



August 4

RC Helicopter Begins



# NatsNews

# Helicopter

Welcome back to “Whose Flight Is It Anyway?”—the game where every flight is funny and the points don’t matter. Wait, I just been informed that this is the opening report for the 2014 Heli Nats and there will be no wisecracking remarks allowed. Well, I’ll try.

As all of the AMA contestants prepare themselves for their most serious competition of the year, the FAI competitors look beyond today as the results not only crown the national champion, but also help select the team that will represent the US in the F3C World Championship in Austria next year.

The previous team comprised of Curtis Youngblood, Nick Maxwell, and Daniel Hiatt are looking for a repeat performance, but not without great opposition coming from last year’s champion Dwight Shilling, and Nob Muraki who is showing outstanding form after the switch to flybarless systems.

We also expect the visit of the FAI Canadian team who also joins the competition. Scott Gray from Ontario, a multi-time AMA champion in his own right, will be playing spoiler, trying to take the top spot. We expect to see a handful of AMA competitors in the lower classes for Precision and eight faithful contestants in Scale.

This year also marks the official allowance of flybarless systems for all of the classes, including FAI. The stabilizing units incorporate three gyros to control all three axis. Two gyros stabilize the head in pitch and roll in addition to the tail gyro that is been used for many years now.

The new units provide a performance enhancement for the aerobatics, but the art of precision hovering still being studied by all using these systems.

The stage is set: a new year, new control systems, new rules, serious competition, and not-so-serious reporting. Keep your hands and feet inside the vehicle, the 2014 AMA Helicopter Nats bus is about roll.

—Santiago Panzardi

Jenni Orebaugh photo.



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