

The Patriots Jet Demonstration Team

Randy Howell, owner of the Patriots Jet Team, purchased the first three L-39 aircraft from the Ukraine in 1999, with additional jets purchased through 2002. The aircraft were disassembled and shipped to the United States via truck, rail and sea in 40' containers from Europe. After painstaking restoration by the Patriots team, the L-39 jets were modified for use on the air show circuit with upgraded avionics systems for navigation and communications, removal of excess weight for better air show performance, the addition of a 30-gallon smoke oil system, and removal of the previous paint scheme.

First debuting in 2003 as a two-ship team, the 2004 season saw the addition of a third aircraft, creating even more fun and excitement. With the success of the 2005 season, the Patriots added a fourth jet for the 2006 season bringing the performance to a new level. Sponsored by Fry's Electronics and Hot Line Construction, the Patriots L-39s have electrified spectators with fast-paced formation flying, choreographed four-ship diamond formation aerobatic maneuvers and the signature "Tail Slide" where the aircraft actually slides backwards toward the ground, a maneuver unique to the Patriots.

Performances highlighted by a computerized red, white and blue smoke system are flown by lead pilot Dean "Wilbur" Wright, right wingman Rob "Stache" Hutchison, left wingman John "Boards" Posson and slot pilot Paul "Sticky" Strickland.

Former Navy Blue Angel solo pilot Scott "Banker" Ind has joined the team and is training in preparation for the 2011 season. The Patriots have completed the restoration and painting of two more L-39's, #5 and #6, and have completed airworthiness trials.

The 2010 air show season marks two firsts for the Patriots. Announcer Lt. Col. Jon "Jughead" Counsell will fly a Patriots morning solo teaser and the team will make appearances for the first time at Davis-Monthan AFB and MCAS Yuma, in Arizona. The Patriots will then continue with shows throughout California, Oregon and Washington. Our fans can find more information about the Patriots by visiting the official Patriot web-site at www.patriotsjetteam.com.