

I asked Fred Greis if he could put a few words out sharing Dale's father Reuben for any members who are new to the Club and never had the chance to meet some of those whose names are so often referred to at Club meetings and on the ice. Thank you Fred for this background and sharing some of your memories of Reuben. I have added the photos of Dale and his famous Aircraft Carrier Fly By and a photo of Reuben from the Club archives. Note the helmet Reuben is wearing and a photo of a similar early flight helmet. Ask George and Fred about Reuben's helmet. The last photo is the plane Reuben flew as a Marine.
Mike

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Regarding Dale Snodgrass, by Fred Greis,

"As some of our iceboating community have already learned, legendary aviator and entrepreneur Dale Snodgrass passed on July 24th 2021 during what will probably be determined to be a mechanical mishap while taking off in his Marchetti SM1019 at Lewiston airport in Idaho.

I make this statement because he was one of the most competent, experienced, and naturally gifted pilots that the navy ever fostered. But the seeds of flying for him were planted before Navy ROTC in college.

His father was Reuben P. Snodgrass. Legendary rear Commodore of the LRIBYC. Reuben was a WWII Marine pilot who flew amongst other things the F4U- swept wing Corsair. And he later became a test pilot for Sperry. Having Reub for a father just had to be a tough act to follow. Reuben introduced young Dale to flying. Dale was several years ahead of me at Connetquot high school, where his sisters also attended. The family lived a few blocks away from mine right on Lake Ronkonkoma. And over the years his parents and mine became friends. Reuben was an avid surfer and was also perhaps the person most responsible for resurrecting the LRIBYC back in the 1960's. Reuben worked at Grumman as did a lot of the other LRIBYC members of that era and beyond, all the way to today. And they all built their own DN's. One of which became my first ice boat.

Reuben built at least two DN's back then. One was the "Wild Blue" which he won the DN nationals with. And the other was the "Blue Chip" which Dale sailed along with Reubens Yankee and stern steerer "Cold Wave". Dale was said to have sailed with gusto. So much so that one story goes that a skipper once commented "don't let that kid borrow your boat or it's libel to come back in pieces"! This in my view was probably just Dale's interest in testing equipment like his father before him!

Reuben set THE benchmark in our club as a no bullshit inspiration to all. He did everything all out and accepted no less. This marine was racing DN's in Russia late into his 70's! Think about that. So, the apple didn't fall far from the tree.

Reuben was a devout Marine. One night many years ago my wife and I were having diner at the Snodgrass house with Reub and his lovely wife Virginia along with the family bulldog Praline. They both waxed proudly of their son. After some lubrication Reub told the story of how "unhappy" he was when Dale chose Navel over Marine aviation. It was a spirited conversation! The angrier he got the more I laughed. And those of you who had the privilege of observing the Reub and Warren show at our club meetings know what I mean!

The decision apparently had a lot to do with a desire to fly with a carrier fleet. Something the Navy could virtually guarantee. There are plenty of online videos featuring this virtuoso both during and after his navel career to keep you amazed. He holds the permanent record for most F14 flight hours at 4,800 with over 1,200 arrested carrier landings. A flame out during Operation Desert Storm while executing a high g maneuver to evade a SAM from which he recovered. Top Gun instructor. Commander of all F14 groups. Instrumental in the integration of the LANTIRN system into the F14. And on and on. As Goose would say, "the list is long and distinguished". And of course, there is that one iconic photo of Dale executing an authorized banana maneuver next to a carrier.

I'd like to think that somewhere there is a Corsair and a Tom Cat flying wingman for each other. Somewhere in the wild blue.

Respectfully, FG."

