



July 22



NatsNews

RC Aerobatics

Brian Strachan (cover photo) is a returning Nats Champion. In 2011, with a borrowed Passport, he won the Intermediate class.

With his ever-increasing passion for RC Aerobatics, he moved to the FAI class and narrowly missed the finals in 2013, finishing ninth. Quite an accomplishment for such a young man!

Just over 10 years ago, Brian bought and paid for a Multiplex Easy Star three-channel airplane. After only 3 seconds or so of sheer terror, the Easy Star spent a quiet afternoon in a tree. But, it *did* live to fly another day.

Ed Valls deserves a lot of credit for almost “forcing” Brian to fly aerobatics. Brian was out for fun; Ed felt he had a serious talent that was just waiting to be uncovered. Brian’s first Nats was in 2009 flying Intermediate with a Focus Sport. Brian’s airplane was the first to break ground and grace the AMA International Aeromodeling Center’s sky. We wish Brian all the best as he graduates from high school in 2015 and begins a course of study in computer science. Oh yes, it also must have a strong component in UAVs.

Our first day of competition had a range of emotions from pleasure and joy to terror and fear. A direct quote from a first-time Intermediate pilot as he landed after his first flight was, “It would have been more fun to eat nails.” A seasoned FAI pilot commented, “That was a lot of fun.”

During the morning judging break in Advanced, two first-time pilots were talking about fulfilling a dream. Kevin Duncan and Brian Dorff (photo 1), both now 30-somethings, both started flying at about age 13. Both had dreamed of flying at the Nats, but for various reasons, not the least of which was distance, that dream remained unfulfilled until this year.

Brian says it is hard to find good competition in his area so he wanted to test his skills against some of the best in the country. Kevin came for almost the same reason, but he is doing very well in the local contests in his area. They love this place. They like the hills, but wonder how it will be to sit all afternoon in a judge’s chair.



History was made at the 2014 RC Aerobatics Nats. The facts were checked with AMA’s Executive Director, Dave Mathewson. He confirmed that this was not a first, but he was confident that Mike and Jean Greear are only the second couple in the history of the Nats to compete as a married couple.

Mike and Jean (photo 2) have made the trip from California many times, usually bringing more airplanes than just what Mike would fly. On this trip, Mike happily brought Jean’s planes as well. Jean has been flying for several years. This year, the Southern California contest circuit has seen her doing so well in Intermediate and Mike doing equally well in Advanced, so they thought it was a good time to enter the Nats as a couple. The Greears are a great RC couple and they have only added to their luster by making history at the 2014 RC Aerobatics Nats.

From the comment about eating nails, to sheer terror, to exhaustion upon landing, the afternoon group of Intermediate first timers (photo 3) also was overjoyed and full of smiles for having stood tall in the flight box and flown their best!

Ed Alt (back cover) is a longtime RC pilot. He is also an electrical engineer so it is only natural that he would think to design electronic components that would help our Aerobatics community. Tech-Aero Designs, Ed’s company, makes three products.

He started with a voltage regulator offering redundancy and fail-safe protection for our airborne flight packs. They come in several configurations. Another product, the Ultra IBEC, is primarily used for anyone who needs onboard glow power. This product eliminates the need for that extra onboard battery. Another product, Throttle-Tech, is for electric-powered airplanes to manage the battery/throttle component. As the flight progresses and the battery starts to wear down, this lightweight device allows the pilot to have the same throttle response for all the useful flights of the battery. Check out Tech-Aero Designs’ website.

How do all these beautiful airplanes arrive safely? Jim and Matt Kimbro (photo 4) need no introduction to the RC Aerobatics community. Master designers and craftsmen of the highest order, heads were turning



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when they saw Jim's latest design at the 2013 Nats, the Asylum, "a monoplane with two wings," as he says.

Slightly redesigned for 2014 and strongly back into YS glow power, Jim needed to solve the problem of transporting four airplanes and eight sets of wings across the country. And yes, there were also all the support systems to sustain flight as well as body and spirit for a week at the Nats. Be sure to stop by Site 1 in the morning and catch a glimpse of this fabulous solution!

Finally, in this issue let's meet some of the staff that keeps us flying so comfortably. Site 4 (photo 5) is under the legendary leadership of Bobby Stout. This year, Bobby has two line chiefs: a morning line chief, Gerald Hood, and an afternoon line chief in Mike Murphy. Bobby insists that Site 4 is only as good as his master scoring guru, Tara Stafford, so he says the site is outstanding.

We are delighted to welcome Makayla Weyland (photo 6) back for her second year running scores to the "Whale" for Linda Jesky and Leslie Hochhalter (photo 7), who are the brains behind the Masters and FAI scoring. These three ladies all need to be sought out and thanked. Without them, we would not have a Nats.

—Jim Quinn

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Photos on this page by Jenni Orebaugh.

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