




**The THUMB PRINT**  
**Thermal Thumbers Of Metro Atlanta**

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**Sept.-Oct., 2016**

**HEADS UP**

Welcome to the September issue! What this issue lacks in seamless elegance, it makes up for it in sheer volume. Yes, it's hefty and nugget-rich. There's a ton of contest coverage, including Josh Finn's recount of the Rantoul USIC. The flyers for both the Turkey Shoot and the Old Goat Smackdown on November 6 follow as a last minute reminder. (Note, too, this will be the final lap of the Great Walston Plan Giveaway.) Odd but apt tidbits fill out the remainder of the issue.

It's time for me to get out of the way. Ciao, y'all!

**THUMBS IN THE NEWS**

Charter Thumb Mickey Walker enjoys a lengthy and justified write-up in the September issue of *Model Aviation* (p. 133). New District V Veep Andrew Griffith recounts the early founding of the Senior Pattern Association (SPA) and Mickey's role as chief instigator, prime early mover-and-shaker, and now trusted *consigliore*. Initially only a local Atlanta area activity, it's grown into many states and supports a healthy contest circuit.

Many years ago, Mickey and I discussed his motivations at the time of the SPA's founding in the early nineties. By then his and his OFB's eyesight and reflexes had taken a hit, and the modern RC Pattern programs had gotten beyond their earnest capabilities. Also, the price of current competition had gotten steep in the way of flying iron and ground equipment. However, the competitive fires stilled burned within. The wisdom of flying pre-1970 designs in pattern formats similar to those of the same era sounded like a great idea. The rest is history, and SPA is the result. Thanks, Mickey.

**THUMBS IN PRINT**

Not much bounty to speak of here, but the outstanding photo from the Muncie USOC of Graham Selick and his grandson Hayden in the July issue of *Free Flight* deserves mention. Hayden is shown launching his E-36 and Graham timing. (We might mention that Hayden is looking *extree* sharp in that UGA baseball cap.) We note no other Thumbs are pictured therein, and reasonable explanations as to why falter in their validity. However, our exploits are covered to a warranted degree in the text.

Thumbs are more graced in the issue's coverage of the Rantoul USIC, at least in photos. There're plenty of Hope and Josh Finn to be seen, as well as Bill Gowen in a Catapult Glider group shot. Again, their exploits are covered to a warranted degree in the text.

The sprinkling of celebrity status upon the Thumbs was continued a tad with the November issue of *Model Aviation*. Josh has his mug and F1R featured in the indoor Nats coverage with some text about an exploit or two, along with the diverse doings of Bill Gowen. Later in the issue, Dohrman is complimented with a glamour shot of his new E-20. Canards make good eye candy!

## WELCOME BACK, OLD FRIEND

Readers of the last issue will recall my lament on losing my “Last Resort” rubber model in the top of a mighty maple tree in the cemetery at the Nats. I had a very good idea where it was in the tree, thanks to its strong signal, namely, directly overhead the final resting place of Charles Babcock, no doubt fondly remembered by the good people of Muncie. No rescue with lineman poles could be done because it was totally out of sight, and the going rate for a tree climber was about what the Walston transmitter costs. Ergo, after a suitable amount of due diligence and appropriate fretting, I walked away with nothing but a good flying story. (It takes a real professional to know when to quit.)

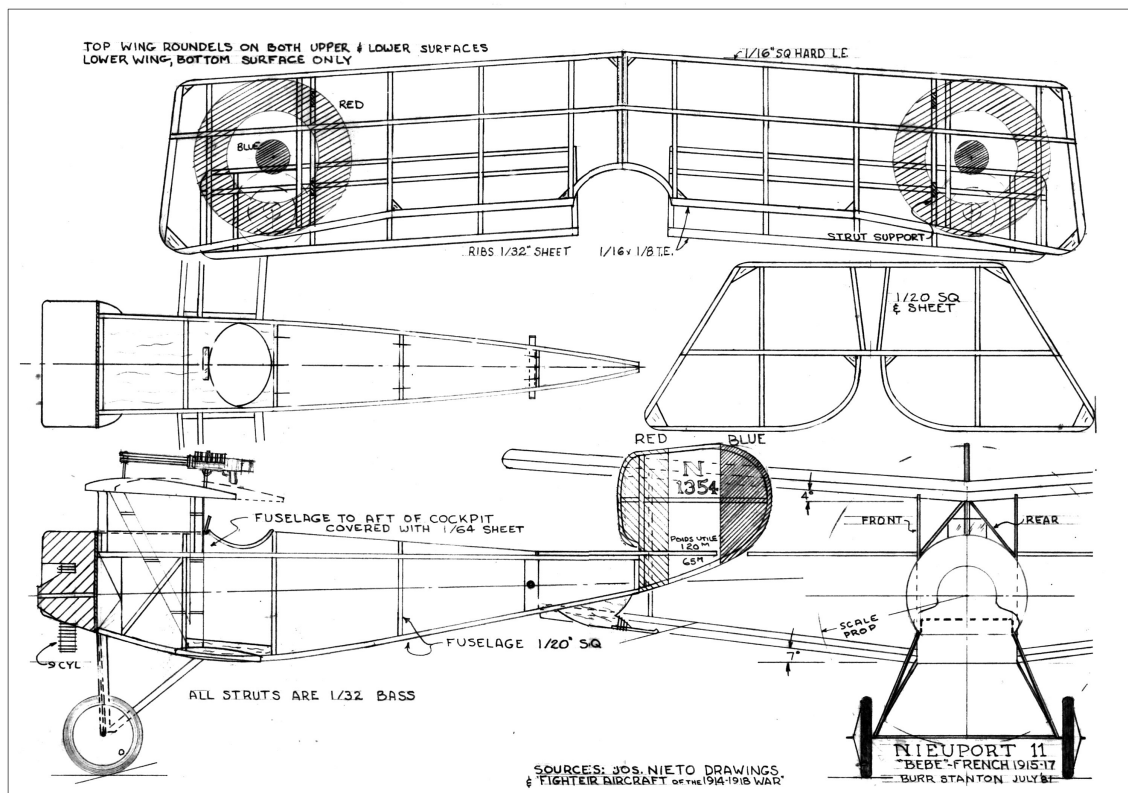
Imagine my delight when I received a call from my OFB Bob Hanford about three weeks later, telling me he spotted it, minus only its wing, at the CD’s table at a Muncie contest that weekend. Arrangements were quickly made for him to mail me the transmitter and for the rest of the model to be delivered to Atlanta by Scott Lapraik at some point.

There’s still no word on the whereabouts of my veteran “Skokie”, lost in a monster thermal a day later way, deep in the soy beans to the west of the field. Hope remains eternal, but skepticism reigns in this regard. No doubt, its final demise will be a warrior’s death via the brutal embrace of a mechanized harvester.

## TREASURE TROVE

This one requires some explanation. Sometime in the 1990s, Burr Stanton’s widow sent me a package of six absolutely lovely plans her recently passed husband drew. (Both she and Burr were unknown to me.) She asked me to forward them to do whatever source that could get them out into the Free Flight community. I dutifully set them aside with the best intentions.

When I returned from the Muncie Nats this year I began putting stuff back in their place. It was then that I ran across the long-forgotten examples of Burr’s lovely draftsmanship. It was a genuinely DA moment, with not a small amount of regret, self-inflicted. (Oopsie, my bad, Burr, twenty years is too late to wait!) I’ve since sent along all six plans (5 No-Cal Scales and 1 Peanut Scale) to the AMA Plans Service. Indicative of its stable mates, the Nieuport 11 plan is provided below. You can see how lovely it is. You can blow it up to its intended 13 inches or beyond, if you like; I can shoot you a digital copy. Thanks to Sergio Montes for the deft photo-shopping.



## A CHANGE OF VENUE

Things were looking iffy for our annual banquet being held at Petite Auberge. Our numbers were flirting with the restaurant's minimum, and the management was making adverse noise on the matter. Well, the karmic wheel revolved in our direction. They lost their lease at Toco Hills and bought out/merged with another fine dining Atlanta standby, Les Violetts, and have relocated to their new digs at I-85 and Clairmont Road. Now tentatively renamed as Petite Violetts, we're on their calendar for the last Saturday in January. All details will be contained in the next newsletter, due out in mid-December. Mark your calendars, thusly.

## NEXT ISSUE

Look for something around Christmas. We should have the flyer for the banquet, as well as the report on Turkey Shoot, the indoor contests in the offing, and the first membership renewal nag.

Once again, let me beseech the multitudes for contributions in the way of articles, photos, rants and raves! Don't make me work too hard! Ciao, y'all!

## September Indoor Contest Report

Five TTOMA fliers met for a good session of flying and fighting it out for the top spots. There was some strange drift, but the air was smooth overall. Nick, Hope, and I battled it out with an F1D qualifying contest. Hope got her model flying well after some recent mods and came out on top after an epic battle with Nick of the shedding carbon blades of doom.

Karl put up flights in more events than anyone else and looked to be having a great time other than a long series of fights with his uncooperative No-Cal.

Hope and Karl challenged Bill in A-6 and Limited Pennyplane, respectively, but neither could get the upper hand. Hope did, however, nail down a solid kanone in Phantom Flash with her new super light wonder machine that did over 3 minutes on its first outing.

Bill trimmed out some more nice looking gliders, and I put up a 28 minute plus flight with my Unlimited to take the club's endurance record. A second flight attempting the half hour mark hit the ceiling too early and shed a prop blade, ending its flying for the day.

Several spectators stopped by and were properly enthralled with the day's events. See y'all next time! Josh Finn, CD, reporting

### F1D

Hope Finn 17:18+17:28=34:48  
Nick Ray 17:39+16:00=33:39  
Joshua Finn 15:30+16:12=31:42

### A-6

Bill Gowen 6:33  
Hope Finn 5:59

### Limited Pennyplane

Bill Gowen 8:08  
Karl Hube 3:18

### Unlimited

Josh Finn 38:27

### Phantom Flash

Hope Finn 509  
Joshua Finn 388  
Karl Hube 215

### Helicopter

Karl Hube 2:31

### Hangar Rat

Karl Hube 103+85=188

### No-Cal Scale

Karl Hube Chambermaid 296

## Summer Swan Song Contest

The day started with very little wind. The drift was not easy to determine. After some discussion and a little faith in the weather report, we set up in the usual place by the hangar. Ten fliers competed in the three scheduled events. The air was calm, and the drift good for most of the morning, but thermals were small and hard to find. Karl Hube was the only one to max out and won the P-30 event. As the day progressed the wind picked up and changed direction several times. Three fliers in Dime Scale all had flights in the 30-to-60 second range, but David Mills's second flight of 96 seconds put the event out of reach of the other fliers. Dohrman Crawford resurrected an old *Prairie Bird* and had it flying well enough to take Embryo. When the wind changed toward Snake Creek near the end of the day it took a toll on the planes being flown. Gary Baughman put his P-30 in a tree, but was able to retrieve it. Jim Conery showed us how beautiful his *Zipper* was in flight, but unfortunately, it ended up somewhere near the creek. The thick brush prevented finding it. Finally, we watched Dohrman's *Blue Ridge Special* fly overhead and disappear in the distance that way on its first day of flying. The day ended with the prizes being awarded. Gary Morton, CD, reporting.

### P-30

Karl Hube *Scorpion Mk. II* 360  
Jim Conery 322  
Frank Perkins *E Pirate* 325  
Dohrman Crawford *Pirate* 319  
Gary Baughman *Big Downer* 314

### Embryo

Dohrman Crawford *Prairie Bird* 168  
David Barfield *Gonzo* 145  
Gary Morton *Hodge Podge V* 63  
Gary Baughman *Prairie Bird* 34

### Dime Scale

David Mills *Cessna Airmaster* 200  
Gary Morton *Waterman Gosling* 147  
Gary Baughman *Waterman Gosling* 127  
David Barfield *Fokker Dr. 1* 57

### Blue Ridge Special

Karl Hube 64

### Classic Towline

David Mills *Jetstream* 35

## October Indoor Contest

We did not have any official scores written down for the October contest. John Barker and his son flew his LLP a bit, and Lee Russell spent the majority of the day experimenting with different props. I tried unsuccessfully to break the F1R record. Nick Ray, CD, reporting.

## Last Fling 'til Spring, October Outdoor Contest

The October outdoor contest turned out to have the best weather in a long time. The temps reached only the mid-eighties, and there wasn't any breeze to speak of at all. All the irrigation machines were out and working but didn't cause any problems. We had a great day of flying. As usual, the *Blue Ridge Special* action was spirited, with Todd Russell losing his first copy in victory. After much beating the bushes, Jim Conery found his *Zipper* lost in the verdant canopy overhead Snake Creek. Your trusty editor was able to put his new *Phantom Flash* in the air; my sixth copy, I think, and it didn't disappoint. Your editor also used his P-30 *Hammerhead* P-30 to demonstrate the vitality of the 6-strands of 1/8<sup>th</sup> rubber, no idling overhead to be seen. Dohrman Crawford flew Sandy Downs's old *Simmers Twin Pusher*, much to the delight of the assembled throng; Twin Pushers never fail to amaze. David Barfield won a kanone in SCat Jet with his *P-59*, and once again, disproved the raft of abuse foisted upon the Jimmie Allen *Sky Chief*. Gary Morton brought a fleet of models bound for Raeford; all appeared on-trim and should do well there.

That's about it. It was a great day of flying, and shame on you, if you missed it. David Mills, CD, reporting.

#### Blue Ridge Special

Todd Russell 258  
Karl Hube 248  
David Barfield 238  
Dana Russell 106

#### Phantom Flash

David Mills 258  
Karl Hube 199

#### Twin Pusher

Dohrman Crawford *Simmers TP* 191

#### Catapult Glider

David Barfield 96  
Karl Hube *Straight Up* 85

#### Coupe

Karl Hube *Sunday Slider* 64

#### SCat Jet

David Barfield *P-59* 72  
Dohrman Crawford *Vampire* 66  
Karl Hube *Hawker Hunter* 49

#### Jimmie Allen

David Barfield *Sky Chief* 74

#### P-30

David Mills *Hammerhead* 340  
Dohrman Crawford *Pirate* 222

## **September Meeting Minutes**

The September 25 meeting of TTOMA was called to order by David Barfield at 1:00 PM at the North Georgia Turf Farm. Ten members were present.

#### Treasurer's & Secretary's Reports

Secretary/Treasurer Karl Hube presented the minutes from the August meeting, and there were no changes or corrections offered. The minutes were accepted as read.

The Treasurer's report showed a current balance of \$X,XXX.XX. There are no outstanding debts, and the next planned expense is \$200 for gift cards to be used as prizes at the November Turkey Shoot. The report was accepted.

#### Old Business

Davis Mills reported that his Last Resort model lost at the last Nationals had been recovered. David also reported the next step in the dispersal of Jim Walston's models and equipment, since Jim is now in assisted living from Alzheimer's. There are many plans, magazines, and engines to be sorted and made available.

#### New Business

Gary Morton made a motion that \$200 of club funds be allocated to prizes for the January Banquet. Dohrman Crawford gave a second to the motion, and the supporting vote was unanimous. Gary also outlined a plan for 2 or 3 focused events at each outdoor contest in 2017. This effort is to be supported by a scheduled e-mail campaign. One of the features of Gary's plan is to return the focus events winner's entry fee as a prize.

This discussion made it clear that an associate CD is needed for the June FAC/AMA/NFFS two-day contest.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:25 PM. Respectfully submitted by: Karl Hube, Secretary/Treasurer.

# Fall Scenes by David Barfield



# Sixth Annual TTOMA Thanksgiving Turkey Shoot

10 AM-4 PM EST, November 6, 2016  
Gate opens at 9 AM  
North Georgia Turf Farm Field, Whitesburg, GA

**It's your last chance to fly outdoors in 2016. The weather promises to be spectacular, and the events will be a hoot. Ask the guys who have been there before. Win a gift certificate good for a turkey at Publix!**

**No Entry Fee!!**

**Winners receive \$25 Gift Certificates!!!**

Bring one or borrow a model from a Thumber and fly for \$25 Publix Gift Certificates. No excuses for not flying this year.

## **Combat Events are Mass Launch**

- 10AM to 3PM The Famous Target-Time Event
  - 10 AM FAC Scale Combat, any FAC Scale Model\*\*
- 10:30AM-Noon SCat Jet, Best 3 of 6, High Total Time Wins
  - 11:00AM Embryo Combat (hand-launched)
- Noon-3PM Electric Free-for-All (AMA E-36, E-20, A and B)
  - 1:00 PM P-30, Fly as many times in one hour as desired\*\*\*
  - 2:00 PM Catapult Glider Tourney (Double Elimination)
  - 3:00PM Blue Ridge Special Old Goat Smackdown
  - 3:30PM Awards Ceremony

\*\*\* **Timed to the ground**, closest to 120 sec. wins, fly-off for tie

\*\* **Scale/Embryo Combat**: Flown in rounds to FAC Combat rules

***\$25 Publix Gift Certificates will be awarded to winner of each event. No limit on number of gift certificates that can be won by one contestant.***

*Events/Rules may be amended to fit weather conditions or other changes announced in advance by the Head Gobbler in Charge (HGIC)*

**HGIC: Gary Baughman, [gibman@bellsouth.net](mailto:gibman@bellsouth.net), 770-422-8489**

# Alert !!!

## 2016 World Championship Old Goat Smackdown, Nov. 6

\*\*\*\*\* Brutal Rules \*\*\*\*\*

- Three Flights with 90-Second Maxes
  - One He-Man Fly-Off for a Tie

This event is for STOCK Blue Ridge Special rubber-powered models. Propellers are available from Volare Products and assorted plans are available if needed. Don't be sneaking carbon, Mylar, delayed prop release or LDA airfoils into this event !!

Experience has shown that you need to build them in pairs as they fly away. This event will eat a few models...trees, river, BIG thermals.

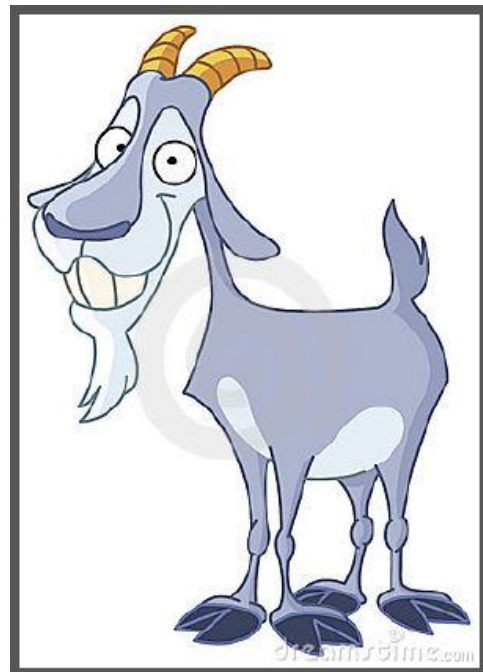
Go Hard or Go Home! " Glory is fleeting, but obscurity is forever!!"

...Napoleon Bonaparte

Here we are ready to wrap up another summer season of outdoor free flight. Last year, we had the first try at a World Championship Old Goat Smackdown featuring the Blue Ridge Special with what was a joke trophy at the time and a light-spirited approach to the event. It went better than expected with good performances in windy conditions. Gary Morton led the way with a max-out to win the day. So, this year we return with a new trophy and a new flight schedule. This is the only event that TTOMA flies that has a permanent trophy that is awarded on the field for you to take home and dust for the rest of your days!

Last year, we flew a five flight event. With the wind we had, a 60-to-90 second flight translated into a long retrieval walk and the event ate up a lot of time. The intent was to fly this event in the background behind Gary Baughman's efforts to produce the Turkey Shoot he had in mind. Not everyone will fly every event on Gary's schedule and that leaves a few time gaps that you can be use for **Blue Ridge Special** flights for the **Old Goat**

**Smackdown.** This year, we will fly the same 90-second maxes, but we will move to a standard three-flight schedule. Read on and glue some sticks together for the Turkey Shoot.





## 2016 USIC Report

by Josh Finn

After two fantastic days of RC flying at Flite Fest 2016 in Malvern, OH (a trip which warrants its own report someday), Hope and I arrived at Rantoul Hangar 2 for an intense 3 ½ days of indoor flying. A little background: USIC has been tossed around across three different flying sites in the past three years, significantly damaging attendance. Its arrival at a centralized location with plenty of advance planning (huge shout out to Mike Kirda for massive maintenance and publicity efforts and to all those who helped him) resulted in a major rise in attendance this year and high hopes for next year. Hangar 3 is a very old building, as are all of the hangars at Rantoul. It was insulated after WWII for winter maintenance operations, lowering its ceiling to 44 ft. Although there are plenty of obstacles (Hope's A-6 got caught on literally everything it could find), it is much more snag-free than an open structure building, and Hope and I suffered only one F1D hang-up. The air is quite still, though a thin jet stream forms late morning just under the ceiling and remains until early evening, at which point the air goes dead calm every time and becomes extremely pleasant for flying. The conditions this year, however, were brutal for humans and for wood structures. The temperatures spiked into the 90's and just got hotter with each progressive day of the contest with humidity numbers hitting 80%, slacking the tissue and causing measurable swelling of wood components. Hope and I both noticed our engineering judgment was significantly impaired by being dripping wet and being distracted by the discomfort. We didn't suffer any structural failures from the conditions, but it definitely impacted our flight times. Those who have been flying at this site for the past year or so commented that the conditions were the most severe they had experienced there—this was just a perfect storm of high humidity and high temperatures. Don't let this sound too disparaging, for despite the heat and wetness, this was by far the best Nats since the Johnson City days.

Day 1 and 2 featured the super lightweight events, and I made an effort to support the less flown events in all this by packing along a giant 31 in. unlimited model, even though it wasn't fully competition ready, and by bringing my new AMA Cabin model. Hope came prepared with an F1D and F1R (35 cm), and I brought a collection of each. We started off the contest with a bang by putting up the first official flight of the contest with my Cat I record-setting F1R after two quick partial motor tests. I flew in the buoyant air next to the hangar door and the model climbed high, sank most of the way to the floor, and then pulled itself back up to 35 ft. or so as the low pitch gradually kicked in. It landed, nearly deadsticked, at 26:39 to easily claim the Cat II record. This flight held on as the longest single flight of the entire contest. After filling out the paperwork for the record, I put up a quick backup flight in the mid-23 minute range (F1R requires two flights) and put the model away.



Josh Finn's F1R goes for the record and the contest's longest flight!

Hope and I started flying our F1Ds, and it became immediately obvious that my F1D props were going floppy from the humidity. By the end of Day 2 I was in fourth place with a pair of 18 minute

flights. Still qualifying as a junior, Evan Guyett pulled off a shocking first place win with a set of low 19s. The fact that first place wasn't decided with a set of 22 minute flights is a testament to the severe humidity effects. Hope tweaked away at her model and pulled out a sixth place against some big names.



Nat'l ChampEvan Guyett's F1D



Hope Finn's F1D

Still on Day 1, I pulled out my Unlimited model and fairly easily put up a single flight just shy of 24 minutes for the win. It was fantastic sitting back and watching that big bird floating around so slowly. Hope flew her F1R for a couple of flights in the teens, not that great, but it was fun, and the model will fly longer when we switch to a low ceiling-optimized propeller hub. I tried my hand at AROG, but kept making bum adjustments and breaking things, so I had to be content with a sub-7 minute flight. I'll try that again next year!



Josh Finn's big Unlimited

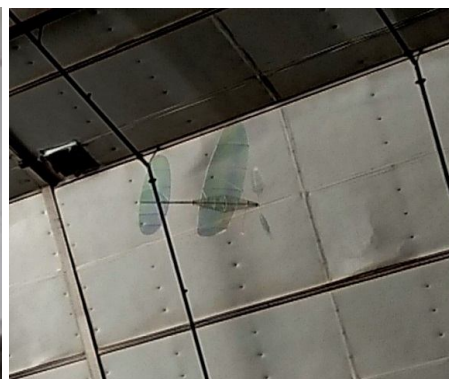


Hope with F1R

I pulled out my Cabin model and put up a nearly 12 minute flight after watching Don Sluzarczyk's beautiful old model put up an effortless 18 minute show stopper. It felt good just to fly the event, so we retired from the site in the early evening to try to recover from the heat.



Josh Finn's Cabin



Tom's Cabin

On Day 2, Hope met her match in Phantom Flash. Even though her 4<sup>th</sup> place finish can be partly attributed to humidity (Hey, I beat her, so something must have been wrong), it was clear that Team Sluzarczyk have these things seriously figured out. Don's winning time was nearly 4 minutes! His plane weighs a scant 2.7 g, compared to Hope's seemingly anorexic 3.7 g machine. Hope also put in a few times in No-Cal Scale, coming right around 2 minutes for her best. Not bad! We won't mention the top times...No-Cal has really advanced of late. I managed to beat out Larry Loucka in WW I mass launch after his model went nuts in the humid conditions. Both our planes are rather old, mine heading for the decade mark and his much older. Mike Kirda's enormous 54 inch Taylorcraft filled the sky each morning with majestic ROG takeoffs. What an amazing machine!



Larry Loucka's 27 year old microfilm covered AROG is still flying great!

Day 3 (Friday) dawned a new day. The traditional lightweight events were over and time for other things. The morning was crazy as I entered my 37 in. Judy in both WW II and Coconut Scale, while helping Hope ready her Found 100, helping her trim her Embryo, plus putting in my Peanut Scale flights. In the end, we didn't take home much hardware, but fun was had for sure. The Judy was particularly majestic with its 30 foot takeoff roll into an authoritative climb. After it landed, all eyes were on David Aronstein and Mike Kirda as their machines fought it out. In the end, Aronstein took another win with his feather-light 37 in. Minimax which required ballast just to reach the 1 oz. minimum weight!



Coconut action!

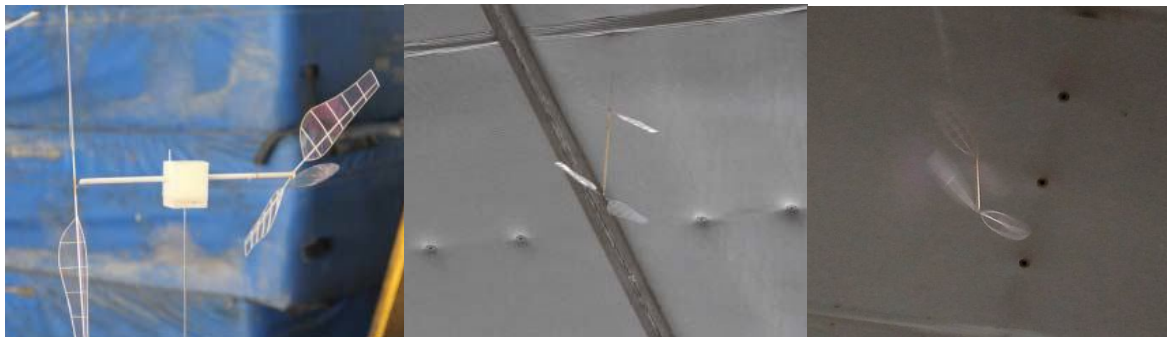
The afternoon of Day 3 saw me with a very, very specific goal: win Autogiro. Unbeknownst to me, Don S. hadn't been able to finish his, and no one else had entered. No matter, I was after a bigger target—the national record. After an hour of tweaking, including a terrifying test run which hit the rafters and folded up the stab, I was finally ready. The model slowly lumbered away on an endless climb. It peaked around 8 minutes, never getting above 30 ft., and landed at 13:10 to KO the old record by nearly 3 minutes. Paperwork done, it went back in the box. That marks two kills for that plane!



The double-record setting Autogiro!

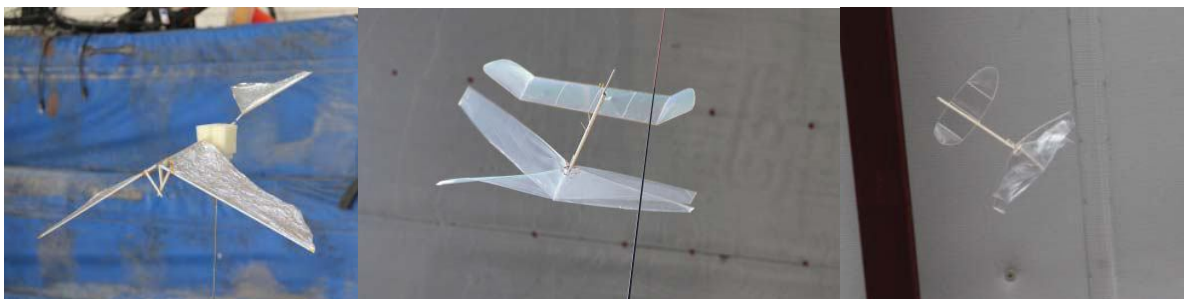
Hope fought the whole day with her F1L and A-6 with constant hang-ups. Nonetheless she prevailed to a 7:01 in A-6, a very exclusive club in Cat II flying for that event (yours truly has never gotten near that regardless of category). This proved good enough for second place against Bill Gowen who was a mere 21 seconds ahead of her. Efforts to close the gap ended in more hang-ups. Oh, well! Hope finally got her F1L behaving and put up a pair of very respectable 11 minute flights, but the final standings would be decided late in the evening between Evan Guyett and Leo Pilachowski, whose epic battle went past 14 minutes.

I tried to make a good showing in helicopter but was stuck with a 5 minute performance while Dmytro Silin's state of the art machine went somersaulting over sprinkler pipes for a 7 minute-plus finish.



Dmytro's Helicopter, contrasting against mine

Dmytro Silin, Larry Coslick, and I went at it with Ornithopters. Larry won cleanly with his wonder machine, but fun was had by all. Such beautiful airplanes!



The beauty queens—the ornithopters!

I got the hair-brained last minute idea to enter Ministick and spent a while fighting it out with mine. By the time we left for the evening, I'd managed second place in the mass launch and was on the leaderboard with an 8:34. Don S. seized upon my departure to beat me out by 21 seconds. That'll teach me!

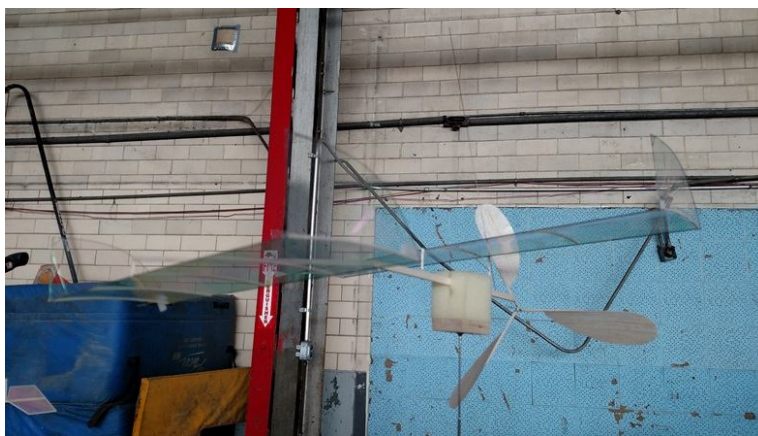


David Aronstein carved a prop for his Ministick

Doyle Blevins serenaded us with his ukulele on Saturday morning as the gliders came out. Hope packed things up while I coaxed my full composite indoor DLG into flying. When the dust settled, Dmytro Silin's austere coaching had set me in the lead with a pair for 34 second flights on an unbelievably low sink rate. Alas, that lead would vanish by the close of the contest, sinking below third place as those with heavier gliders were able to reach the roof and transition correctly.

We piled out after ogling Dmytro's insane three-bladed Pennyplane propeller and demonstrating my RC DLG for a few folks. It was a great chance to harass Rob Romash about not throwing hard enough! After our departure, Bill Gowen fought his way to a placing in the Catapult Glider events, but was seriously hocked by the humidity, something that Kurt Krempetz and Stan Buddenbohm managed to overcome.

It was, all in all, it was a fantastic Nats, and I cannot wait for next year. I give fair warning, the Unlimited already has a **much** bigger propeller, and Hope has built what can only be described as the ultimate Phantom Flash!



Dmytro Silin's three-bladed prop!