



## Blue Angels: A Portrait of Gold

By Brian Shul

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### Blue Angels: A Portrait of Gold By Brian Shul

Says Brian Shul: "I was fortunate enough to get to spend an entire winter season with the team. I flew with them, attended their briefings, and generally watched as a team came together during a very difficult three month trial. I was able to see the behind-the-scenes story of what it takes to make that show happen, and it was phenomenal. I was faced with new photographic challenges also, as the intense maneuvering and high G forces of the Thunderbird routine brought new meaning to the word concentration. One of the quickest ways to a severe headache I know, is to be staring sideways out the cockpit, looking through a small viewfinder, trying to focus, pulling Gs, and maneuvering violently in ways you have no control over. But, like the fledgling Thunderbird pilots, I too became more competent with each flight and was able to produce enough shots that met my standards, for the book. It was the first book of its kind done on the team, and after reviewing it, the team was so impressed, they made me an Honorary Thunderbird, an honor bestowed on only few in the team's 40 year history. I was very proud of that, and felt like I had enjoyed the experience of a lifetime in the making of that book. But little did I know that just a year later, I would be involved in an even bigger project. I knew the Navy Blue Angels were coming up on their 50th Anniversary year, and really didn't have a good book about the team. I pursued the idea and was told no, each time I contacted the team about flying with them. Finally, I went to team headquarters in person and showed them the Thunderbird book. That did it. They wanted one too, but said theirs had to be even better. I informed them that in order to do that, they would have to let me fly with them for an entire air show season, to give the reader an inside account of what it is like to be a member of the Blue Angels. They approved all my requests, and I spent an entire year on the road with the team. I shot over 20,000 images..."

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