EL TORBELLINO

NEWSLETTER OF SAN DIEGO ORBITEERS FREE FLIGHT CLUB

July 2026

The Prez's Corner *– Don Bartick*

Well since my last ramblings, we have gotten notice from the National Youth Aviation Academy, that they were unsuccessful in negotiating a lease with the current owner of "Taibi Field". As such, they returned the funds to each club that contributed to the forthcoming lease arrangement. Furthermore, if we choose to continue flying on the field, it would be at our personal discretion and risk.

The Academy will continue to search for a new location. Should one be found, the funding would again be placed on the shoulders of each participating club/individual. In our case, we solicited donations from our membership. Worked fine. The refund we received from the Academy is being held in our Treasury, earmark for future field expenses.

In my previous ramblings, I cited; "If anyone reading this page have any ideas or knowledge to explore open fields for availability, please take it upon yourself to do so. It's for the good of the hobby. Should you come across a candidate field, please advise me or one of our board members."

So, if outdoor free flight is to survive, we need to find a field that is chase friendly or can be groomed to be chase friendly.

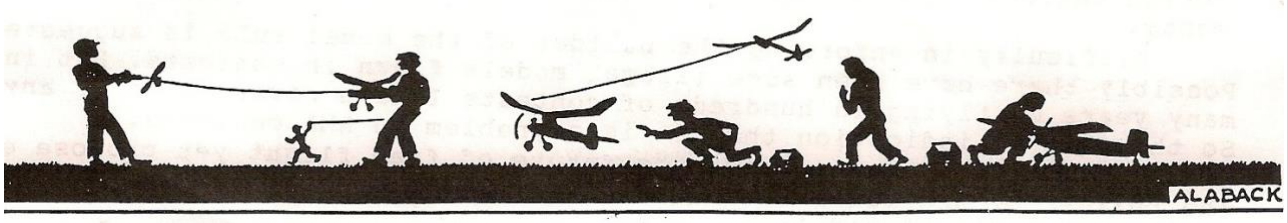
When you read this, Arline and I are in Muncie, Indiana to participate in the 100th NATS, July 20-24. Wish me luck.It also gives us an opportunity to visit the National Model Airplane Museum to see, in person, the P-30 Exhibit I spearheaded.

In closing, I want to continue nagging our members to seriously consider Indoor Free Flight. We have a good venue. Plus, Indoors has perfect weather, short chases and great competition. Shortfall: we need more participants to help defer the costs.

Next Indoor session Aug 2nd , with A-6 & No-Cal events.

That's a wrap.

Remember: "Motivation determines what you do. Attitude determines how well you do it"
-Lou Holts



BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Chairman
Don Bartick (Temporary) (858) 774-2941
dbartick@4-warddesign.com

Vice Chairman
Open Position ……..…….(xxx) xxx-xxxx
yourname@volunteer

Secretary
John Merrill ……(619) 449-4047
johnrmerrill@yahoo.com

Treasurer (Trustee at Large)
Howard Haupt ……...(858) 272-5656
hlhaupt1033@att.net

Mike Jester ……..(775) 831-8303
michaelhjester@gmail

Mike Pykelny ……..……(858) 748-6235
MPykelny@dslextreme.com

Greg Hutchison ……..……(619) 465-7698
hutchison2262@gmail.com

ORBITEER TASK LEADERS:

Competition Director and Score Keeper
Mike Pykelny..……..(858) 748-6235
MPykelny@dslextreme.com

Banquet and Social Activity Coordinator
Linda Piazza...……..(858) 748-6235
MPykelny@dslextreme.com

Safety Officer & Field Marshall
Open Position ……..…….(xxx) xxx-xxxx
yourname@volunteer

Web Master
Jake Olefsky ..…...……(760) 815-3225
jake@olefsky.com

Newsletter Editor / Membership Cordinator
Howard Haupt ……..…..(858) 272-5656
Hlhaupt1033@att.net

ORBITEERS MEMBERSHIP DUES

Annual Membership - $20
Lifetime Membership - $250
Non-Member Newsletter Subscription - $15
Junior Members 16 years old or younger - Free

Submit Dues to Club Treasurer:
Howard Haupt
3860 Ecochee Avenue
San Diego, CA 92117-4622

THE FINE PRINT THE FINE PRINT

El Torbellino is the official newsletter of the San Diego Orbiteers, an Academy of Model Aeronautics (AMA) Charter Club (#1113) and a California not for Profit Corporation. This newsletter is sent monthly to all paid members, selected exchange and magazine editors. Non-Members may subscribe at $15.00 per year within the U.S.A., offshore price will be adjusted to reflect the postage required. Materials from El Torbellino may be reproduced on an unlimited basis by other publications, but proper credit is requested.

ORBITEER WEB SITE
www.SanDiegoOrbiteers.com

CONTRIBUTORS THIS ISSUE:



Don Bartick
Mike Jester
John Merrill

PHOTO CREDITS THIS ISSUE :



Mike Jester Page 3-5, 11
John Merrill 5
Arline Bartick 7, 12

EL TORBELLINO

Sliced Ribs for Indoor Duration Stick Models
By Mike Jester

Indoor duration stick models like Limited Penny Plane (LPP), A-6, and EZB require delicate ribs cut from 4-6# sheet balsa wood. Normally the wing and stab ribs are cut from a sheet of balsa wood using a rib template (see picture below). You end up with the grain of the wood running lengthwise of the curved ribs, forming potential for fractures.



For years I have known about a technique for clamping a wet sheet of balsa wood between a pair of wooden blocks with mating convex and concave surfaces. After drying ribs can be sliced off the end of the sheet. Ribs that are sliced off the curved and dried sheet will have the grain curving, eliminating the potential for fracture in the ribs cut with a template. Sliced ribs formed this way enable you to use lighter (less dense) balsa wood, making it easier to make the 3.1 gram minimum allowed under the LPP rules, for example. It has been proven that ribs with a simple circular arc are just as efficient as ribs with complex airfoils when used in indoor duration stick models. This is due to the very low Reynolds numbers the wing and stab encounter on such models since they fly very slowly. However, I had no way to form precisely mating convex and concave surfaces on wooden blocks. I recently turned to my son-in-law (a mechanical engineer) who is an expert at 3-D printing. He printed me mating plastic blocks for forming wing ribs and stab ribs for my future LPP models. The picture below shows a sheet of balsa wood that I first heated in hot water clamped between the two 3-D printed blocks with mating circular surfaces.



Balsa Wood Sheet Clamped Between Rib Forming Blocks

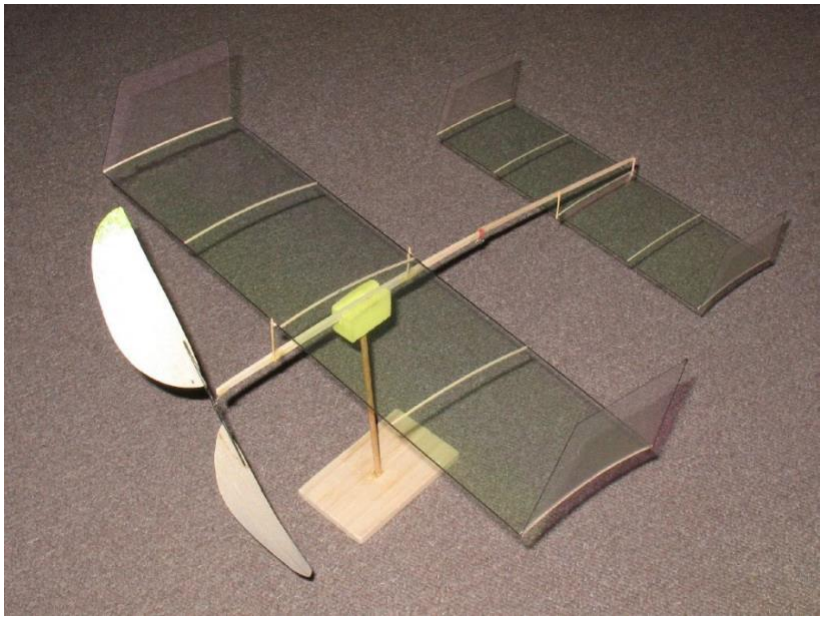
Well, that didn't work out. After three days only the edges of the balsa wood sheet were dry. I determined that it would be better if both the upper block and the lower block were printed with a pattern of ventilation holes. Without these holes, it could take a week or longer for the curved sheet of balsa wood to dry completely. The keep it simple solution (KISS) was to use four No. 16 office rubber bands to hold down the ends of the sheet over the top of the block with the convex surface. The sheet dried out completely

overnight. I did not want to bother my son-in-law with the job of engineering and printing upper and lower blocks with ventilation holes.



Single Rib Forming Block with Balsa Wood Sheet Held with Rubber Bands

The plan for the Carbon Penny LPP by Bill Gowen (see picture on the next page), who holds most of the LPP records, shows that the wing ribs have a 14-inch radius of curvature. As indicated on the plan, the stab ribs have an 18-inch radius of curvature. The bottom block of each set has a convex upper surface, and the top block of each set has a concave lower surface. The top and bottom blocks for forming the wing ribs should have a 6-inch length that runs parallel to the length of the wing ribs. Once the sheet wood has dried you can unclamp the blocks, slide the sheet slightly to the left, and slice off ribs one at a time with a new Xacto blade held in one hand, while pressing the top block lightly down with the other hand. The wing ribs are cut to slightly less than 5-inches in length after they are sliced to accommodate the LE and TE and not exceed the 5-inch maximum wing chord. The extra length in the blocks makes it easier to clamp the blocks together to squeeze the balsa wood sheets into the desired curved shape. The width of the top and bottom blocks for the wing ribs should be about 3-inches. That is enough width to allow you to slice enough wing ribs for one model. The height of the blocks is not critical. The top and bottom blocks for the stab ribs should have a 5-inch length that runs parallel to the length of the stab ribs. Cut the stab ribs to slightly less than 4-inches in length after they have been sliced to accommodate the LE and TE and not exceed the maximum 4-inch stab chord. The width of the top and bottom blocks for the stab ribs can also be 3-inches.



Carbon Penny LPP Designed by Bill Gowen

The picture below shows the LPP I built years ago and still fly, as recently as June 7, 2026, at the SDO contest at Los Coches Creek Middle School. I just built the air frame and prop to the maximum dimensions allowed under the rules. There is nothing special about my own design which I built without a plan. This LPP used to weigh close to the 3.1 gram minimum allowed under the LPP rules, but it has since gained weight to about 3.2 grams after repairs to the tail boom. In my experience, the design of the prop, optimum rubber motor sizing, and proper winding are each more important than the design of the air frame of an LPP. As I recall this LPP flew over ten minutes at the 2023 AMA Indoor Nats at the Kibbie Dome in Moscow, Idaho.



LPP By Mike Jester

From the Workbench - J.Merrill

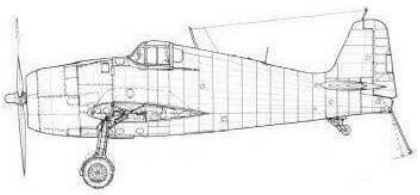
For those of you that are also members of FAC, you may have heard that this year is the 100th Anniversary of the Guillow's Model Company.

To celebrate this, the FAC is hosting a postal contest, and almost any one of their kits is eligible. This was also written up in the AMA magazine.

Personally, I've built several Guillow's kits over the years, and have had limited success at best. Not to be deterred, I'm trying once again. This time I'm attempting the 16 1/2" wing span F6F Hellcat. The bones are just about done, just need to cover.

Hopefully I can do some testing at the next contest.

So, what's on your workbench?





San Diego Orbiteers
Flying Schedule 2026
Taibi Field Perris, Ca

Primary Date	Rain Date	Event
August 16	Aug 23	P-30/Glider/Power
September	(TBD)	**Free Flight Championships, Lost Hills, Ca**
September 20	September 27	OT/NOS Rubber/Glider/Power
October 18	October 25	P-30/Glider/Power
November	13,14&15	**Dual Clubs, Lost Hill, Ca**
November 22	November 29	Coupe/Glider/Power
December 13 MP 12/25	No Date	Make-up

June 2026 Outdoor Contest - J.Merrill

OT/Nos – 1 entrant.
1ST Place: David Wade flew his Gollywock for a 3-flight total of 323 seconds.

Power - 1 entrant.
1ST Place: Don Bartick flew his High Tail 330 (Gas) for 2 flights for a total of 200 seconds.

Catapult Glider - 3 entrants.
1ST Place was Chris Reck,
2ND Place was David Wade, and a very distant
3RD Place was John Merrill, (a very distant 3RD at that)

The weather was nice, but warmed up quickly. We were done flying around 10:00 am, so wrapped it up early. By then it was about 89 degrees on the field, with a few dust devils developing.

June 2026 Outdoor Contest Photos - A.Bartick













Proposed Change to the AMA P-30 Rules

By Mike Jester

Several months ago, I submitted a proposed change to the AMA rules for the P-30 event that would prohibit the use of auto-functions such as variable incidence tail (VIT), auto rudder, and wing wiggler. This proposed rule change has received the unanimous approval of the Board of Directors of the San Diego Orbiteers.

Paragraph 1.1 of the P-30 rules would be amended by adding the language in brackets below to the end of the paragraph. The brackets are only being included to highlight the proposed amendment and should not appear in the amended rules should they be approved.

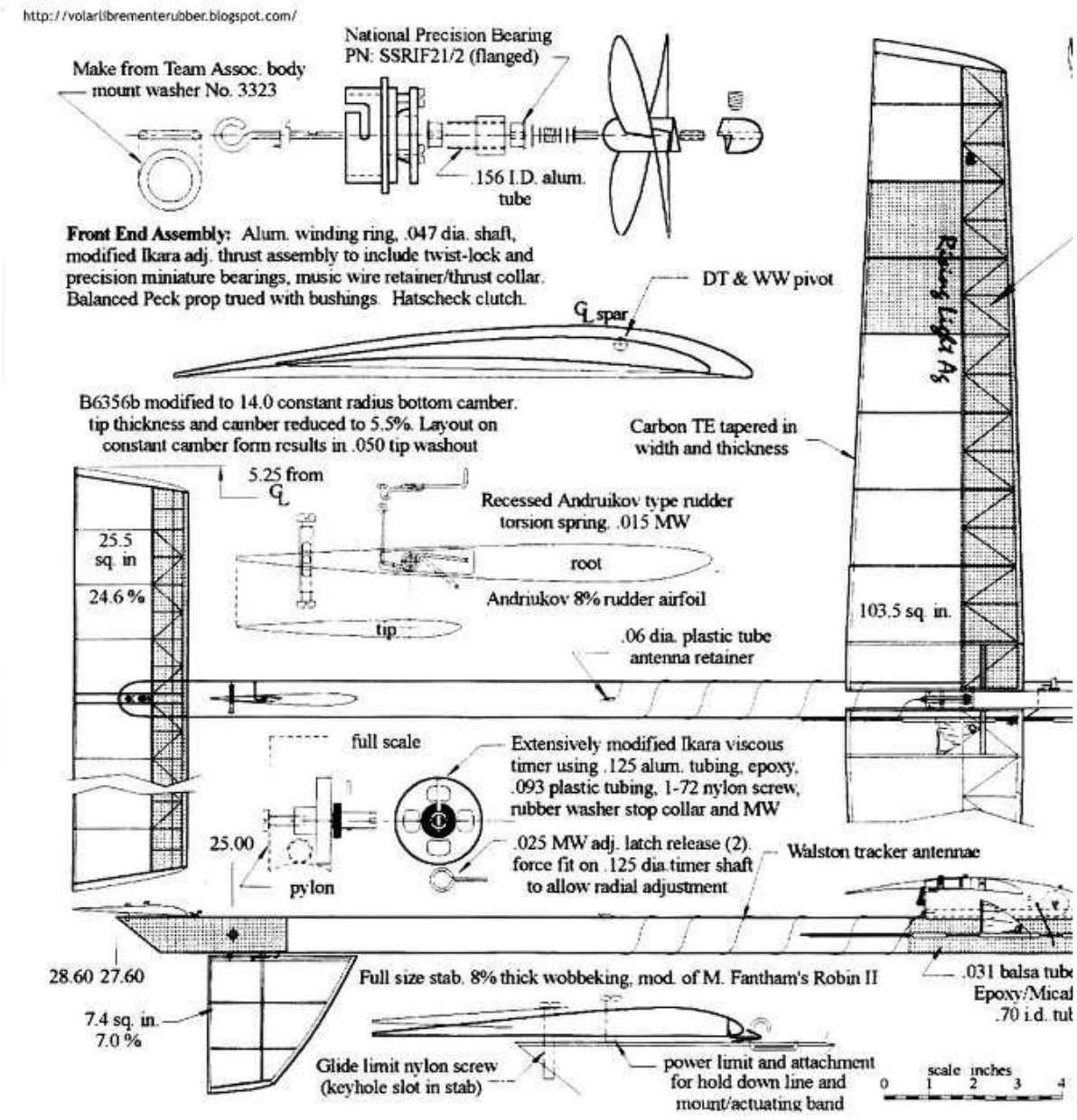
1.1. No part of the model shall exceed 30 inches when it is in assembled condition [and its wing, stabilizer, and fin(s) shall remain fixed throughout each official flight except upon the triggering of a de-thermalizer (DT)].

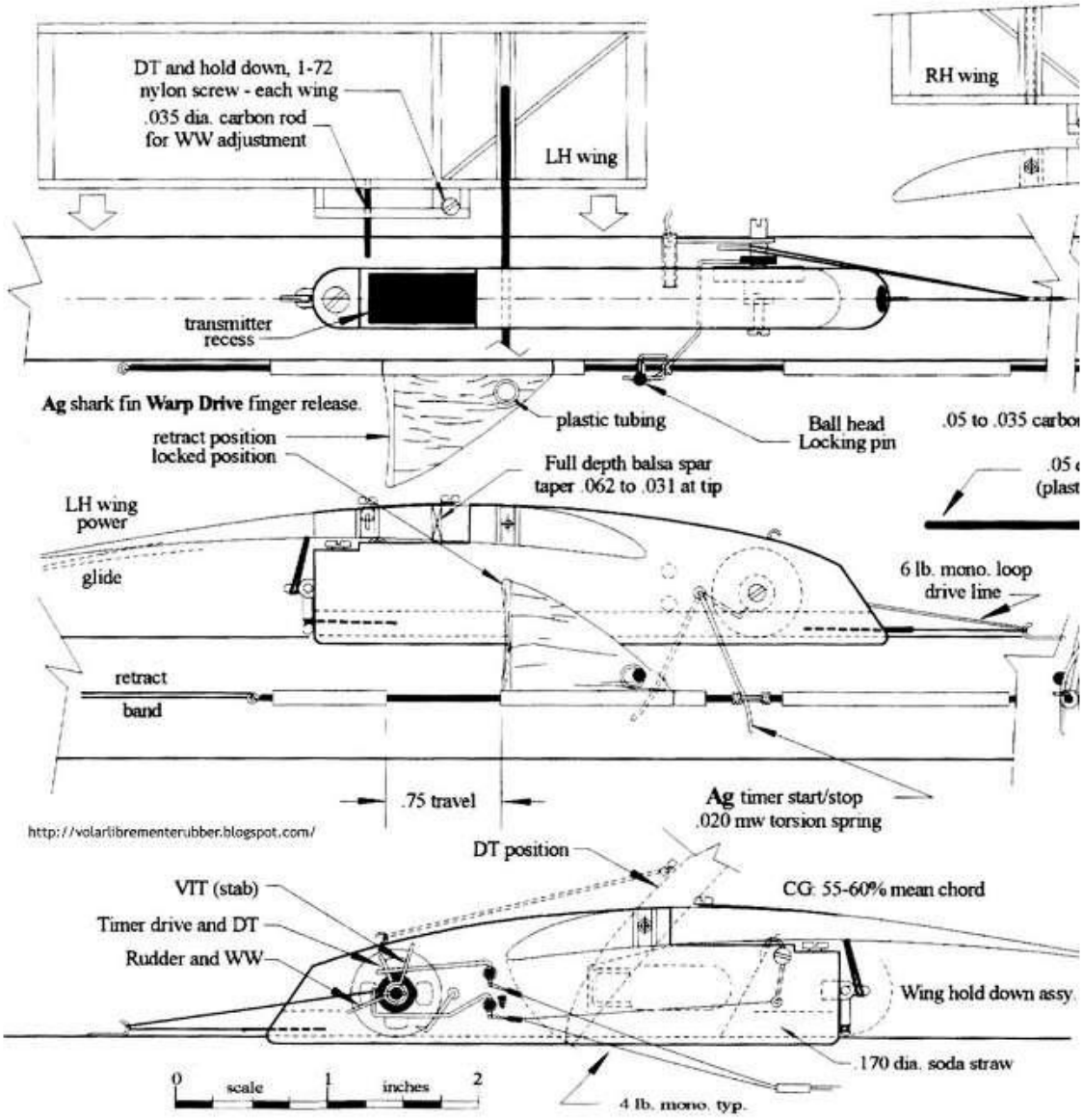
Two members of our club, John Oldenkamp and Harry Steinmetz (both deceased), were primarily responsible for developing the rules for the P-30 event in the late 1970's. It has since grown to be one of the most popular, if not the most popular, outdoor free flight event in the world. Currently there are at least twenty (20) commercially available P-30 kits including the laser-cut short kit for the Three Nite P-30 which I designed in 2020 and which is currently sold by Volare Products. The original intent of the P-30 event was to provide an inexpensive, entry level outdoor rubber powered free flight event suitable for beginners yet challenging for experienced fliers. Indeed, the very first outdoor free fight event I competed in was P-30 and I won the event flying against nine experienced fliers with my Square Eagle P-30 that I built and trimmed myself. Increasingly P-30 models are being developed, publicized, and flown that include auto-functions. In particular, a P-30 with VIT has a huge advantage over a locked down P-30. It can climb vertically for about 7 seconds before the TE of the stab is raised to provide the stab with about 1-2 degrees of negative incidence for the cruise and glide portions of the flight. I do not want to see P-30 go the route of the F1B (Wakefield) and F1G (Coupe) events where one must buy an expensive high-tech auto-function model built in Eastern Europe in order to be competitive at major contests. Home-built P-30 models with auto-functions are far more complex to build and more expensive to build than simple, locked down P-30 models.

Articles have been published in the AMA's magazine and in Free Flight Quarterly documenting the advantages of auto-function P-30 models. YouTube videos exist that show the structure and function of VIT on a P-30 model. One example is the Rising Light Ag P-30 (see plans reproduced following this article). The AMA rules committee for free flight events has a complex multi-stage review and voting process for proposed rule changes. The only thing I know at this stage is that my proposed rule change, along with supporting documentation and pictures, have been received by the AMA. My best guess is that a final ruling on this proposal to prohibit the use of auto-functions in the AMA P-30 event will not come before Thanksgiving.



Mike Jester Launching His Square Eagle P-30 at Perris, California


http://volarlibrementerubber.blogspot.com/
Make from Team Assoc. body mount washer No. 3323
National Precision Bearing PN: SSRIF21/2 (flanged)
.156 I.D. alum. tube
Front End Assembly: Alum. winding ring, .047 dia. shaft, modified Ikara adj. thrust assembly to include twist-lock and precision miniature bearings, music wire retainer/thrust collar. Balanced Peck prop trued with bushings. Hatscheck clutch.
DT & WW pivot
℄ spar
B6356b modified to 14.0 constant radius bottom camber. tip thickness and camber reduced to 5.5%. Layout on constant camber form results in .050 tip washout
Carbon TE tapered in width and thickness
5.25 from ℄
Recessed Andriukov type rudder torsion spring, .015 MW
root
Andriukov 8% rudder airfoil
tip
25.5 sq. in
24.6 %
103.5 sq. in.
.06 dia. plastic tube antenna retainer
full scale
Extensively modified Ikara viscous timer using .125 alum. tubing, epoxy, .093 plastic tubing, 1-72 nylon screw, rubber washer stop collar and MW
25.00
pylon
.025 MW adj. latch release (2). force fit on .125 dia timer shaft to allow radial adjustment
Walston tracker antennae
28.60 27.60
7.4 sq. in.
7.0 %
Full size stab. 8% thick wobbeking, mod. of M. Fantham's Robin II
.031 balsa tube
Epoxy/Mica
.70 i.d. tub
Glide limit nylon screw (keyhole slot in stab)
power limit and attachment for hold down line and mount/actuating band
scale inches
0 1 2 3 4


DT and hold down, 1-72
nylon screw - each wing
.035 dia. carbon rod
for WW adjustment
LH wing
RH wing
transmitter
recess
Ag shark fin Warp Drive finger release.
plastic tubing
Ball head
Locking pin
.05 to .035 carbo
retract position
locked position
Full depth balsa spar
taper .062 to .031 at tip
LH wing
power
glide
6 lb. mono. loop
drive line
retract
band
.75 travel
Ag timer start/stop
.020 mw torsion spring
http://volarlibrementerubber.blogspot.com/
DT position
VIT (stab)
Timer drive and DT
Rudder and WW
CG: 55-60% mean chord
Wing hold down assy.
.170 dia. soda straw
0
scale
1
inches
2
4 lb. mono. typ.

INDOOR FLYING August 2ND 2026

No-Cal & A-6

Los Couches Creek Middle School
9669 Dunbar Lane, El Cajon CA

Feature events: No-Cal
A-6
& Fun Fly

Flying Hours: 8am to Noon

Minimum donation is $30 to fly







56th United States Free Flight Championships

September 25-26-27-28 2026 Lost Hills California

Category II National and America Cup Competition

Contest Times : Fri and Sat Sun Up to Sun Down

Sun. Sun up to 3:30 P.M. Mon. per F1E event director

AMA Events	NFFS Events
1/2A gas	1/4A,Early 1/2A 1/2A Nostalgia gas combined
A gas } combined	A Nostalgia
B gas }	B Nostalgia } combined
C-D gas	C-Nostalgia }
HLG (J+SO)	Golden Age 1/2A Gas only
Cat Glider (J+SO)	Small +Large Nostalgia Rubber combined
P-30	Andrade Rubber
E-36	E-20
A-B electric combined	Classic Towline
Mulvihill -Moffet Combined	

SAM Events on request SAM rules

Any of the above events can be flown on Fri,Sat or Sun and completed on subsequent days Additional events on request of 3 or more fliers

SCHEDULED EVENTS

FRIDAY	SATURDAY		SUNDAY		MONDAY
Vintage FAI Power	F1A	F1Q	F1G	F1S	F1E
Vintage Wakefield	F1B	F1P	F1H		
Pro P-30	F1C		F1J		

ENTRY AMA and Lost Hills membership required

Fees Entry and first event $ 40 subsequent events. Unlimited Juniors No entry fee $5.00 each event.

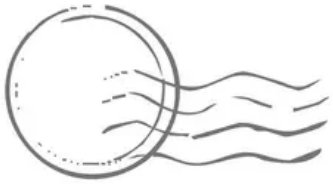
Awards CASH Sweeps $ 100 total hightime any 5 AMA or NFFS events

Entrants	Place 1	2	3
5 ormore	$50	$25	$15
4	$25	$15	
3	$15	$5	
2	$5		
Juniors	$15	$10	$5

AMA and NFFS rules current run times and maxes FAI rounds and maxes per event director Mike Mckeever Vintage events and Pro P 30 start 8A.M. 5 90 minute rounds. 1st round power and wake240 seconds pro P30 180 seconds. HLG and CAT from Pen

CD Glenn Schneider (gtodds@ sbcglobal.net)AMA 1648 925 743 1398

SAN DIEGO ORBITEERS
Howard L. Haupt / Editor
3860 Ecochee Avenue
San Diego, California 92117-4266



WHAT'S HAPPENING -

Aug 03, 2026 - San Diego Orbiteer & Scale Staffel Indoor Flying
Los Couches Creek Middle School
9669 Dunbar Lane, El Cajon CA
Events: No-Cal / A-6 / Fun Fly
Flying Hours: 8am to Noon
Minimum donation is $30 to fly

Aug 16, 2026 - San Diego Orbiteer Outdoor Monthly
Taibi Flying Field, Perris CA, 7:30 start time.
Events: P-30 / Glider / Power