

EPISODE 32

[INTERVIEW]

[0:00:05.3] IP: On this episode of AvTalk, we discuss the aviation incidents that have occurred in the past two weeks, and delve into the fortunes of major carriers in the Middle East. We're joined again by Jeremy Dwyer-Lindgren to discuss vintage aviation advertising and strapping rockets to a Convair?

Hello and welcome to Episode 32 of AvTalk. I am Ian Petchenik here, back in the United States with –

[0:00:31.6] JR: Jason Rabinowitz. Hello I'm back in New York. I'm back home.

[0:00:37.2] IP: You had to think about that one for a second.

[0:00:38.6] JR: Yeah, it's been quite a number of hops along the way since we last spoke, but I'm home.

[0:00:44.7] IP: You actually made it back from France and then you were home for what? Four and a half, five minutes and then you're off –

[0:00:50.4] JR: Maybe 10.

[0:00:52.1] IP: Maybe 10. Then you were off to Seattle.

[0:00:54.4] JR: Yeah. I flew Leon, to Dublin, to JFK, on Aer Lingus, took the subway back home to my apartment. Was here for about 12 hours and went straight back to JFK and flew JetBlue mint out to Seattle for a special event, that I guess we'll talk about in a little bit.

[0:01:16.0] IP: Yeah, we'll definitely talk about that one in a little bit towards the end of the show. I did want to mention the fact that you made it without succumbing to any air traffic control

strikes that we talked about in the last episode. We're recording on the 22nd of May in the midst of a French national strike.

[0:01:34.6] JR: Of course, we are.

[0:01:35.5] IP: You made it out just in time.

[0:01:37.2] JR: All my flights miraculously were perfectly on time, no issues with any of them. The only issue I had along the way was there was a train strike in France, because of course there was. I had to take a bus over the Alps, which was not great instead of a train. In the grand scheme of things, flying through France in the summer and that's the worst that happened. Fine, I'll take it.

[0:01:59.0] IP: You did okay for yourself.

[0:02:00.3] JR: Yeah,, not too shabby.

[0:02:02.7] IP: Yeah. A lot has happened in the past two weeks and a lot of it not very good at all. The most recent is a crash of a 737-200, a Global Air 737-200 crashed while operating for Cubana. At last we, heard 111 of the 113 people onboard died. Something that, you know, still trying to understand what exactly happened, because it crashed pretty much right after takeoff.

[0:02:32.9] JR: Yeah, it barely made its way outside of the property of the airport from what I saw. We unfortunately still don't really know much more than we did immediately after the incident, which isn't much. There was a huge amount of misinformation and bad information, because let's be honest, this was coming out of Cuba. It's one of the most difficult places in the world to get accurate news from. At some point, it was reported as Cubana 737, well they don't have any 737s.

Then it was reported by state media as being a Blue Panorama 737, who was wet leasing their aircraft to Cubana, but it wasn't them. It turned out to be this 737-200 from this little tiny Mexican charter and leasing company that I had never heard of. Since then in the last day or two, the Mexican authorities have completely grounded that airline.

[0:03:30.6] IP: It didn't have a large fleet to begin with. I think the total fleet before the accident was three aircraft. Now I mean, with two aircraft left they've grounded those two. It was very interesting, because we didn't have any data after the – I mean, usually there's something but with I mean, the fact that it was in Cuba, so we have very, very limited coverage in Cuba, because there are no ground-based receivers in Cuba at this point, something that we're extremely interested in getting if it's possible. Also, this is a 737-200.

[0:04:06.5] JR: 40-year-old aircraft.

[0:04:08.2] IP: Yeah, yeah. First delivered to Piedmont Airlines in July of 1979. Obviously, the Mode S transponder, not ADS-B equipped, but it did have its Mode S transponder, but we obviously didn't receive any data from the aircraft, especially because it happened so close to take off that there wasn't time to gain altitude for any data to come in. That's where a lot of the confusion came in, especially because we're going off reports—

The information that came up first was that an airport worker had told some guy who was standing there taking pictures that it was an American plane. Then the first question was did they mean a United States plane, or an American Airlines plane, because there were two American Airlines flights scheduled to depart around that time. I mean, it started very confusing and just got even more confusing from there.

[0:05:00.1] JR: Yeah, so we'll see I guess what happens over the course of the investigation. This is a 40-year-old 737-200. Who knows if the flight recorders were even functional? I hope they were, but we've heard nothing about them since the incident, but hopefully they get some knowledge and can find out what happened. I guess, a little background on Cuban aviation is for obvious reasons, embargos and all that political stuff. Cubana does not have many modern aircrafts. They really struggle to keep their fleet going. They have a modest fleet of somewhat modern, what are they –

[0:05:41.4] IP: The IL85.

[0:05:42.2] JR: Yeah, that's it. The Ilyushin 96, the little regional jets, the high-wing twin-engine aircraft, but they've had such a hard time getting spare parts from them. They've had to

cannibalize some and the rest of the fleet has been pretty much grounded, so they've scrambled to lease aircraft from wherever they can and this flight happened to be operated by at least 737-200, which is in my mind a sign of desperation if you're leasing a 40-year old aircraft like that, you just simply don't have a choice in the matter whether its financial, or availability, but really sad to see that news out of Cuba.

[0:06:22.1] IP: Yeah. I mean, I'm sorry, it was Ilyushin 96, their long-haul fleet.

[0:06:28.1] JR: I'm not talking about the Ilyushins. Those are not modern aircraft at all. I'm talking about the high-wing twin-engine, the TU –

[0:06:38.2] IP: They've got a AN-158s.

[0:06:40.6] JR: That's it. That's what I'm talking about. The Antonov An-158. That's it. Those are those are somewhat modern capable aircraft that they have a bunch of in their fleet, but since they can't get spare parts, they can't operate them and unfortunately grounded.

[0:06:55.8] IP: They also have the ATR 42 singular one and then the 75.

[0:07:02.2] JR: Right, right. Cubana is supposed to have, they ordered 10 An-158s. They have six in their fleet now, but unfortunately they are all grounded. They have one ATR, four Ilyushin 96s that may, or may not actually be flying. That's pretty much it. Pretty much anything operated by Cubana is leased at this point.

[0:07:26.9] IP: They had been doing a number of wet leases, or both, yeah, number of wet leases for Nolinor was doing some, Blue Panorama and the Global Air. I mean, that's a whole bunch of stuff. Their operations, how they continue the airline, keep the airline ongoing is rather fascinating to me.

In a better ending, in what could have been a very bad ending as well, Sichuan Airlines flight lost the first officer, the right side windshield. It failed and left the aircraft, on its way out, damaged the flight control unit, which controls the autopilot. The captain pan flew the plane, this happened near Chengdu and they turned around, stayed higher than they would have liked to, because you don't want to fly into a mountain.

[0:08:17.8] JR: Good advice, Ian.

[0:08:19.4] IP: Yeah. Two weeks in a row with this, the good advice here. Then successfully landed it and minor injuries to the first officer and a member of the flight crew. I mean, it's happened before, windshield failures and things like that, but the windshield just completely failing and leaving the aircraft is amazing to me.

[0:08:40.2] JR: Yeah. If you look at the pictures, it looks the air pressure pretty much nearly sucked out the autopilot control panel. I don't know what the technical name for that panel is, but it was pretty much nearly sucked out of the aircraft and substantially damaged and inoperable. I'm looking at the track on flight radar and they somehow managed to still change the transponder code to 7700 and it shows up, that the little icon turns red. Through all of that, they were even able to accurately change their transponder code, which I find amazing.

[0:09:14.6] IP: They did that, because they couldn't use the radio to communicate. I mean, you're traveling at a high rate of speed, 500 miles an hour or so. It's tough to hear the radio in your car when the windows are down on the highway. I can't imagine how loud it is when you have an open window and you're flying a plane.

[0:09:38.0] JR: Yeah, and they were at 32,000 feet when this happened. Even though they started their descent, the ground speed never really – it fluctuated but it didn't change substantially for quite a period of time, so I can't imagine what that must have been like in that flight deck. Thankfully they were skilled pilots. They managed the situation and they landed safely.

[0:10:02.8] IP: Yeah. I mean, it'll be another investigation that we're keeping tabs. I feel like we're keeping tabs on a lot of investigations issue.

[0:10:10.0] JR: I hope you have this all written down.

[0:10:12.0] IP: I miraculously have the – I do have this all written down, but it's just – one, it seems like one after another. I know that statistically speaking it's within the range of normal

here, but it just feels a little more closer together, I guess these days. Let's close out our incident report, I guess as the first half of the show.

[0:10:35.9] JR: I don't like this segment.

[0:10:37.4] IP: Yeah, I don't either. I'd rather talk about other stuff that isn't these things. Luckily, no one got hurt in Istanbul when –

[0:10:44.7] JR: Just some pride, I think.

[0:10:46.5] IP: Some pride and an airplane. An Asiana A330 was taxing in Istanbul. A Turkish Airlines A321 was – it's unclear. I guess, to me, I haven't found whether or not it was pushed back too far or had not pulled in far enough.

[0:11:03.9] JR: It wasn't one where it was supposed to be.

[0:11:06.3] IP: Exactly. It was in the taxi lane and the A330 basically just lopped off the tail.

[0:11:13.7] JR: I've never seen anything like that. I mean, in all these incidents were aircraft to have close calls on the ground that which happens routinely at JFK. You usually see some pieces fall off, or a winglet chopped off, but this was the entire freaking tail of the aircraft basically are really –

[0:11:34.2] IP: Just lopped off?

[0:11:35.9] JR: Flopped over. That was that.

[0:11:38.8] IP: Of course, we'll put photos in the show notes, because it was one of those things – Istanbul is a great spotters airport and they have some great spotting locations. Of course, I went on JetPhotos right away to see how quickly people could get something uploaded. It was like an hour later that there were photos, and you could see just tail just hanging off where it was not supposed to be.

[0:12:01.9] JR: Yeah, there was a lot of blaming, I guess when this first happened. How could the pilot do that? Well, if you're the A330 pilot, you're following the centerline. There's not supposed to be anything in your way.

[0:12:13.4] IP: Right. Yeah. If you look at pictures of the A330, the pictures that I've seen, there's very little damage just at the wing. I mean, it's just at the wingtip.

[0:12:24.5] JR: Yeah. I mean, it's ridiculously amount of damage, but my favorite incident is still the A380 versus CRJ at JFK from 10 years ago at this point. That's still by far my favorite.

[0:12:37.5] IP: For those of you who don't know, we'll find video, or a link to and put it in the show notes. Basically an A380, what was it? It was a CRJ?

[0:12:46.8] JR: Probably a CRJ 700, I think.

[0:12:49.8] IP: It was it was a regional jet, T-tail regional jet. The wing tip of the A3, it was at Air France, I think. Air France A380 clipped the CRJ. Just basically turned it 90 degrees. I mean, like it was –

[0:13:02.2] JR: Pretty much, no big deal.

[0:13:03.1] IP: Like it was nothing, like a top. Yeah, I'd forgotten about that one.

[0:13:06.5] JR: Yeah, that's a good one.

[0:13:07.5] IP: That was pretty crazy. No one got hurt. The plane has gone in for inspection. It'll be interesting to see if they decide to repair it or not.

[0:13:14.0] JR: I'm sure they will. I have no doubt, that aircraft will fly again.

[0:13:18.6] IP: Okay. All right, then I will add this to the list of things we're keeping an eye on and we'll go from there.

[0:13:24.1] JR: Put in over for in the app, let me know when it's fine to get.

[0:13:26.1] IP: Yes, already did. Yeah, the TC-JMM. It may be a while, but we'll see. It'll be interesting to see how quickly they repaired the Asiana A330, which is HL7792. Two aircraft to keep an eye on.

[0:13:43.6] JR: The most recent aircraft collision we had at JFK was that January 4th meltdown we had here, where a Kuwait 777 and China Southern 777 had a close call and did some damage. The Kuwait 777 was at JFK for a 110 days or something like that.

[0:14:02.2] IP: Yeah, it just left last week.

[0:14:04.1] JR: Yeah, it was there for a substantial period. That was just really damaged to the APU and the tail. Not quite the entire tail being knocked off, so who knows how long this repair takes.

[0:14:16.2] IP: Yeah. I mean, a year. We'll say a year and see if we're wrong or right.

[0:14:22.0] JR: It happened at Turkish's home base. They do a ton of maintenance there. If anywhere for it to happen, I'm sure they're happy it was there.

[0:14:30.6] IP: Yeah, that's true. Let's take a break and we will come back and talk with Jeremy Dwyer-Lindgren once again. Jeremy is going to come talk to us about some rather interesting vintage aviation advertisements that he's put together and found in various sources and trawling the depths of eBay. He's got some very interesting stuff and I won't spoil it, but there may be rockets involved. We will talk to him in just a little bit, so stay with us.

Welcome back we are joined once again by Jeremy Dwyer-Lindgren, who is not here to tell us about his travels this time, but is here to tell us about some vintage traveling that he's unearthed in his, we'll call it never-ending quest for airline ephemera. Jeremy, thanks so much for joining us again and welcome back.

[0:15:29.6] JR: Yeah, welcome back again, again.

[0:15:31.5] JDL: Thanks for having me on again, again, again. It's always a pleasure to join the two of you.

[0:15:35.9] IP: This all started because you were just trawling the depths of eBay and came across some rather interesting vintage aviation print ads. The one that we really wanted to talk about is one that we'll get to in a minute, but if you're listening to the podcast, just a word of advice, go to the show notes if you're not there already on the flightradar24 blog, because we'll have posted this particular advertisement in the show notes, so that you can see it and follow along and know what we're talking about, because it really is a great visual piece of artwork. I want to start there, because a lot of these vintage ads are just really great pieces of artwork.

[0:16:19.8] JDL: Yeah, absolutely. I'm perusing through them a little bit now and it turns out impulse control with meager amount of money can do some damage on eBay if you know how to search. Certainly picked up a hobby of finding old vintage airline ads from their 40s, 50s, 60s and even into the 70s. The artwork is often the best part. I am a photographer. I love photos, but I find that the artwork is often way more compelling, because it tells you more of how they want you to see their product and see yourself in it. I find that particularly interesting.

[0:16:54.7] IP: That's one of the things that strikes me, especially about the early advertisements. It's not even so much see yourself in the airplane, it's see the airplane. I mean, all of these air travel still being introduced, and so you get all of these advertisements that are really just about the airplane, which is so foreign to me for now.

[0:17:16.7] JR: Yeah, because all these old ads are about the airplane, not the thing inside the airplane, the airplane.

[0:17:23.1] IP: Now every ad you see is these glorious seats, or look, we have Wi-Fi or entertainment, or anything like that, or you don't even see the airplane, or airline at all. It's just like destination marketing. It's we can fly you to London, or Bali, or wherever and here's a picture of –

[0:17:40.2] JR: Fly our

[0:17:40.7] JR: 30-year-old 767 to London.

[0:17:43.4] JDL: Yeah. I think it's interesting, because you can definitely see a progression through the advertisements and in the 40s and first part was obviously quite tied to the war and war effort, things like that. Once you break past 45 and the conclusion of the war, you start to see a lot of ads about the airplane. You have everything from the bizarre and short-lived Avro Jetliner, the C102 to the DC-6 to -7, you've got the 707, the Lancastrian, something like that.

One of the ill-fated ones that never quite went anywhere, the Comet, the DC-8, but you don't really see a switch heavily into at least in the ads anyway into what the airplane can offer until the comet and the 707 come out. Then you see a lot of time-based ads. Something plugging, I think PanAm had a six and a half hours to Europe, I assume from New York, which at the time was probably a gain of two or three hours over what had previously been being flown on it, say a Super Seven or something.

Then by the late 60s, you start seeing much more focus on the passenger experience across the board. Some of the early ads from Delta with the Convair 880 and the DC-8 are advertising their club compartment. Certainly, there was no shortage of comparative luxury across the board in some of the early jets. You see that really come out in the late 60s and with the introduction of the 747. Almost every airline is going out of its way to plug the ads and the onboard experience, which I think also speaks to the trajectory of commercial aviation has from a technical standpoint stopped from the 60s.

We haven't with the exception of the Concorde and the short-lived Tupolev 144, we haven't gone faster. The engine technology is revolutionary more than it is evolutionary, and the same with aircraft design in general. That there wasn't necessarily a whole lot of new things to plug after that point, other than larger jets and increasingly exotic comforts on board, which of course largely went away with regulation. Go ahead Jason.

[0:19:57.6] JR: At some point, it definitely switched to economics of buying the aircraft; more efficient engines, more efficient cost per seat, rather than just our plane is amazing and fast when our plane will get your passengers from A to B for 10% of whatever the other old thing you are flying with. Big change.

[0:20:17.7] IP: Well, and I also think a big part of the change in the advertising is that manufacturers stopped advertising to the consumer, because people were sold on air travel. I mean, you didn't need to convince anybody. Especially as air travel became more and more affordable, people are going to take a plane anyway. I mean, if you had the money back then, it was a ridiculous amount of money to fly across the country.

I guess, you couldn't be choosy about who you were going to fly, but you could be choosy whether or not you were going to fly or not. Whereas now, it's of course I'm going to take a plane. Why would I take a boat, unless that's the whole point of my travel? If I'm going to a destination, of course I'm going to fly. I think there's a big shift there, where you get different – who the audience is for the advertisement and who's actually doing any of the advertising.

[0:21:08.8] JDL: Yeah, definitely. Some of the early, again, early introduction of jets in particular, I see this less in the ads though it's in a few. I see it much more in the welcome aboard packets that they used to make, which might be small booklets anywhere from five to 20 pages. They'll explain the safety of jets, the new sounds that they might make, which I think is really interesting that they're having to essentially sell the passenger and comfort the passenger via words on this is a new experience, and we need to prepare you for all the questions and concerns that you might have about it.

A lot of those early welcome aboard packets were plugging things, like how much safer the aircraft was, or how much faster and all the new comforts on board, but selling the jet was definitely one of them, or jet travel rather.

[0:21:56.6] IP: Yeah, that's interesting. I never really considered that even after people bought the ticket, they still needed to be reassured once they were on the plane that everything's going to be okay.

[0:22:06.3] JDL: Yeah, it's wild that consistent and I'll have to pull up, see if I can get a clip for the show notes, but you can look through a couple of old American ones that I've got, and they go into quite a lot of detail about how jets work and how radar works and how that all works together to keep you safe.

[0:22:25.5] IP: I think that goes back to the, every everything new and you're still trying to convince people that this is a good way to go. Not so much we need to have people fly in the planes and things like that, but from a safety perspective. As a commercial perspective, it's interesting that the marketing of the safety of air travel starts so early.

[0:22:42.9] JDL: Yeah, absolutely. It really picks up I think in the 50s and the 60s quite a bit.

[0:22:49.2] IP: The ad that got my attention. I said, "Yeah, we absolutely need to talk to you about." Let's talk about that.

[0:22:54.3] JDL: Where it's maybe not so safe?

[0:22:57.2] IP: I mean, I'll let you describe the ad from Aerojet General Corporation from 1954.

[0:23:05.1] JDL: A subsidiary of general tire and rubber company, which doesn't tell you much more. Apparently at the time in the early 50s, Aerojet was working on creating JATO bottles, jet-assisted takeoff, or otherwise known as a rocket, and strapping them to the bottom of a plane to assist in engine-out operations on short takeoff, or heavy aircraft scenario, where it wouldn't have enough lift to stay airborne on one engine if the other conked out.

JATO of course isn't terribly novel. They were on military aircraft starting in the 40s, early 40s and there were no shortage after that. They're pretty popular. I think is that the B-47, everyone can remember that famous photograph of one of the Boeing B-47s getting a JATO on a takeoff

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[0:23:52.0] JR: So much smoke.

[0:23:54.7] JDL: Yeah, it's cool. On civil aircraft was pretty unusual, except apparently for Ethiopian Airlines, which got sold into strapping a couple onto the bottom of their Convair 240s for help getting out of the hot and high conditions in Addis Ababa and a couple of the nearby in-country airfields. It turns out that they did have, from what I can tell, one regular customer and that was Ethiopian Airlines, and they strapped JATO bottles to the bottom of the jets, or prop planes rather and off they went.

[0:24:27.6] IP: This this artwork is great, because the ad is basically a Convair 240 with an engine out, and the JATO bottle is going as it takes off, is the main artwork in the ad.

[0:24:42.2] JR: The ad specifically says, one airline which we're going to assume is Ethiopian from the picture using Jade –

[0:24:49.8] JDL: They leave out the ETH, but the rest is all there. lopian.

[0:24:53.5] IP: One airline using JATO as standard equipment, assumingly from Aerojet General Corporation, of course has saved its passenger liners on two occasions following engine failure on takeoff, and that's exactly what the picture shows. This Convair taking off with one engine, non-functional, and the two JATO bottles smoking away behind it.

[0:25:14.0] JDL: Yeah, and I thought it was interesting that they plugged that because Ethiopian from what I could tell from the research on a – both that the company wrote historically and then some of the online stuff I've dredged up is Ethiopian used them regardless. They hit the JATO bottles more often than not to get out of Addis Ababa, or Addis Ababa. It was obviously safety, but it was primarily also we need to get this thing off the ground, whether it has the other engine going or not, and if the right engine as and the ad happens to fail, all the better that we have rockets, but we needed anyway. We're not the only airline to try it. From what I can tell, several Caribbean Airlines needed them, or tested them anyway to get FAA certification on short field operations, and they also used it on Convairs in the 50s and 60s.

Ethiopian stopped using them in 54. I'll give you a guess as to why, but you could probably guess. It didn't go super well. One of the bottles –

[0:26:15.8] IP: It's a really bad idea.

[0:26:18.2] JDL: Yeah, one of the bottles came off, went through the wing as one would expect to happen. The plane from what I can tell was fine, but I think that was when they decided that Condor 240s were no longer a great idea and they moved on to DC 6s not long after, probably smart. Looked it up and it turns out metro liners, the little flying pencils there, they were so

poorly underpowered, at least the first production runs of them that they put, or had the option to put a little JATO bottle inside the tail cone to help it get off the ground in the event of an engine out.

My understanding is that the – I've looked around in some forums and some Facebook groups, things like that. The pilots and the mechanics didn't seem to think much of them. One of the pilots on the forum describes it as the JATO bottles were used in case of an engine failure, so that search and rescue could find the site of the accident more easily.

[0:27:15.0] JR: I mean, I just love how disingenuous this ad is in the second paragraph, because of course, it's an ad from the 50s, so there are multiple paragraphs, but it says the widely recognized need for standby power will be fulfilled blah, blah, blah. It was neither widely recognized, or actually needed was it, by anyone ever?

[0:27:34.0] IP: Standby power is in all caps mind you.

[0:27:36.3] JR: Standby power, exactly. It was never widely recognized, nor needed. I guess they duped a few customers into thinking they actually needed it, but come on.

[0:27:47.1] JDL: No, it never did widely pick up at all. From what I could find, like I said Ethiopian was the only one that used them regularly in any manner, and the rest were just tests. By and large, aircrafts were sufficiently powered by the end of the 50s that they didn't really need them anymore, with the exception of some crazy guy who decided to strap a bunch onto a 727 to get out of Mexico City. That's something to see, that there's a YouTube video for that and you should look that up, because that is something.

[0:28:16.9] IP: We will post that in the show notes, just to have that available for everybody to watch.

[0:28:22.0] JR: Further while, I watched it yesterday and it's remarkable how they do a really, really quick rotation of the nose and then all of a sudden they power on these JATO bottles and the thing just goes, just straight, pretty much straight up.

[0:28:37.0] IP: Yeah, we'll definitely have that in the show notes, so that we can let people watch that and compare what a JATO takeoff is versus a normal takeoff.

[0:28:44.3] JR: Again, not a good idea, because of the comments in this YouTube video are true. They pretty much say, yeah, obviously when you slam a couple rockets on all of a sudden on the belly of an aircraft that wasn't designed to be there, it causes all sorts of nasty metal fatigue and cracks and nasty stuff that you do not want. They had to reinforce the aircraft with extra aluminum and putting on extra aluminum seems like it would counteract the extra thrust of the JATO bottles, so that's just stupid.

[0:29:16.1] IP: Yeah, the whole thing sends –

[0:29:17.0] JR: Slightly short-lived.

[0:29:17.9] IP: Exactly. Well, I mean, I'm looking at the end and it says 1943 first JATO for military aircraft, 1946 first and only proof for commercial aircraft, 1953 approved as a standby power source, 1954 is the ad. Jeremy, correct me if I'm wrong, Ethiopian stopped this in 1954, 55. I mean, so it didn't last very long at all.

[0:29:41.2] JDL: No, Ethiopian used them for maybe two years tops. It was when they started going particularly far distance routes. I think Athens and they needed the extra boost to get out of Athens when they were particularly heavy on fuel, and that route started in 53 or 54. It didn't last particularly long before it went wrong.

[0:30:03.3] IP: Yeah. I mean, it seems like such a thing to be advertising though. It's like strap rockets to your plane and all of this copy goes into trying to sell this idea. Jason, you brought this up earlier and it's something that I always find fascinating about vintage ads is that there's paragraphs of text on all of these ads. I mean, compared to ads nowadays, there's so much copy. There are so many, just so much narrative in all of these ads. It's fascinating across all of these vintage airline ads.

[0:30:38.1] JR: It differs quite a bit from today's video montage with absolutely horrible crap rock in the background.

[0:30:45.9] IP: I mean, I will take a paragraph or two on the beauty of the 747 versus the montage and the awful music any day.

[0:30:56.7] JR: I mean, you typically see that nonsense in military more than you do in commercial, because I guess you can't sell to the military without terrible awful music, that must be a rule somewhere. What do you even see these days for commercial stuff? Really just not much.

[0:31:13.2] IP: I mean, for print ads?

[0:31:14.4] JR: Yeah. Or print ads, or even video, or any ads for new aircraft. Do you really see anything from the A350?

[0:31:20.4] IP: Aircraft. No. No, I don't think you see very much at all for aircraft. No.

[0:31:24.4] JR: You might see ads for the company as a whole, like you'll see an ad for Boeing, but they make everything from satellites to who knows what else. You don't see aircraft advertised almost at all ever.

[0:31:38.7] JDL: It drops off really heavily. I've had a very hard time finding anything on the 767, or later. Airbus has always been notorious hard. I think that I've only managed to scrounge up five or six ads from Airbus period ever. Certainly after 1980, they dropped precipitously. I've never really seen anything, or very little on 75, 67, even the 87 is hard to find. You pretty much need to get a trade magazine like Flight Global, or one of the others to find any of that type of ad. The only reason I have any after 1990 is when I went to fire and grill and took all of the things home, so I could cut the ads out and then have them 50 years from now. Even then, I only have six.

[0:32:28.2] IP: It's really impressive to see how big of a shift there's been. I mean, part of it is obviously the decline of print advertising writ large, but I think a lot of it goes to the fact that airplanes aren't – they're not new anymore. I mean, it'll be interesting to see if, a huge if any of the new supersonic things ever take off, or space travel. Space tourism takes off, what those

advertisements will look like? Because that'll be the first new advertising in the aerospace industry in a very long time. That'll be something to look forward to. Then we can clip all of those ads and then when we're doing a podcast and in 50 years from now, we can look back on the virgin galactic print ads, if there are any.

[0:33:15.8] JDL: I hope to have them if they do.

[0:33:18.2] IP: Jeremy, I want to thank you so much for joining us once again, with some really cool stuff. If you find something crazier than strapping rockets to a Convair 240, I want to hear about it.

[0:33:29.2] JDL: Well, I think that's going to be a high bar to hit, but I'll be sure to let you know.

[0:33:32.1] JR: You can do it. We have faith.

[0:33:34.1] JDL: Thank you, Jason.

[0:33:35.3] IP: Thanks Jeremy Dwyer-Lindgren for joining us. We'll talk to you soon.

[0:33:38.8] JDL: Have a great day guys.

[0:33:48.7] IP: We are back having strapped rockets to ourselves and launched ourselves high into the sky.

[0:33:54.4] JR: I don't recommend doing that.

[0:33:56.0] IP: No, no. I do want to find somebody who straps some JATO bottles to a modern aircraft. I do want to see that.

[0:34:04.4] JR: That'll be fun.

[0:34:05.2] IP: I'm probably not going to find anybody.

[0:34:06.7] JR: No, I really again, don't recommend that.

[0:34:10.2] IP: Let's talk about, you made it back from France and you went home for 12 hours, then you hopped on a Jet Blue flight to Seattle and did what?

[0:34:21.3] JR: Well, I got stuck in traffic for a bit, but then I ran all the way up to Everett, to Boeing's facility for the delivery ceremony of Air Italy's really Qatar's first 737 MAX aircraft. This 738 MAX was an order that Qatar had placed a little while back. Due to let's say external forces in the Middle East, making the environment in Qatar non-conducive to expanding their fleet, this aircraft is now going to Air Italy, which Qatar took I think a 49% minorities taken, but they're pretty much controlling what happens with Air Italy these days. They're completely reflecting it.

The MAXs will make up the – I guess, the regional fleet, not domestic but the regional European fleet, they will, I think just in a week or two start operations with A330s out to JFK and Miami again with least Qatar A330s, and eventually they will get 787s, which can you guess where the aircraft are coming from?

[0:35:40.4] IP: Those are going to come from Qantas.

[0:35:42.4] JR: No you're wrong. It's Qatar.

[0:35:44.3] IP: See, I was so close. It was a Q. I knew it was a Q.

[0:35:46.7] JR: Yeah, you got the first letter right. Qatar is, there's no illusions here. They are in this to make money and they're in it to crush Alitalia, which may or may not happen. I don't know. Nobody knows what happens with Alitalia at this point. I would say this is Akbar Al Baker's, the CEO of Qatar, this is his side hustle, I guess, wanting to get into the Italian aviation game. If we can look back not very long ago and see what Eddie had tried with Alitalia and all their investments around, it failed miserably. I don't know why Qatar thinks they can do it better, but good luck to them.

[0:36:28.2] IP: Yeah. To be perfectly honest, I don't quite understand why anyone would want to be getting into the Italian aviation industry at this point, but if we're making an argument in favor

of it, I guess it's Alitalia is so bad at this point, that it's on the verge of collapse and might be being generous.

[0:36:48.4] JR: Not going anywhere. The Italian government was not letting Alitalia disappear overnight.

[0:36:52.5] IP: They're not going to disappear, but what I'm saying is they're not in – they're not in strong financial shape, and they're not necessarily the best option, I guess is what Qatar's thinking is.

[0:37:04.1] JR: Not being in strong financial shape has never impacted Alitalia in any way.

[0:37:09.3] IP: That's a fair point.

[0:37:10.5] JR: Yeah. Anyway, I don't know. We were checking out their first 737 MAX. The delivery is quite nice on the outside. The inside, I've actually never been on a 737 MAX before, so that was my first time on one. Surprise, surprise it's pretty damn similar to the 737NG. If you're inside it, there is not a damn way to tell you're on a MAX and not an NG. The engines look a little different, but it has the same sky interior, same seats, same sidewall. There's literally no difference for the passenger on a MAX instead of an NG.

The seats were nice. They were pretty roomy. It's fairly basic, though there's at least power outlets and stuff, but it didn't exactly scream luxury. I'm a little confused as to why Qatar thinks passengers will book away from the airlines they know and are used to in Europe, why they would start booking Air Italy. That's up to their marketing team to figure out, I guess.

[0:38:11.6] IP: Meridiana is not new. I mean, Meridian has –

[0:38:14.4] JR: No. Meridiana is obscure small –

[0:38:16.6] IP: Which is what Air Italy was before.

[0:38:18.8] JR: Yeah, that's a good point to make. Air Italy is Meridiana in disguise. Meridiana isn't a relevant tiny little niche airline that flies some European stuff and some long-haul stuff

from Sicily and other odd plate oddball, long-haul destinations Italy out to the US, but they're there nearly irrelevant. 99% of people can probably have never heard of them and would probably never book them, but they fly some interesting routes. Those interesting routes are going away and now they're going to fly to Milan and Rome and they're basically going to be Alitalia at this point.

[0:38:58.9] IP: Alitalia, Air Italy, not Alitalia, which I mean, I guess is not confusing at all. If you've never heard of either of those and deciding which one is which, that'll be an interesting prospect too.

[0:39:10.2] JR: Right. They're actually bringing the name back. Meridiana used to be, or had absorbed another airline called Air Italy, I believe at some point a number of years ago. Then at some point they were named Euro Fly and then they went back to Meridiana, now they're going back to Air Italy. The name is not new. It's a revived name, but I don't think it really has any major rip name recognition.

[0:39:34.7] IP: One of the interesting things in all of this that they'll now have three liveries flying. They have the new Air Italy livery, they have the standard Meridiana livery and they took delivery a while ago of one of the old Eastern Airlines, well not – the new old Eastern Airlines 737s. It's in Eastern Airlines livery, but it says Meridiana, which I think is not important at all, but just one of those interesting things, I think.

[0:39:59.8] JR: Right. It's fun to see this whole plan come around and take shape, because when Qatar first bought their stake in Meridian, I was like, "What the hell are they thinking? Meridiana is so freaking irrelevant that they're throwing their money away, but it's an interesting play." We'll see where this goes over its due course.

[0:40:17.8] IP: Yeah. I mean, that's what Qatar is up to. Let's talk about what Emirates is up to, because they're doing something, well the opposite. They're parking planes.

[0:40:27.1] JR: Yeah. A bunch of, I don't have the numbers in front of me, but a bunch of A380s and 777 are being parked at DWC, which is the other Dubai airport that isn't quite in operation yet.

[0:40:39.7] IP: It's about two dozen aircraft in total.

[0:40:42.2] JR: They're blaming pilot shortages is it?

[0:40:44.9] IP: Every year around Ramadan, they park a couple of aircraft, just from demand perspective. They've done this in years past and things like that. This year, they're saying that they're suffering from a pilot short of between a 100 and a 150 pilots. Tim Clark, the CEO of Emirates says that he told Bloomberg that this is something that he foresees resolving itself by fall, so September, October. I'm not sure what he meant by that, and there was no discussion of that in the article that I read of what problems would be solved by September, but at this point, they're saying that they're suffering from a pilot shortage of between 100 and 150 pilots, which parking a couple dozen aircraft in a fleet of 250, 270 aircraft is nothing to sneeze, I don't think.

[0:41:34.9] JR: Now, the Middle East is going through an unexpected bout of trouble. Qatar has the whole blockade, or embargo thing against them. I don't know what you want to call it, but it's not great times for them. Emirates is parking aircraft, because they have a pilot shortage and Eddie had is in the worst shape of all of them. I guess, they are not looking great. There's all sorts of rumors about their massive aircraft orders that they have in place being scooped up by other airlines, because they just don't have the need for these aircraft anymore. I don't know what happens to them, but it's not good times for the Middle Eastern Airlines.

[0:42:13.7] IP: You said unexpected, but it's not entirely unexpected.

[0:42:18.2] JR: I would say the Emirates one is unexpected, but not so much Eddie yet.

[0:42:21.7] IP: Sure, sure. I mean, Eddie has the – I mean, since 2016 when they had that dismal, I think a reasonable way to put it their financial performance and dismal might be being generous to say – Since then, it's what are they going to do with all of these aircraft on order? They've been scaling back to some pretty major destinations. They've been scaling back capacity and changing – I mean, just this week they reduced their Melbourne flights to two class 787 down from a three class 777ER, or 300ER. I mean, it's little things like that. They just paring back and paring back and paring back.

[0:43:00.6] JR: Yeah. I've never flown Etihad, but I feel I should hurry up and maybe do that before it could be too late.

[0:43:08.0] IP: Are you going to go and spend the, what is it? \$25,000 per trip for the – I almost forget which one is which, so residents or the apartment, or the –

[0:43:16.0] JR: The answer is no.

[0:43:17.3] IP: The balcony, or I don't know.

[0:43:19.9] JR: The amphitheater. No.

[0:43:21.4] IP: The amphitheater, yes.

[0:43:22.4] JR: No, I will not be doing that.

[0:43:24.4] IP: Okay. If you did, I mean, I would expect that we would spend some time on that. If you want to, I won't stop you.

[0:43:30.0] JR: Nope.

[0:43:30.7] IP: I also won't help you pay for it.

[0:43:32.0] JR: No, no, no.

[0:43:36.2] IP: Qatar's doing their thing in Air Italy. Emirates is parking some planes. Hopefully by September they say it'll be better, but we'll see about that. Who knows what Etihad is doing. Enter Michael O'Leary, who this week gave a rather fascinating interview. Jason you were much more in tune with that, so I'll let you summarize all of that.

[0:43:56.2] JR: Yeah. It was a good long interview, like 12 minutes I think, where Ryanair's CEO spilled all the things that was on his mind. They talked about fuel prices, which are going up, something like \$80 a barrel now and how that affects tickets, which air fares seem to lag 12

months behind oil going up. Even though oil prices are up, airfare is still flat. Talked about the purchase of a lot of motion and how the remnants of Air Berlin became Niki Lauda's Airline, which is being absorbed by Ryanair and they foresee possibly having up to, or more than a hundred Airbus aircraft in their fleet in years to come, really sparking conversations with Airbus, which is something Ryanair does not have currently. They're a complete 737-800 operator, they have something like 400 to 500 aircraft.

To see Airbus introduced into Ryanair's fleet will be really interesting, because that's not something they've ever babbled in. What else did they talk about? Norwegian, how Norwegians not profitable at \$40 a barrel of oil. How the hell are they going to be profitable at \$80 a barrel? What is I aid –

[0:45:18.5] IP: Poor Norwegian. They find a way to shoehorn themselves into, I think every episode we do.

[0:45:25.8] JR: It's something.

[0:45:26.8] IP: We don't look out for ways to beat up on Norwegian.

[0:45:32.4] JR: Right. If they don't make money –

[0:45:34.3] IP: Would absolutely. With the oil half the price what it is now, they're not certainly not going to make it then. O'Leary's basically said, it's going to be either they go bust one day and close up shop, or IAG buys them out and really keep some capacity. At this point, he's probably right. Norwegian's unsustainable, the 787 groundings is certainly a kick in the ass at the time. They really don't need it, but their future doesn't look great according to Ryanair CEO, which may just be him positioning who knows, to lower their value to make their own takeover, but that would be fascinating.

[0:46:13.4] IP: I would be thoroughly surprised by that. At this point, I've almost lost my capacity to be surprised by anything at this point. Just because –

[0:46:22.0] JR: Norwegian has a ton of 737s that would fit nicely into Ryanair's fleet. They could lease out the 787s and be done with it. Maybe that was all just the plot to keep IAG out of the running, who took a 5% stake, a hostile stake home. Maybe not hostile, but Norwegian had no say in the matter.

[0:46:40.7] IP: Right, right. I mean, I'm sitting over here staring at a checkerboard and you're playing nine-dimensional chess, and I appreciate that.

[0:46:46.2] JR: I'm not playing. I have no part in this. I get to watch. I'm the guy watching the two old men in the park play chess.

[0:46:54.8] IP: That's a good place to be. Ryanair has 443 737-800s. They have one 737-700.

[0:47:05.1] JR: That's a BBJ.

[0:47:06.3] IP: No, I think this one's the one they use for training. I mean, I don't know what the cabins configured.

[0:47:10.4] JR: Don't they have a BBJ?

[0:47:11.9] IP: No, they've got a couple of Learjets to fly around, but those are mostly for the mechanics. I mean, very interesting to me that they own those aircraft.

[0:47:20.2] JR: That's a whole other podcast topic.

[0:47:22.2] IP: Yeah, exactly. Anyway, so the interview is generally just all over the place, which I thought was – and it was long too.

[0:47:31.0] JR: Yeah, it was a long segment from Dubai of all places. I'm like, I don't know why they were in Dubai.

[0:47:37.9] IP: Maybe he's going to buy Etihad.

[0:47:40.3] JR: Ooh, plot twist.

[0:47:42.4] IP: This is how rumors get started. We'll put a link to it, because it's definitely worth checking out. If nothing else, then then getting O'Leary's impression – because it seemed to me in this particular interview, he was being less Michael O'Leary, if that makes any sense.

[0:47:57.9] JR: He's being less of a –

[0:47:59.9] IP: Not a nice person.

[0:48:00.9] JR: I'm going to choose my words carefully here.

[0:48:03.3] IP: Yes, not a nice person.

[0:48:03.7] JR: I'll go with what you said there, but he seemed very down-to-earth, very business-centric.

[0:48:08.9] IP: I mean, because usually when he comes on, he's trying to introduce pay for use toilets, or standing seats, or something utterly ridiculous to generate free publicity for his airline, for Ryanair. This seemed like he was answering questions and giving thoughtful answers. I mean, obviously for someone who runs such a successful airline, I shouldn't be surprised that he has the capacity to do this. It just surprised me that he did it. We'll put a link to the interview and it's worth the time if you're – after you finish listening to this podcast, of course, if you're still looking for something, it's certainly worth your time.

Let us close out the show with some quick hits on things that either are patently ridiculous, or follow-ups from the other stuff that we talk to. Oh, but we forgot, in the beginning of the show when we were doing our incident reports, plural, the most recent one which was the Saudi Arabian Airlines A330 operated by Onur Air landed in – diverted to Jeddah without its nose gear deployed. There is video which we will link to in the show notes, but you can imagine what the video looks like.

[0:49:22.9] JR: Lot of sparks.

[0:49:23.6] IP: It's a plane and lots of sparks. Everybody was okay. They deplane down the runway through the slides. Everyone was fine and got off.

[0:49:31.2] JR: Once again, the only injuries that were sustained were due from the evacuation itself,

[0:49:36.3] IP: Yeah. A consistent refrain that we hear. That's good in a sense, I guess. They picked it up off the runway today with some airbags and a jack. Now it's I guess got towed off and it'll get repaired. I saw pictures of the – it was basically just look like it needed some new gear doors, and well probably some maintenance see why the gear didn't come down in the first place, but that too.

[0:50:01.4] JR: Yeah.

[0:50:02.1] IP: Air Belgium got its Russian over flight permission finally that we talked about. Was it last episode, or two episodes ago?

[0:50:09.0] JR: One of them.

[0:50:10.3] IP: Air Belgium had been acquiring a couple A340s and was trying – yes, and trying to operate to Asia from Belgium. They couldn't, because they didn't have Russian over flight permission. They finally got it, so they're going to Asia. Good luck to them. Last but not really least, Qantas hitched a Tesla Model X to set a Guinness Book of World Records for the heaviest thing towed by an all-electric production vehicle.

[0:50:41.3] JR: I can't tell you how little I care about this.

[0:50:44.1] IP: I say it only because the photography was good, or the videography was good, and it's worth maybe 45 seconds of your time, but that's what happened.

[0:50:52.9] JR: The audio of the video was just – the noise of the helicopter filming it.

[0:50:58.9] IP: I think that's important, because oftentimes you get this stirring music. I think we talked about this before. We get this ridiculous stirring music that no one needs.

[0:51:10.2] JR: Yeah, nobody needs that pounding crap metal that –

[0:51:13.7] IP: There you go you.

[0:51:14.5] JR: - you hear so much. I have a cool thing that I forgot to mention.

[0:51:18.4] IP: Well, here we go.

[0:51:19.5] JR: Just yesterday, I was out to – out having lunch. My office is right by the East River in lower Manhattan. I noticed two helicopters flying really close together right down by the downtown heliport by Wall Street, which is not out of the ordinary. I noticed that one helicopter was flying sideways and had a big camera pod in the nose, which is unusual. The other helicopter was something I didn't quite recognize. I'm looking up and I'm thinking, "Huh, I bet Mike Eisler in that aircraft filming that other aircraft. No more than 10 seconds later, who do you think I get a direct message from on Twitter?"

[0:52:03.1] IP: Did you tell Mike, I said hello?

[0:52:04.3] JR: I did. It turned out to be, they were filming air-to-air footage of a new Airbus prototype H160 helicopter, doing some North American tour. Just so happened that they flew right over my head and it just happened to be that my friend was on the other helicopter doing the filming. Just wanted to mention that.

[0:52:26.7] IP: I saw that they were doing the tour. I didn't know they had made it to New York, because that's the one they had boxed up, I think into an Antonov An-124 and flown it into Las Vegas for the helicopter expo a couple months ago, and then they were flying around the country. I guess, they made it to New York for some filming, so that's cool.

[0:52:46.0] JR: Yeah. I don't know much about helicopters, but I know that thing was super loud and super cool-looking. I couldn't recognize it, but then I followed AirbusHC_USA, guys get a

better Twitter handle, but there's some information there on it and it was just really cool to see that while I'm outside having lunch.

[0:53:07.8] IP: I mean, much better than the normal pigeons or seagulls.

[0:53:11.5] JR: Well, typically when we eat outside, we just sit there watching the heliport, because these – these helicopters come in and leave every 10 seconds and tomorrow, I think will actually be a particularly interesting day, because the president be in town so we'll see all sorts of Ospreys and Apaches and who knows what else on the heliport.

[0:53:30.3] IP: Did they land the president there too?

[0:53:32.4] JR: Oh, yeah. The president comes in on marine one and the media and some support comes in on the Ospreys these days, which are super freaking loud and big.

[0:53:43.8] IP: They really are.

[0:53:44.4] JR: For that heliport.

[0:53:45.9] IP: They really are. I mean, when President Obama was coming to Chicago, they would fly right over between O'Hare and the parking lot at Soldier Field where they had the staging area. They would fly right over my house and they were so loud.

[0:53:59.5] JR: Yeah, and actually on the heliport in downtown, they actually don't do a vertical takeoff, because I'm pretty sure the downforce would destroy the helicopter pier. They actually do a rolling almost like a mini-version of an aircraft, an airplane where they take a rolling start and just take off horizontally. It's a tilt rotor, so it can do that.

[0:54:22.9] IP: I think those things are absolutely cool. Yeah, but they are so loud.

[0:54:27.6] JR: They're insane aircraft.

[0:54:29.2] IP: Everyone, thank you so much for listening to episode 32 of AvTalk. As always, if you have suggestions or comments, criticisms, you want to tell us something about aviation, or

not, podcast@fr24.com, or send us a tweet at [flightradar24](#) or Facebook as well, [flightradar24](#). We've got some good stuff coming up in the next couple episodes. We're going to talk with – well, we're not going to talk with him, but Ken Hope will be back with another glossary term in either the next episode, or the episode after.

When we ask people to do things, we understand that they actually fly for a living. Ken's been doing a lot of flying and keeping busy with that, so we're going to have that in the next couple episodes. We're going to have some other good stuff as well. We're looking forward to that. We're going to talk with that Nick Turner who works at Honeywell as well. We talked with Jill about flying the planes. We're going to start with Nate about what goes into the planes and some cool stuff that he's been working on.

If anyone has any suggestions or anything like that for future episodes, just e-mail us, podcast@fr24.com and we'll be happy to check out your suggestions. Thank you everyone for listening. I am Ian Petchenik. Here as always with –

[0:55:45.3] JR: Jason Rabinowitz. Thank you for listening.

[END]