

BRIEFING



FRENCH CONNECTION CAP-10 RESTORED

STORIED AEROBAT

Dell Collier sits in the Mundry CAP-10 he restored at his Caldwell, Idaho, workshop (inset).

The wood-and-fabric Mundry CAP-10 was a small French company's attempt to sell Americans a competent but relatively expensive aerobatic machine that could also be used as a two-seat cross-country tourer. It didn't work—American pilots had little interest in wood, fabric, aerobatics or anything French—

but the CAP-10 nonetheless became a major player in the airshow world. A pair were flown by aerobats Daniel Héligoin and Montaine Mallet, a husband and

wife known as The French Connection. And connected they were, famously flying canopy to canopy through a 360-degree circle as the climax of their performances.

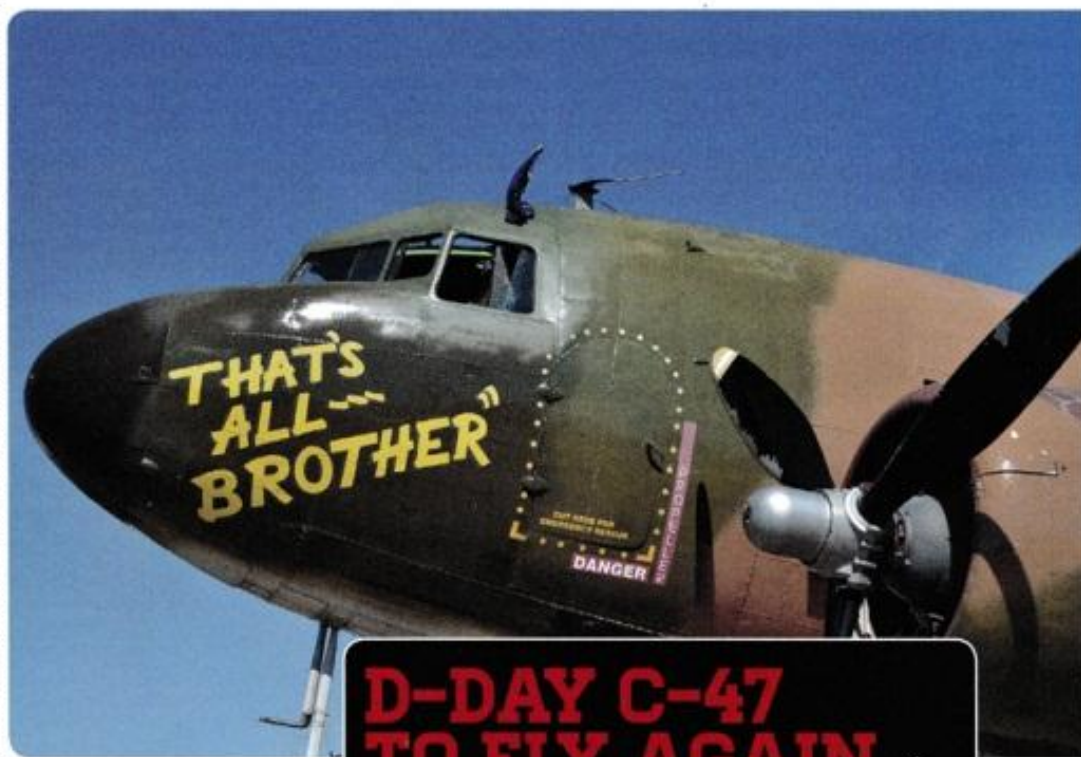
"WE TOOK THE AIRPLANE APART AS FAR AS WE POSSIBLY COULD," SAID COLLIER. "THERE'S NO PART OF THAT AIRPLANE WE HAVEN'T TOUCHED."

Héligoin and Mallet were killed in 2000 while practicing their act, and the CAP-10 largely disappeared from American skies; there are only 23 registered in the U.S. today. One of them has been thoroughly restored by aerobatic-aircraft specialist Dell Collier's Caldwell, Idaho, workshop Dell Aero Speed: N78OS, which was flown by Héligoin during airshows all over the U.S.

"We took the airplane apart as far as we possibly could," said Collier. "There's no part of that airplane we haven't touched. We hadn't planned to have the engine overhauled, but we found some camshaft corrosion, so that's been done as well." The airplane has also been repainted in its original French Connection colors.

Collier, an experienced aerobatic pilot, has good things to say about the CAP-10. "It was a basic aerobatic trainer, but it was one of the best. Not just the handling, which was great for a trainer, but the side-by-side seating. An instructor and student could be face-to-face, which produced a lot more feedback, a lot more comprehension than you got in a tandem-seat arrangement like a Decathlon." N78OS never made it into my logbook, but I flew three of its sister ships when I was one of Montaine Mallet's aerobatic students, and I can second Collier's motion.

Stephan Wilkinson



D-DAY C-47 TO FLY AGAIN

With the help of a Kickstarter campaign that raised \$329,000 through June, the Commemorative Air Force has purchased the Douglas C-47A that led the D-Day invasion on the night of June 5-6, 1944. The historic transport, dubbed *That's All, Brother*, was chosen by Lt. Col. John M. Donalson, commander of the 438th Tactical Carrier Group, to lead 800 other C-47s in the invasion's first wave.

An Air Force researcher had identified the C-47, serial no. 42-92847, as the lead D-Day ship while researching a member of the 438th TCG. After changing hands among 16 private owners, the airplane was slated for turboprop conversion by Basler Turbo Conversions in Oshkosh, Wis. "We reached out to Basler and we were able to work out an opportunity to save the aircraft with the generous support of the folks who joined us in our Kickstarter campaign," said Keegan Chetwynd, a CAF curator based in Dallas.

The CAF is now raising funds to restore the transport to flying status, a project estimated to cost \$1.5 million. At EAA AirVenture in July, Chetwynd reported that the CAF was already halfway home toward that target. "Our intention is to reconstruct the airplane as a type specimen of the D-Day aircraft," he said. "We will return it to its immaculate configuration, as it would have flown on D-Day." More info at thatsallbrother.org.



AIR QUOTES

"I APPROACHED MOST OPERATIONS WITH A THOUGHT THAT, OK, IF I'M GOING TO COP IT, SO BE IT."

—JOHN "LES" MUNRO,
NO. 617 SQUADRON, RAF

