

NATSNEWS



CELEBRATING 90 YEARS OF COMPETITION

July 11

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RC Aerobatics (Pattern)



This year we celebrate AMA's 80th anniversary and 90 years of aeromodeling competition. So much has happened in the last 90 years, but one thing has remained constant throughout those years: RC Aerobatics continues the original concept of the first aeromodeling championships.

One thing is for sure, a lot has changed during those 90 years—but the idea of bringing like-minded RC modelers together for a week of flying, fellowship, and fun remains the same.

One of the changes for this year's RC Aerobatics Nats is a new event director. After two years and a job extremely well done, Bob Kane wanted to return to his primary reason for coming to AMA's International Aeromodeling Center; Bob wanted to fly. Last year, Bob, a very good singer, was singing "Me and My Shadow," and his shadow happened to be Albert Glenn. For AMA's 80th anniversary, Albert has stepped out of the shadows and into the light.

Albert Glenn, the 2016 RC Aerobatics Event Director, has a long and stellar pedigree in aviation. Albert started flying Control Line when he was eight years old. By 12, he was into RC with a Mini Mambo single-channel, controlled with an escapement. He started flying RC aerobatics in 1989.

When I asked what his favorite plane to fly was, he was quick to answer the Boeing 777. Along with being an expert RC pilot, Albert also is a captain on a 777 for FedEx. He has been with FedEx for 42 years and has logged more than 18,000 hours of flying time. He wanted to share his love of flying with his sons. His son, Anthony, tended to the full-scale style of flying and he is also a captain flying for FedEx. His son, AC, preferred the RC style of flying that his dad did. AC is our current FAI National Champion.



At that first Nats, the Good brothers flew their own-design airplane. Today, many competitors are doing that exact same thing. For almost half of those years, Mike Harrison has been flying in our RC Aerobatics Nats. Like the Good brothers, for most of those years, Mike has flown his own design, and this year is no exception. Mike is returning with his Encore. Along with his Encore, another great R/C Aerobatics designer, Mark

Hunt, is flying a Harrison/Hunt collaborative design, the Harmony II.



So that we all start on an equal playing field, certain criteria must be met before a model can be flown in competition. All models, fuselages/wingspans, must be no more than 2 meters long. None can weigh more than 5,000 grams. (A 50-gram margin of error is allowed for the scale.)

Keith Hoard was in charge of weights and measures. Glow fuel-powered airplanes were weighed without fuel. Electric-powered planes were weighed with battery packs. When each plane passes inspection, its battery pack is stickered and approved for competition flight.

AMA District X Vice President Lawrence Tougas was pleased to see that his Spark airplane and all of his battery packs passed weight inspection.



Although it wasn't a part of that first Nats 90 years ago, the ice cream social that begins the afternoon pilots' meeting is a welcome tradition. A special thank-you goes out to F3A Unlimited and Mike Mueller for supporting this pleasant addition to our Aerobatics Nats. It's a tradition that we all hope Mike and F3A Unlimited will continue to support for the next 90 years.



When we all had full tummies, Albert got down to the business at hand and briefed us on all of the particulars of this year's Nats. Gasps were heard throughout the audience when he mentioned a 7:30 a.m. start time for FAI on Wednesday and Thursday. Peace and understanding were restored when Albert explained that he wanted this early start time to be sure that the pilots and the judges were clear about all of the nuances for the "F" and the "Unknown" sequences. John Carter and Derek Koopowitz added some clarifications for a few of the maneuvers.



The evening concluded with an excellent NSRCA meeting that was open to the entire membership. Many significant points were discussed. Growing the membership, the frequency of the K-Factor publication, and other such topics were discussed.

Mike Mueller gave an excellent perspective on new aerobatics pilots and introductory equipment. He also shared an excellent rationale for why the NSRCA is so important for the health and welfare of RC Aerobatics. Questions were asked about the new E-Scoring System.

Joe Walker gave an excellent presentation on NSRCA's new mission statement. Support for F3P was also mentioned.

A big thank-you was extended to all of the NSRCA officers (pictured below) who volunteer their time and expertise for the benefit of the entire membership, and even more so for the advancement of RC Aerobatics itself—the oldest style of competition flying sanctioned by the AMA. 🛩️





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