

Propwash

The Newsletter of the Mercer County Radio Control Society
November 2005

Air War at Warren Kruse Field

The weather forecast had been iffy all week: Terrible weather up to the weekend, terrible weather after, and a window of clear skies between. Then the forecast closed in: Rainy on Saturday, better on Sunday. When the weekend finally arrived, the weather was iffy again. But by midday Saturday it had cleared and remained beautiful for the rest of the Warbirds event.



The event started with a shed full of parts.



Bing geared up the heart of the sound system.



If it takes two men one hour to assemble two tents,
...



... how long will it take eight men to assemble one?

The turnout was a bit lighter than had been the case at the Jumbo Jamboree in May, but much better than last year's Warbirds, when bad weather had effectively washed the event away. And even with the threatening clouds Saturday morning, the first aircraft took to the skies immediately following the national anthem. There's no doubt that WWI biplanes trailing smoke have an iridescent glow in the bright sunlight against an azure sky, but many a real-life battle has been won, or lost, in an ill-defined bank of clouds. Clouds filled the

picture Saturday morning as aircraft from three different eras took to the air.



Andy Fodor discovered that, as work assignments go, timing is everything.

Of course, to focus exclusively on the aircraft would miss much of the color of the event, which began mid-week with the anxious kitchen manager trying to guess the weather, the turnout, and the effects of the weather on the appetites of the turnout. It gathered momentum on Friday as experienced teams of flyers assembled an aerodrome, starting with only a shed full of parts. Illustrating impeccable planning and the utmost in collegiality and cooperation, groups of two, three, eight, as many as it took, applied their years of experience, ensuring that the impound/registration facility was assembled with each of the six panels in the proper order. Tents, so important in the event of inclement weather, were assembled once, twice, sometimes three times with the care that might otherwise go into a Stearman, a Sopwith, or a Fokker. By midday Friday, the venue was ready.



Planes to fly and planes to buy.

The Warbirds event was open to military aircraft of all sizes. Maybe it was just the visual impact of a third-scale Stinson L-5 or a quarter-scale Sopwith Pup, but as

the activity began on Saturday morning, the event seemed to be dominated with models that felt almost as large as life. And especially in contrast to events like the Electric Fly, some of these models sounded equally full sized. Not that anyone minded.



Joe Spett offered Warbirds hats to the more fashion conscious modelers.



Questionable weather presented no impediment to the intrepid Dawn Patrol.



While not limited to giant scale, the event drew some really big models.

The construction and finish quality, as one might expect in a scale event, was quite good. Charlie Kel-

logg's highly-detailed Avenger, which won the People's Choice at this year's Jumbo Jamboree, made another appearance at the Warbirds. But the People's Choice this time went to John Smith's 54 pound, ten-foot-span, Quadra-powered Westland Whirlwind, a model of a fast WWII twin-engine fighter, which in addition to its impressive appearance on the ground, offered a thrilling display in the air.



The "People's Choice" award went to this Westland Whirlwind, a model of a WWII fighter.



A crippled P-38 approaches with one engine out and a bent nose gear.



Fortunately, the damage was minimal.

As the weekend progressed and the weather cleared, there was much to excite the audience. A formation flight of two giant scale biplanes, with attendant smoke-trailing aerobatics, ended with a skillful demonstration of a dead stick landing. A P-38, after a thrilling show of aerobatics intended to lock down a recalcitrant nose gear, ended with a perfect folded-gear landing.



WWI demonstrations included formation flight, ...



... aerobatics, ...



... and a dead stick landing.

And Bill Zentmayer's Skyraider, which provided the publicity photo in the Trenton Times for this year's event, had what some believe may have been its final

encounter with the earth. Of course, Bill has surprised us in the past, demonstrating that his flying ability is exceeded only by his skill in the rapid repair of damaged airplanes.



Nobu Iwasawa's P-40 took to the air to provide protection to ...



... Keith Zimmerly's Forest Service B-17 (from ground fire?).



Beyond the flying, the Warbirds event provided an opportunity to relax, ...

But again, it's important to remember that airplanes are only part of an event like this. The opportunity to work together as a team, to socialize with other enthusiasts

from outside the local area, to share a meal in our elegant facilities: These are the things we'll remember longer than who crashed what on that day. And next spring, when we clean the refrigerator and find the opened can of cat food in the back, well remember that this event ended with the happy adoption of two black kittens that, otherwise, might have spent a winter hunting mice in the snow behind the clubhouse.



... share expertise on how it's done, ...



... explore new opportunities, ...



... and make new friends.

Electriflying!

“Mercer County is hosting an electric fly?” he questioned with a look of puzzlement on his face. “Does that mean they’re planning to leave their glow drivers connected for the whole flight?”

Sometimes it’s tough to get respect. Especially when we step outside of our stereotype as the club where age, experience, and model weight routinely push the known limits. But host we did, and it was a fine day for the electric guys. Except for that nagging 10-15 knot wind that kept some of the lighter models grounded.



John Tanzer brought his finely detailed electric P-38.



As with many of the lighter electrics, the wind was too intimidating for this electric ducted fan twin.

Nevertheless, participants and spectators alike were treated to clear skies, mild temperatures, and the legendary MCRCS hospitality. And a look at the changing electric fleets and technology, perhaps the fastest changing aspect of our RC hobby. The aircraft, it seems, are simultaneously getting larger and smaller. The foam ARFs and shock flyers illustrated the perform-

ance that is possible at the low end of the weight continuum. Harry Minnier’s Diablo pattern plane and James Vale’s AXI-powered Twinstar illustrated the capabilities at the heavier end. And several entries demonstrated that foam and/or light-weight construction techniques in no way limit the potential for scale realism.



Perhaps the most powerful electric was this Diablo, brought by Harry Minnier of the Pine Barons.



The wind proved no challenge to this TwinStar electric conversion, which flew at the event.



Electric flyers take note that the field outlets drive speakers, not chargers.

It might seem that Warren Kruse field was not designed for electric flight. The coarse turf and tall grass could support such speculation. As might hearing field announcements through your charger inadvertently plugged into the public address outlet. But, fact is, the field, originally intended for models of .40 size and larger, works just fine for electrics. The small ones are launched by hand. The larger ones often have power-to-weight ratios in excess of their fueled counterparts and tend to jump off of the ground, especially in a modest headwind.

But perhaps the event that best illustrated the enduring character of electric flight at MCRCS was near the end of the day when Dave Babcock installed a power strip and a sheet of Wonderboard on one of the tables. Wonderboard is a cement-based wallboard that is unaffected by water or extreme heat. His effort thus produced an outdoor charging station well suited for the biggest of LiPo creations. So who wants to build our first quarter-scale electric?

Dues are Due

It's that time of year again when thoughts turn to carved pumpkins, roasted turkeys, and general seasonal good cheer. It's also time to pay your club dues. Your dues must be paid by January 1, 2006. Dues for the coming year will remain \$55.00 for Members and \$27.50 for Junior Members. You may mail your check to MCRCS, P.O. Box 84, Hightstown, NJ 08520 or pay your dues directly to Jans Brower at a meeting. However, if you mail your dues, you must include a photocopy of your 2006 AMA membership card. **Your payment cannot be processed without a copy of your 2006 AMA membership card.** If you pay in person, you only need to show your card.

Election of Officers

The election of club officers will be held at the November 2nd club meeting. Plan to attend and make your vote count in selecting the individuals who will lead the club for the coming year.

Awards Night

Awards night will coincide with the December 7th meeting. This meeting will be held at 8:00 PM at the Lawrence Township Branch of the Mercer County Library, 2751 Brunswick Pike in Lawrenceville (on Route 1 across from Triangle Art). In addition to the awards for this year's building contest, ten \$50 gift cer-

tificates to Tower Hobbies will be given away as door prizes.

Horse Sense

You may have noticed that there are a number of horse stables in the general vicinity of our field and that the occasional horse and/or dog pack wanders near our runway. As old members are aware, we need to be careful to treat horse riders and dog trainers with the utmost of care and respect. Some may find it difficult to understand how horses and dogs could be considered more consistent with a wildlife reserve than, say, model airplanes. There are, nevertheless, those in positions of political power who, if not of this opinion, are at least sympathetic to those who are.

Thus, it is important that we give horses and dogs the right of way when we are flying (or driving, for that matter). In particular, this means:

- Don't take off while there are horses or dogs near the runway.
- If horses appear while you are flying, do your best to steer clear of them and do not fly over them.
- Offer to act as a spotter if someone else is flying when animals appear, to help them avoid conflict.
- In the unlikely event a conflict occurs between you and a horseperson, give them the benefit of doubt in the matter and report the incident to a club officer.
- Do not, under any circumstances, attempt to raise a dispute yourself with any member of these groups.

We have a first rate field in the middle of a pastoral environment. It is important that we remain aware of the needs of other users to ensure that we retain the rights to that field.

Food Flies

Be sure to note on your calendar that you will have two opportunities in the coming months to win food prizes by flying. Sunday, November 6th, is the annual Turkey fly. Start flying at 9:00 AM and collect tickets to participate in the turkey drawing somewhere between 12:00 and 1:00 (depending on the weather).

For those who haven't participated in one of our ham or turkey flies, this is sort of like 50-50. Except, instead

of buying your tickets, you get tickets for flying. Then tickets are drawn to see who wins. The club has allocated funds to buy a number of turkeys and hams, so the chances of winning are pretty good.

The annual 2006 Ham Fly will be held on Sunday, January 1, again starting at 9:00 AM. Unsupported rumors suggest that Doug McMillan may provide a vat of his famous soup for Ham Fly attendees. However, we were unable to confirm that rumor at press time.

Of Note

The twice-monthly club meetings provide an opportunity for members to get together away from the flying venue and discuss club issues, both important and otherwise. A few of the important items that have been noted or discussed recently include:

- Two new instructors have been added to the roster: Seth Hunter and Bob Bennett.
- The membership limit of the club has been increased from 185 to 200.
- The possibility of moving the frequency board has been discussed several times. The Board of Directors is reviewing the matter.

Cell Phone Interference

There has been discussion recently regarding the possibility of cellular telephones interfering with the proper operation of RC radio systems. Most of the discussion has involved high-end Futaba radios (i.e., the 9Z with frequency synthesizer module), although the concern extends further.

Tony Stillman, in his column that appeared in the July 2005 issue of *R/C Report* presented a lucid discussion of some informal research done on the problem. Citing an email provided by a faculty member of the engineering department of Oklahoma State University, the article describes that research.

The research began by measuring the signal strength of cell phone transmissions. The study found that cell phones transmit at high power immediately after receiving a call, but before the phone rings. Apparently, upon receipt of a call, the phone responds with an "I'm here" message at full power. Then, after negotiation with the cell station, it reduces power to the minimum level required to support the conversation, often about 10% of the initial value.

The study found that interference can occur when the cell phone is **near the transmitter** at the time a call is

received. It would seem that the interference does not involve the radio frequency part of the circuitry, but rather the logic circuitry that determines what signals to send (e.g., channel, trim setting, servo direction, etc.). Undesirable effects can include servo chatter in PPM mode, lockout in PCM mode, or other unpredictable effects that may result in the loss of control. The effects noted in the study only occurred when the cell phone was within 3-4 feet of the transmitter, and then only when a call was received.

The Futaba web site, in its question-and-answer section, addresses the question: "Is there any risk to using cellular phones in close proximity with my radio?" The response notes that any such problem would be a result of interference with the processor, and not the radio frequency. While claiming that Futaba has been unable to reproduce any of the reported problems, the response does "recommend limiting the proximity of powered-on cellular phones to at least 1,000 feet from any radio in operation." That should do it.

Lost

Bob Bennett lost an electric starter that he inadvertently left at the Warbirds event. Last seen in the clubhouse, he would appreciate hearing from anyone who may know where it is. His phone number is 732-462-4893.

Impressing the Staff

It has been rumored that those who wander too close to the club kitchen on event days often come away with new titles and/or skills. Word has it that getting too close to the editor's office near a publication deadline has a similar effect.



The Propwash Junior Editor at work.

Upcoming Events

November

- 2nd Meeting and annual elections at WWL
- 6th Turkey Fly
- 16th Meeting at WWL

December

- 7th Annual awards meeting at Lawrence Library
- 21st Meeting at WWL

January

- 1st Annual Ham Fly
- 4th Meeting at WWL
- 18th Meeting at WWL

Club Information

The Mercer County Radio Control Society is a New Jersey-based AMA Chartered Gold Leader Club. Its field is in Assunpink Wildlife Management Area off Exit 11 of Hwy 195. It meets at the West Windsor Branch of the Mercer County Public Library on the first and third Wednesday of each month at 8:00 PM. The club publishes this newsletter for members approximately six times a year and operates a web site at www.mcrcs.com.

Officers

President: Doug McMillan
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VP, Events: Armand Graziani
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