

## **Sikorsky pilot takes honors Aviator of the Year: Kevin Bredenbeck, first and only to test X2 copter, feted at Dubai Airshow**

By Rob Varnon, Staff Writer  
Monday, November 14, 2011



Sikorsky Aircraft Chief Pilot Kevin Bredenbeck prepares to conduct the first flight of the X2 TECHNOLOGY Demonstrator Aug. 27 at the company's Schweizer Aircraft facility in Horseheads, N.Y. Bredenbeck, Sikorsky Aircraft's director of Flight Operations and the chief test pilot of the company's newest aircraft the X2, was named Aviator of the Year by Flightglobal Magazine during the Dubai Air Show. Photo: Contributed Photo / Connecticut Post Contributed

While competitor General Electric notched a \$6 billion engine contract on opening day of the Dubai Airshow, United Technologies Corp. celebrated an individual's accomplishments.

On Saturday, Kevin Bredenbeck, director of flight operations at UTC's Sikorsky Aircraft was honored in a reception in Dubai for being named Aviator of the Year by Flightglobal Magazine.

Dubai kicked off on Sunday and will conclude on Thursday. It is expected to be a showcase for corporations working in the business jet and commercial airliner sectors, both of which have been growing in the Middle East, according to Raymond Jaworowski, senior aerospace analyst with Newtown-based Forecast International.

Bredenbeck was the first and only test pilot of Sikorsky's hybrid helicopter, the X2, which set a speed record in 2009 of more than 250 knots. Since then, Sikorsky has been creating a military variant of the helicopter called the S-97 Raider and hopes to sell it as an armed aerial scout.

The X2 demonstrator program also won the Collier Trophy in 2010 and the American Helicopter Society's 2011 Hughes Award given for outstanding improvement in helicopter technology. Last month, the Society of Experimental Test Pilots recognized Bredenbeck with the Iven C. Kincheloe Award for the year's outstanding professional accomplishment in the conduct of flight testing and now the aviator of the year.

"What an incredible experience this program has given me, the X2 team, and the entire Sikorsky workforce," Bredenbeck said in a press release. "Today, the future of rotorcraft looks different because of what Sikorsky accomplished on the X2 Technology demonstrator. I am honored to be recognized, but, make no mistake, the achievement of the X2 was a total effort by a dedicated team, backed by the full support of 18,000 Sikorsky employees."

The Flightglobal Achievement Awards celebrate and acknowledge individuals, teams and innovations at work in the aviation and aerospace industries. Readers provide the nominations in four categories: Leader of the Year, Aviator of the Year, and Innovator of the Year, as well as a Lifetime Achievement Award. A panel of experts narrows the candidates and then selects a winner in each category.

Sikorsky also announced during the Dubai show that it signed a contract with the Royal Saudi Land Forces Aviation Command to upgrade its fleet of 12 Black Hawk UH-60A helicopters. The value of the contract was not disclosed, but Sikorsky has had financial success with similar U.S. Army contracts.

Another UTC subsidiary, Pratt & Whitney, did not tout any major contracts in the first few days of the show. Instead, Pratt announced its PurePower engine platform hit 1,000 hours recently.

The PW1500G, PurePower engine is slated for use on Bombardier's CSeries aircraft, while the PW1200G is being used for Mitsubishi's Regional Jet.

One of Pratt's key competitors, GE Aviation, notched a \$6 billion deal as part of Boeing's announced sale of 50 aircraft to Emirates in a deal with an initial value of more than \$18 billion.

"It's GE's show so far," Jaworowski said.

UTC's Pratt is facing some difficulty as it's been locked out of part of the market, particularly, Boeing's 737 MAX, aircraft. But Jaworowski said Airbus' A320neo has an option for Pratt engines.

There was a \$4.6 billion, 50 A320neo order announced on the second day of the show, but the engine portion of the contract was not revealed.

There is some potential good news awaiting UTC, as the Goodrich Corp. announced a 10-year overhaul and repair deal with Emirates. In September, UTC announced it is buying North Carolina-based Goodrich for about \$16.5 billion.

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