COLORADO FREE FLIGHT

THE MAX-OUT

Newsletter of the Magnificent Mountain Men

AMA CHARTERED CLUB #177

Issue 2025-06
(Nov-Dec)



**"Chuck, do these thermal things come by often?
Been waiting a while now."**

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-November Scramble (Frito Pie!)
-Christmas Banquet
-Rocky Mountain Champs Photo spread and Recollections
-Projects and New Builds
-December Indoor Scramble

Upcoming Events

Annual Meeting	10 Jan 2026	Chuck Etherington
Indoor at Manitou	11 Jan 2026	TBD
Indoor at Beth Eden	16 Jan 2026	John Christensen
Indoor at Beth Eden	30 Jan 2026	John Christensen

From John Christensen: "Anyone not receiving announcements about indoor at Beth Eden can be added to the email list by contacting me at: cloverdale1955@gmail.com "

MMM Club Officers and Contact List

President
Chuck Etherington **720-201-6218**

Vice President:
Bernie Olson **682-333-4802**

Sec'y / Treasurer and Flying Site Coordinator:
Chuck Etherington **720-201-6218**

PR:
Don DeLoach **719-964-7117**

Newsletter:
John McGrath **719-963-9227**

Indoor Coordinator:
Sean McEntee **314-910-2097**

Club Records Monitor:
Don DeLoach **719-964-7117**

Safety Officer
Ken Phair **303-771-3263**

Club Points Monitor:
Jace Pivonka **720-202-2936**
Pete McQuade (backup)

The President's Corner

By Chuck Etherington

Season Wrap-Up



Hi All,

Well, we had quite a year:

- Four big contests
  -Pikes Peak Ceiling Climb – UCCS Gallogly Gym
  -Casino Cup – West Wendover, NV
  -14 Rounder – Lowry Ranch
  -Rocky Mountain Champs – Lowry Ranch
- Seven Outdoor Scrambles at Lowry Ranch
- One Winter Coupe contest
- One Outdoor scramble at Norris Ranch
- Four Indoor Scrambles at Manitou Springs High School
- Two major Science Olympiad contests

We enjoyed numerous indoor flying opportunities at Beth Eden Church in Denver.

We were 'graced' by a band of 4 tornadoes that crossed our Lowry site in May. One coming toward us from the SW was alarming to say the least, but it dissipated after tearing up some houses and the Crosswinds RC flying site (also on Lowry Ranch). The other three skipped us but touched down to the NE one after the other. I use the word "graced" because although alarming, it was very interesting to see nature at its most violent.

We had two inductees into the MMM Hall of Fame: Mark Covington who we miss dearly, and John McGrath. Both well deserved.

We introduced the concept of Assistant CDs. Too often the CD is downwind chasing when a decision needs to be made or a question asked. The backup CD doubles the chances of a CD being accessible throughout the day. The backup can also help with scoring and post-contest reporting.

Our relationships remain very good with the Colorado State Land Board (that our leases are with), Nick Trainor (rancher at Lowry), Arapahoe Hunt, and Civitas Oil & Gas (who is doing a lot on road improvement and installing an electronic gate at Quincy). They take very good care of us.

Pete and Darold have worked hard to further secure our relationship with Manitou Springs High School and develop a plan for having the air handlers turned off during our competitions.

Ken Phair has accepted the position as club Safety Officer. He created a very comprehensive safety document and plan for implementation which we will roll out at the annual meeting.

That's pretty much a wrap. The annual meeting will be Saturday 10 January at the Pikes Peak Grange Hall, 3093 N. State Highway 83 in Franktown, 9:00 – 12:00. Among other things, we will discuss what went well in 2025 and what we can do to improve in 2026. Your attendance will be greatly appreciated.



November Scramble (Frito Pie!)

2025 Year-end Celebration

Jerry Murphy/Master Chef

What do we have to celebrate? Well, we have a premier flying field that we share with our fellow co-leasers. In addition to our monthly scramble contests, we hosted two major multi-day competitions. Our membership remains steady. How should we celebrate this year's successes? How about the 2025 edition of the Frito Pie Contest?



Sometime about 25 years ago, Don and I were talking about how we could treat the club to a celebration of our successes, along with our Texas roots. He suggested Frito Pie. This Texas treat is easy to prepare in the flying field and will be a treat for all of us. Through the years we have enjoyed various forms of entertainment such as Ray Boyd's Irish band and others. So, what is Frito Pie? It is a simple, easy to prepare dish consisting of Chili and Frito corn chips.



Here is the recipe:

- 18 cans of Costco Cattle Drive chili
- 1 pound of shredded cheese
- 1 jar of Jalapenos
- ¼ pound of chopped onions

Scramble Report

Darold Jones, CD

The weather was spectacular! Big thermals, almost no wind and temperature in the low 80's. There were 18 flyers entered and the sky was filled with models. Don put together a string of 13 maxes to walk away with the scramble and Karren maxed out in Catapult glider to win that part of the scramble. Skilly was there with her horse, Champ. She did some retrieving on the horse and Chuck borrowed Champ to give Clara some riding lessons.

Jerry and Don served up Frito Pie to the crowd, which included some significant others who rarely visit the field. All in all, a great day. Did I mention the weather was spectacular?











November Scramble Results		
	Contest Date:	2-Nov-25
Scramble Place	Name	Points
1	Don DeLoach	100
2	Frank Menanno	79
3	John McGrath	51
4	Sean McEntee	39
5	Pete McQuade	35
6	Karen Gromman	31
7	Bernie Olson	29
8	Skilly DeLoach	27
9	Bill Gromman	21
10	Darold Jones	19



The 2025 MMM Club Christmas Banquet

(Ed.)



The club was treated to an incredible Christmas party at the home of Don, Cindy, and Skilly DeLoach on the 21st. Right from the outset, we should give a huge thank you to Cindy, not only for opening her home to twenty-plus model builders and family, but also to managing all of the food service (amazing barbecue from Mission Barbecue), beverages of all kinds, desserts, and to top it all off, perfectly prepared eggnog during the after dinner presentations! Cindy made the offer to host after Don and Rick Pangell struggled mightily to find a venue suitable for a group this size during the holiday season.



The house was set up to perfection, with two dining areas, beautiful Christmas decorations and even an MMM Christmas wall hanging. Simply put, we could not have asked for more, and probably deserved less!

Thanks also to Skilly, who not only served as co-host along with Cindy and Don, but who devoted much of the day to setting up the house, preparing decorations and place settings, and developing a free flight set of conversation starter cards to help get the party rolling during the after dinner session! That was a lot of fun, Skilly.

President Chuck did his part as well by borrowing and delivering a large number of chairs (tables too?) from the Pikes Peak Grange in Franktown. Thanks, Chuck!



After dinner we were treated to a slide show put together by Bernie with many of the season's highlights from the field (thanks, Bern) and Chuck made presentations of some annual awards, including the Glider Trophy (Jace) and Scramble Trophy (your Editor). Chuck also recognized some of the year's outstanding performances, such as Todd Reynolds' participation at the World Championships as a member of the US F1C team, and numerous NATS appearances and wins (notably by host Don)



(Blind squirrel finds nut…)



Most of all, though, the night was a wonderful chance to get together with our favorite people and celebrate what a wonderful year it's been. To those unable to attend, we know you'd have been there if able, and you were most definitely with us in spirit!

Scenes from the Rocky Mountain Champs









































Thanks to Frank, Chris and especially Bernie for contributing these (and many more) to the newsletter. Beautiful shots, guys!


ON ANY SUNDAY




Clubhouse







RMFFC 2025 Memories

Compiled by Chuck Etherington

Don DeLoach:

Bernie Olson pre-entered the contest, volunteered to manage the lunch grilling operation then sadly cut his hand on a Rossi/prop just a few days before the contest. Regardless Bernie came out all four days, ten stitches in his fingers, with no complaints. Bernie is the model of selfless service to the club and we are grateful for him.

Chuck and Frank, with some help from others, hauled all the contest gear, grill, and raffle to/from the storage silo before during and after the flying. Thank you guys!

Jeff Pakiz again did a terrific job running the FAC events and mass launches, including static judging Friday through Monday. Thank you Jeff!

George Dalecki came all the way from Michigan and won the RMFFC Grand Championship on his first attempt! Congrats George! Among his great feats is a string of four straight maxes in coupe before having to take a zero in round six when he ran out of time. He also entered a crowded glider pen very late on Monday but still managed to take second place…very impressive flying.

I think its time to admit that Jace might be the best flyer in MMM history. He won all five events he entered: F1A, HLG, HLG Mass Launch, 5x5 HLG and Catapult. His max-to-flight drop on those five events was extremely high—definitely the highest of any flyer at this RMC. He tied for Grand Champ using only 3 of the allowed 5 events but ended second on the tiebreaker (total # of maxes in the flyers' other events).

Dave Sechrist came all the way from Indiana and had a couple of mishaps the first two days but then it came together for him in E-36 on Monday. Flying his little 80% Maverick he was pretty much unbeatable!

Mike Isermann came all the way from College Station, Texas with a car full of beautiful FAC models. What a pleasure to see a true stick and tissue craftsman in action!

Sean McEntee deserves major props for what he did to honor Mark C. And his dog Miller. Miller died right before the RMC and Sean brought both Mark's and Miller's ashes in a custom made box to be spread on the field at dusk. The weather was perfect on Sunday afternoon, just after the HLG Mass Launch. A few stories were shared, more than a few tears were shed, and glasses were raised to our great friend Mark. Jace's mom and dad brought three wonderful homemade pies which were enjoyed by all. We unwound while watching the orange sunset thinking of Mark and all the great times we shared with him on that hilltop.

Bill Groman:

My strongest impression of the contest overall came from seeing the free flow of help and advice between all the competitors. No burdens or difficulties went unshared!

The high-point of the contest for me personally was watching my wife, Karren, get her first max on her first flight in her very first competition. She ended up placing higher than me, but that made the whole day seem even better.

John McGrath:

The flying was fabulous but challenging at times. I was fortunate to do well in three events, but not without some difficulty. None of it was pretty. In Coupe none of us maxed out, so it was mostly a case of comparing "almost" flights. In OT Stick/Fuselage I was getting lots of good flights with Herb Kothe's Sparky. Five maxes by my count! But then CD Don pointed out that I hadn't actually read the rules, and only three of those two-minute "maxes" could be counted, plus 120 seconds out of the required 180 for my fourth flight. Ouch! Lucky for me, we ran into the end of the day before other, better fliers (like Don), could do their best work with their own OT Rubber models. In Andrade, I read the rules okay, but my prop locked up about 20 seconds into my first flight, giving me a time of only about 45 seconds. Too long to score it as an attempt, too short to call it a success. Fortunately, I was able to max the next flight, which was a 3-minute flight, and with so much going on, that sufficed. Messy, messy. Then there was P-30, where I flew into hole after hole after hole. Oh well!

The ceremony celebrating Mark Covington was very moving. I really miss Mark and his presence at large contests—the RMCs especially, when he would lash a couple of easy-ups together and create the best place on the field for good company, great conversation and the chance to hang out with one of our favorite members. I always looked forward to seeing Mark, and I miss him tremendously.

The absolute highlight of the weekend for me was being inducted into the MMM Hall of Fame, about which I feel extremely honored—and flattered. In a club so rich with talent, history and members so willing to step forward to serve the club, being recognized in this way is truly humbling. To whomever put my name forth, and to those who served on this year's Hall of Fame committee, I thank you from the bottom of my heart. It's an absolute privilege to be able to fly with you all.

Thank you so much to Don and Chuck for putting on a fabulous contest!

Projects and New Builds

Bernie's Witch Doctor



From Bernie: Wrapping up construction of a Witch Doctor 800 from an original Sig kit. This prize dropped into my hands at the 2024 RMFFC auction and Ken Phair generously donated a pair of Tornado engines for the model. The kit was die cut (crunched) and offered a reminder of how much I've been spoiled by laser cutting. A Mennano/BMK RDT is installed using a flood-off system for shutdown. With the Tornado .29 installed, the plane currently sits at 2 ½ lb with a few items left to install.

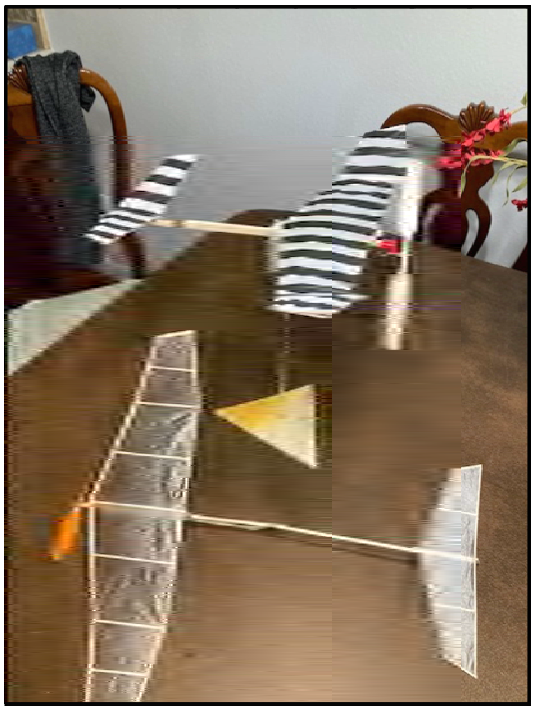
The fuselage was glassed with 0.56 oz fiberglass and painted with Klass Kote. Thought I'd try covering the wing and stab with Polyspan and tissue which is something I'd never attempted before. The medium-weight Polyspan was applied with Sig Stixit. That was then drawn tight with heat and two coats of thinned dope were brushed on. The Polyspan went down beautifully even to the undercambered lower wing surface. To this point everything was going nicely! An outer layer of tissue was then doped in place and another coat of thinned dope applied over that. Finally, one coat of clear Klass Kote was sprayed on for fuel proofing. Peck Polymers tissue was attached initially following a technique spelled out in a NFFS article written by Glenn Schneider. Wrinkles, however, were a constant struggle. Esaki was then tried with better results but still some wrinkling especially on the upper wing surface. I just got to the point of accepting that the technique is beyond my skillset and the wrinkles are going to haunt this Witch Doctor. I have no desire to try the Polyspan/tissue hybrid method of covering again. Just stay six-feet away and she looks super!





Fabulous Job, Bernie!

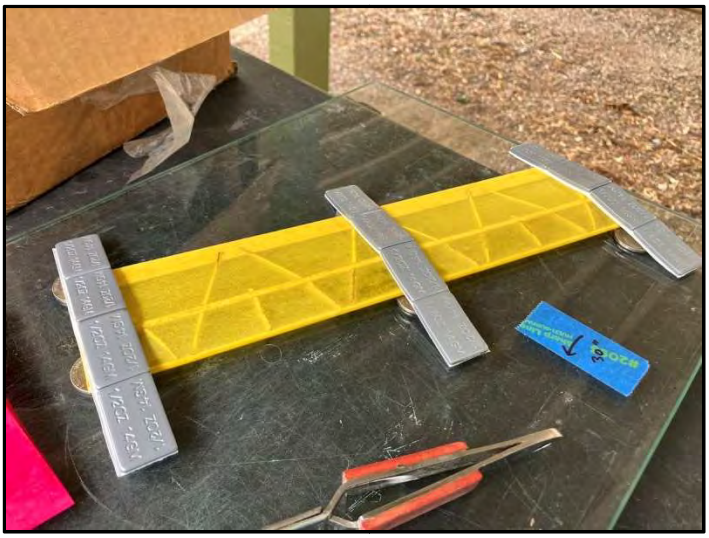
Bob Radney's – uh, how do you say that?



From Bob: Zypher on the stand and Rehpyz on the table. In other words I reversed which end the prop is on!

Bob, you are a modeler extraordinaire!

Wheel Weights

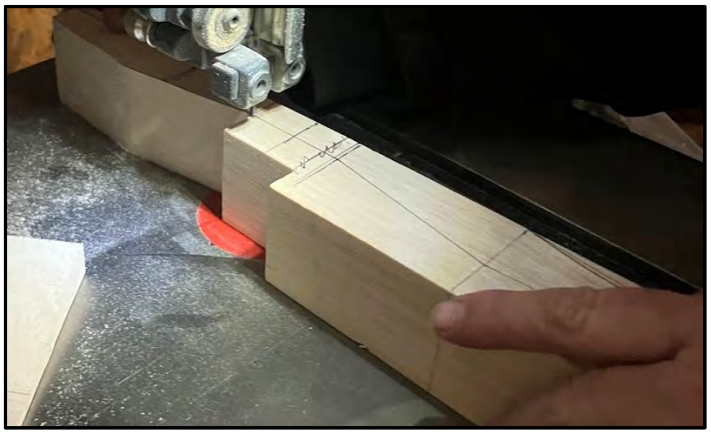


I like to weigh down my parts while the dope dries, but I support them on glass in six or eight places with nickels so some air gets underneath. I came across these wheel balancing weights ("CK Auto Steel Adhesive Wheel Weights") on the web. They come in strips of four, joined with a piece of double-sided tape. Instead of cutting them apart, I just let them drape over the stab. Worked well. (Ed.)

John's First Rodeo
Carving a prop with the master



This really deserves a whole article. As part of my Gollywock build, I needed a wood prop. Don DeLoach invited me over to show me how it's done. In the photo, Don first lays out the details on the block in accordance with dimensions he has on the phone from the Free Flight Quarterly Gollywock book.



Next came the careful bandsaw work, followed by using the drill press to drill that critical center hole.



The lower surfaces (really the rear surface of the prop) gets carved first. In the photo you'll see the guardrail lines I drew to keep myself safe. This being my first prop, Don did one blade, then supervised as I did the other. I learned a lot about carving in general, knife control, and damage control! All errors are correctable, sometimes by cutting from the other direction, sometimes by gluing back into place a piece you carved out a little too aggressively. Once the lower surface is under control—with some use of the cylindrical sanding block—then it's time to do the upper sides. They're much more straightforward because it's basically a big convex surface. Much friendlier.

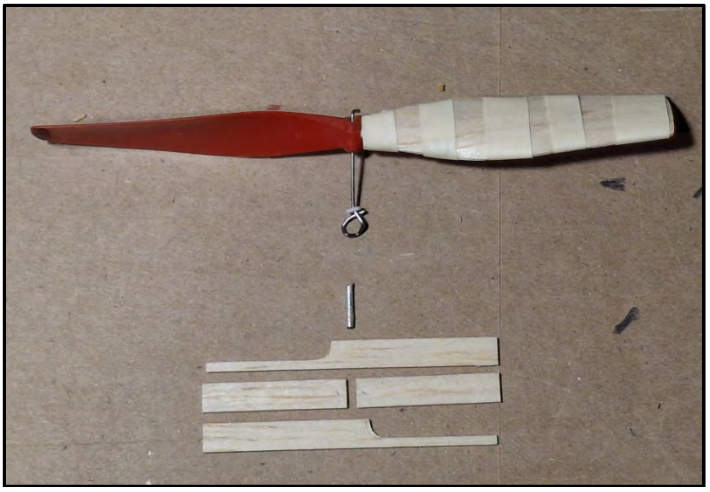


Here's the blank all cut out, ready for actual carving. Also in this photo is one of Don's secret weapons: the cylindrical sanding block. This lets you really control a great deal of the sanding where things get concave or "tightly curvy" and also lets you govern any undercamber you choose to introduce.

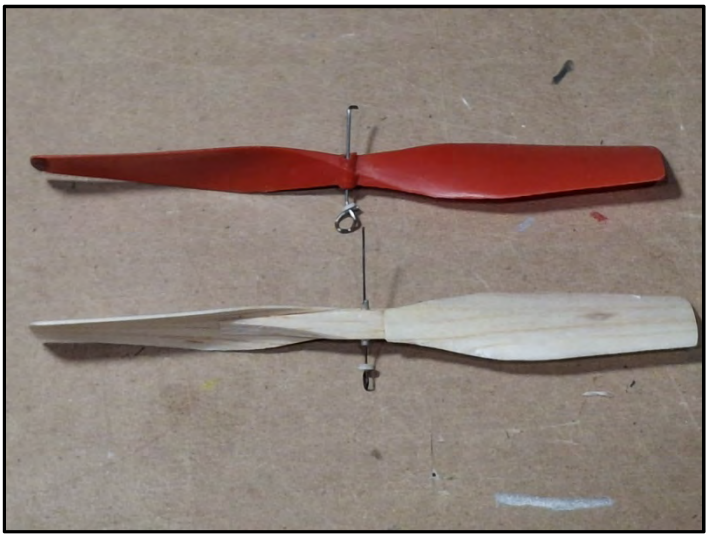


Prop blades glassed—end in sight!

Glassing came next. I had no idea this was a thing. Using ¾ or 1 oz cloth cut on the bias, Don laid two long strips onto the still-damp doped blades. Each strip passed from the upper surface on one blade, around the hub, then onto the lower surface of the other. Painting with acetone reactivates the dope underneath for a good bond. We added another coat or two of thinned dope, then began the edge treatment, which is successive wickings of thin CA, followed by trimming the glass, then repeated until (hopefully) you get a very thin hard CA border all the way around. That's where it stands at the moment. I'm trying to smooth out and harden the rough edges.



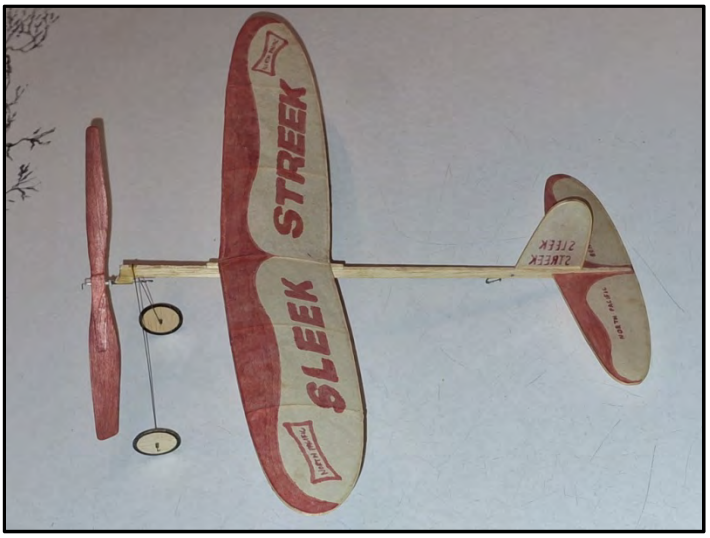




Am I ready to declare prop carving the most sublime act in all of free flight? I'm not quite there yet, but seeing how the whole process is actually pretty forgiving, I can see that my next one will go twice as fast. It's not a hard as it looks. Thanks, Don, for the education!

David's Plastic-to-Wood Prop Imitation Method

From David: Here is something for MaxOut. I just made a new prop for my Sleek Streek. Really easy way to make a balsa copy of a plastic prop! In fact, that is how I did the first balsa props that I ever made. The wing & tail outlines are also formed around actual Sleek Streek parts. Built the model in 1981, looking forward to flying it again soon!

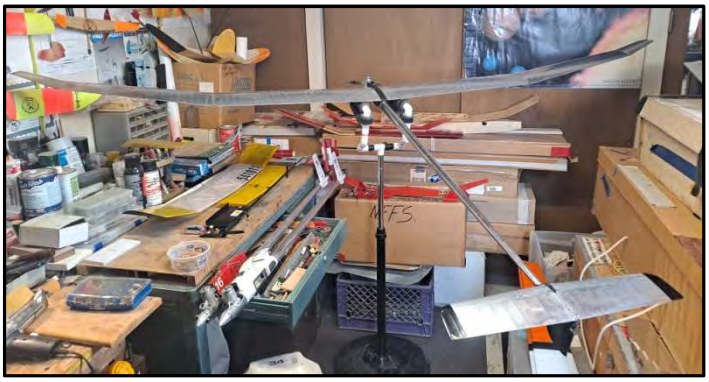


Sleek Streek!

Cool method, David!

Frank's F1C

From Frank, Man of Few Words; Getting New F1C, sub fin, ready for SWR!





Frank, more details!

Bill Groman's Hidden Mini Workshop



From Bill: Hey John, here are some pics of my hidden mini workshop I built for doing smaller tasks when the weather makes it unpleasant to drag myself out to my unheated garage. I say "smaller tasks," but I've actually built a few fairly large CL and RC models using it.

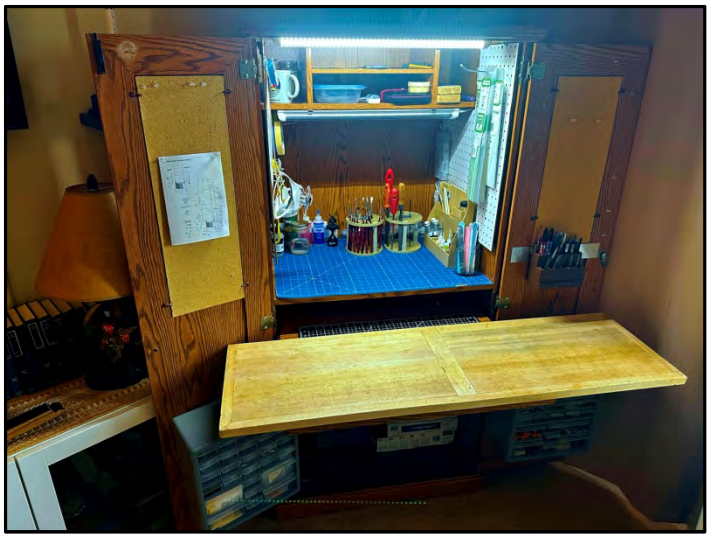
The first pic shows it as it appears to anyone walking into our den; it seems like an ordinary computer hutch. *(This is a trap, right?)*



The pic above shows how I've repurposed the hutch to make it into a hobby work center:



Pegboard lines the sidewalls and LED strip lights are mounted under the top shelf, with switches at the rear and wiring hidden behind the pegboard. A glue caddy is on the right and several tool holders are placed easily at hand. Unseen is a power strip for soldering and power tools under the work surfaces:

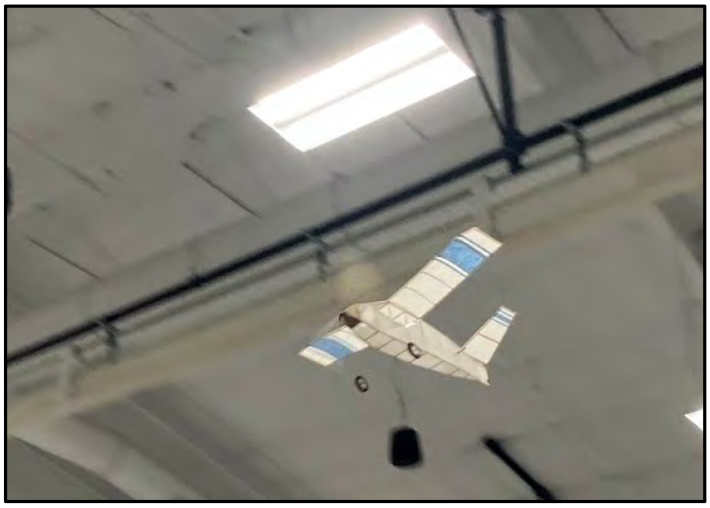


Placement of the hutch allows use of a 48" building board

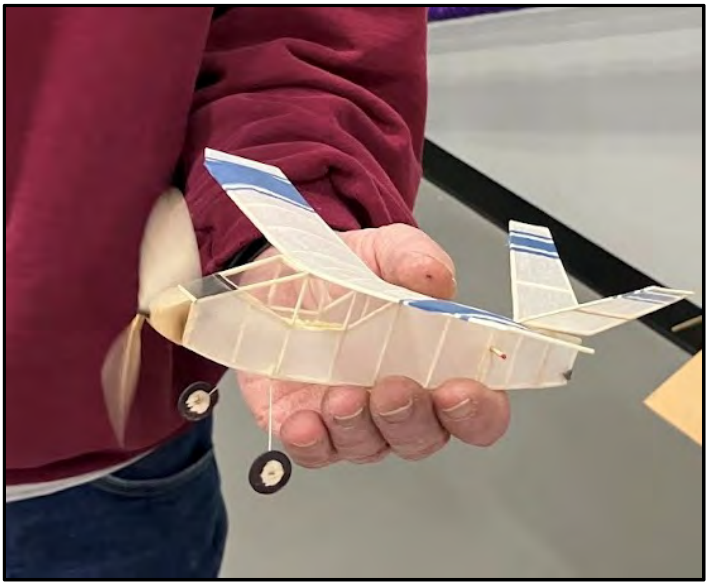
I've built three of these units for family and friends so far, starting with various computer hutches available for cheap prices on Facebook Marketplace. More than just a warm place to work, it lets me share my hobby time with my wife while she does her own projects in our den. There are a few tricks to making these workbenches more suitable for our modeling work but these pics should get the main idea across. I built my first one 25 years ago and would never be without one now!

Amazing, Bill. What a great way to optimize space!

John Christensen's ½ size
Boston Beancraft
(Seen at Beth Eden in December)



The BB already has more character than a model has a right to. John shrank it down to—is it 8"? Pistachio size, I believe. In half size it's even better looking. John was getting nice 45-second-ish flights with it. It flies beautifully!



Sean's Rear Wheel

Sean's rear hub on is chase bike was in need of replacement. This definitely qualifies as a Project!



It's getting rough when the hammer comes out! Dan McEntee marking spokes and positions on the rim of Sean's chase bike, in preparation for a new hub.



St Louis motorcycle great Jan Pott fine-tunes Sean's wheel.

Sean, I just want to know, can you get it out of first yet?

Kritter Korner

Don's Goose



This smallish Canada goose landed in Don's backyard and was strangely tame. Too tame. It wouldn't leave. This one needs rescue, though it must be congratulated on making a superb short-field landing. Don's contacted Avian Rehab. When I came into Don's backyard in the dark to meet him in his shop, Skilly didn't recognize me at first. She said she was about to say, "Hey, is this your goose?" *(Ed.)*

Skilly, Champ, E-36 at the RMC



Who says you can't chase on a horse?

CD Scoring Quiz #2

Jace Pivonka, Club Scorekeeper

Non-Small Glider Events					
Name:	Event	Flt 1	Flt 2	Flt 3	Flt 4
Larry	E-36	120	120	120	100
		120	120	120	120
Curly	P-30	120	120	120	100
		120	120	120	150
Moe	F1A	180	180	100	
		180	180	180	

This one has an interesting feature. Can you figure out what it is?

Determine each flyer's overall score, then determine each fliers number of calculated maxes. Who wins?

(Answers on the final page)

December Scramble

December 14, 2025
Manitou Springs High School



It's the most wonderful time of the year…indoor season! Time to lube up the winder and pull out indoor models for flying in the comfort of the indoors. We couldn't echo enough, our thanks to Darold Jones and Pete McQuade for their tireless efforts in working with MSHS on the HVAC issue. Unfortunately, both Pete and Darold were out of reach this weekend--Darold rehabilitating from a broken kneecap and Pete beginning treatment for leukemia—and we were again at the mercy of the artificial weather patterns. However, Pete and Darold have built a much stronger relationship with MSHS a long-term solution looks brighter than previous years. Nine flyers made it out for our season-opener with seven recording official flights. John McGrath put some flights up on his fabulous Spitfire Mk V NoCal, which is still dialed in from last year.





"Need Rubber-- 99 Super Sport—Anything helps. God Bless")

Sean McEntee, still reeling from five busy months of graduate school, opted for some (relatively) relaxing flights on his standard and unlimited catapult gliders. Don DeLoach and Tom Norell battled head-to-head in P-18, with Don coming out on top.



The highlight of the day goes to Butch Burlemann. He recently came into ownership models built by Jack Dech, an RC Sailplane and indoor FF flyer who recently passed. Included were some gliders and an LPP of unknown design. Butch put several great flights on it, and we all had a great time watching Butch enjoy the model. A video of one flight made its way to Jack's son, who took great joy in seeing members of the modeling community remembering Jack through his models.

January's scramble will be at MSHS on 1/11, from 10:00-4:00. The preceding day is also the annual club meeting; a busy weekend for club affairs. Thank you again for all who attended!

Solutions to the CD Scoring Quiz

Each flyer has exactly the same raw score in terms of number of seconds (460). However, the number of calculated maxes for each flyer is different. For Larry: 3.83 maxes; For Curly: 3.67, and for Moe: 2.56. Larry takes the win flying his E-36!

IF YOU WANT TO BECOME A MEMBER, OR IF YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION CHANGES, PLEASE USE THIS FORM

Use this form and send it in regardless of how you pay

NAME_____

STREET ADDRESS_____

CITY/STATE _____ZIP_____

PREFERRED PHONE _____EMAIL:_____

AMA NO._____

DESIRED STATUS(CHECK ONE):

MEMBER____2025 DUES: Adult - **$45.00**
16-20 years - $10
(Under 16 yrs. old – FREE!)

NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIBER _____2025 RATE: $15.00 PER YEAR

SEND CHECK PAYABLE TO: MMM CLUB, C/O CHUCK ETHERINGTON
33946 GOLDFINCH DR.
ELIZABETH, CO 80107

Note: ***MMM also accepts PAYPAL for Dues, Contest Entry Fees, Etc (mmmffclub@gmail.com)***

Paypal does charge a fee, so maybe add an extra buck to help us out.