

HRVATSKI SIN, FRANCUSKI
PILOTSKI PRVAK I PERUANSKA
ZRAKOPLOVNA LEGENDA



A CROATIAN SON, A FRENCH
CHAMPION PILOT AND A
PERUVIAN AVIATION LEGEND



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*Mjesto Janjina na poluotoku Pelješcu
nedaleko Dubrovnika iznjedrilo je velik
broj moreplovaca i pomorskih kapetana.
Jedna od najpoznatijih kapetanskih
obitelji bila je obitelj Bjelovučić.*

Miho Bjelovučić, koji potječe upravo iz te loze, bio je iskusni pomorski kapetan koji se nakon bezbrojnih plovidbi svjetskim morima skrasio u Limi, glavnom gradu dalekog Perua. U braku s Francuskinjom Adrienne Cavalier dobio je 30. srpnja 1889. sina Ivana (Juana). Kad je Ivan imao osam godina, otac Miho se teško razbolio i otišao na oporavak u Dubrovnik. Na žalost, tamo je nedugo zatim i preminuo. Nakon očeve smrti majka s Ivanom i ostalom djecom seli iz Lime u Francusku svojim roditeljima. Ivan, u Francuskoj poznatiji kao Jean Bielovucic Cavalier, već je odmalena pokazivao sklonosti tehnici te bio bistro i radoznalo dijete. Nakon završene osnovne i srednje škole titulu akademski obrazovanog građanina stekao je na polju filozofije i književnosti.

Pilotska dozvola, a potom rekordi!

U svojoj devetnaestoj godini, 1908. upisuje pilotski tečaj u vrsnoj zrakoplovnoj školi braće Voisin. S velikom dozom sigurnosti možemo ustvrditi da je upravo on bio prvi Hrvat koji je 10. lipnja 1910. godine dobio dozvolu za upravljanje letjelicama. Pilotska dozvola francuskog aerokluba nosila je redni broj "87". Mnogobrojna su zrakoplovna natjecanja na kojima sudjeluje Bjelovučić, jednako kao i njegovi rekordi, koji se nižu iz godine u godinu. Navest ćemo samo neke:

- Sudjelovanje na prvom Budimpeštanskom aeromitingu (01.-15. lipnja 1910.)
- Obaranje brzinskog rekorda, kada u četiri etape, od Pariza do

*Janjina on the Pelješac peninsula near
Dubrovnik has produced many sailors
and sea captains. One of the most fa-
mous captain families was the Bjelovučić
family.*

Miho Bjelovučić belonged to this line and was an experienced sea captain who, after countless voyages on the world's oceans, finally settled down in Lima, capital of the distant Peru. During his marriage to a French woman, Adrienne Cavalier, a son Ivan (Juan) was born on 30 July 1889. When Ivan was eight, his father Miho became very ill and went to recover in Dubrovnik. Unfortunately, he died there soon afterwards. After his father's death, Ivan's mother took him and the rest of the children away from Lima and back to France to her parents' house. Ivan, who became better known in France as Jean Bielovucic Cavalier, had shown interest in technical gadgets from an early age and was a very clever and curious child. After completing elementary and secondary schools, he graduated in philosophy and literature.

Pilot licence followed by records!

In 1908, at the age of 19, he enrolled in a pilot's course at the excellent Voisin brothers' air school. We can claim with a fairly high degree of certainty that he was the first Croat to be granted a pilot's licence on 10 June 1910. His licence number from the French air club bore the number "87". Bjelovučić took part in many flying competitions and year after year he set many records. Below are just a few of the most significant:

- Participation in the first Budapest Air Meeting (1-15

Bordeauxa, u roku od 6 sati i 15 minuta prevaljuje tada nevjerojatnih 540 kilometara. Nešto kasnije, točnije 27. kolovoza 1910., Bjelovučić se upisuje u knjigu "besmrtnih zrakoplovaca" kada na letu od Pariza do Angoulemea oblijeće, kao prvi pilot u povijesti, simbol Pariza, Eiffelov toranj. Ovu vijest prenio je, zajedno sa slikom zrakoplovca, i hrvatski tisak. Bjelovučiću je pripala i velika čast da kao prvi zrakoplovac poleti s "hrama francuskog zrakoplovstva", pariškog aerodroma Le Bourget. Bilo je to 20.

listopada 1910. prigodom tamo organiziranog prvog međunarodnog zrakoplovnog mitinga. Značaj Le Bourgeta kao vodeće svjetske zrakoplovne priredbe održao se do današnjih dana. Mladi je Bjelovučić 1910. godine pobjednik milanske zrakoplovne utrke "Circuito Internazionale Aereo Di Milano", gdje u izuzetno jakoj međunarodnoj konkurenciji na francuskom zrakoplovu tipa "Voisin" osvaja prvo mjesto.



U rodnome Peruu

Liga za zrakoplovstvo Perua 1910. godine poziva Bjevovučića sa željom da on postane prvi instruktor budućih peruanskih pilota. On se na molbu odaziva te u Francuskoj nabavlja prvi peruanski zrakoplov. U rodnom Peruu, u gradu Santa Beatrize, ostvario je prvi let u povijesti ove latinoameričke države.

Letu je nazočio i prvi čovjek Perua. Zadnjeg dana siječnja 1911. Bjelovučić počinje s obukom budućih pilota te postaje utemeljitelj i direktor prve zrakoplovne škole na tlu Južne Amerike. Iste godine vraća se u Pariz s činom pukovnika peruanskog zrakoplovstva i preuzima dužnost vojnog atašea za zrakoplovstvo. U Europi ponovno niže uspjehe i rekorde.

Po nalogu zrakoplovne tvornice "Hanriot" 1911. godine leti prema istočnoj Francuskoj. Tu na relaciji Pariz-Nancy obara rekord koji je do tada držao njegov dojučerašnji učitelj.

Udaljenost od 295 kilometara preletio je za 2 sata i 50 minuta. Nedugo zatim "Bleriotovim" se dvokrilcem penje na visinu od 2200 metara za rekordnih 12 minuta. Ostvaruje ponovno i brzinski rekord u zrakoplovu "Hanriot" na drugom vojnom natjecanju u kolovozu 1912. godine. Više puta

Bjelovučić je gledao smrti u oči. Tako je 09. lipnja 1910. preživio tešku havariju svoga zrakoplova, a 12. svibnja 1911., nakon uzlijetanja s pariškog aerodroma Issy, spasio se iskanjem s male visine iz gorućeg zrakoplova. Ivan Bjelovučić

1912. godine postaje prava zvijezda. Pariški dnevnik "Le Matin", s nakladom od milijun i dvjesto tisuća primjeraka, proglašava ga najboljim francuskim zrakoplovcem. Žiri su bili sami čitatelji dnevnika. Znajući da je Francuska u to vrijeme bila vodeća svjetska zrakoplovna nacija, ovo priznanje još više dobiva na važnosti.

June 1910).- Breaking the speed record, when he covered an incredible 540 kilometres, in four stages, from Paris to Bordeaux in 5 hours and 15 minutes. Somewhat later, on 27 August 1910, Bjevovučić entered the annals of "immortal aviators" when he was the first pilot in history to fly around the great symbol of Paris, the Eiffel Tower, during his flight from Paris to Angouleme. Bjelovučić had the honour to be the first aviator to fly

from the "temple of French aviation", Le Bourget in Paris. This took place on 20 October 1910 on the occasion of the first international air meeting. Even today, Le Bourget remains the leading aviation event. In 1910, the young Bjelovučić won the Milan air race "Circuito Internazionale Aereo di Milano". In a French "Voisin" plane, he managed to beat very strong international competition to take first place.

In his native Peru

Peru's National Aviation League invited Bjelovučić in 1910 to become the first instructor of future Peruvian pilots. He accepted the invitation and purchased the first Peruvian airplane from France. In his native Peru, in the town of Santa Beatrize, he embarked upon the first flight in the history of this Latin American state. The president of Peru was also present at this flight. On the last day of January 1911, Bjelovučić started training future pilots and became the founder and director of the first air school in South America. That same year he returned to Paris as a colonel in the Peruvian air force and took over the duties of a military attaché for the air force. The series of successes and records continued in Europe. In 1911, he was asked by the "Hanriot" aeroplane factory to fly eastwards over France. On the journey between Paris and Nancy he broke the record held by his former teacher. He flew a distance of 295 kilometres in 2 hours and 50 minutes. Soon afterwards he climbed with a "Bleriot" tandem-wing model to a height of 2,200 metres in a record 12 minutes. He set the speed record once again in a "Hanriot" at the second military competition in August 1912. Bjelovučić stared death in the eye many times. On 9 June 1910 he survived a terrible plane crash and on 12 May 1911, after taking off from Issy Airport in Paris, he saved himself by jumping out of a blazing aeroplane at low altitude. Ivan Bjelovučić became a real star in 1912. The Parisian daily newspaper "Le Matin", with a circulation of over a million, proclaimed him the best French aviator. The jury consisted of readers of the newspaper themselves. If we take into account that France was an international leader in aviation, we can better understand the importance of this recognition.

Osvajanje Alpi

Najzapaženiji uspjeh njegove letačke karijere bio je prelijetanje planinskog lanca Alpi. Na francuskom jednokrillcu tipa "Hanriot" uzletio je 25. siječnja 1913. iz malog švicarskog mjesta Brig i nakon 25-minutnog leta na visini od 3200 metara sletio u talijansku dolinu Domodossoli. Na ovaj način postao je prvi pilot u povijesti koji je uspješno preletio Alpe. Bjelovučićev uspjeh bio je i velika reklama za tvornicu zrakoplova "Hanriot", koja ga je nagradila s iznosom od 50 000 franaka.

Godinu 1913. Ivan Bjelovučić zaključio je još jednim rekordom. U 150 sekundi uspio se na avionu tipa "Ponnier" popeti na visinu od 1000 metara.

Europa u ratu

Već slijedeće godine, 1914., Europu je zahvatio ratni požar.

Bjelovučić se odmah priključuje francuskim zračnim snagama. Kao vrhunski pilot raspoređen je u najslavniju zrakoplovnu postrojbu Prvog svjetskog rata "Les Cigognes" (Rode).

Tijekom jednog zadatka izviđanja bojišnice nad Belgijom Bjelovučićev zrakoplov je pogođen a on ranjen. Nakon dužeg liječenja i oporavka Ivanu se nije ispunila želja da se vrati na bojišnicu, već počinje raditi na mjestu voditelja tima za ispitivanje zrakoplovnih motora u tvrtci "Bellanguer", a potom kao upravitelj zrakoplovne škole u Remisu.

Za vrijeme Drugog svjetskog rata Ivan Bjelovučić se priključuje francuskom Pokretu otpora i sudjeluje u borbenim akcijama. Nakon oslobođenja Bjelovučić je ponovno na naslovnicama francuskih novina. Povod je bio njegov skok padobranom s Eiffelovog tornja i to u 57. godini života! Za izuzetan doprinos razvoju zrakoplovstva odlikovan je nizom peruanskih, francuskih i belgijskih odličja, među kojima se ističu francuski Orden za hrabrost i Ratni križ s palmom. Bjelovučić je kraće vrijeme bio i zapovjednik peruanskog ratnog zrakoplovstva. Ivan, Juan, Jean Bjelovučić umro je 14. siječnja 1949. godine u pariškoj bolnici Chaillot.

Conquering the Alps

The most significant success in his aviation career was flying over the Alps. In a French "Hanriot" monoplane he took off on 25 May 1913 from the small Swiss town of Brig and after a 25-minute flight he landed on the Italian Domodossola plain. This made him the first pilot in history to successfully fly over the Alps. Bjelovučić's success was an excellent advertising stunt for the "Hanriot" aeroplane factory, which rewarded him with 50,000 francs. He saw 1913 out with one more record. In 150 seconds he managed to climb to an altitude of 1,000 metres in a "Ponnier" aeroplane.

Europe at war

The following year, in 1914, Europe was caught up in war. Bjelovučić immediately joined the French air force. As one of the best pilots he was deployed in the most famous air force unit of the First World War, "Les Cigognes" (Storks). During one scouting mission over the battlefield in Belgium, Bjelovučić's plane was hit with gunfire and he was wounded. After lengthy treatment and recuperation, Ivan's wish to return to the battlefield was denied, but he started working as a team leader testing aeroplane engines in the "Bellanguer" company, and afterwards became director of the air school in Reims. During the Second World War, Ivan Bjelovučić fought for the French Resistance. After the liberation, Bjelovučić reappeared in the headlines of French newspapers. The occasion was his parachute jump at 57 years of age! He received a series of Peruvian, French and Belgian medals for his outstanding contribution to the development of aviation, including the French Medal for Bravery and the Croix de Guerre with palm. Bjelovučić was also a commander in the Peruvian army air force for a short time. Ivan, Juan, Jean Bjelovučić died on 14 January 1949 in Chaillot Hospital in Paris.

