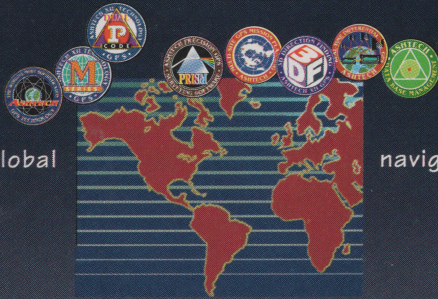
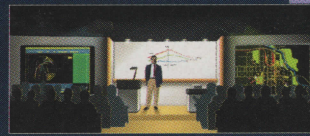
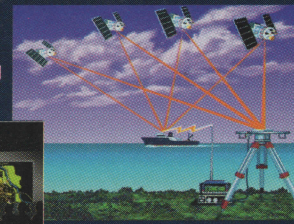


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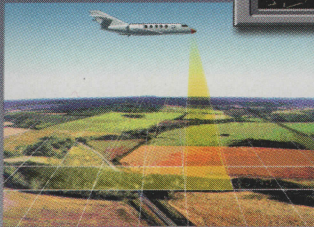


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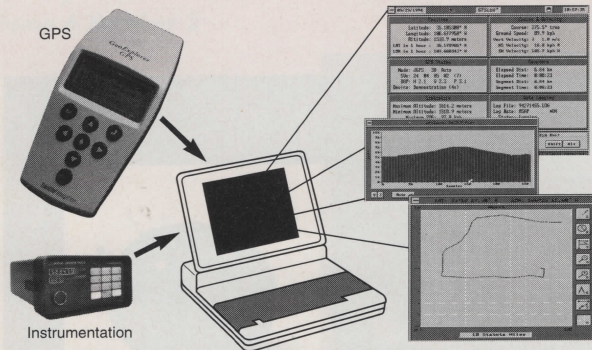
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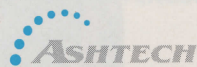
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FROM THE EDITOR

## Stamp of Approval

Sure, the Collier Trophy was a real honor, and Rockwell's commemorative emblems (featured in the December *GPS World Showcase*) were a wonderfully designed series. But these and other acknowledgments of one of the most remarkable, practical, and far-reaching accomplishments of human technical ingenuity and endeavor have mostly taken place among a small circle of friends, as a conversation among satnav cognoscenti.

Isn't it time that we took our light out from under the bushel? Isn't it time to celebrate the Global Positioning System with the rest of the United States? Isn't it time that the U.S. Postal Service issued some stamps featuring GPS? As a recurrent philatelist from childhood myself, I appreciate the wonder and educational value that a well-designed stamp can produce: a little window into the world, a miniature TV screen for the imagination. And, as a communications practitioner by training and trade, I definitely respect the cost-effective and irresistible promotions that the postal system carries into the homes and offices of the country.

GPS is ripe for postal commemoration. Unlike biographic stamps of, say, Elvis or Grace Kelly, we don't have to wait for anyone to die to honor GPS. The satellite constellation is complete. Applications are multiplying; markets are expanding steadily. But 95 percent of the population still doesn't know how to spell GPS. Despite the favorable prospects for GPS, some of the largest prospective applications — particularly among land vehicle and recreational users — would benefit from some education about the system and its utility. A stamp series could also give credit where credit is due — the Department of Defense and the GPS industry — and give a real boost to the marketplace as well. Like the quadrennial Olympic series that dedicate individual stamps to several different events, GPS would lend itself to a multiple issue portraying the diverse uses to which the system is being put.

Given the politics and time required for proposing and approving a new stamps, the idea needs institutional advocates, perhaps the U.S. GPS Industry Council or the Institute of Navigation or DoD itself. Having put the system together in the first place, it seems only right that we get into the stamp marketplace ahead of Liechtenstein, Pitcairn Islands, and those other philatelic entrepreneurs for whom postal revenue constitutes a significant portion of GNP. After all, being first to issue a GPS stamp would be a way for the nation to show that while you might lick us, you can't beat us.

Glen Gibbons

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