



NatsNews

Daily Coverage of the 2011 National Aeromodeling Championships

July 17, 2011

Monday

RC Electric Soaring
Outdoor Free Flight

Tuesday

RC Electric Soaring
Outdoor Free Flight

Wednesday

RC Electric Soaring
Outdoor Free Flight

Thursday

RC Electric Soaring
Outdoor Free Flight



The Butt Hutt Team performing their daily thermal ritual.



Inside:



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RC Sailplane F3J Day 1

Photos by Gordon Buckland.

The first day of F3J was held on an absolutely incredible thermal day at the Muncie Soaring site. The heat built quickly during the morning to the mid-90s by midafternoon and the thermal action was strong. Some flights found a little difficulty making their times, but generally the air was available to make the max and return for a landing.

Some of the newer teams (such as ours), without the experience in F3J, were learning the game. Equipment malfunctions saw some hectic activity as helpers and pilots rushed for a relaunch.

The F3J with winches format is simple. It is an exciting way to fly sailplanes and requires much less equipment to be provided by the organizers. In fact every team of four or five pilots has to provide their own launch equipment and be ready to fly when their round starts.

The organizers provide the timing and sound equipment to time the flight window and even the scoring system developed by Jim Monaco is done online by each team as the flights are completed. Using smart phones the data is entered directly into the scoring system and everybody including the whole world with access to the Internet can see the scores being recorded in real time.

The idea is to launch the models when the timing system horn blows which means that all lanes are launching simultaneously. The flight time begins when the model is released and the flight must be completed by the time the system sounds the horn again in 10 minutes time.

This 10 minute window is the max and because it takes a

certain amount of time on tow to launch the model and there needs to be a margin at the end to land the model. The flight times are always a little less than 10 minutes. The average is around the 9:55 mark but many seasoned F3J pilots can do short 1 sec launches to get as close as 9:58 flight times.

Jody Miller showed how that is done today with a throw right on the horn and an immediate pull on the elevator in an Immelmann with roll out at 40 feet altitude behind the flightline to hook up with a great read in a nice thermal. He concluded the flight right before the horn to record a 9:58.86 time with a 100 landing to win his round.

Cody Remington also made 9:58.56 with a 97 in the same round and was surprised he didn't get the 1,000 points. That's the real joy of this exciting format that anybody can do what it takes with the right equipment attitude and guts to go for it and win the round.

The consistent flying of Larry Jolly saw him finish Day One after seven rounds with 5999.77 points. Skip Miller is sitting in second on 5993.63 with Cody Remington close behind on 5991.57. Fourth place is Rich Burnoski on 5991.28 and fifth is Jim McCarthy on 5985.45. Jim Monaco is sixth with 5981.3. Neal Huffman placed seventh on 5980.75. Jon Padilla was eighth on 5977.59. Ninth is Josh Glaab on 5964.85 while Peter Goldsmith rounds out the top 10 with 5964.26 points.

It was certainly a baptism of fire for some of us who are new to F3J, but it is so much fun we can't wait till tomorrow to have another day of F3J with winches at Muncie.➔

—Gordon Buckland



Chris Lee brings his ship to the LZ.



Left: As the Horizon Hobby team shows, F3J is a very fast-moving contest format but a very social one also.

Below: FAI standard landing tapes were used to measure the landing scores in F3J.



Left: Jack Strother prepares his gorgeous Aspire for duty.



Often times the landing approach was reversed over the pit area.

Right: Dave Beach, Doug Pike, and Ray Munro enjoy some shade on a very hot day.



Below: Dave Bradley pedals his Pike Superior up for a quick launch.



Above: Cody Remington takes the Egida to the spot with Skip Miller calling.



Rich Burnoski shows how to relax between flights.



Gordon Buckland landing his Xplorer at Karl Miller's call.



Above: Karl Miller relaxes in the shade during his thermal flight.

Right: Tom Siler flying the sailplane with Jeff Carr doing timing duty.



Jody Miller gives Dave Bradley's Pike Superior a good heave.

Below: The Butt Hut Team upright.



Jim McCarthy wiggling the sticks while John Diniz calls his air.



The landing zone can be approached in any direction in F3J.



Jody Miller stretches back to launch Karl Miller's Aspire.

Geoff Carr throws the model in the exciting mass launch which makes F3J so much fun.

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had been inadvertently locked in a room during the event.


Planning for the first newsletter began months in advance. Letters between AMA members included discussions of what the cover and masthead might look like, as well as artwork. At that time, *NatsNews* was the only publication produced

by the AMA. One person took all of the photos and wrote all of the articles for the first edition of the newsletter.

NatsNews has always included stories about contest participants and winners. The length of the newsletter has varied. In the beginning, it was typically about four pages long. Today, it varies from four to 18 pages, depending on how many events are going on.

Today, photos and articles

about the competitions are still included in the newsletter. It is published every day during the Nats. The finished product is handed out to pilots, emailed to subscribers, and posted on the Nats website.

A variety of writers and photographers contribute to today's *NatsNews*. Often, there is a different writer for each event. The newsletter is quite popular among pilots who attend the Nats. 

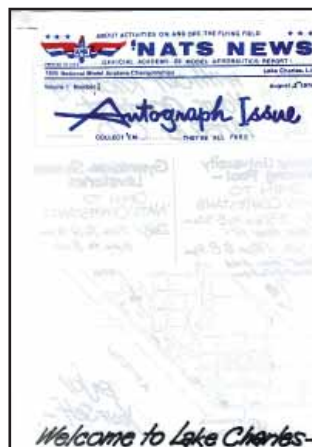
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This was the cover of the first issue of *NatsNews*, published on August 5, 1974. This Nats was held in Lake Charles, Louisiana, and the cover of the newsletter was designed as an autograph sheet. Because the newsletters were handmade, the back side of the paper bled. Source: National Model Aviation Museum.



The appearance and content of *NatsNews* changed as the years passed. Here is the July 30, 1979, edition of the newsletter.

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Hideaway RV Rental is a proud sponsor of all AMA 2011 flying events.

Morgan,

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to a Naval base in Los Alamitos, California, for the 1967 Nats. “I said ‘this is your chance to bail out,’” Ron said. Obviously, she didn’t. In fact, Jane seemed to be enjoying her work at the Nats headquarters this week.

Along with the fact that Jane must spend a good chunk of her summer in Muncie, she also has accepted her husband’s love for model airplanes. To date, he has a total of 140 flyable airplanes, with 300 in boxes waiting to be built. The former vocational electronics teacher favors RC and Vintage airplanes. He is a 52-year member of the Chambersburg Model Air Club and enjoys participating in fun-fly Vintage competitions.

The couple’s two children also learned to adapt to the life of a traveling modeler. Ron and Jane took their son and daughter to the Nats and other model aviation activities until

they left for college. Son, Karl, caught the modeling bug and is a RC and Vintage aircraft fan, just like his father. “There’s no way he could avoid it,” Ron said of his son. Karl plans to attend this week’s celebration of the AMA’s 75th anniversary, Ron said. Their daughter, Kathleen, is a molecular biologist, but isn’t a modeler.

Ron and Jane only spend roughly seven months of the year at their home. The two typically travel to Florida for two months in the winter. Ron flies his airplanes all over central Florida—from Cocoa Beach to Spring Hill. He said many of the aeromodelers he met in the contest circuit have retired to Florida.


Retirement from the Nats appears to be in the near future for Ron. He wouldn’t pin down a definite date for retirement, but said it is, “maybe, pretty close.” Talks of who might replace him have been ongoing for a handful of years. “This position is quite demanding.

“My health is going to be the

controlling factor. I just haven’t had the energy to do what I need to do. You sometimes have to wonder if your body is telling you something.”

However, when the day does arrive when he must take off his director’s badge for good, he believes there are capable individuals who would be willing to fill his shoes. “There’s people prepared to step in,” he said.

But, being the Nats Contest Director isn’t a job for just anyone. Ron said having people skills and patience are important. “It takes a lot of patience to deal with competitors who are pushing the limits of everything, including the rules. You have to have the ability to smile, and then kick them in the (sic) at the same time.”

When Ron does decide to retire, he definitely will miss all of the people he has met through the Nats. “The people, the friendships that you develop over the years,” are his favorite aspect of the Nats. “Airplanes are an excuse for everybody to get together.” 

NatsNews: Now and Then

Every year, like clockwork. Every year, *NatsNews* is published during both the indoor and outdoor National Aeromodeling Championships (Nats). It is available both online and in hard-copy form.

The newsletter has been published since August 5, 1974. The Nats were held in Lake Charles, Louisiana, that year.

The newsletter is printed each day during the Nats. Today, the annual outdoor event is held at

the International Aeromodeling Center in Muncie, Indiana, while the indoor event is held in Johnson City, Tennessee.

It doesn’t appear that the newsletter has changed all that much since its inception nearly 37 years ago.

The first editions of *NatsNews* included event rules and regulations, information about who would receive the proceeds from concession stand sales, a map of the contest area, and blank

pages for autographs. There also was information about the annual banquet, which was being held as part of the Nats, a lost and found section, details of a raffle, and information about where to go on the grounds to rent tables and chairs. There also were cartoons, profiles of Nats officials and volunteers, and, on one occasion, a brief story about a woman who

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Ron Morgan

By **RACHELLE HAUGHN**
Model Aviation Staff

In 1960, Ron Morgan loaded his airplane into his car and drove from his home in Pennsylvania to the Nats in Dallas. With 18 years of aeromodeling experience under his belt, he looked forward to participating in his first Nats. But, plans changed.

“I went with the intent of flying in my first Nats,” he said this week, while taking a short break from his work in the Nats headquarters in Muncie, Indiana. “A couple of guys said they needed help, so I put the airplane back in the car and helped. So that was the beginning,” the Nats manager and contest director said. His first job at the Nats was to assist the tabulation department.

Fifty-one years later, Ron still dedicates nearly two months of his summer to the Nats. The quirky 75-year-old hasn’t lost his sense of humor or his love for aeromodeling.

Every year, Ron and his wife, Jane, make the trek from their home in Scotland, Pennsylvania, to



Ron Morgan and wife, Jane. Jane quickly learned what she was getting herself into when she married Ron in 1967. The couple spends about two months of their summer at the Nats in Muncie, Indiana. Photo by Rachelle Haughn.

Muncie for the Nats. They typically arrive in their recreational vehicle about a week before the Nats begins and stay until it ends. This year, the Nats kicked off on June 27 and will end on August 15.

Ron, who was named Contest Director in 1965, is responsible for the overall organization of the contest, and communicating with the managers and the four people who help him operate the Nats. He also holds planning meetings

prior to the first day of the Nats and schedules the competitions. Jane runs the Nats headquarters and assists the headquarters staff. “She’s been a very, very, large, valuable asset to me,” he said. “This is her 44th trip (to the Nats).”

He said his wife knew what she was getting herself into before they married. About a week before their wedding, the couple flew

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MA,

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AAM to all of its members and kill MA. As part of the agreement with AAM, AMA news and model events were included in a special section of AAM. AMA officials hoped that this new venture could still provide AMA members with the organization’s news, but also offer members some exciting modeling

feature articles to enjoy. The AMA section’s section was published in the last few pages of each edition of the magazine.

This arrangement worked until officials with AAM announced in February of 1975 that the company was filing for bankruptcy. Without a way to communicate with AMA members, the organization’s officials gave the green light for MA to be revived.

Magazine employees only had

two months to prepare for the July 1975 re-launch. They scurried to contact advertisers, contributing editors and columnists. This first edition was 80 pages long.

Today, the magazine still thrives and circulation has grown to about 130,000. The average length of an issue is 168. Along with columns, the magazine includes product reviews, letters to the editor, plans, and feature stories. 

War,

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of essential materials for the airplane model industries. He then issued a bulletin, stressing that aeromodeling was an essential defense activity and that the government should encourage such activity by granting industries the necessary materials.

The AMA then took another stance by forming its own gas rationing board. The board immediately received a flood of letters from frantic modelers, requesting gas rationing cards and letters of recommendation for such cards.

The federal government apparently got the message.

By January of 1942, modeling was back in full swing. The US Navy asked modelers to build 500,000 scale models of US Allied and enemy airplanes. The aircraft would be used for training purposes, such as aircraft recognition and shooting practice.



Cpl. William R. McNeil of the Ellington Field, Texas, built scale models of American and enemy airplanes for aircraft identification classes for student bombardiers and navigators of the country's aerial combat teams. This photo was taken during World War II and was published in the March/April 1944 edition of *Model Aviation*. Source: National Model Aviation Museum.


By the end of 1943, that goal was surpassed and the program was canceled.

In the fall of 1943, modelers received even better news. It was announced in *Model Aviation* magazine that the War Production



These US Army Air Force cadets worked to put together a model in their down time during World War II. This photo was published in the July 1942 edition of *Model Aviation*. Source: National Model Aviation Museum.

Board was considering allowing modeling manufacturers to create a limited number of kits and engines. After receiving the nod from the government, the kits were released to schools, AMA chapters and schools—solely for educational purposes.

The war ended in 1945 and modelers returned home to their workshops. Supplies were once again manufactured and the Nats resumed. 

Model Aviation's Evolution

By **RACHELLE HAUGHN**
Model Aviation Staff

Before the Academy of Model Aeronautics (AMA) even existed, there was *Model Aviation* (MA) magazine.

The magazine—which is still published today—has been killed, then revived by the AMA.

The first issue was printed and distributed to those attending the 1936 National Aeromodeling Championships (Nats).

The magazine was provided to AMA Leader Members and subscribers, for the next two decades. In 1954, all members

This is the first issue of *American Modeler*, later known as *American Aircraft Modeler*, which included the section dedicated to AMA news. It was published in the July/August 1966 issue. Photo National Model Aviation Museum.



began receiving the magazine as part of their membership benefits.

Then, in 1966, the AMA began



This was the first issue of the revived *Model Aviation*, published in July of 1975. National Model Aviation Museum.

searching for a way to reduce costs, but increase membership. Officials with *American Aircraft Modeler* (AAM) offered a solution. The AMA council voted to provide

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War's Affect on Aeromodeling

By **RACHELLE HAUGHN**
Model Aviation Staff

World War II may have meant fighting in the danger zone overseas for some modelers. For others, however, war meant it was difficult to keep up the hobby that gave them a brief escape from troubling times.

Modelers received a one-two punch in 1939 when the war broke out. Not only did participation in the National Aeromodeling Championships (Nats) drop, but providing supplies for overseas combat became the top priority. By 1942, supplies needed for model airplanes began to dwindle and, eventually, were depleted.

Cements, raw materials for gas engines, substitutes for newer materials, and balsa wood began to disappear. By 1943, spruce and white pine replaced balsa as the main wood used to construct a model airplane.

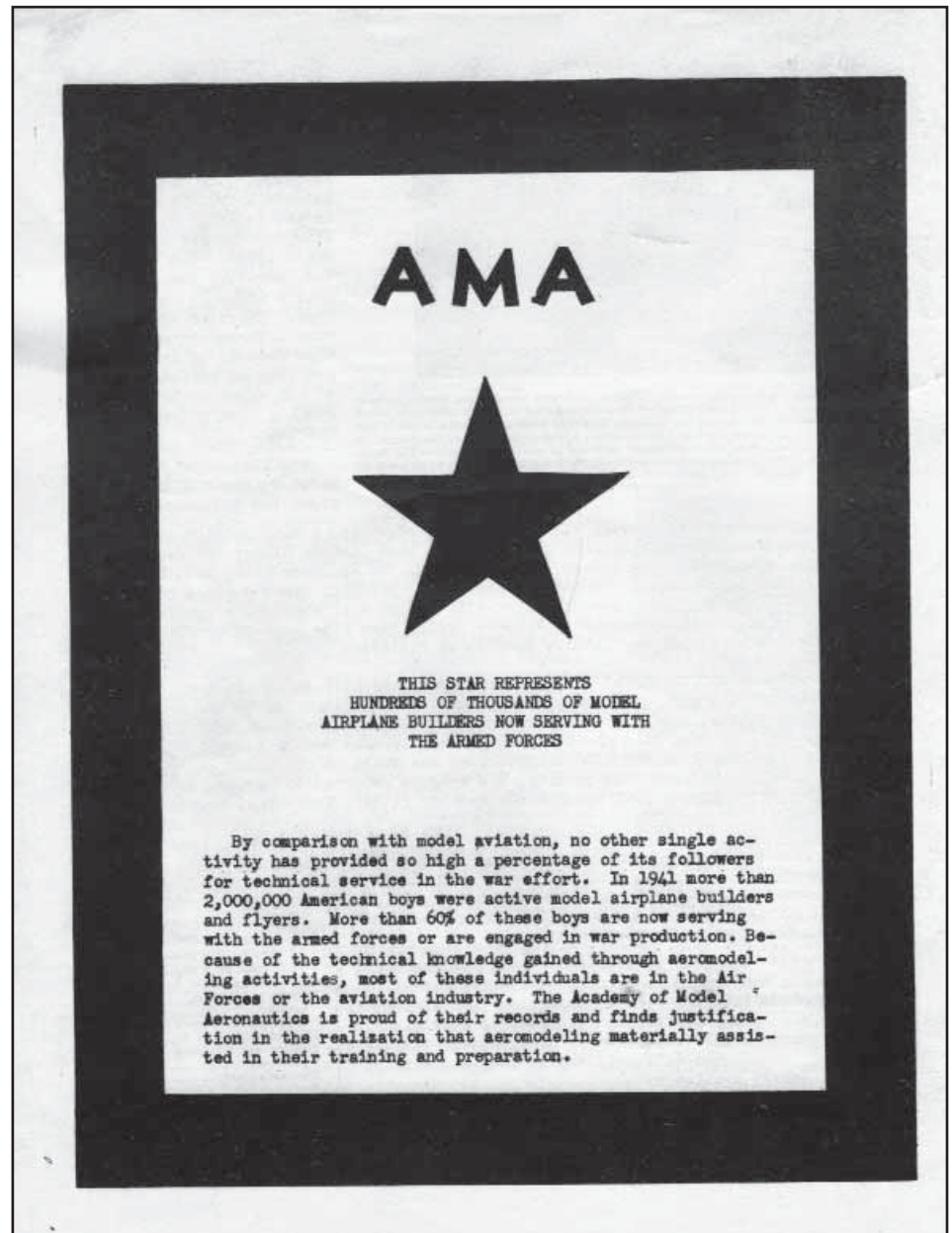
Rubber also became a precious commodity. Those who had collected it before the war held onto their stock. Those who hadn't began cutting up old inner tubes so they could continue flying their aircraft.

And it just kept getting worse.

Gas rationing soon went into effect in the United States. With transportation for military personnel being of utmost importance, providing gasoline for gas-powered model airplanes was put on the back burner.

Flying fields also began to disappear. Virtually every available piece of open land was needed for the military, factories, or crop production. Areas near military bases also were more heavily restricted.

But, modelers weren't ready to



This show of Patriotism was published on the back page of the March/April 1944 issue of *Model Aviation* magazine. It was designed to honor aeromodelers serving overseas during World War II. Source: National Model Aviation Museum.

give up.

Although their beloved Nats had been canceled, they still found a way to compete. Telegraphic Meets were held in eight cities across the country and the results were wired to coordinators. The coordinators then determined the winners.

After seeing the toll the war was taking on the modeling

industry, the Academy of Model Aeronautics decided to step in.

It was announced in the March 1942 edition of *Model Aviation* magazine that Edward Miller had been appointed to the AMA's Education Committee. He vowed to create a program of conservation and curtailment

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75th Anniversary Gala



The 75th in Pictures: Part 2



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The 75th in Pictures

