Beat: Entertainment

CF-18 Demo Team Returns To

Air Show Atlantic 2022, In Debert, N.S.

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USPA NEWS - For aviation enthusiasts living in the Martime provinces, the Air Show Atlantic production is an end of summer tradition that draws thousands of excited spectators every year.
Since the early 1980's there have been 37 air shows held at various locations around the region.

After a two year hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic, air show fans were thrilled to hear that Air Show Atlantic would be returning to Debert, Nova Scotia on August 27th and 28th, 2022.
Over the years, there have been many returning fan favorites along with new performers that continue to draw the crowds. One such fan favorite is the CF-18 Demonstration Team.

At the 2022 Air Show Atlantic Practice Day, I had the chance to speak with Captain Ken Jacobson, the Public Affairs Officer for the CF-18 Demonstration Team, to gain some insight into the mission of the CF-18 Demo and support team.

Captain Jacobson started by outlining the mandate of the CF-18 Demonstration aircraft. He explained, "The CF-18 Demonstration team represents the aviators of the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) who conduct and support operations at home and around the world every day. Showcasing the abilities of Canada's multi-role fighter through an impressive aerobatic routine, the team attends air shows and conducts flypasts across Canada and the United States."
When asked about a team motto, Captain Jacobson said, " Inspiring and connecting with Canadians and fans around the world."

Captain Jacobson went on to explain that the theme of this years CF-18 demonstration jet focuses on "fighter operations home and abroad."
This years CF-18 Demonstration Pilot is Captain Jesse Haggard-Smith, who goes my the callsign "Modem". He attended the Royal Canadian Military College at age 16 and in 2011 was accepted into the Royal Canadian Air Force where he was selected to fly jets. He has been flying the CF-18 Hornet since 2018. He has logged nearly 1,000 hours in military aircraft including 600 in the CF-18 Hornet. He has served on the NORAD mission in Canada and deployed to Romania as part of Operation REASSURANCE.

Captian Jacobson went on to say "Unlike the Royal Canadian Air Force Snowbirds, the CF-18 Demonstration Team changes each year. The RCAF handpicks it pilot and support from members of the Air Force that have shown themselves to be examplery, fully capable, highly qualified, and motivated."

The CF-18 Demonstration Team consists of an East crew based at 3 Wing Bagotville, Quebec and a West crew located at 4 Wing Cold Lake, Alberta.
"The East crew from 3 Wing Bagotville take care of the jet during shows on the East coast and the West crew from 4 Wing Cold Lake take care of the West coast. The technicians drive to each show site bringing their trailer that contain the necessary tools and parts to maintain the CF-18 Demo jet.", noted Captain Jacobson.

As the interview concluded, I asked Captain Jacobson what the Demonstration Team would like the audience to "take away" after witnessing a thrilling CF-18 Hornet performance? He had this to say, "This year we are flying under Operation Inspiration. Our hope is to inspire someone in the crowd to take on a challenge or to go after that goal they have been looking to achieve, whether it means becoming a fighter pilot or something else that is completely different. Our hope is that they look to the air demonstration and say wow I can really reach that goal and go after it with all their heart"

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