

Propwash

The Newsletter of the Mercer County Radio Control Society
May 2008

Building Contest Draws Nine

Two of the best attended meetings of the year are the static judging for the Building Contest in April and the Awards Meeting in December when the winners of the Building Contest are announced. Is the draw the opportunity to see the fine workmanship displayed in the painstakingly detailed scale models? Is it the suspense over who is going to win? Or is it the fact that coffee and doughnuts are traditionally provided at both of these meetings? It's anyone's guess.



Tom Dyl's P-47 was the first model to take its qualifying flight.



Every contest needs a Cub; Dan Geerders was happy to provide one.



Mike Luciano's AT-6 took honors as the largest model in the contest.

Whatever the reason, we managed to fill the large community room at the Lawrence Library with a combination of members and models. Nine models competed in this year's contest. Three members competed in the prestigious Scale class this year. Mike Luciano's entry, an Ohio Models AT-6 with blindingly brilliant yellow 101" wings, was the largest of the three. Powered by a G-62, it appeared poised to devour the skies. Tom Dyl's Top-Flite Giant P-47, sporting 85" wings and a Quadra 52 for power, was the second largest. Finished in typical Dyl detail, it was clear that the size factor didn't influence its attitude toward command of the skies. Finally, Brian Bunda's quarter-scale Balsa USA Nieuport 17, an entry from an earlier era, provided a nice balance to the other two scale entries, a reminder of a time when aerial combat seemed somehow less intense, if still deadly.

Clearly the most popular category of the contest, with five entries, was the Almost Ready to Fly (ARF) class. Three of the five were scale: Jim Feszchak entered Hangar 9's .60-sized version of the P-47. Although smaller than Tom's scale entry, it was still a detailed rendition of the famed fighter. Dan Geerders' J-3 Cub was an essential entry in the contest; no contest seems complete without at least one Cub. Irwin Keshner's Pitts Special, the contest's only electric entry, was the

third of the ARF scale entries. Frank Figurelli entered a pattern model, named Jackie II, which appeared to be closely related to a Fliton Inspire 60; of course, powering it with a .90 gave it something of an attitude and warranted a new name. Finally, Paul Abati's red-and-white 81" Kadet, powered by an OS .46, rounded out the ARF class.

Winners are not generally announced until December, but it would not be too much of a stretch to announce Dan Geerders the winner in the Non-Scale class with his OS .40 four-stroke-powered Uproar. (He was, of course, the only competitor in this class.)

The contest this year was judged by Jim Feszchak, Sal, Lucania, Joe Raimondo, and Keith Zimmerly. It is the points assigned by these judges that determine the winner of the contest, which was directed by Joe.



Highly visible models, like Paul Abati's Kadet, are easy to watch.



Keith Zimmerly took the controls of Brian Bunda's Nieuport 17 for the test flight.

Of course, the models have to fly and fate sometimes declares the losers. The fly-off took place as scheduled on Sunday, April 27th. There was some question regarding whether it would happen, though, as the ground was wet, the air was cold, and the sky was cloudy at

9:00 AM, the scheduled start of the fly-off. And the fact that none of the competitors had arrived also contributed to contest director Joe Raimondo's reticence to announce it was a go. But by 10:00, the air had warmed, the ground had dried a bit, and competitors had arrived, so Joe declared that the fly-off was on.



Prop nut tightened, Frank Figurelli started Jackie II for the qualification flight.



The 4-stroke O.S. engine on Dan Geerders' Uproar was almost quieter than the starter motor.



If a .60's good, a .90's better; Jim Feszchak's P-47 had no shortage of power.

Tom Dyl was first off with his P-47. With a team of assistants, Tom took his model to the flight line and easily fired it up. Then with practiced ease and aplomb, he taxied onto the runway, turned into the wind, and following a thunderous response to the throttle, was quickly in the air to demonstrate a fine scale flight and landing.

Dan Geerders was second into the air with his Cub, a somewhat peaceful interlude between thundering warbirds. Mike Luciano followed quickly on his tail, though, with the AT-6. Somewhat trickier in the air than a cub, it made a slightly wobbly takeoff, an exciting flight, and a somewhat bumpy landing. It was an enjoyable flight to watch, though.

Paul Abati flew fourth with his Kadet. Having failed to qualify last year due to crash landing in the corn field, Paul showed no similar problems this year. An easy takeoff, followed by a few easy patterns and a flawless landing kept Paul firmly in the competition.

Keith Zimmerly took the controls for the first flight of Brian Bunda's Nieuport 17 for a flawless performance, including a few low passes. Brian took the controls for a later flight, after the pressure of qualifying was off.

Frank Figurelli would have been next up, except for the fact that the propeller left his plane prior to taxiing. Thus, Dan Geerders took Frank's place in the lineup with his Uproar. Perhaps the name is overstated because the four-stroke OS .40 that powered this plane was so quiet that it was almost indistinguishable from the noise of the electric starter. Regardless of the relative silence, the model flew great.

.90, his model took to the skies with a vengeance and only through careful throttle management was Jim able to tame the model for a landing. But he did and it was flawless.

The Building Contest fly-off is traditionally combined with Opening Day. It's not obvious why we call it opening day because the field never closes and we fly all winter. But it seems a good excuse for a picnic at the field and the club usually supplies hamburgers and hotdogs to the attendees. This year Armand Graziani purchased the supplies and Pat (Binky) Monacelli cooked them up. It's hard to tell whether it was Armand's choice of meats, Pat's skill at cooking, or the smell of castor oil in the air; but the hamburgers and hotdogs seemed to taste better than ever. But then it's always great to get together with friends to eat and fly.



Pat Monacelli cooked hotdogs and hamburgers for the Opening Day crowd.



Electric flyers everywhere were disappointed that Irwin Keshner's Pitts did not make it to the fly-off.

A few turns of the wrench and Frank Figurelli was back on the flight line, easily qualifying his Jackie II with a quick flight. Jim Feszchak finished the flight tests with a flight of his P-47. A .60-sized model powered by a



The landing gear held this time when Mike Luciano test flew the Sea Fury.

While the Building Contest accounted for much of the flying in the morning, there was a lot of flying in the afternoon. The Dawn Patrol, although not out in force, did fill in a portion of the sky with its biplanes. The Lucianos provided additional entertainment as they test

flew some large models that were not entered in the Building Contest. A Sea Fury with Canadian markings had flown earlier at the field, but had rough landing when its gear had twisted. Its flight on Opening Day was exciting, but uneventful. One of the other models they flew had a less successful flight, however, crashing into the corn field following a radio failure. Aircraft of a wide variety flew during the day, including a few trainers and a few electrics. And some even managed to find time for flight instruction.



Keith Zimmerly flew his SE-5a, just one of his fleet of WW-I biplanes.

By any accounting, the day would have to be considered a success. The skies eventually cleared, to a large degree. All of the Building Contest contestants who attempted to fly qualified. And nobody went home hungry.

Flight School Gets a (Luke-) Warm Reception

The 2008 MCRCS Flight School is underway. The program this year is a revised version of last year's ground school program. Unlike last year's program, which consisted of six hours of classroom instruction, this year's program reduced the classroom portion to two hours and added an open house session and a field day.

The open house sessions, conducted in the first half of April, gave participants an opportunity to look at some of our models up close and try their hand at flying a simulator. The second session, conducted in the last half of April, included much of last year's ground school program condensed into one two-hour session. The field day program, scheduled on four different dates in the first half of May, will give participants an opportunity to fly one of the club's trainers.



Flight School Director David Vale, here with Robbinsville Librarian Ann Marie Ehrenberg, enlisted the support of the Mercer County Library System.



Open House attendees saw and discussed what makes these model airplanes fly.



During hands-on exercises in the Ground School class, students connected a flight pack.

A number of club members participated in the open house sessions, bringing their models, talking to attendees, and helping individuals with the flight simulator. In some cases that assistance consisted of the advice that new flyers start with a trainer rather than an extreme aerobat, a turbojet, or a helicopter. A few of the

younger set ignored the advice and demonstrated that helicopters really aren't that hard to fly.

Three club members, Ric deBastos, Seth Hunter, and David Vale, taught the ground school sessions. This year the topics were limited to aerodynamics, radios, motors, engines, and building.



As if conducting an orchestra, Seth Hunter presented the symphony of aerodynamic forces.



Ric DeBastos lectured on the theory and practice of powered flight.

The field day program will take advantage of the AMA Intro Pilot program, in which a new flyer can obtain AMA insurance coverage for a short period without joining the AMA. Participants are required to fly with an AMA Intro Pilot, a specially certified club flight instructor. This year, primarily in support of the flight school, twelve MCRCS instructors have become AMA Intro Pilots. They are:

- Michael Clawson
- Bill Collier
- Armand Graziani
- Seth Hunter
- Nobu Iwasawa
- Bob Levanduski
- Sal Lucania

- Bill Malinowski
- Pat Monacelli
- Walt Siedlecki
- Terry Watros
- Keith Zimmerly

Participation in this year's program was surprisingly light, considering last year's attendance and the publicity done for this year's program (posters, newspaper articles, airplanes in libraries). Approximately thirty people in total attended the four open houses. About twenty attended a ground-school session, the last of which was held on April 29th. It remains to be seen how many will take advantage of the opportunity to fly a club trainer and/or join the club. Sometimes it's difficult to understand why the general public doesn't jump at a chance to get into this great sport of ours.

Web Site Updated (Again)

By David Vale

There is a new webmaster in town, and for better or for worse, the MCRCS website is not what it used to be. After running the website for nine years, Terry Watros resigned that position and I took it over. My editorial style will be familiar to most, as I have edited the club newsletter since 2005. The essence of my style can be summed up in a phrase: "A picture is worth 119 words."



The new MCRCS website: A picture is worth 119 words.

The new website is at the same address as the old, www.mcrs.com, but the content has changed. Navigation through the website is done primarily from a menu on the left-hand side of the screen. The current choices are as follows:

- Home Page** – Main page, pertinent announcements
- About the Club** – Who we are
- Public Events** – Event details for the following
 - Flight School**
 - Jumbo Jamboree**
 - Warbirds**
 - Electric Fly**
- Club Events** – Event details for the following
 - Building Contest**
 - Opening Day**
 - Student Days**
 - Family Picnic**
 - Turkey Fly**
 - Ham Fly**
- Directions** – Getting to the field
- Calendar** – The annual calendar
- Newsletters** – All newsletters since April, 2005
- In Memoriam** – Members no longer with us
- Contact** – Contact information

TCNJ 2008 Engineering Contests – Three Times the Fun

When The College of New Jersey’s (TCNJ) engineering department designs a model airplane, where do they turn for a test pilot? The Mercer County Radio Control Society, of course. For the second year, design teams from TCNJ contacted our club and Keith Zimmerly, this time with assistance from Pat Monacelli, was ready and eager to assist.



The UAV Team chose a Senior Telemaster as a platform for its sophisticated navigation systems.



Unlike some engineering designs, it’s a rare Telemaster that fails to fly beautifully.

Last year the college fielded a single team focused on an SAE-sponsored weight-lifting contest. This year’s competitors included a similar team, using an O.S. .60 and an inventory of carbon fiber to produce a light model with heavy ambitions. It also included an electric team, with similar objectives, but a requirement to use electric power. The third team faced a challenge of a different sort, that of designing a UAV capable of navigation and target identification.

The UAV team was ready to fly first, on April 8th. In compliance with AMA regulations, the club’s involve-



A newsletter is forever: Newsletters since 2005 are available online.

The event pages provide information on upcoming events and news coverage of events that have occurred. The pages for the Building Contest and Opening Day now contain news and pictures from the events themselves. Newsletters since 2005 are archived.

The website is undergoing almost constant change. It’s the first website I’ve ever managed and I’m learning as I go. (Web-master is probably still a bit overstated.) If you like what you see, let me know with an email. If you don’t like something, let me know that as well. And if there’s something you don’t see that you’d like to, let me know and I’ll add it to my list. This website presents our club to the public and it provides a mechanism for the club to communicate with its members. If you have any ideas for improving it, let me know.

ment was limited to test flying the model in command mode; it was not allowed to roam free under its own navigation system at our field. The model may be easily recognized as a Senior Telemaster, a popular model in our sport. The TCNJ team had made a few modifications, however. Concerned that the wing's rubber-band attachment mechanism might not be sufficiently rigid for their needs, they instead secured the wing to the fuselage with about six #8 wood screws.



The Maximum-Payload Team brought its own design, a bright yellow-and-blue model.



The Electric Team learned to strengthen foam at critical junctures.

The UAV test flight, under command of test pilot Zimmerly, was flawless. Of course, starting with a Telemaster, how could it have been otherwise?

The two load-bearing teams came a couple days later. The fueled model, after a few adjustments, made a successful test flight. The electric model, however, required a few modifications before it was ready to fly. In particular, the control horns mounted directly to the plastic foam that constituted the main structure of the model did not exhibit the necessary firmness required for precise control. When field modifications consisting of five-minute epoxy in the screw holes failed to

produce the necessary rigidity, the team took the model back to the shop for further modifications.



The electric model sported a detachable cargo bay mounted on the landing gear.

Parting Shot



Sal Lucania provided this photo of the Dawn Patrol, ready as usual to mix it up.

For Sale

Lanier RTF with 4 Hitec mini-servos, FMC receiver, Thunder Tiger .25, all low time. \$175.

Kangke CAP 232 ARF with 5 coreless BB servos, RCD FM receiver, needs .60-1.20 engine.

NIB SuperTigre .90 2-cycle with muffler, mount. \$90.

O.S. 120 Surpass w/pump. Not run for years but looks OK. \$170.

Saito FA 45 4-cycle, very low time. \$90.

Saito FA 45 4-cycle, high time but runs great. \$45.

Contact Bob Bennett for above items. (732) 462-4893.

BVM ducted fan jet, never flown. Rossi .91 engine, never run. Retracts, scale paint. \$2,500, BO, or trade for large-scale plane. Call Gary. (732) 770-5928.

Upcoming Events

May

- 14th Meeting at WWL
- 23rd Setup day
- 24th-25th Jumbo Jamboree
- 28th Meeting at WWL

June

- 8th Family Picnic at WK Field
- 11th Meeting at WWL
- 25th Meeting at WK Field

July

- 9th Meeting at Lawrence Library
- 20th Dawn Patrol & Oldtimer's Day
- 23rd Meeting at WK Field

Club Information

The Mercer County Radio Control Society is a New Jersey-based AMA Chartered club. Its field is in Assunpink Wildlife Management Area off Exit 11 of Hwy 195. It meets twice each month on Wednesdays at 8:00 PM, usually at the West Windsor Branch of the Mercer County Public Library. The club publishes this newsletter for members six times a year in odd-numbered months and operates a web site at www.mcrs.com. This newsletter is available, in color, on the web site.

Officers

- President: Keith Zimmerly
- VP, Membership: Bob Levanduski
- VP, Events: Armand Graziani
- Secretary: James Feszchak
- Treasurer: Bruce Evertsen

Newsletter Editor

- C. David Vale
- Phone/Fax: 609-430-9635
- Email: cdavidvale@gmail.com