times trying to solve the problem (in hind sight the altimeter just needed to be re calibrated).

The takeoff and landings must have moved the main batteries in the Fuz which pulled the power lead out on the 9XTend. The safety system activated in flight and the Telemaster landed (heavily) on the far side of the airfield cracking the tail and bending the undercarriage.

I was happy just to have made it to the start line considering out of the 34 other entries only 4 made it to the start line. I now have a yr to get some experience operating the AP system and to develop a better airframe.

It was unfortunate for the comp that the other teams also had their share of problems and crashed. That left Team Telemasters (Aaron and I) to win on points.

Simeon