

August 2012 Edition

# Wine Country Flier



Next meeting: 18 September 2012, 7:30 P.M.  
Veterans Memorial Bldg. (Northwest Room) Across from Fairgrounds

**Get there early for your free door prize raffle ticket!**

[www.wcflyers.com](http://www.wcflyers.com)

Promoting Model Aviation in Sonoma County

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Website: Patrick O'Halloran



## General Meeting

By: Paul Kohlmann  
17 July 2012

17 members present

- Opening raffle: Paul won the \$30 gift card from Jake's.
- New members: Dave Stanfield dropped in and introduced himself. He has been flying ultralights but is switching back to RC. We also met a control line flyer who has moved into scale builds.
- Treasurer's Report: 77 members, \$1700 in bank, \$7600 in the CD.
- July 4<sup>th</sup> Float Fly Recap: 23 pilots flew this time on a perfect day.
- Night Fly #2 Recap: a smaller turnout, perhaps due to the wind earlier in the day, but 6 or so pilots flew. Adam's lights went completely dark for several seconds at one point to add interest. A third event will be scheduled for later in the summer.
- Pylon Racing Report: the first round of the 5 race second half of the season went well. Another great day of weather. The next race will be on 8/26: moved out to avoid the PCAM.
- PCAM: coming up 8/18-19. Volunteers for the booth and the flight demo were requested. Glen and Jerry both stepped forward at this meeting. Adam volunteered Bobby King. It is still unknown as to how much time will be allotted to the demo, so the routine is not yet certain. Raffles will be held each day for kids under 15 or 16.
- Heli Fun Fly Recap: ~10 helis flew for a good turnout. Spot Landing on autorotate, drag racing, and other events were held. Interestingly, a drag was held between nitro and electric choppers, where the electric prevailed. No carnage occurred during this Fun Fly.
- Learn to Fly Day: any new pilots or those looking for skill development are encouraged to attend this event on 7/22. Jon, Adam, and possibly John Reade will be present with buddy boxes. Other members willing to teach please come forward.
- Young Eagles: the EAA is holding an annual event on 7/21 in Petaluma to expose kids to aviation. A free booth has been offered to our

club. Adam, Merle, and Paul will staff the booth, and anyone else that would like to help is welcome.

- Table Repair: thanks to Merle for repairing the disabled table at the field. This presented a real hazard and could have gotten someone hurt.
- T-Shirts: Merle is getting some club stickers made up and his contact may be able to do shirts and hats as well. More than half of the members present said that they would buy a polo or T if they were available.
- John Lehtio's collection was auctioned off to benefit his estate. Several airplanes and a great deal of hardware went to new homes.
  - Bucket of standard servos: Merle--\$10
  - 3 Cirrus servos: Glen--\$6
  - 2 HS322's: Joe--\$5
  - 2 HS81's: Paul--\$13
  - 3 HS80's: Glen--\$5
  - Fuel pump: Charlie--\$1
  - Himaxx power setup: Adam--\$50
  - 13x6.5 pusher prop: Adam--\$0.50
  - Foam tape: Adam--\$0.25
  - Volt Watch: Brian--\$3
  - Robart hinges: Phil--\$0.50
  - Nose wheels: Brian--\$0.50
  - Muffler: Charlie--\$1
  - 4 motor mounts: Merle--\$1.50
  - Zagi 400: Merle--\$5
  - Starter: Brian--\$20
  - Fiberglass: Bill--\$5
  - Covering/balsa: Charlie--\$1
  - Balsa/hardware: Brian--\$5
  - Balsa/hardware: Brian--\$1
  - Spirit glider: Adam--\$5
  - Trainer: Merle--\$30
  - Yard Stik: Paul--\$10
  - Dope: no bid
  - Balsa/hardware: Phil--\$1
  - Screws: Charlie--\$0.50
  - Chargers: no bid
  - Mufflers/hardware: Bill--\$0.50
  - Receivers: Merle--\$0.50
  - Props: Charlie--\$1
  - Hardware: Chuck--\$1
  - Giant box: Merle--\$5
  - 4000mAh LiPo: Bill--\$12
  - Total proceeds = \$194.25

- Club Raffle
- Jerry: plane cover
- Adam: Multiplex Merlin
- Merle: starter
- Joe: spinner
- Dick: hinge tape
- Total proceeds--\$39

Adjourned at 8:50

### **Board Meeting Minutes**

By: Paul Kohlmam  
7 Aug 2012

- Wings Over Wine Country: the airshow schedule is not out yet but Jon is preparing a long and a short routine in order to be prepared. A tentative was discussed:
- Banner: Brian tested out the old banner as well as a new style.
- Youth: Gabe and TBD might fly a segment, possibly concurrent with the banner, to bring attention to the younger members in our club.
- Jim Swanson's Hexacopter: something odd for the wow factor. Perhaps this could be stationed at one edge of the demo area. Jeff mentioned that this has video that could be broadcast to a screen at the booth.
- Flight Sim and Generator: Jeff will bring his computer and sim and Jon has a quite generator lined up.
- Snoopy and Red Baron: Steve will fly Snoopy. Sounds like a McDonald will be handling the Red Baron.
- Large Scale: Phil's ¼ scale Cub will be flown by Adam. Looking for more.
- Warbirds: a number of pilots and aircraft have been identified including Steve on the Do 335, Jake on a P6E Hawk, and Merle on his Mitchell.
- Helis: Phil, Jeff, and Gabe are lined up.
- 3D: Adam on his Sukhoi.
- Jets: hoping for a guest to join us from another club but this has not solidified yet.
- Raffle Prizes: Jon has a Cub provided by Jake and is working on a contribution from HobbyTown. Jon will check that we have enough tickets. Adam checked the records

from 2011 and found that we spent \$368 on all of the raffle prizes combined for ticket sales of \$445. A number of entry level plane and heli kits were discussed. Adam will be doing the shopping and will see what he can get for a similar level of expense.

- Insurance: Jon covered the costs for the certs for the three airshow venues and requested to be reimbursed.

- Club Booth: volunteers are still needed to staff the booth. We agreed that shortening the shifts to an hour may help increase participation. Volunteers will be issued a wristband for Airshow entrance. These are in short supply and will only be available to folks that pitch in and help represent the WCF.

- 2011 Finances: Adam worked up a report on how the club spent its money over the last year. He's working on the income side of the ledger and that will be available next month.

- Wind Sock: the club received a slick new sock that needs to get mounted at the field. Merle will work with Adam to get a post up with a swiveling mount.

- T-Shirts: Jon tried his hand at designing some shirts using an online tool but had some issues. He also looked at some standard designs using our logo. There is just enough time to get shirts made for the airshow volunteers. They would run ~\$20 with expediting fees. We agreed that it would be better to work up a design when things calm down rather than rush and save a few bucks in the process. A number of artist resources were discussed.

- Neil Taylor/Larry Frank: the annual Fun Fly and Scale Event is scheduled for September 30. Phil will discuss with Glen as this is a food event.

- RC Heli Scale Masters: to be held in Woodland coming up in the first week of October.

- Field Rules: Jon planted the seed for the next meeting that we should have the club rules posted at the field.

Meeting convened at 7:45pm.

### **My journey to the NATS**

By Red Jensen

Growing up surrounded by model airplanes, I was always content with having something to do with my idle time, something to share with my dad, and for us to do together. Weeknights were filled with the smell of epoxy and monokote, weekends at the flying field. The people there were other kids and adults whom I assumed shared the same passion I did.

Gradually however it became a raging obsession. Not something I did in my idle time with my father anymore, although we still did that, but a consuming fire that has affected everything I do in life up until this very day. It has fostered a love of aviation that I would love to explore from a pilot's seat, but my lot in life seems to be models and I'm ok with that. I know it sounds like some corny metaphor, but the truth is that if I'm not doing something with an airplane, be it reading a book, sketching a new design, building, even thinking about them, I'm not happy. Sometimes I feel guilty when my wife who has been stuck at home all week wants to go out, and I would be just as happy to be stuck in the garage all weekend. I've learned to control those urges, and am quite happy to do so; I have a wonderful life and family. Only much later did I find out that most other folks weren't all consumed like I was, but rather simply did it for the fun, some only dabbled slightly. It was confusing a bit at first when I was younger, but I understand completely now.

Over the years I also found that I wasn't content with building and flying the things as they came out of the box. I wanted to change stuff and make it my own. I have always been interested in the technical aspects of how and why planes behave the way they do. I was and still am a voracious reader. I always read the specs of the latest planes, the airfoils used, why the moments were particular to its handling characteristics etc. Math is a struggle for me, however when applied to model aircraft, it is a medium that I can use that made sense and I can learn with. It drove me to learn everything that I could about airplane design. I learned CAD solely so I could draw

airplanes. I made a hotwire cutter to cut my own wings. I learned how to vacuum bag them to make them stronger and straighter etc. Eventually this all led to investing in a laser cutter so my creativity could be realized with as little delay as possible.

I love to fly anything, but racing and speed planes have always held something a little extra for me. The planes mark the epitome of efficient aerodynamic design; nothing more than what is absolutely essential can be tolerated in a winning aircraft design. I've studied every picture, article and plan I could find. Recently a new racing class has formed to loosely re-create the long defunct Formula One class but with the fire breathing high nitro two strokes replaced by a simple and reliable electric set up. What has attracted me to the class is that they look like reasonably scale approximations of the full scale IF-1 planes that race at Reno, another passion of mine. EF-1 as it's called is a grass roots effort designed to be a feeder into the faster nitro powered classes, and to attract back some pilots who may have stopped racing for one reason or another. I designed a model of Jon Sharp's Nemesis, the winningest racer in history, and decided to race.

Still after all these years, that fire still burns in my soul. I see the coverage of the big events in the magazines and all I want to do is be there, do the same things, participate in some way. Reading about the National Aero Modeling Championships or NATS, it always seemed to be the biggest and most coveted contest. It lasts more than a month, and covers every conceivable facet of the modeling world. Free flight, scale, racing, control line, aerobatics, gliders and on and on. Such a variety of cool stuff all in one place boggles the mind!

The NATS are held at the National AMA Fling site in Muncie, IN. now, but they used to be held in a different place around the country every year. In 1984 they were held in Reno, NV. I was 13 and went with my mom and dad;

I think we were there 3 or 4 days. We watched Formula One pylon racing, control line combat, indoor duration, whose models weigh less than a penny and can stay up over an hour and many others. I thought man this is it!

I have gone to my fair share of club level contests, and flown nearly every discipline and met some truly great people, but I never did it with any seriousness. I was just happy to be there, fly & participate. Competing on a national level just wasn't in the cards. I began to realize recently that I did have the means to travel around a bit, and that I could compete in a bigger pond if I wanted to. I thought it about it a bit and realized that yes, I really wanted to! I decided that I would go to the 2011 NATS and compete in EF-1's inaugural year. Alas that was not to be, my work schedule got in the way, so I set my sights on 2012. I put in for my vacation time early, and defended it more than once. Missing 2011 was probably a good thing. In reality, I was far from ready to compete. I decided to attend as many EF-1 races as I could before the NATS to get ready.

EF-1 is meant to be flown on a standard AMA Q-500 375' short course which consists of 3 pylons arranged in an isosceles triangle, this is much different than our two pole course with air starts. You stand in between the pylons 2 & 3 on the short side. Racing around you is a whole different ballgame! The races are more of a sprint, and last little more than a minute. It's a staggered standing start with two planes leaving slightly ahead of the two others & lasts 10 laps. Your caller becomes paramount as he gives you a hard straight push at the start, and then helps watch traffic, calls turns, counts laps and more often than not, has a better view of your racing line than you do so is in a better position to offer advice. It's needed and greatly welcomed!

In May, Steve Cole, Bryan Germone and I headed over to the Woodland/Davis club for the first race of the season. They have a nice facility with a professional course. It has turn lights, cut counters & automatic timers and off course judging. There were some heavy

hitters and factory pilots there, which I had not expected. Travis Flynn, current Q-40 Champ, Gino Del Ponte, and last year's EF-1 Champ, Robert Holik, current F3D US team member, Jimmy Allen, Gary Schmidt etc. These are all of the sponsored pilots that I had been reading about over the years. I was jumping right into the fire! I had a couple of decent races and then ended up in midair on takeoff that broke my plane in half and put me out for the rest of the day. I was bummed, but hooked! There are not many ways to describe racing 4 planes around yourself at over 100 mph. Exhilarating comes close, but it's one of those things that you just have to experience for yourself. I was disappointed but vowed to keep after it. I knew I could do better. Fast time for the event was Gary Schmidt with a 1:11xx, my best time was 1:22.

The next opportunity came in June down in the LA area at the Apollo XI field in the Sepulveda basin. Again Steve, Bryan and I arrived. I was determined to go faster, make some friends and most of all prove to myself that I could do this. I really wasn't feeling all that well, I felt a bit groggy & it showed. I was flying the slow way around the course, long & loose. I was gaining on everybody in the straights, but giving it all away in the turns. Steve on the other hand was cooking and turned his best time of 1:19. (fast time was 1:15) in not ideal windy conditions. I had a couple of wins, a second or two and a zero from cutting out. Again not what I felt was my best performance, but felt I was getting valuable practice & ended up in mid pack with a fast time of 1:21. There is a pretty good video of the event here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yBa1g-QnxNo&feature=plcp> EF-1 starts at about 2:48.

The Sepulveda race showed me that I could fly the course with some practice, and my plane was fast even though it was overweight. I thought long and hard about building a new plane for the NATS, but decided to just keep practicing with what I had since it was flying well. Near the end of June, Steve, Bryan and I

went to the field in the late afternoon when there was sure to be nobody there to set up a 3 pole course and get some more practice in one at a time. The course has to be set up parallel to the runway, so this isn't practical during normal field hours. We ran several heats with the course in two different positions and it really felt as if I was flying a good course and getting my timing dialed in. I felt good! We were ready to pack up and go home, but you know how it goes. Steve and I decided to fly together one last time for fun. Steve got out to an early lead and as I was trying to catch up on lap 2, I pulled as hard as I could around pylon one. My Nemesis turned hard, a little too hard actually! The whole front of the aircraft from the front of the wing forward departed the airplane! Scratch my racer for the NATS! So the decision had been made for me, I had to build a new plane in 3 weeks.

I had been designing a new plane called Invictus. I had one flying prototype, but it wasn't for me, so I immediately started another. Luckily I already had another wing started and sheeted, and fiberglass parts made. I quickly framed up another fuselage and tail, and set about getting it all together. I had to leave for work in the middle of all of this, but I managed to cover the fuse and tail in the hotel room while away. With one week to go, it looked like it was going to be a close call. I even had a backup plan to purchase an ARF and race it if I had to. I was going to the NATS come hell or high water. I finished Invictus on a Saturday night. Sunday I took it to the field for a shakedown flight. I was leaving the next day for Muncie.

Steve and Bryan were not able to make the journey with me, but my oldest son Jack was, and I was thrilled to have him along. We arrived the night before the EF-1 race and watched some Q-40 & Q-500 races to get a feel for things. I paid my entry fee and checked my plane in. Immediately there were a lot of questions about Invictus, as I hadn't shown it anywhere except at our field.

Race day came and we got to the field by 6:30. Practice opened at 7:00, closed by 8:00. I wanted to get at least one practice flight in on the course and shake off the jitters. There were 60 pilots there and nearly all of them were the fast guys I'd heard about or met at earlier races. Practice flight went well and the plane seemed to be faster than ever. I was as ready as I was going to get.

We had a quick pilots meeting and relaxed for a few minutes while the matrix was built. The plan was to race 6 rounds, then have fly-offs to determine tie breakers if needed. My first round I drew Travis Flynn. It's go time now, no easy rounds; I have my work cut out for me! I told my caller Archie Adamisin to just call me safe turns, no way to place well if I cut out. I got a good start and by the end of lap one I was out front. By lap 5 I had almost a lap lead. I made sure to go long enough to not cut and got the win. A win! In my first round ever at the NATS, I was on cloud 9!

Second round I drew Gino Del Ponte, last year's winner and arguably one of the top pilots in the world. I launched in the second group this time and settled in a little behind Gino. About lap 4 I was gaining slightly so Archie started to push me. I was able to catch and pass Gino, then stretch out my lead to about 100'. Gino was pushing hard as well trying to pass me and ended up cutting! Second round, second win! I was sure now that if I just flew good heats I had a chance to place well, don't blow it. Archie was up in the next round and I was calling for him. He hit some bad air coming around pylon 1 and scattered his plane. He decided that his plane was fixable however and set about it.

Round three came and Archie was still working on his plane, so a fellow pilot named Dean Stone volunteered to call for me. On the start the plane to my right drifted into me. I had visions of the Woodland race and didn't want the same thing to happen here too. I swerved hard left and chewed the prop on the runway. I got airborne but was dead last. The plane sounded funny and seemed slow. Slow

it was, I ended up double cutting and got a 0. After I landed I was able to see that I had lost nearly an inch off of each blade. Not good.

Round 4 came and Archie was able to call for me again. These next three rounds were absolute must wins for me. A zero in a race with no throw outs is a death knell. The only chance I had was to hopefully race somebody else who hadn't lost at all and beat them, with a little luck I might still make top 10. I don't recall who was in my heat, but I again got a good start and quickly jumped out front. By lap 7 I was lapping people and again flew a little long to protect my lead. I was cruising, the plane was incredibly fast and I was calm. This turned out to be more profound than I could have known. I landed and grabbed my plane, shut it off and got ready to call for Archie. As I walked up to the line to grab Archie's plane, he calmly informed me with a sly grin that I had just turned a 1:10.1, the fastest time ever recorded in EF-1. I had just set a National and World record and wasn't even trying! I couldn't believe it. I could care less what happened after that, nothing could be sweeter! Turns out that in the very next round Gino Del Ponte went 1:09.6 to again lower the record. Rats! Oh well, now I was really, really sure I could compete with the best of them! I had two more rounds to go, and I was loaded for bear. Walking back into the pits with my fast time blinking on the score board, again there were a lot of people asking questions, and I was only too happy to answer them.

Near the end of the fourth round, the severe storm warnings that had been broadcast over the radio seemed to be a credible threat with huge black anvils building up to the West and reports of heavy rain and lightning only 20 miles away. It was decided to finish 4 rounds and call the race. Needless to say I wasn't happy. Turns out the call was right, and less than an hour after it was over, the rain came,

and stayed for two more days. My NATS was over before I realized it.

Archie and I ended up with the same number of points at the end of the day. I ended up in 17<sup>th</sup> spot thanks to my time, Archie in 33<sup>rd</sup>. This goes to show that not only do you have to scramble for every last point, but you also need to fly fast because time counts. Gary Schmidt the eventual winner had a fast time of 1:12.9. I plan to hit one or two more races this year, and then do it all over again next year, hopefully with even more races.

Some people would call it an addiction; I choose to think of it as fulfillment.



## WCF 2012 EVENTS SCHEDULE

August 26<sup>th</sup> - Pylon Race # 2

September 3<sup>rd</sup> -Float Fly

September 12-16 -Reno Air Races

September 23<sup>rd</sup> - Pylon Race # 3

September 30<sup>th</sup> -Larry Frank Scale Fly-In

October 21<sup>st</sup> - Pylon Race #4

November 18<sup>th</sup> -Pylon Race # 5

December 8<sup>th</sup> -Christmas Party



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