



The THUMB PRINT

Thermal Thumbers Of Metro Atlanta

www.thermalthumbers.weebly.com

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July-Aug., 2023

HEADS UP

Welcome to the fourth issue of the year. We've much to present because we've been flying up a storm outdoors at NG Turf field and at the Muncie Nats. Full reportage and photo spreads follow for each. We're also offering more indoor action at Christy Church in Macon, GA, hopefully forthcoming this fall and winter. Several more months of outdoor action remains at NG Turf field in Whitesburg, GA, and note some things are finalized for our annual Turkey Shoot in November. Gary Morton is the contest director, and the flight program is being worked upon as I peck. Expect the flyer for same in an upcoming Bulletin and the next newsletter. So, glue some sticks together and show up somewhere with a model airplane! Time for me to get put of the way.

RENEWAL REQUEST

Well, the worm has turned. We've gone from nag to tirade to harangue to a mere request. You might ask why the change of mood. Well, we're in the last half of the calendar year, and the club offers half-off memberships for the remainder of the year. Ergo, it's easier and cheaper for those sitting on the fence to join, and those that run across our website mid-year might be inclined to join for half the toll. Very reasonable of us, I'd say. For those so seduced, the membership form follows.

THINGS TO DO, PLACES TO GO, PEOPLE TO SEE

We're already half way through with the year's contest schedule, but there's plenty of flying to be done. You can't say we don't provide fun things to do on the weekends. Be advised: we've added special FAC fun for September and October. September's is Embryo ROG and Hoot Owl in 2 Bit +1, and October's is No-Cal Scale. As always, concerning Christ Church contests, look to the Bulletin about two weeks prior for confirmation before you burn the gas.

Last but not least, the October meet will feature the annual **Old Goat Smackdown**, where stout-hearted lads and lassies vie for the fame and glory of taking home the Old Goat Trophy. Gird your loins, for it's not an event for the weak or the silly. Anyone with a Blue Ridge Special can give it a go, if you have what it takes, where eagles dare.

Sept. 10: Outdoor Contest. Summer Swan Song. NG Turf, Whitesburg, GA. CD-Jim Conery

Sept. 22-24: Outdoor Contest. FF SAM Champs/FAC Contest. AMA HQ, Muncie, IN

Sept. 30: Indoor Contest. Christ Church, Macon, GA

Oct. 7-8: Outdoor Contest. Phil Hartman Memorial Contest. Raeford, NC.

Oct. 15: Outdoor Contest. Last Fling Til Spring. NG Turf, Whitesburg, GA. CD-David Barfield

Oct. 14 or 21, to be determined: Indoor Contest. Christ Church, Macon, GA

Nov. 5: Outdoor Contest, Annual Turkey Shoot. CD-Gary Morton. Flyer forthcoming.

THUMBS ON THE MARCH: 2023 MUNCIE NATS

Let's start off with the weather report. In all but one aspect the Nats weather this year was delightful. Highs were only in the low to mid-eighties, and only got kind of hot one day. Nighttime temps were a blessing to the campers, staying in the sixties all week and making for deep slumbers. The cool nights did make for heavy dew and fog in the mornings, but it only lasted a few hours. That one aspect! Well, the wind the last two days wasn't our friend, featuring the most turbulent air we'd seen in a while. Thermals were strong and abundant but were kicking out models right and left. The last day's howling winds were added to the crazy turbulence and made for an exciting day. Retrievals that week weren't too bad because of the modest temps and shorter crops, but the winds the last two days made it a chore. The low daytime temps certainly helped. Overall, turnout was about what it was last year in the 130s. (One note of criticism: frankly, the AMA screwed up mightily in not providing the customary large buckets of ice water at HQ to the fliers. Had it not been unseasonably cool, they would've had a big mess on their hands. (Some of the other fliers are so old, and those plastic, pony-size bottles of water just don't cut it.)



Nats photos by Frank Perkins, Dohrman Crawford and Don DeLoach

Thirteen Thumbs made the contest and all flew, and frankly, we had more than our fair share of podium finishes. We recorded a number of firsts: Hope Finn with hers in Mulvihill, Josh Finn with his in HLG, E-36 and Dawn Unlimited and Caleb Finn's in E-36 Jr. and more podium finishes galore. Frank Perkins, Jim Conery, young Paul Finn and your trusty editor had numerous podium finishes to add despair to the efforts of our fellow fliers from-sea-to-shining-sea. Also, by my rough calculations the Thumbs were approximately ten percent (10%!) of the total turnout, give or take, so kudos to us. (And where was everybody else? They must've heard we were coming in force.)

After we returned Dohrman and I calculated our expenses for our Nats trip. As for me, it came to around 650 dollars, American. Rough summary: gas @ \$200ish, contest and camping fees @ \$200, banquet and raffle @ \$50, food and beer @ \$100ish. Dohrman and Jim probably spent some more on their daily, 5000 calorie breakfast at the 12th Street Café. I went cheap and ate well out of the nearby Walmart deli section, the food trucks on the field and a few dinners in town with my camp mates. Regardless, this ain't much expense for an eight day vacation?!

Camping on the field makes a huge difference financially, of course, as in ten dollars, American, a night versus whatever you find on the interwebs for hotels/motels. The regulation showers and bathrooms on the field make it an easy decision for the hardier of nature, that and a 1200 acre flying field in your front yard. We encourage all of you to give the Nats a try next year.

THUMBS ON A LIST

Who knew there was such a list, in this case the augustly named "Sierra Hotel". Well believe it or not, someone is keeping a list of all those valiant souls who've flown over a minute in S-Cat Jet as it's known locally, otherwise known as FAC Jet Catapult. (Did you notice in the new rulebook that undercambered airfoils are allowed!?—ed.) Two Thumbs are entered thusly:

Gary Morton 10/20/19 P-59 Barron Field, Wawayanda, NY 2nd

Josh Finn 9/5/21 Canberra Rocky Mountain Champs, Denver, CO 1st
6/27/21 Canberra Chattahoochee Challenge, Whitesburg, GA 1st

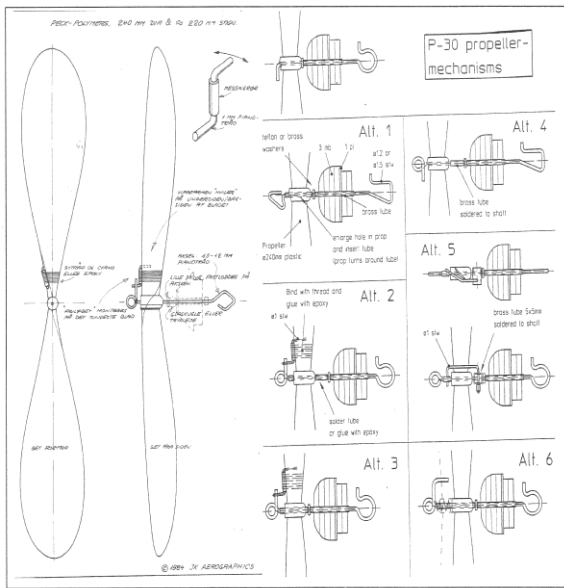
It may be no surprise that our man Wally Farrell dominates the very long list with seventeen (17) chalk marks to his credit. However, anybody feeling frisky about ousting the high time leader, please note: Randall Krystosek sits on top with a 12:15 mark with a Cessna T-37, first place at the 2019 Nats, no less?! Well, I'd say you have your work cut out for you. And as we all say, "S-Cat Jet, never has an event promised so little and never disappointed", preceding discussion excepted, of course. Other than being worthy of kanones, an ease of construction, costing next to nothing, offering buckets of camaraderie and being a ridiculous amount of fun, it has no redeeming value whatsoever. Plans abound on the interwebs for those thusly seduced by said charms.

OUR FREEWHEELING WAYS

Another chat developed under a canopy during the recent Chattahoochee Challenge about the many ways to get props to freewheel dependably on scale models. Many held forth, including your editor. After a week or so, the WHAM newsletter published the following drawing, outlining all the major mechanisms to do this in clear graphic form. Enjoy.

The only thing I'd add is it's almost always a better idea to utilize the "rotating latch" method by centering the rigmarole on the prop hub, not out on the blade, as shown in the drawings. Two photos from my collection of scale front ends follow to illustrate. Done this way you avoid a serious imbalance issue, and all the doodads can be painted and disguised a little. For most scale models of two feet wingspan or less all you need is a 1/16th inch OD aluminum tube for the latch bearing doo-hickey and a short length of 0.025 inch wire for the grabber thingie, bent as illustrated. Why not 1/32nd wire? Well, a little slop for clearance avoids a lot of trouble, like dirt, rust, whatever. Also, it's smart to recess the tube into the hub a tad for strength. Avoid grinding into the prop shaft

bearing and fouling the prop shaft hole! This and a wrap of good thread and some glue as pictured really makes the hub/blade juncture more durable, a generally weak area..



GOT ANY DOPE?

No, we're not talking about the whacky-toebacky, rather we're talking about the old, reliable nitro-cellulose lacquer (aka nitrate dope) we use on our model airplanes. Due to the rash of FAC models I completed this year, plus my recent conversion over to tissue-over-Mylar covering for my duration models, I came very near to running out before the Nats, but wasn't really bothered. I'd just get some more, no worries.

Well, it turns nitrate dope and its recommended thinner ain't that easy to find anymore. For example, SIG doesn't even list it on their website. Nor does Brodak, but they do offer butyrate aplenty. I asked around to some of the cottage industry types at the Nats, and they didn't have any for sale, either. After all this and additional searching on the interwebs once I returned home, I was eventually put upon Aircraft Spruce and Specialty in Peachtree City near Falcon Field. Their website shows them to be a solid go-to source for the personal aviation crowd. They sell all kinds of supplies and gear, including righteous Randolph brand nitrate dope, taughtening and non, and thinner. It's lucky I called first before driving down because they were out of the taughtening variety. The nice lady said she could have one quart of both shipped from their store in Illinois that same day. That was Monday morning, and the box was sitting outside my front door Wednesday afternoon. You can't expect better service than that.

Yes, it wasn't cheap, but what is these days? However, I was happy to pay the fifty-odd dollars, American, such was my plight. If you find yourself in similar circumstances, give them a call at 770-478-2310/452 Dividend Dr./Peachtree City, GA 30269/ aircraftspruce.com. They're literally one block away from Falcon Field, and it might be a hoot to check that out. I'd be surprised if there wasn't a cold snack joint somewhere within the field's confines, if you know what I mean, where you can watch airplanes take off and land. Google maps shows a CAF facility of some sort, maybe with some cool, vintage aircraft being worked on.

THE LATEST FAC FRUIT SALAD

The latest update of our club's kanones follows. Unfortunately, it's current as of May 1, 2023, so the bountiful harvest from our recent Chattahoochee Challenge isn't included hereinafter. Regardless, they will be eventually, so fret not. You will recall that the last newsletter kanone count included our current membership and added our dearly departed and those fliers from further away

who graced our flying field with their attendance. A number of Thumbs expressed favor for this earlier change, and henceforth, it'll be continued. Ergo, here we go:

Air Marshall

Wally Farrell 726 (?)
 Mark Fineman 191
 Easy Dave Niedzielski 92
 Wayne Brock (d) 50

Lt. General

Ollie Benton 39
 John Blaire (d)
 Josh Finn 38
 Gary Morton 35

Major General

Dean McGinnis 30

Brigadier General

John Diebolt 28
 David Mills 25

Colonel

Dohrman Crawford 23
 John Blair (d) 22
 Oscar Smith (d) 21
 George Perryman (d) 20

Lt. Colonel

John Barker (d) 18
 David Barfield 18

Tim Lavender 18
 Billy Pennington (d) 17
 Hope Finn 16

Major

Jimmy Jordan 13
 Karl Hube 11
 Jim Conery 10

Captain

Gary Baughman 9
 James Martin 8
 Matthew Canady 7

Lieutenant

Jim Altenbern 4
 Doug DeMasie 4
 Richard Schneider 4
 Brook Dixon, Sr. 3
 Wayne Anderson 3
 Jim Jennings, Sr. 3
 Julie Farrell 2
 Joe Ryan 2
 Ed Hardin 2
 Al Pardue (d) 2
 Don Peacock (d) 2
 Frank Hodson (d) 1
 Barry Sholder 1

LEST WE FORGET, THE CURRENT TALLY

There's no time like the present to check and see where we've been, where we are and we're going. The club's high points at this juncture follow. You'll notice quite a few changes, owing largely to our well attended August heat fest. There's still time to make an impact, especially in the podium finishes, as there's a big knot at the top. With a little greed and ambition, you could be the one this year! So, glue some sticks together and show up somewhere with a model airplane! The game's afoot.

David Mills 37
 Caleb Finn 35
 Jim Conery 31
 James Martin 31
 Doug DeMasie 31
 Dohrman Crawford 23
 Josh Finn 22
 Paul Finn 20
 Ed Hardin 19
 Gary Morton 15
 Hope Finn 8

Joe Ryan 7
 Frank Perkins 7
 Dan Crews 6
 David Barfield 6
 Jim Altenbern 6
 Jimmy Jordan 5
 Nick Ray 5
 Bill Gowen 4
 Richard Schneider 4
 Shawn Li 1
 Lee Russell 1

NEXT ISSUE

Look for something in early October. We'll have the Turkey Shoot finalized by then and include a flyer on it, which will likely have been in a *Bulletin* by then. The September and October contest reports will be in it, too. The discussion on the annual banquet may've started, and we can give a report on that. It looks like a contingent of Thumbs will be attending the Muncie SAM Champs in September, and we'll cover that.

As always I beseech the multitudes to forward anything of note in the way of articles, plans, photos, rants, or raves. Don't make me work too hard! Ciao, y'all!

LAST HALF 2023 TTOMA MEMBERSHIP FORM


Name _____ AMA# _____


Address _____ State and Zip Code _____

Other Family Members and AMA # _____

Telephone _____ Email _____

\$10.00/year for adults and other adult family members in same household. Only good until Jan. 1, 2024. No charge all aged 18 yrs. or younger. Send check, payable to TTOMA, to: James Martin/ 3901 Bays Ferry Trail/Marietta, GA 30062/ 404-632-7226/ jhnmartin1963@gmail.com

NFFS MEMBERSHIP & RENEWAL APPLICATION										
Mail to: NFFS Membership Office 51 Julia Circle Middle Island, NY 11953	Make checks payable to National Free Flight Society									
Dues include a mandatory \$0.50 per year for NFFS membership.										
U.S. memberships (Age 19 & over)	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 years \$58.00 (\$18.00 Youth) <input type="checkbox"/> 1 year \$30.00 (\$10.00 Youth)									
Youth: Age 18 & under as of July 1 of the current year										
<input type="checkbox"/> Check here if you desire <i>Digest</i> delivery via email. This saves valuable funds on printing/mailling, and you receive your <i>Digest</i> about 3 weeks sooner. As a bonus, the <i>eDigest</i> contains exclusive additional content in each issue.										
Canadian Memberships (all ages)	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 years \$98.00 (printed <i>Digest</i>) <input type="checkbox"/> 1 year \$50.00 (printed <i>Digest</i>) <input type="checkbox"/> 2 years \$58.00 (<i>eDigest</i>) <input type="checkbox"/> 2 years \$30.00 (<i>eDigest</i>)									
Non-US/Non-Canadian Residents (all ages)	<input type="checkbox"/> 2 years \$58.00 (<i>eDigest</i>) <input type="checkbox"/> 1 year \$30.00 (<i>eDigest</i>)									
Life Membership	<input type="checkbox"/> \$500.00									
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Amount: \$ _____ Current expiration date: Mo./Yr.: _____										
PLEASE PRINT VERY CLEARLY										
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www.flyingacesclub.com

AUGUST SIZZLE WHILE YOU FIZZLE CONTEST REPORT

NG Turf Field, Whitesburg, GA

Our flying field was once again packed with model flyers going for gold and glory and the Sizzle While You Fizzle contest lived up to its name. Ten adults plus two youth fliers put up numerous flights in several categories in heat that was well into the nineties with very little wind, so retrieving walks were pretty short but rest breaks were long. We also had one recycled modeler, Brett. Sorry, I didn't get his last name, but he flew several categories of models and spent time meeting club members, timed flights, and hurled some HLGs that he brought along.

The big (?) hit of the day was the Hoot Owl challenge promoted by Doug DeMasie and Gary Morton. Six members had models ready to fly, but only one had been tested. James Martin said he nearly lost his on a schoolyard test hop! Everyone's model flew quite well and flights of 50, 60, and 70 plus seconds were recorded. Once we get used to motor size and length, as well as prop size, these are going to become a model with the same status as the BRS and the Hangar Rat.

One of the best sights of the day was watching Gary Morton packing in the turns using a plastic soda straw as a blast tube. No harm in being cautious! These little models are a real hoot, pardon the pun. If you haven't built one yet, hop to it and join the fun!

P-30

Frank Perkins	328
Jim Altenbern	266
Jim Conery	200
James Martin	56
Doug DeMasie	56

Catapult Glider

Jim Altenbern	133
Doug DeMasie	66

Hoot Owl Open

Jim Conery	172
James Martin	170
Joe Ryan	160
Doug DeMasie	150
Gary Morton	130
David Barfield	74

Rubber Scale

James Martin	Kawasaki Hein	170
David Mills	Waterman Gosling	28

Embryo

Doug DeMasie	73
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Dime Scale

David Mills	Chambermaid	47
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P-30 Jr

Caleb Finn	289
Paul Finn	179

Catapult Glider JR

Caleb Finn	43
Paul Finn	22

HLG Jr

Caleb Finn	59
Paul Finn	16

E-36 Jr

Paul Finn	206
Caleb Finn	203

1/2A Classic Jr

Caleb Finn	238
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Towline Glider Jr

Caleb Finn	166
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Peanut Scale

David Mills	Lacey M-10	64
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There you are, a pretty good rundown of the day. T'was a great day to hurl balsa creations at the clouds! Hope you're able to make another trip to Muncie next month on Sept. 10 and that the weather Gods shine on us! CD Jim Conery, reporting.



August photos by Frank Perkins

CAFFA

Carolina Area Free Flight
Association



**Kudzu Flying
Corps**

FAC Squadron 13

October Hurricane 2023
Phil Hartman Memorial
Raeford, N. C. October 7 - 8, 2023

Saturday, October 7

Square Eagle P-30 Mass Launch #
FAC Combined Racers Mass Launch
FAC WW 1 Mass Launch
FAC Embryo (ROG)
FAC Peanut
FAC Phantom Flash (ROG)
FAC 2 Bit+1 (ROG)
AMA E-36
AMA Hand Held Catapult
AMA P-30

Sunday, October 8

SAM Twin Pusher Mass Launch
Flying Horde Mass Launch ##
FAC WW 2 Mass Launch
FAC Blue Ridge Special
FAC Dime Scale
FAC Jet Catapult
FAC No-Cat
FAC Simplified Scale
NFFS E-20

Launch time for all mass launch events will be announced by the CD

Phil Hartman (1938-2023) Memorial Flight. Phil founded Blue Ridge Models and designed the Square Eagle P-30, the Blue Ridge Special and a number of other spectacular rubber powered models and gliders.

Flying Hoard Mass Launch

Any rubber powered model airplane of 26 inch wing span or less. Last one down wins. This is a "for fun" event. No FAC kanone.

Motorized chase vehicles allowed on roadways only

Water and soft drinks provided
On field comfort facility

Contacts: Contest Director: **John Diebolt** jdiebolt@mindspring.com 919 467-1025
CAFFA Secretary: **Jimmy Jordan** jjordan18@ec.rr.com

Entry Fee: \$10.00 (Juniors Free) Covers 2 days of flying

Field location **MapQuest/Google Maps/GPS:** 204 Ratley St, Raeford, NC 28376