



NEWS RELEASE

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Spectators brave strong winds, overcast skies for NAS Kingsville's Wings Over South Texas air show

By Jon Gagné, NAS Kingsville Public Affairs Office

Aviation enthusiasts from throughout South Texas and afar braved strong winds and overcast skies April 14-15 to travel to Naval Air Station Kingsville for the 2012 Wings Over South Texas air show. The three-day event, which includes the Friday pre-show practice, pep rally at Texas A&M University-Kingsville and a Meet The Blues event sponsored by Kleberg County and the City of Kingsville drew 115,000 spectators.

The majority of spectators attended the Saturday show, which produced the strongest winds, with gusts reaching 25 mph. An estimated 70,000 people turned out for the opening day of the weekend show.

"All in all, the weather turned out to be just fine," said NAS Kingsville air boss and air show coordinator Lt. Cmdr Dave Anderson. "We estimated 70,000 people came through gates for Saturday's show. The crowds were lower on Sunday – but the forecast for possible showers may have hurt attendance. Still, the show went on and we're pleased with the attendance numbers."

The headline acts for the show included 2011 National Aerobatic Champion and former World Aerobatic Champion Rob Holland; the US Navy F/A-18E 'Super Hornet' Tactical Demonstration Team from VFA-122; the US Air Force Air Combat Command's Heritage Flight and B-1B Bomber; the Disabled American Veterans B-25 Mitchell Bomber, the Horsemen Flight Team; Randy Ball's Russian-made MiG-17, and of course, the US Navy Blue Angels.

Other acts included stunt pilot Kent Pietsch, the Indy Boys and their jet-powered school bus, King Ranch pilot Paul Fiala, and air show veteran Jan Collmer. The Naval Air Training Command also provided a 4-plane, T-45 Goshawk power demonstration.

Tejano music recording artist Jennifer Pena and Kingsville resident Sandra Messbarger opened the weekend shows each day by singing the national anthem, and country music recording artist Aaron Watson and his Orphans of the Brazos Band rocked the show each day with a mid-show concert.

"I'm very pleased with the way things went this weekend," said NAS Kingsville Commanding Officer, Capt. Mark McLaughlin. "My air show staff did an incredible job and the people who attended seemed to have a great time. Our performers also put on one heck-of-a show."

Watson and his band, who travel throughout the Midwest, were thrilled to be part of the air show – their first.

"We were just so honored to be in Kingsville for the air show and to be able to perform for spectators" Watson said after the event. "My daddy is a 100-percent disabled veteran from the Vietnam War and I have a real soft spot in my heart for the men and women who wear the uniform of our country. To be here at NAS Kingsville and play for the fans was really a treat for us."

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