Issue # 274

January– March 2012

Antique Flyer



bringing modelers together
Academy of Model Aeronautics

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President's Comments

By Chip Buss



It's hard to believe that 2012 is one forth over. It feels like the holidays were just last week. Maybe that's because I'm still trying to pay them off? The weather conditions have not been very favorable for flying lately. Fortunately the field, although it be muddy, is in good shape thanks to the pre spring cleaning by a volunteer group. The runway has been patched and John Trumbull is testing a liquid driveway sealer to see if it will hold up under the elements. The runway upgrades will be completed when the weather clears. VP/Field Engineer Mike Sidwell has completed the "Temp Fence" to keep the idiots off the mud flats. Thanks goes out to the crew who helped install it. The crew consisted of five supervisors and no workers! How it was installed is still a mystery.

Our last meeting was very successful. We finally auctioned off the last of Tony S.'s items he generously donated to the club. SAM27 owes him many thanks and a lunch. The proceeds from his donation will probably fund this year's club project. The idea behind this project is to get as many members as possible building. The vision is to buy outrunner motors, ESCs, batteries, servo's, lumber, and plans in quantity for the end result being a receiver ready quick build plane. Anyone with a suggestion of which model to build is encouraged to please contact me. This project is for everyone, especially if you're a first time builder. Help will be available from the "Helper's" list which will cover most of the North Bay. Actually I can't think of any senior member who would not help, and we have many "SENIOR" members.

Finally, SAM27 has two members that are up for reelection in SAM INT. (I still call it big SAM). They are Ed Hamler for President and Mike Clancy for Western VP. There is a ballot in the latest SAM Speaks (April-May) for us to fill out and return. I can't think of a better way for us to get the latest info from our friends in high places!

That's about it for this quarter. Again, if you have any suggestions please call or email me at chip_buss@yahoo.com 415-883-7351.

A Few Words from the Editor

By Jimmy Walker



Spring is just around the corner and with it comes the time to go over you hanger of models and double check everything and pre-flight all of your models so you will be reliable and safe when the sun finally stays out and the field is dry. Check all those batteries and connections and if you have questions we have a whole club full of members that are willing to help.

Our primary function of this SAM club is for old-timers. But as you know the majority of the members will bring out modern planes or fun planes that are definitely not in the range of old-timer rules. That's what make this such a good club. We focus on our primary objective of being a SAM club, but we have a venue to fly just about anything we want for fun. We are limited a bit in the length of the runway so larger airplanes are not easily flown at Lakeville...especially the large and more scale airplanes. So...lets have lots of fun and don't feel like you are restricted in the type of plane that you fly.

My page here would be incomplete if I were not to add the constant request for pictures and articles from members. There are at least a hundred of you guys that own cameras and have collectively a lot of knowledge about model airplanes. That means that you could take some time to pen an article about your latest build or some pictures to go along with it. I hear a lot of click, click, click and a lot of flashes as you take pictures at the meetings and I see a lot of cameras at the field. Those that don't want to ahare them with the newsletter must have a fantastic private collection. I'd personally like to thank Ned Nevels for his input...he comes through with quite a bit of nice stuff. Several others are good at sending pictures too.

I often get the comment "I'll get these pictures to you as soon as possible"...well???

We could use some technical articles along with a chronology of your latest build. I've done very little modeling so far this year due to an increased work load and a lot of time away. But...there must be a few of you that are retired and could possibly put something together. Thanks in advance for your support.

On the Cover

Dick Sullivan's well made Kerswap for the Speed 400 event. Covering is Polyspan put down with a glue stick and nitrate dope.

Said in 1956—"I'm afraid this new Volkswagen car is going to open the door to a whole lot of those little foreign jobs".



Monthly Club Meeting - January 2012

The January, 2012 meeting was held at the Hamilton Field History Museum. John Trumbull has been very active in the creation and maintenance of the museum, and his efforts have resulted in a very interesting and informative venue. Many members showed up early to view the displays, and John gave us an informal presentation on the history of the building and the negotiations with various parties to bring the museum into existence. The building was originally a fire house when the base opened in 1935. Later it became an admin building. The base was active until 1975.

President Chip Buss opened the meeting at 7:15 with 28 members in attendance.

Jay Beasley reported the treasury to be in fine shape and as of the date of the meeting 79 members had paid dues for 2012. He will give a detailed 2011 treasury report to the membership at a future meeting.

A motion was passed to donate $250 to the Lakeville Volunteer Fire Department. Later in the year we will consider making a donation to the Novato Fire Department's Toys for Tots program.

Bids are open for the remainder of Tony Cincotta's models. Action has been slow up to this date, with only one bid for the Liberty Flyer and one bid for the engine. Bidding will be open until mid February. Jim Temple has graciously stored all of these items at his business site, as he has done for other auctions, and because of his support the officers decided to give Jim the magnetic building board that was to be part of the auction.

Chip reported that some members have asked about club ID

cards. A discussion followed concerning the value of carrying a membership card and the expense and time involved in issuing them. A card could be of value when trying to determine if a person you don't recognize at Lakeville is actually a member. A show of hands in support, or not, of issuing cards resulted in the decision to continue this discussion at a later date.

The continuing discussion of ALES altitude limiting devices for use in contests, guess what, continued. Andrew Tickle, Mike Clancy, and Aric Wilmunder gave their inputs. It was suggested that Andrew write a short description of the devices to be sent to the membership to see how many people would like to purchase one of the units. Chip will handle order taking.

Ed Hamler reported that Miriam Schmidt had some serious heart problems that have been taken care of by three stents, and she is doing well.

Bob Film gave another humorous presentation. He was stationed at Hamilton Field as an F-104 Crew Chief many, many, many years ago. His story about engine maintenance on the airplane had the crowd roaring in laughter. Who knew what a comedian Bob is? I guess after the ladder story he told a few weeks ago, we all should have known.

It was decided that we will hold February's meeting again at the museum, so we can spend a little more time viewing the exhibits. Thanks again to John Trumbull for making the building available to us.

Show and tell

Ed Solenberger showed a very nice electric boat he built. He also discussed how to keep CA bottle caps clear. He suggests using two caps and to clean a used one by soaking it in acetone. He doesn't think keeping the glue in a refrigerator is beneficial, and says avoid sticking a pin in the bottle top to clean it. Ed also demonstrated how to mix epoxy and lead shot in a ziplock bag to make form fitting ballasts.

Bud Romak showed two beautiful models: A Klarich kit Rearwin Speedster and a Fairchild 24. These models featured magnetic connections for the wing to fuselage and the struts to the wing and fuselage. They seemed to be very strong and should certainly work well in these rubber powered models. See picture on this page

Bob Film was the winner of the monthly raffle—a gift certificate from the hobby shop in Rohnert Park.

The End



Bud Romak's Fairchild 24

Monthly Meeting —- February 2012

The meeting was held at the Hamilton Air Museum courtesy of John Trumbull.

Bob Rose did his usual great job of handing out raffle tickets prior to the start of the meeting. Way to go Bob!

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 P.M. by our illustrious President, Chip Buss. There were 22 members and three guests present with one member wandering around all evening trying to find the place (Karl Tulp). Sorry Karl.

Since Jay was not at the meeting Chip asked for a volunteer to bitch and whine just to keep things normal. Ed Solenberger volunteered to provide this missing element.

At 7:02 the meeting was interrupted by a phone call from our Secretary/Treasurer Jay Beasley letting us know that he was up skiing. The interruption ended at 7:02:30.

The visitors at the meeting were Roy Anderson, an old San Francisco Vultures member, Gary Fellows, and a friend of Don Bekins, Kwei U.

Chip read and showed a flyer for Jakes Hobbies next indoor Fly on March 2nd at the Rohnert Park indoor soccer building.

Old Business:

The ALS chips have been ordered and the price will be $41. each.

The bidding on the auction items concluded with the Antic going to Dick Sullivan and the Liberty Flyer going to Larry McCormick. Two other items had been bid on but had not reached the minimum price. A discussion was held and it was voted to accept the bid amounts for these items.

Ed Hamler has set the dates for the 2012 Crash & Bash. September 21st, 22nd, and 23rd.

New Business:

There was a discussion of having a combined fun fly/meet with other local SAM clubs. Since some of the clubs have few members they might like to be invited to our events. We (Imperial We) will check on contact information for these other clubs.

John Trumbull asked for club participation in a Cub Scout model program. This was greeted favorably by the club members. Details to be worked out.

Bob Film asked about putting up tape at the field to try and keep people from messing up the parking area. Mike Sidwell will make rebar posts to install the tape. Assuming it will ever rain again and the tape will be needed!

Show & Tell:

Bob Rose gave a talk on some of the local history he has learned from his landlord Al Mariuchi. He talked of some old rail lines, wharfs (on the Petaluma River), and some of the local buildings (or what's left of them). He also showed a 'practice bomb' and a piece of a crashed airplane collected in the local area.

Don Bekins showed an old partially built 'tether boat'. His friend Kwei U is going to complete it.

Ed Solenberger showed the Ohlsson .60 that came with the boat. Ed resurrected the engine from its frozen state and it looked like a new engine. Ed also read a poem (?) he wrote about the engine. *(note the article in this newsletter from Ed—editor)*

Jim Bearham showed a foam Wilga – 2000.

Dick Sullivan showed his Speed 400 Kerswap. The club project from a couple of years back.

Ed Hamler showed a 'Power-Up'. An electric power system for paper airplanes from BP Hobbies.

The raffle drawing was held and Don Bekins won a multimeter. A second ticket was drawn and Rich Minnick won a $30 gift certificate. It will be presented to Rich when Chip finds it!

The meeting closed at 8:57 P.M.

Thus endeth the minutes.

VEJ



Dick Sullivan's kerswap

Monthly Meeting —— March 2012

The meeting was attended by 32 members who had fasted all day in preparation for … Free Pizza!!!

Prior to the meeting Bob Rose handed out raffle tickets and Chip Buss collected for membership dues (Tim Erikson) and ALES chips. ALS for Andrew.

After demolishing several Pizzas, the meeting was called to order at 7:04 PM by 'El Jefe'.

There were no volunteers for crier/whiner (Jay was absent, again) so we had to do without.

Chip wanted everyone who received a 'Remax, property for sale' e-mail from him to know that it was SPAM. Somebody got into his e-mail addresses.

Chip announced some coming events. A float fly at Lake Hennessey on Saturday March 31st and on the same night an indoor flying event at the indoor soccer building in Rohnert Park. There will also be a float fly at Sal Lake on Sunday April 22nd .

'El Jefe' also mentioned that he had the ALES chip for those that ordered them.

It was mentioned that Ed Hamler had sent an e-mail regarding a possible AMA requirement for all clubs within a 5 mile radius of an active airport to have a written agreement with that airport. It would require that the airport be notified when RC flying activities were going on. There is still a lot of discussion going on about this so we'll just have to wait and see.

Chip announced that Bob May's wife passed away and a card was passed around for the members to sign.

John Trumbull was approached by a group from Gnoss Field (The Gnoss Field Community Association) who would like us to put on a Show & Tell at one of their functions some time in June or July. There was a concern from some of the members that maybe we wouldn't want to be involved and it might be better that the less Gnoss Field knows about us the better. It was suggested we contact the AMA for advice. John will hold off till he gets an O.K. from Chip.

John also passed around a sheet of proposed rules for an ALES contest at Lakeville. Andrew Tickel discussed ALS. Mike Clancy suggested club members come to Dixon to view and experience an ALES contest. More discussion of ALS/ALES followed.

FIELD WORK: On a TOFFF day, a group of members repaired some of the holes in the field runway. 'Weed Block' was put down under the larger holes and the holes were covered with black 'Gorilla Tape'. As an experiment, John Trumbull covered one of the patches with driveway repair goo. If it works, we'll do it to all repairs. Chip brought his mower and the weeds were gone over in an attempt to keep them in control. Also, liberal amounts of 'Round Up' were used.
On a different day, because of the rain, and the fact that we can't seem to keep idiots from driving on saturated adobe, another group of members put up stakes and tape to see if that would keep people off the wet adobe.

A club project was discussed and John Trumbul suggested we might include the Cub Scouts as he mentioned at our last meeting. Chip said we might want to buy a bunch of cheap motors and speed controls and go from there. Dis cussion followed.

Ed Hamler said he was going to Taft this weekend and then there was a discussion of how members could find out when these contests were going to be. It was mentioned to use the District 10 WEB site's calendar to check for events. That assumes that clubs will notify the district WEB Master of their events.

It was brought up that some of the smaller local SAM clubs would like help in putting on events. They want to put on the event but don't have the manpower to do it by themselves. Ed Hamler had a list of the tasks necessary to put on an event and these smaller clubs would need people to do some of these tasks. More discussion.

The subject of trophies was brought up and it was suggested that computer generated certificates or small 'dash' plaques would be good enough.

Ed Hamler had two SAM rule books for $5 ea. Both sold quickly.

In the raffle drawing, Frank Plexico won the $30 gift certificate. Gary Fellers won a Harbor Freight flashlight. Robert Belforte won the Big SAM membership donated by Ed Hamler.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:04 PM.

In the auction that followed (Auctioneer Mike Clancy) $460 was collected.

Thus endith the minutes.

SAM 27 Gallery



Now Children...everyone wave goodbye to the little airplane.



Another work of art by Bud Romak.

The Fairchild is shown here in its "bare bones" stage. Many of the parts such as the struts and cowl are held on by strong light magnets. We're looking forward to the finished model.

Proposed Rules for Trumbull's ALES* contest

Registration: The contest desk will open at 9 AM on _____2012 at the Lakeville Road flying field.

There are two classes of Old Timers:

Planes with wingspan of 60" or less (regardless of wing loading or square inches or mode of power)
larger planes (no electrified gliders).

There will be a fee of $_____ for each class.

Pilot's meeting (and rule review) at 9:15AM

Flight schedule for small planes: 9:30 mass launch
10:20 to 11 :00 individual choice launch window
11 :15 second mass launch

Flight schedule for large planes: 10:00 mass launch
10:20 to 11 :00 individual choice launch window
11:45 second mass launch

Launch rules (for both classes)

For mass launches there will be a 3 minute window, opened by the director's whistle, to get your plane in the air. A second whistle will sound after two minutes to warn of the final minute for launching. The director will give a backward count for the final 20 seconds to get to altitude before timing starts. Upon the third whistle, all motors must turn off regardless of altitude, and timing for all planes starts simultaneously. Any plane having an ALES controlled motor shutoff before the third whistle sounds will NOT restart. A pilot can fly for as long as he wants during the 3-minute launch window so long as he does not experience an ALES motor shutoff.

For the individual choice launch the pilot selects when to launch, and time starts for that flight upon altitude shutoff or 2 minutes from launch whichever first occurs. The individual pilot's timer is responsible for monitoring motor turnoff. The plane must be airborne at the end of the launch window.

Launching may be ROG or by hand-launch so long as it is done from the launching area No pilot may stand in the launch area while his plane is flying; assistants may enter to launch and leave immediately. Gas engines must start in the pit area.

Flight objective

All three tasks are straight 15-minute duration and will be scored by the number of airborne seconds between the starting time and ground contact (as adjusted for landing problems or motor restarts). Each pilot is responsible for reporting an accurate time to the contest scorekeeper.

Landing rules

To be scored the plane must land outside the parking and spectator areas and within the area of the runway and cultivated field west of the runway.· The parking and preparation areas, the ditches and areas outside the ditches, and the field east of the parking area: are out of bounds for landings. Any person who enters the landing area to retrieve an aircraft in a manner or at a time that interferes with the landing of any another aircraft will subject the plane he is retrieving and the pilot of that plane to contest disqualification. Any pilot who impacts another plane on the; ground will suffer a 60 second penalty on that flight. A "landing box" will be designated by colored tape on the ground. A pilot may restart his motor as necessary inside the box to avoid hitting an obstruction upon landing. No penalty will occur if the restart is within 20 feet of the ground, and the time for that flight will be scored as the time from the start of the flight plus 2 seconds after restart. (Yes, I assume from 20 feet or less in the air the landing would have been completed within 2 seconds.)

**altitude limited electric soaring*



April 22nd
Fun Float Fly at Sal Lake near Healdsburg
Chip Buss 415-883-7351 chip_buss@yahoo.com

April 28th and 29th
Oakland Cloud Dusters 23rd annual Free Flight Championships at Waegell Field in Sacramento
Bill Vanderbeek 408-472-0274 billvanderbeek@yahoo.com

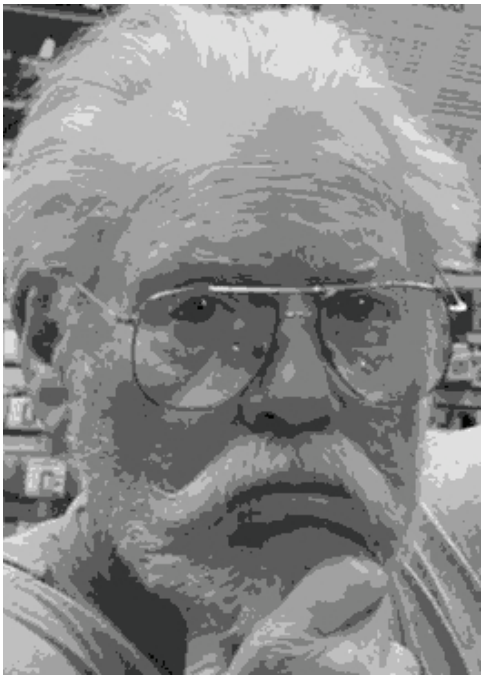
May 25th, 26th, and 27th
Bissonet Memorial at Lost Hills
CD Walt Ghio 209-478-8225 f1bwalt@comcast.net

June 2nd
Western States Champs at Waegell Field in Sacramento
CD Mike McKeever 916-967-8475

June 23rd
Northern California Free Flight Championships
CD Doug Galbreath 530-753-2519 F1Cdoug@aol.com

WHEN TOYS WENT TO WAR

By Ed Solenberger



This story takes us back to the 1930s, when times were lean and fathers were out of work. Children made do with things they could conjure up from items at hand as toys. Very little money was available for "unnecessaries".

Airplanes fascinated young and old alike. Children were attracted to magazine pictures of model airplanes, but they cost more than some kids could afford.

Along came a man. who saw the need and spent his life making flying models that youngsters could afford. His name was Jim Walker. His story is well known, but his models came to be perhaps even of more importance, as we shall see.

World War II broke out; our country was poorly equipped to respond to the attacks—especially from the enemy aircraft. Our military gunners had very little practice shooting at aircraft The only practice up to that time was our full sized aircraft towing targets. That was not working very well because the tow plane frequently got hit. There were drones, but they were costly.

An Army colonel saw Jim's little gliders, and immediately recognized their value as practice targets for machine gunners. He ordered a large number of them and they were also used by other branches of the Service.

Enter another famous man, Irwin Ohlsson. He made little engines or "Toy Engines" as some referred to them. Combining these engines with the famous Walker Fireball gave anti-aircraft gunners a chance to fire at flying targets. Over 15,000 Jim Walker Fireballs powered by the little Ohlsson .23s were launched off of ships for target practice! All civilian supplies were suspended until the War ended.

The rest of this story is about one of those "Toy Engines". The characters are a composite of men I have known and some I have yet to meet.

A father went off to War and became a gunner aboard a Navy Destroyer Escort. He got practice by shooting at the models. Soon his ship Is attacked by enemy suicide planes. His new skills allowed him to shoot down two enemy planes before they could reach his ship. However, one hit the ship and he was badly injured.

After the war, he returned home in San Francisco. He remembered the "Toys" and told his son about them. He and his son bought one of the engines, and they decided to build a boat to be powered by it. They planned to have fun together running it at one of the lakes in Golden Gate Park. They had no experience running such a thing, but Dad had the ability to make a mounting block for it. That block of wood displayed a great amount of woodworking skill. They started to build the boat, but it was never finished as the engine ran only a short time



Ohlsson 60

WHEN TOYS WENT TO WAR

before it refused to cooperate. Sadly, the father died soon after as a result of his war injuries. The son put the project aside and it lingered in a corner, gathering dust. Recently, it came into the hands of our own Don Bekins, who passed this unfinished project on to me. I now have this great antique engine, fully cleaned, perhaps to be run again to fulfill the dream. The boat will be finished as a display model. Unfortunately, the two—engine and boat—will not be united as was the plan. There is no longer a facility for a tethered engine powered model speedboat today in the park in San Francisco.



This was one of the "must have" models in the early 40's. The Jim Walker Fireball from American Junior Aircraft Company. You could buy this complete kit for $7.95. The control line model was a dream to fly with an Ohlsson 23.



Fort Lewis Washington—1943. You can barely see the Interceptors in the sky as the gunners take aim. This was as much fun as skeet shooting. We have a class of models called catapult models...but I hope we don't have artillery.

Last Month's Mystery Plane was...

The Romanian IAR 80

This plane was produced by the Romanian Aeronautical Industries in 1939. It was an all metal fighter and ground attack airplane on par with the Me-109, the Hurricane, and the P-40. Entry was delayed until 1941 when armament was available and it flew for Romania on the front lines until 1944.

The IAR 80 was powered by the Gnome-Rhone 14K (a fourteen cylinder radial) under license.

Many of the features of the plane were copied from other planes of the era. The Polish PZL 24 was one example of a very good airplane which the designers of the IAR 80 used to incorporate some of the features. The wing profile was an exact replica of the Italian Savoia-Marchetti bomber in service in the Romanian Air Force at the time. This was a result of time constraints in designing a wing and it gave the IAR 80 a slower speed, but more maneuverability.

The design of the cockpit, instruments and the gun sight were all imported from foreign suppliers.

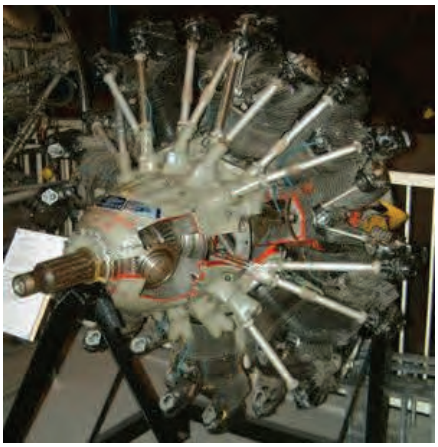
This plane was considered one of the best fighters of 1939 and a Luftwaffe Major tested one in 1941 and said that the take-offs and landings were very good; slightly slower than the Bf-109e but the climb is equivalent; in a dogfight the turns were equivalent. In 1941 the Romanians were firmly under the German sphere and Germany supplied the much needed guns.



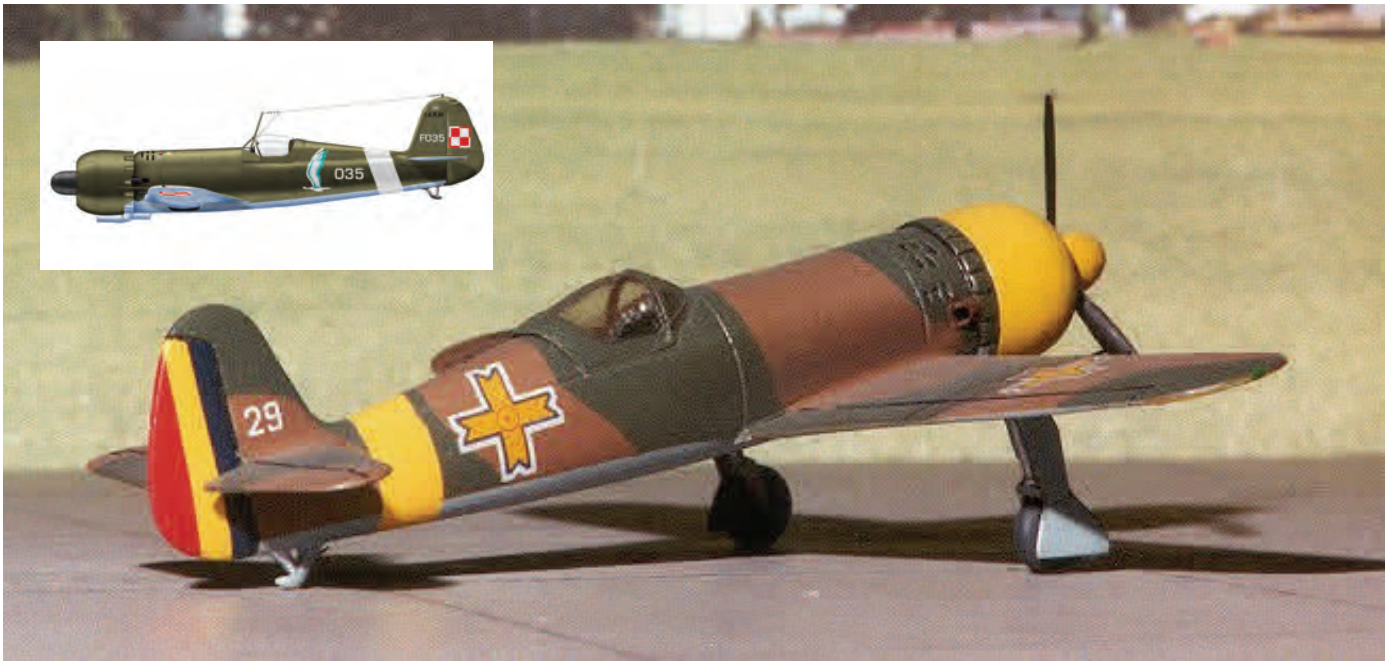
A larger Gnome engine was installed for a while. a BMW was a possibility but Germany was unable to fulfill the export.

In 1943 the USAAF flew B-24s to the Ploesti refinery. The IAR 80s along with Romanian Me-109s shot down 10 of the American bombers.

Another fight between P-38s and IAR 80s showed 23 losses for the P-38. Quite impressive for a little known aircraft.



Gnome-Rhone 14K



La Page Mystère

This was an airplane designed and used between the wars. The US Army Air Corp used it until the late 30's.

The prototypes took place in 1927 US National Air Races and took 2nd place.

In 1932 one was flown from Dayton Ohio to Washington DC at a speed of 266 mph and an altitude of 25,000 feet. This version had a new Conqueror supercharged engine.

They served in several "Pursuit" groups though the accident rate was high and they eventually became obsolete. Most were simply worn out and scrapped.

A fine example is seen at the USAF museum in Dayton, Ohio. The colored pictures at the top of the page were taken by yours truly—the editor of this newsletter.

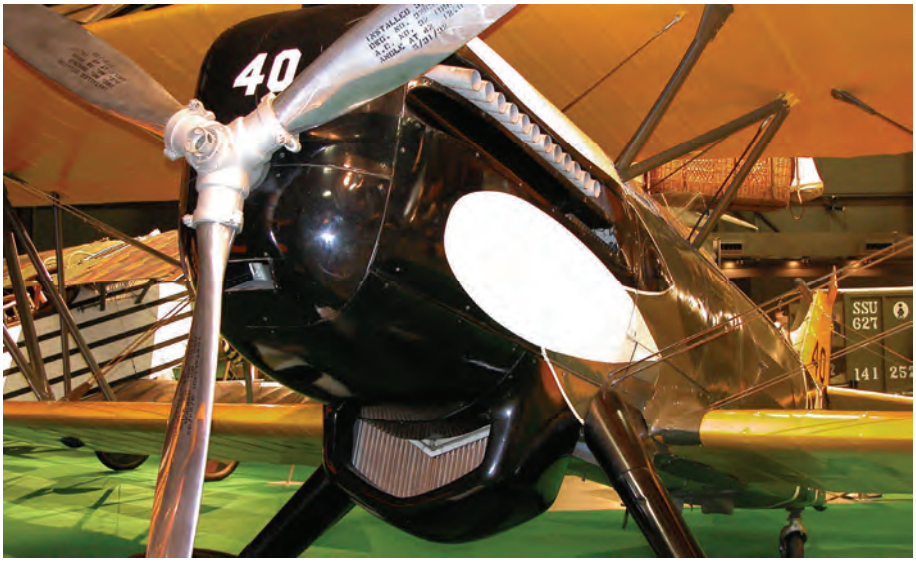
I currently have a new kit for a large RC model of this plane. I don't dare take it down from the rafters...it's too enticing.





Makes for a nice model!







The Benefits of Being a SAM Member

By Ned Nevels

One of the advantages to being a SAM member for over 25+ years is having some great friends to help you along! How many guys have the SAM President configuring a recently purchased model for your Anderson Spitfire motor and getting it all set up for flight with a PCM receiver and Transmitter? Or, for that mater, have a former SAM President and arguably one of SAM"s finest R/C flyers do the first test flight? I purchased the model from Steve Roselle, who purchased it from the estate of Wayne Conner of SAM 21 from Tracy California. The model was built specifically for an Anderson Spitfire motor with a cowl that was sized for one. Eddie had a spinner that was a perfect fit for the cowl but the prop nut was too long to fit within the spinner. SO we asked our fellow SAM 27 member (and the co-founder of the Ohlsson 23 event) Ed Solenberger if he could make a short nut that would work the same way as the McCoy prop nut does. Once again I benefit tremendously by having been around SAM for so long!

You'll Notice that the new prop nut is dual-threaded with the lower portion threaded for the engine prop stud but the top portion is threaded to fit the spinner alignment stud! You talk with Ed Solenburger at TOFFF on Thursday and meet him at the field Sunday to test the model out....yeah he just cut out of solid aluminum on his vertical milling machine in a day or so!!



Photo by Ned Nevels



Photo by Ned Nevels

So then we get the model out and do an RF check with the radio and the engine running...Ed Hamler (left) and Don Bekins (right) checking out the RF characteristics of the new (to me) Bomber.



Photo by Ned Nevels

Here's the business end of the model with the Anderson Spitfire.

The Benefits of Being a SAM Member



How many guys can count on the best R/C pilot in SAM to test-fly his models ? I don't think there will be any problems with seeing this model in the air!! It's officially "RED" but it has overtones of orange that really make it "POP" in the sky...



We also tested another model, built by Dan Carpenter of SAM 26. Dan builds the most competitive SAM models (usually Foote Westerners) He had built a couple of smaller models, designed for B and A classes, equipped with McCoy 29 and 19 ignition motors respectively, but the models were scaled to be legal for glow. Don and Ed tested the models before the Eloy contest and found that the ignition McCoy was not competitive with models of this size.

Eddie took them home with him and put in one of his Super Tiger G21-.29 and a Veco Glow in them. He brought out the B model Foote with his Super Tigre .29. All I can say is “Look out folks!” this will be an unbeatable combination in "B" Glow competition.

Letters to the Editor

Found these quotes online at SAM talk forum today I thought they were very true. I cropped and edited them to flow but they're not my quotes but are from several men.

Quotes from my fellow modelers

Frankly I pity those who never work with their hands. I don't snob over them, nor do I feel superior, I simply pity them because they will never feel what any of the rest of us model builders feel.

When I build a model I stand back and remember how it looks and how it flies is really only important to me. To satisfy one's self is all that is really important in our world of models.

What endures in this hobby of building model airplanes are your feelings about your work and creations. You would not trade your models for anybody's, not even the best models ever made because they were made by someone else. To buy a model implies that I would have to trade my life for his which means living a whole new complex of pain and joy. One of those per lifetime is enough.

I recognize being a builder of intermediate skills in all respects but I can narcissistically stare at a model that I have built over and over. This would never happen with a model that I did not build. I will admire another's model analytically trying to learn from it and be motivated by the craftsmanship. But it will never be mine at rest or in the air and my spirit will never soar with it.

It's a way of talking with your hands. And some people are more fluent than others. And in a world where a great number of people work at a desk or on a computer, manipulating, processing and otherwise creating words and numbers, working in a physical medium offers a great deal of satisfaction.

"Learn to use your hands as well as your head

There is a kind of practical knowledge and good sense which can flow into the brain only through the use of the hands." Charles F. Kettering, (1876-1958)

James Temple

Petr Kolar sent me some photos of his new models he's preparing for the SAM Euro Champs. I am attaching a couple of the glider photos. They are both gorgeous and excellent examples of the craftsmanship often seen in Europe. Rado Cizek's Zehrovice is a superb flyer. I'll look for it in June in Slovakia.

Ed Hamler





Letters to the Editor

These notes are from Aric Wilmnunder concerning his trip to the 2012 AMA Expo.

If you want specific details on the Expo, skip down to the paragraph that begins with 'So About the Expo'. If you don't mind a few reflections along the way, well as the sign says, Enter at your own Risk!

I hate regrets. I see regrets as either things you have done that you wish that you hadn't, or things that you didn't do that you wish that you had. I don't have too many of either of these, but if I had to put them on a list, there are probably more things in my life that I wish I had done than not. Not going to the 2002 Olympics in Salt Lake was one of those. Family and friends had a place to stay, it was just about in our backyard, but with the tragedy of 9/11 just a few months prior, I was worried about other terrorist strikes and used that as an excuse to stay home.

Whether consciously or not, I now try to make an effort to avoid future regrets. I had always wanted to see a shuttle launch, and as the number of remaining flights dwindled, I saw a news report that the final launch of Discovery had been postponed due to an electrical problem in an engine. With no place to stay, and not even knowing where I was going to watch it from, I grabbed a flight to Orlando. Little did I know that after the first delay, there was another a day later, then a weather delay, then a hydrogen leak the day after that, and then someone spotted that insulating foam was coming off the external tank and the flight was scrubbed for over 3 months.

Fortunately, out of this disaster, a phoenix rose. After the scrub I decided to visit the Space Coast and stopped at a library to use the Internet and look up a place to stay the night. The reference librarian came over to help and suggested another hotel nearby so I took her advice. As I was checking in I was a bit concerned about the raucous noise coming from the pool area, and the voices weren't from kids, mainly from older guys. After I was handed my room key I noticed a small table with a white tablecloth and a sign simply stating 'Welcome Astronauts'. Reading this I returned to the front desk and when I asked I was told that the Astronaut Scholarship Foundation meets there once a year for a fund raising event. I went to the table and asked about the event, and after a small donation I was invited later into a ballroom with about sixty astronauts.

I had texted another space enthusiast that I met on the trip that I was staying at a hotel with some astronauts, she wanted to know who they were, expecting at most a shuttle commander. When I told her she was shocked that I had unexpectedly met the cream of the US Space program. I met Buzz Aldrin, the second astronaut on the moon, Jim Lovell and Fred Haise from Apollo 13, Gene Cernan, and Al Bean were there. Scott Carpenter, Al Worden, and many others. In that one room there were eight men who had walked on the moon. I would never have stumbled upon this if I hadn't taken the initial risk of getting on a flight to Florida. Missing the shuttle launch suddenly wasn't such a disappointment.

So what does this have to do with the 2012 AMA Expo? Well before last year's Expo, like most of you, I began to receive email reminders in November from the AMA that the event was coming up.

Then reminders about reduced prices if you bought your passes early, but by the time January rolled around the discounted airfares were already gone and the thought of driving to Ontario at the last minute seemed overwhelming. Well guess what. I should have gone, and I have had a whole year to regret my mistake. This year I decided to not compound the error and with just a little warning, to my family, I threw my travel kit (including 3 planes) into the car and headed south

I also had an ulterior motive. Last year after flying at the cross-country sailplane event in Cal Valley, I read about how 24 years ago, Joe Wurtz set the cross-country long distance record of 141 miles. With the advancement of technology, it surprised me that this record was still standing and so I wondered about what it would take to put together an event to challenge the record. Well among the vast number of tasks that would be required to organize this kind of event, one of them is locating a suitable course to fly, so during my trip to the Expo in Ontario I added about 4 hours to the drive by scouting different routes down the central valley. More on that in a future article.

So about the Expo. This was my first visit to the Expo so I can't go into detail about what has changed since last year, but I can talk about my impressions from this year's event. To start off, I was very fortunate that I knew a number of others that were also in attendance. Before the Expo opened on Friday I had a call from Scott Woodward, incoming SVSS president, that there were some spare expo tickets, and while the line was already into the parking lot, he was inside the convention

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center and that I should come and join him. The day was off to a promising start. Scott was there with his brother; they had both grown up flying planes with their dad. When we first entered the Expo we tried working our way down the far right isle and quickly became separated as we each stopped at one booth or another. Eventually we decided to just wander at our own pace and meet up later.

The first area I came across was a static display of scale airplanes. A variety of WWII fighters, an early 'flying machine', and a gorgeous jet that if you looked inside you could see that it had a glass cockpit with fully functioning video displays. Just stunning. Across from the airplanes was a display of RC Transmitters going back more years than I care to guess. I recognized a few that I had when I was younger, and some that had belonged to the adults that had mentored me. Next to that display I was pleased to see Ed Hamler representing Big SAM, the parent organization of the Society of Antique Modelers. Ed was busy signing up new members.

On the next rows were demonstrations on how to redo the covering on your plane, and as the day progressed, the different sample planes that were being overhauled and restored went from wrecks to modeling masterpieces. In other booths there were blinking lights for night-flyers, wobbling glue holders to keep your glue upright, every length of servo extension you could possibly need, each for only $2, and lots of hobby shops and other vendors selling the latest goods at substantially discounted prices.

One of the products that surprised me the most was the proliferation of large foam planes. Mostly scale and primarily of World War II aircraft. Now when I say large, many of these had four-foot wingspans or more, working landing gear, and lighting and the planes were priced for just a few hundred dollars. If you want a scale B-17 and don't mind the telltale marks of extruded foam, these planes will be flooding the marketplace soon.

On the sailplane side, I had been warned that if I didn't want to drain my finances to stay clear of the Soaring USA booth, but eventually the lure was too great. Probably the most impressive plane there was an all-black spread-tow Xplorer II. It looked incredibly menacing, and I shudder to think how few ounces it must weigh.

Horizon Hobbies had one of the largest booths at the show. I wanted to talk to their representative about telemetry and also to let them know that the customer support that I received was exceptional. Over the holidays I had my DX7 transmitter upgraded from DSM2 technology, which uses 2 2.4Ghz channels, to DSMX, which uses agile frequency hopping across a range of channels. I had been experiencing some signal dropouts and short range-checks on some of my planes, and after the upgrade many of my range checks have now more than tripled in distance. The Horizon technician replaced a number of my receivers and satellites at no charge.

I think that in a few years telemetry will alter our flying landscape. GPS tracking not only will allow us to track our flights and locate downed planes, but could also be used to notify civilian and commercial aircraft of our location during flight. In-flight power monitoring will quickly alert you of low battery situations, and could identify and warn when power drains by faulty servos or extreme maneuvers is placing a strain on the flight systems. I have learned that human perception is especially limited by distance, so having tools to help us improve our senses will make us better pilots.

For my questions on telemetry, I asked among the Horizon reps and they quickly introduced me to their expert on the subject. I currently use an altitude data logger to record m flights and I upload and review the data when I return from the field. I believe that feedback is crucial for learning a skill, and that getting immediate feedback is better than having it delayed even a few hours. My key interest is to use altitude telemetry as a tool to improve everything from how to improve my launches, to how to better read lift during flights.

I first wanted to learn the range of the telemetry systems, and the full-range module has a 2-mile effective range. Plenty or range for sailplane use. I have an older iPhone, and their receiver module will work with this as well as iPad tablets, and even the iPod Touch. The current software gives the altitude as a number or on a dial, and I was interested in having plotting, so you could track your altitude history, not just your current situation. I was assured that this capability was under development and new software features will be arriving shortly. One interesting note was that since these are applications that are available for download from the Apple Store, they have to go through the Apple software approval process. This was a challenge for Horizon's first release, but now that they are familiar

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with the process, they believe that subsequent releases will be easier and quicker to get through approval. I will be following these developments and may write more about this in the future.

The Expo included two flight rooms, one for sponsored teams, mostly young pilots flying 3D profile planes doing amazing aerobatics just inches from the deck. The other room was packed with youngsters building and flying small gliders or rubber powered planes. It may not always seem this way, but the sport is bringing in a new generation of flyers, and these kids grew up with video games, so not only are their reactions many times quicker than ours, but they are attracted by speed, and maneuverability and cool new technology like quadcopters and First-Person flying.

On the second day the crowds grew even thicker, so if you were hoping to have a conversation with any of the vendors, you should have thought of that the day before. The Swap Meet opened up and even before the line outside the convention hall began to inch forward, a few individuals were already heading to their cars with their newly acquired treasures. By the time I got there, there was such a crowd that as another attendee described it, the room already smelled like an armpit, and that description was certainly apt. Any great deals must have disappeared quickly, but it was interesting to wander between the different tables and feeling a bit of nostalgia looking at the old kits and engines.

For me the most important part of the second day was a presentation, including representatives of the FAA, discussing the new rules being developed that will impact unmanned or model aircraft.

Preceding the forum, another sailplane enthusiast has approached me and mentioned that the new rules were going to set a flight ceiling and limit model flying to no higher than 400 feet. When I heard that I envisioned the end of Thermal Duration, 15-minute SAM flights, model rocketry, cross-country, the list went on. I arrived prepared to hear bad news, but what I found was that so much of the rules process is still shrouded in secrecy, the discussion was more about the process of creating the new rules, rather than what those rules were going to be. What was discussed was that once the FAA rules are finalized, the AMA or other organizations are then able to submit Standards back to the FAA and those Standards then go through their own approval, rejection, or modification process. While the AMA would develop the Standards, they are hesitant to discuss them publically since any standards need to be in response to the initial rules, which are still under development, so a lot of unnecessary angst, and anger could develop if the AMA reacts before the rules are posted.

After the FAA presentation I spoke briefly to our district representative and I also thanked the AMA member who is working with the FAA on this process. I certainly do not envy being in that position. Afterwards I took one final pass through the entire exhibit hall, picked up a case for my transmitter, one of those goofy glue holders and then headed out to my car to begin the trip home. Fortunately I had some fun on the trip back. The Central Valley RC Club, home of the Fall Festival, had their first Thermal Duration contest of the year on Sunday morning. This gave me a chance to improve on my performance from my previous visit to the Fall Fest.

One final note regarding the scrubbed launch of the shuttle Discovery. After all of the repairs were completed, my friends and I all returned to Florida last February for what was to be a vey successful and stunning final launch for Discovery up to the International Space Station. After being needled by two of my sons for months about leaving them behind for that adventure, in July we all boarded flights to Florida along with my Dad, who had worked on satellites but never attended a launch. Three generations of my family were able to see the final space shuttle launch when Atlantis lifted into the sky.

No more regrets there.

Aric Wilmunder





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Club Meetings

Monthly Meetings are normally held on the third Wednesday at 7:00PM at the Novato Fire Department Training Room on Atherton Avenue between highway 101 and Highway 37. The dates may vary; a reminder is always sent out before each meeting. The training room is located behind the fire station. Ample parking is available.
Occasionally a meeting is held at Round Table Pizza in Novato so please contact someone above if you have a question about the venue for that month.

Membership

Membership dues are based on the class of membership. The **full membership** includes flying privileges at the Lakeville site and voting rights for only $25 yearly. An **associate membership** includes the newsletter and meetings for only $15 yearly. Associate members will not be allowed to fly at the Lakeville site.
Dues are payable to the treasurer/secretary as shown above and require proof of current AMA membership if you fly at Lakeville.