



Charting Out the North Pole



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Jeppesen charts provide indispensable information on how to approach different landings around the world – even a sleigh at the North Pole.

BY HOWARD SLUTSKEN

Over 80 years ago, Captain Elrey Jeppesen found himself flying early airmail routes. The navigational aids of the day were primitive and limited, and pilots used road maps and railway tracks to find their way.

So Capt. Jepp – as he became known – started writing detailed notes about routes and emergency landing strips in his little black book. At first he shared this valuable information with other pilots for free, but ultimately realized that it could be a money-making venture.

He launched his eponymous company in 1934, initially selling charts to pilots, then to airlines and the military. Since then, Jeppesen charts have become the standard for pilots, and the company, now a division of Boeing, has a library of more than 30,000 globe-spanning charts, in digital and paper form.

The iconic Jeppesen approach charts are filled with the information pilots need to complete a safe approach and landing. The format of the charts has also inspired a series of more than 80 commemorative maps recognizing Jeppesen employees, and honoring pilots such as Jimmy Buffet and Harrison Ford, and events such as Apollo 13 and the Miracle on the Hudson.

In 2013, Jeppesen added Santa Claus to the list of honorees with the release of its North Pole Village chart. The approach course takes sleighs over the SANTA, CLAUS, COMNG and TOWNN navigational fixes,

which all meet the five-letter pronounceable-word naming standard for waypoints.

When the weather is bad, the Reindeer Landing System guides a sleigh to a safe landing, but if Rudolph’s nose isn’t working or two or more reindeer are “inoperative,” visibility has to be better. If a sleigh can’t land, the missed approach is a climb to the MSLTO fix, followed by a right turn then a hold at KSSNG, which truly sounds like a great idea.

The chart is filled with all sorts of important – and fun – information that every “naughty or nice” pilot needs to know for North Pole flights, so be sure to check it twice! ■



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CHART: JEPPESEN