



The THUMB PRINT

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NFFS

July-August-September-October 2007

HEADS UP

Welcome to the July-October issue. We're still running late by a good margin but catching up in notches. Plenty of news items follow and a few announcements as well. Once more we're plagued with an obituary for someone we all know. Pay attention to the rules change proposals listed below and make your opinions known to Ron Sharpton, our district's rep on the contest board. The indoor season is in full swing, so make an appearance somewhere; the dates and venues follow. Several contest reports and meeting minutes are provided and we're getting current there, too. (This desk is still looking for some indoor contest reports from last spring; those contest directors are asked to poke around their hard drives for them.)

This will do it for the preliminaries for the issue in hand. As always, keep those photos, news items, and other contributions coming. Don't make me work too hard. Help??!!

THE FIRST NAG

It's renewal time again, so you know what is coming. Yea, this is my first beseeching of the multitudes, but I'll keep it convivial at this juncture. No need to raise the bile at this point. The 2008 membership form follows later in this issue. Please note we've a dues reduction for next year. You know who you are and you know what to do.

BEHIND CLOSED DOORS

We've numerous indoor dates coming up this winter and spring. All the remaining indoor contests are being held in the gym at North Cobb High School in Kennesaw. The school is west of downtown Kennesaw on Old Hwy. 41 at the Blue Springs Road intersection. Mark your calendars thusly: Nov. 19, Jan. 19, Feb. 16, March 15, and April 19. Note the April date will be the 2008 Peach State Indoor Champs, to be CD'ed by yours sincerely. Look for the PSIC flyer in the next issue. Look for additional dates and venues in these humble pages and on the web site.

The North Cobb site is easy to find and there is a good map on the web site. We've had a few indoor cancellations this year because schools have bumped us for their own and last minute uses. Hey, it's the world we live in; it's not our building. So, keep you eyes peeled for an emergency e-mail prior to the date. If you've any doubt, contact Bill Gowen at b.gowen@earthlink.net

The North Cobb site is a good one. The room has a category II ceiling, a generous floor area, and only mild clutter overhead. There's plenty of parking in the lot opposite the Blue Springs Road intersection. Follow the broker signs to the gym.

WALT ROZELLE, R.I.P.

Longtime free flight stalwart and charter Thumb, Walt Rozelle, died on October 24 from cancer in hospice near his St. Simons Island home. Services will be held on November 14 on St. Simons Island. I scanned the announcement with the details from the NFFS website and it is re-printed later in this issue.

The Low Country is very pretty this time of year and a great time to visit. Think Prince of Tides or Forrest Gump. Unless you're living in the Deep South, you'll probably want to fly into Savannah or Jacksonville, rent a car, and drive down or up. Then, you've a very scenic one hour drive down or up I-95 to Brunswick and figure on another thirty minutes to get on the island and to the church. Those tempted to fly into Atlanta need to factor in a pretty boring, five-hour drive, unless you like looking at the interstate slash of county seats, vast pine tree paradise, and verdant but harvested farmland for three hundred miles, each way. Your call.

If you want or need tips on any of the above, get with me. I grew up very near Savannah, just one hour up the coast, and am a card-carrying, Low Country homeboy. (A very old joke: What does China and the Low Country have in common? Everybody eats a lot of rice and worships their ancestors. Don't look at me funny. Walt liked that joke.)

ERRATUM

Latin is just so sexy. Actually, it's necessary here. I received an e-mail from Gary outlining a slew of errors in the last issue. This collision of fact and fiction occurred around my assertion that the bevy of gas-powered contrempts at the Nats was courtesy of Gary. As his judicious accounting of same strongly indicated, most of this excitement was actually furnished by Dohrman and Graham.

I ask the reader's pardon. Such was the rain of balsa, tissue, and steel alloy that week, I just lost track of where it was coming from. I recalled George Perryman's old axiom then on the field and I'll recall it now, "If you test fly long enough, sooner or later, you're going to crash." Alas, my pleading were to no avail. It was, however, a good and entertaining floor show at the time.

MORE ABOUT THE SENATOR

The Keil Kraft Senator is our 2008 Model of the Year and items about the International Senator Postal pop up all over the place, if you notice them. As was outlined in the last issue, several Senator's have been built by members and a few more are in the works, including mine.

The following aspects of the postal were mentioned by Larry Kruse's in his most recent column in "Flying Models", which I paraphrase as follows: Landing gear can be removable; any freewheeler up to a diameter of 13 inches is OK; glazing of the canopy is optional; no restrictions of rubber weight or size; structure can be amended for a DT mechanism and to allow a blast tube, just don't go crazy and try something slick. Fearless Leader Emeritus Redux Frank is watching.

EXPRESS YOURSELF

There's a fresh batch of rules change proposals up for review and vote. None are trivial and none are poorly worded. Some you've seen before; one attempts to un-do a recent rules change; and a few make too much obvious sense to sit on the other side of. I'll introduce each and make an attempt to present the logic behind each. For most, I'll venture one man's opinion.

Read over the following summaries and ponder thereto. Better yet, look them up yourself on the AMA web site. Contact Ron Sharpton, our District V Free Flight Contest Board member. Ron can be contacted at: dixiefreeflight@aol.com / 1290 Country Rd./ Daytona Beach, FL 32119 / (386)-767-6138 . Ron is a good man, listens to people, and appreciates your input. The committee is voting at the end of November.

OFF-09-1, 6, 7

These three proposals deal with the desire to change the gas power events back to the separate 1/2A, A, B, C, and D classes. They vary in the details. A recent rules change collapsed the categories into fewer numbers. The rationale was to improve competition by increasing the number of entrants per event. Opinions vary as to whether this happened or not. Submitted by Faust Parker and James Grove.

I don't fly gas, so this one doesn't blow up my skirt one way or the other. Whatever improves flying and participation—you decide. I'm for anything that puts more people on the flightline and models into the air.

OFF-09-2

This proposal seeks to remove the limitation on the number of models you can fly in an event. The present limit is two. This one has been on the books for ages and I believe the old rationale was to prevent a contestant from not having to retrieve his models. This made sense in the past when we had very long maxes and contests were won with relatively fewer flights than now. The submitter points to the problems of our modern era with extended fly-offs and the contestant being knocked out of contention by lost or crashed models. This change would, however, favor those modelers with multiple models per events and tend to reward the feverish builders out there. Submitted by Faust Parker.

I don't know exactly where I fall on this one. Without getting too lawyerly, I'd fall on the side of increasing flying on contest day and nix the present limitation.

OFF-09-3

This proposal seeks to redefine the rubber size rules in catapult glider to allow the use of rubber strip other than 1/4 inch, or practically speaking, to allow the use of an equivalent amount of 1/8 inch strip. Loop length would remain the same. Submitted by Faust Parker.

Who could argue with this? Yes, yes, yes.

OFF-09-4

This proposal will, if passed, remove the Builder of the Model (BOM) for the outdoor free flight events. Outdoor free flight scale and all the indoor events will be unaffected. The submitters see the requirement that modelers build the models they fly to be a severe deterrent to participation in our present times. They also see the present BOM rule as poorly written, inconsistent, and unenforceable, as well as not being actively enforced anyway. They also think the availability of bought or given models and those of deceased friends could markedly increase

the number of fliers at contests and overall fun flying. Submitted by Jim Juhl and so-signed by Hank Nystrom and your trusty editor.

(Personal Soapbox: The BOM issue has been kicked around for years and every free flyer has an opinion about it. Mine is it's time for it to go, as it has in every other aspect of model aviation, save some types of scale modeling, indoor free flight, SAM free flight (but not RC SAM), and some limited types of control line competition.

The organized hobby and sport of free flight is dying a slow death. The numbers don't lie. The only thing the BOM does is preserve the present contest environment, which ain't that great. Don't get nostalgic for the past; it was decades ago. Membership in the NFFS is in slow decline; there's a national shortage of flying fields, regional and local; most free flight clubs aren't growing; contest participation is in slow decline nationally; our cottage industries aren't making anybody prosperous. The degree of pre-fabrication apparent in our modern kits makes a mockery of our rickety and patch-worked BOM rule. It's not the 1950's anymore; people just don't have as much free time as they used to have for building model airplanes. Exactly how much of the status quo is worth preserving? The original purpose of the BOM was to keep parents from building the models of their children—at the present time, shouldn't we be encouraging families to build and fly models together?

The free flight community really needs to ponder the implications of continuing to keep the BOM in place. It does little to encourage the building and flying of free flight models. Rather, it presents significant barriers to participation, particularly to newcomers. Wanting to preserve the BOM just because you think somebody might beat you in a contest next year with a model he or she bought or was given to them is the height of selfishness in free flight's current operating environment. Look beyond yourself and just give it up.

Having said that, however, let me assert removing the BOM isn't a cure-all, as some think. It is, however, one of several changes we can make to incrementally increase our numbers, something we desperately need to do. Specifically, the NFFS's present membership of 1400-odd souls just isn't viable for the future. Heaven forbid, but it might even be too late.)

OFF-09-5

This proposal seeks to allow proxy flying in contests, as it once was. The submitter feels there are opportunities to increase competition flying via proxy, particularly at regional and national contests. This would, in turn, encourage building, too. For example, a flier with a stable of gas models who can't make the Nats can give them to a friend to fly in his stead. Another example is the opportunity for our retired members with mobility issues who are still active builders to loan their models to those OFB's still able to travel and compete. Two-man, builder/flier teams are very common in other types of model aviation competition. Submitted by Gil Morris.

I'd vote yes, yes, yes, for this one. Anything that can clearly encourage the building and flying of free flight models is a good idea in my book.

OFF-09-8

This proposal seeks to limit the wingspan of HLG's to one meter, approximately 39 inches and change. The submitter sees the inevitable adoption of the discus-launch technique as near universal and having a positive effect on participation. However, he sees a danger in an inexorably increasing wingspan, such that larger models, having an innate aerodynamic advantage, will have a negative impact on participation, such models being more expensive and technically difficult to construct. Submitted by Art Ellis.

I don't know what to think about this one. I certainly think well of the discuss-launch trends and look forward to doing it myself. I guess I just don't see where we have a problem to be fixed yet. I say table the proposal at this time, let the models be flown formulae libre for a while, and see what develops. We can always change it later.

THE REAL FACTS: BUILD OR BUY?

I got curious and thought I'd take a look at the event participation at the last Nats in terms of those events predominated by models built by their fliers and those characterized as having large numbers of bought models. The results were revealing, although I don't content these results are definitive. I tried to go apples-and-apples, oranges-and-oranges, but only to a convenient extent. Ergo, feel free to argue.

Here goes, broken down by models being actually flown, not including entrants, from the 2007 Nats (note that my use of "junior" refers to the AMA age category, 0-to-16 yrs., not "kids".):

OVERALL PARTICIPATION

BUILT (JSO)		BOUGHT(JSO)	
P-30	32	Coupe	14
Mulvihill	40	Wakefield	26
Moffett	22		
1/2A Gas	19	F1J	11
AB, CD Gas	24	F1C	(blown out, 11 entered)
Classic Towline	21	F1A	24
		F1H	20

Analysis needn't be paralysis. The basic fact blares out there is an awful lot of bought models being flown, and by extrapolation, many fliers don't mind flying purchased models. Plus, there are probably many other fliers who are potentially willing to fly proxy for their club mates or fly the models of their departed OFB's. Any stigma associated with such obviously isn't universal. It hasn't hurt anything and it puts fliers and models on the flightline. And somewhere along the way, somebody might make a few bucks. I see no harm in any of it.

JUNIOR PARTICIPATION

BUILT (J)		BOUGHT (J)	
P-30	7	Coupe	1
Mulvihill	6	Wakefield	0
Moffett	0		
1/2A Gas	2	F1J	2
AB, CD Gas	3	F1C	(ditto above, 0 entered)
		F1P	2

Analysis needn't be paralysis. The basic facts on junior participation shift here and there and are a bit more opaque, and the inferences harder to draw. The availability of models off-the-shelf hasn't hurt, particularly in terms of towline events, with rubber-powered events apparently suffering in comparison. Although the opinion can't be held with the rigor of the previous table, you can't tell me our juniors are being hurt in any way.

Further, let me ask this question and I expect the readers to answer it honestly within your own heads: How many more juniors would be flying at the Nats if their fathers, uncles, and friends could give models to them? Frankly, if you think the answer is "fewer of them", you need to turn in your high school diploma or college degree. You want to get more juniors out to the flightline quickly? Give or buy them models, teach them how to fly them, and fix them when they crash. Nothing could be plainer. I'd bet some of them might be so intrigued they'd be tempted to build a few models in time.

WHAT THA?!?!

Sometimes you see things and you just can't understand the logic behind them. Such was the case when Fearless Leader Emeritus Redux Frank forwarded this news item on a recent bit of parliamentary hoodoo-voodoo by the AMA District Veeps. It's so bizarre I'll just quote his e-mail, "Motion IX: Moved by C. Bauer (VI), and seconded by m. Smith (IX), that the 2009 Nats will be run in two-week segments spread over eight weeks during the summer of 2009, no Nats will be run on Mondays. Passed unanimously at the August 2007 AMA Executive Council meeting has been rescinded at the October meeting."

This is so stupid it's overwhelming my mental faculties. I've tried as hard as I can and I just can't triangulate the logic behind this idea. What could they possibly be trying to do here? What were they serving during that meeting? Do you know how drunk I would have to be to pull anything that dumb? Two six-packs, I figure, which is what I drank before, during, and after my Dawgs beat the snot out of the Gators down in Jacksonville.

BTW: our Veep, Tony Stillman, can be reached at tony@amadistrict-v.org. I thinking Tony could benefit from an infusion of a contrary point of view. He'll get mine—that's for sure.

TINY BUBBLES

I've been using Mylar for years. Other than the loss of some torsional strength, it's far superior to tissue in all other aspects. However, it does require an additional skill set, but remains fairly easy to learn with a little practice.

One problem that continued to plague my efforts, particularly with the ¼ mil, is the formation of bubbles under the Mylar at the trailing edge when heat is applied. Well, I've learned two things recently that have lessened this problem. First, I switched to Velcro Adhesive in the squeeze tube from Sig Stix-It in the can as an adhesive. The "stick 'um" element seems to give off fewer vapors under heat than my old standby of several years. You can find it in a 1 oz., white/orange tube at good fabric stores. It lasts forever in the tube. Thin it a ton with nitrate thinner. You don't need much, but hit the rib undercambers twice to be sure.

The bubbles became even less of a problem when I started spraying all my bare frames with clear lacquer from a spray can prior to covering. Down here in Georgia we have extreme humidity changes and I've come to assume some of my warping is caused by it. The spray

lacquer seems to do a better and lighter job than brushed nitrate with better sealing and less over-slop and it dries faster. Also, lacquer raises the fuzz on balsa better than nitrate and is a great prep for all finishes on balsa.

BTW: The cheapest source of high-quality spray lacquer is the old Aqua Net hairspray in the big howitzer rattle can. The smell doesn't last very long. (And for a while at least, the room smells like the old Southern matriarchs of your youth.) You can find it at most beauty shops and drug stores, right next to the blue rinse. Look for it the next time you go in to stock up on emery boards.

NEXT ISSUE

Unless I'm deluged with materials, expect something in your inbox between Christmas and New Years. Within its cozy confines you'll find the material on the annual banquet in late January and the first serious nag about renewing your membership. If you're feeling frisky, you can do it now and act smug about the laggards around you. Just send Diamond Don Brown your check for twenty dollars, American (\$20.00), payable to TTOMA. That way, when I start nagging everybody, you can feel superior.

Ciao, y'all!

Walt Rozelle

Walter Rozelle, long-time editor of *Free Flight*, the National Free Flight Digest, died October 24th. Walt will be remembered as an eloquent and tireless voice for NFFS and free flight.

A memorial service will be held at 11:00 am Wednesday, November 14 Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, 615 Mallory Street, Saint Simons Island, Georgia 31522.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in Walt's name to Hospice of Golden Isle, Inc., 1692 Glyngo Parkway, Brunswick, GA 31525 or to Na Free Flight Society Foundation, c/o U.S. Family Foundation, Inc., 450 P Grove Road, Inverness, FL 34452-5725.

Rex Hinson, President, National Free Flight Society

OCTOBER CONTEST REPORT

Cat-A-Piglet

Al Pardue	142
Clarence Purdy	136
Jim Altenbern	107
Bob Thoren	99
Frank Hodson	85
Scott Lapraik	77

P-30

Scott Lapraik	258
Jim Altenbern	209
Al Pardue	202

Embryo

Don Peacock	257
Jim Altenbern	179

HLG

Jim Martin	99
Bob Thoren	89

CLG

Jim Altenbern	184
Bob Thoren	104
Barry Sholder	93
Jim Martin	84
Scott Lapraik	78
Clarence Purdy	69
Frank Hodson	4

Commercial Rubber

Al Pardue	86
Bob Thoren	72

FAC Two-Bit

Jim Martin	147
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Jr Stringless Wonder

Alex Kramb	279
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22 Sept FAC contest report

We had good weather for our second attempt at holding an FAC event here at TTOMA. Winds were light and variable for the first half of the day, and conditions could not have been better. The drift was no problem, and many models went up and came down close to the launch. This changed through the day, and the final tally required careful fusing and attention to the DT settings to avoid a walk in the woods.

I had publicized this event online in several places, and had hoped for a good turnout. Actually, the fliers who turned out were quite good, there just weren't very many of them. We had seven fliers who logged official flights.

It appears that FAC events are popular, and I predict a lot more of this type of flying here as it nicely suits the field. The events such as Embryo, 2 Bit and Scat Jet are well within almost anyone's capabilities to construct them.

Here are the results:

Embryo	Model	time
1. Gary Morton	Work in Progress	312
2. Al Pardue	Cruiser	175
3. Clarence Purdy	??	114

2 Bit	Model	time
1. Al Pardue	FA Moth	233
2. Gary Morton	FA Moth	170

Scat Jet	Model	time
1. Frank Hodson	Viggen	42
2. Al Pardue	Yak 15	27

Dime Scale	Model	time
1. Barry Sholder	Bristol Brownie	100

We need to do some work on our Scat Jet flying. The guys at PENSACOLA seem to know how to build and fly 'em with much greater times. Dime Scale would seem to be a natural, and I would have been in that number except that mine is still wrecked and not repaired. Ditto Embryo. Woulda, Shoulda, Coulda, sound familiar??? How about coming out and flying with your pals.

Respectively submitted,
Dohrman Crawford
Cub reporter

AUGUST MEETING MINUTES

Meeting called to order. Fearless Leader Emeritus Redux Frank presiding. Thirteen members present. Treasurer's report read and accepted by vote. Previous minutes unavailable to be read. Excuses offered.

Old Business: Broad discussion of issues concerning upcoming September 8 contest. Discussion of contest prizes for September meet lead by Frank; motion carried by vote. Discussion of gas event engine runs; all engine runs to be 7 or 5 seconds, per discussion. Gary volunteered to judge scale events, starting at 9 AM. Common launching point for SCAT Jet and CLG to be used. Embryo judging to be done at 9 AM or before third flight. Cash to be handed out at 5 PM.

New Business: Announcement of Gathering of Turkeys contest in Pensacola on September 7-9.

Meeting adjourned. Submitted by Yvonne Purdy, scribe, reporting for Karl "Still Dances With Trout" Hube.

OCTOBER MEETING MINUTES

Meeting called to order. Fearless Leader Emeritus Redux Frank presiding. Seventeen members present. Treasurer's report read and accepted by vote. A little came in; a little went out; \$2291.85 left over at end of period. Previous month's minutes unavailable to be read. Excuses offered.

Old Business: Discussion introduced by Frank about when to have meeting during contest day; decision made to have it at 1:00 pm. Present officer slate nominated for re-election to serve in 2008; slate accepted by vote; for the record, Frank (Pres.), Barf (Veep), Don (Trea.), and Karl (Secre.). Discussion of 2008 dues; decision made to reduce to \$20.00/yr., a reduction a five

dollars. Discussion introduced by Jim about 2008 Model of the Year; voted taken to fly the Keil Kraft Senator; 2008 Event of Year to remain FAC Two-Bit Rubber. Discussion of fall/winter meeting schedule; fall/winter meetings to be held indoors at 11/07, 1/08, 2/08, and 3/08 during indoor contests; back-up site to be St. Lukes Presbyterian in Dunwoody; look for updates via e-mail. Discussion introduced by Dohrman of annual banquet in January; same place and about same time as last year; possibility of getting a representation of Confederate Air Force for Peachtree City as speaker.

New Business: Discussion introduced by Frank about 2008 outdoor contest schedule; plan is to have same schedule as last year with two-day contest in June and September, Saturday being FAC and Sunday everything else. Bob Thoren announced HOD contest in Pensacola on Feb 10-11, site 8A.

Meeting adjourned. Submitted by David Mills, scribe, reporting for Karl "Still Dances With Trout" Hube.

2008 TTOMA MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name _____ AMA # _____

Street _____

State and ZIP Code _____

Telephone _____

E-Mail _____

Other Family Members _____

\$20.00/yr. for adults, plus \$1.00/additional family member(s). Juniors and seniors-no charge.
Note \$25.00/yr. after Feb.15

Send your check payable to TTOMA to: Don Brown/477 Safari Cir./Stone Mountain, GA 30083



Dunwoody Bigfoot
Is a Current NFFS
Member



No Flying Site
Worries for
Dunwoody Bigfoot



Dohrman's new FA Moth
Two-Bit entry



Dohrman's new King Harry
Two-Bit entry

Al's new
Sparky



Whit's new Torontonion
Nostalgia Wakefield

Aircraft Maintenance Behind The Scenes, A Real Confidence Builder

Remember it takes a college degree to fly a plane, but only a high school diploma to fix one. Reassurance for those of us who fly routinely in our jobs.

After every flight, UPS pilots fill out a form, called a "gripe sheet," which tells mechanics about problems with the aircraft. The mechanics correct the problems, document their repairs on the form, and then pilots review the gripe sheets before the next flight. Never let it be said that ground crews lack a sense of humor. Here are some actual maintenance complaints submitted by UPS' pilots (marked with a P) and the solutions recorded (marked with an S) by maintenance engineers.

By the way, UPS is the only major airline that has never, ever, had an accident.



P: Left inside main tire almost needs replacement.
S: Almost replaced left inside main tire.

P: Test flight OK, except auto-land very rough.
S: Auto-land not installed on this aircraft.

P: Something loose in cockpit.
S: Something tightened in cockpit

P: Dead bugs on windshield.
S: Live bugs on back-order.

P: Autopilot in altitude-hold mode produces a 200 feet per minute descent.
S: Cannot reproduce problem on ground.

P: Evidence of leak on right main landing gear.
S: Evidence removed.

P: DME volume unbelievably loud.
S: DME volume set to more believable level.

P: Friction locks cause throttle levers to stick.
S: That's what friction locks are for.

P: IFF inoperative in OFF mode.
S: IFF always inoperative in OFF mode.

P: Suspected crack in windshield.
S: Suspect you're right.

P: Number 3 engine missing.
S: Engine found on right wing after brief search.

P: Aircraft handles funny. (I love this one!)
S: Aircraft warned to straighten up, fly right, and be serious.

P: Target radar hums.
S: Reprogrammed target radar with lyrics.

P: Mouse in cockpit.
S: Cat installed.

And the best one for last.....

P: Noise coming from under instrument panel. Sounds like a midget pounding on something with a hammer.
S: Took hammer away from midget.