

EL TORBELLINO

NEWSLETTER OF SAN DIEGO ORBITEERS FREE FLIGHT CLUB

JUNE 2020



Prez's Corner – Mark Chomyn

June finds us slowly emerging from hibernation (otherwise known as sheltering in place) and going out to enjoy the things we normally take for granted. I decided that I'd been dwelling in the garage for too long and decided that it was about time to visit Taibi Field. I found I wasn't alone. Our May 24 fun-fly event saw at least ten flyers that were ready to brave the "new normal" and get some flying in.

With no points or dough on the line the atmosphere was pretty casual. I spent my time trimming planes that had been sitting in the garage building area. The glider guys decided to hold a friendly competition and were putting up flights at a pretty good pace. I didn't hear who won bragging rights for their efforts but it looked like there was no lack of fun and comradely during flying. Field conditions at Perris are still less than ideal. The mulch piles are still present and rather difficult to navigate depending on where you step. This presents some retrieval problems for those of us who don't have the legs we did when we were younger. As I'm headed for a hip replacement operation in the near future retrieval can be a bit painful at times.

Some probably wonder why we've gone to a fun-fly format. The answer to that is our contests have historically been held as CAT III events. CAT III events are flown under a two-minute max and our club's points system is based on CAT III. Depending on drift at the field a two-minute flight can find you deep in the mulch piles for retrieval. So, until we sort out a workable alternative, or the field gets plowed to a level two-minute envelope (about a quarter mile in each direction) we've temporarily gone to a fun-fly format. One alternative could be to drop flight times to a 90 second max. However, for those seeking to accumulate "Cup Points" that might not be a workable alternative. Would appreciate input from those who are reading this.

Can you believe it? A rubber power free flight model on the cover of AMA's June edition of Model Aviation with a bold white heading saying "Build A Free Flight Model". Am I dreaming? No, it was for real. A building tutorial for beginners in how to construct a Keil Kraft Ajax by none other than Bob Benjamin a noted aviation artist and model airplane enthusiast. The cover shot of the Ajax with its great graphics made me drool. The May edition of the building tutorial showed the construction of the fuselage. The June edition moved on to the nose block, stab, rudder and wings with some tips on sanding leading and trailing edges. Okay, I may have expressed some dissatisfaction with the lack of free flight material in Model Aviation, but all is forgiven. I expect the next installment will focus on covering and I hope there will also be information on trimming and flying. Would love to see AMA put out a You Tube video with Mr. Benjamin putting up some flights with the Ajax. Let's hope.

That's all for this month, hope you and yours all remain healthy and remain optimistic. We will get through this together.

Mark

"When everything seems to be going against you, remember that the airplane takes off against the wind, not with it". - Henry Ford

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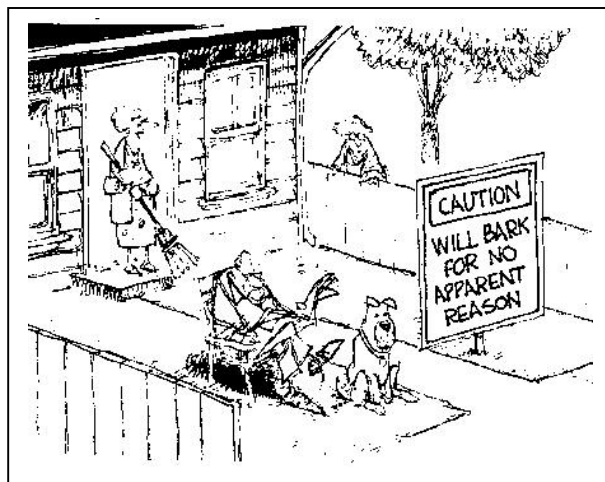
THE FINE PRINT THE FINE PRINT

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Outdoor Free Flight Rules of Thumb

By Mike Jester

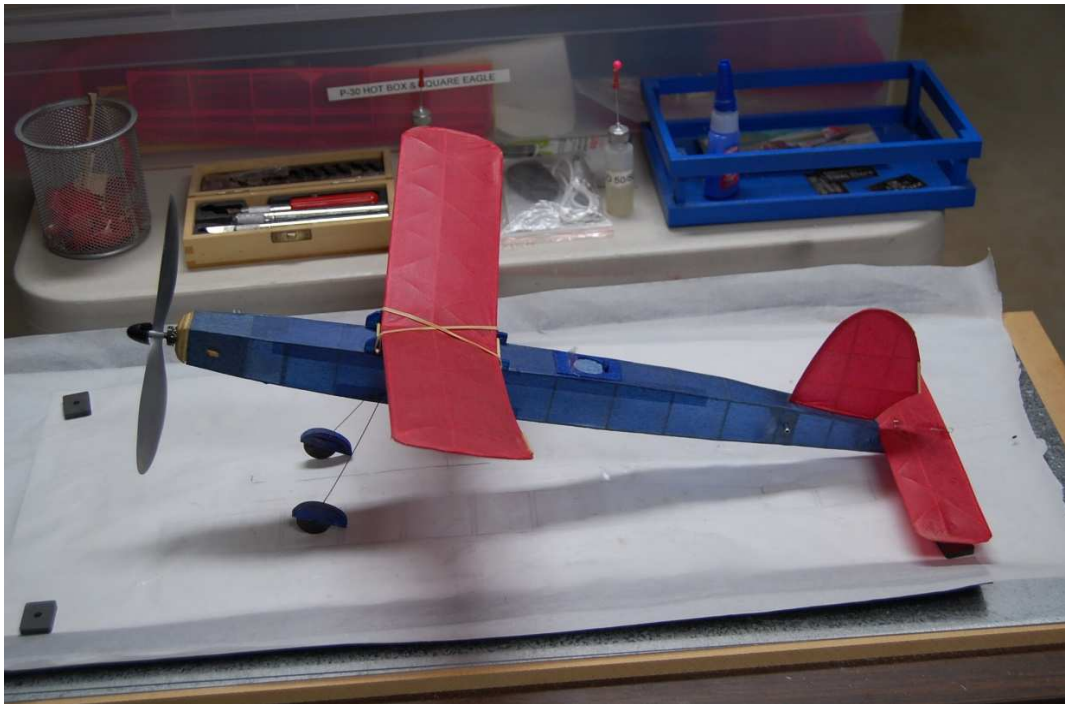
During the course of my outdoor free flight hobby, I have come up with the following rules of thumb:

1. If you bring your chase bike to the flying field, conditions are likely to be calm and you will have wasted space in your vehicle, and effort in loading and unloading the bike. If you don't bring your chase bike to the flying field winds will be 5 - 10 mph by the late morning and your chases will be long and difficult.



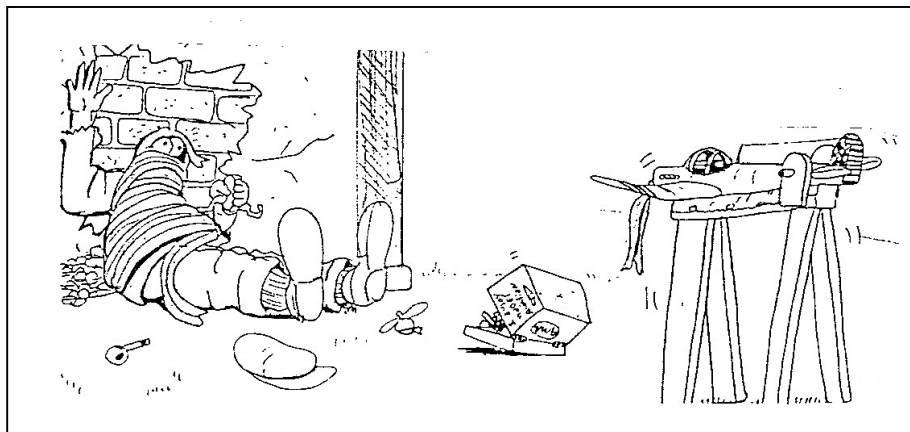
The Author's Chase Bike Parked at Perris, CA

2. If you go to the effort of bringing back-up models for each event you plan to enter, you probably won't end up needing any of them.
3. If you only bring two rubber motors, and the event calls for three official flights, both rubber motors will break.
4. Fifty percent of the time you will forget the bottled water you planned to bring to a contest.
5. If you make up a reminder list you will usually forget to review it before you complete packing and drive off to the contest.
6. If you lay down the small Allen wrench (used for adjusting a Gizmo Geezer prop assembly) somewhere outside your field box you will have a hard time finding it later on.
7. Your models that are dogs will never catch a boomer thermal and unfortunately will not fly away forever.
8. Only your best models will fly OOS and not be retrieved. (Cries for sympathy from fellow fliers are a waste of time.)



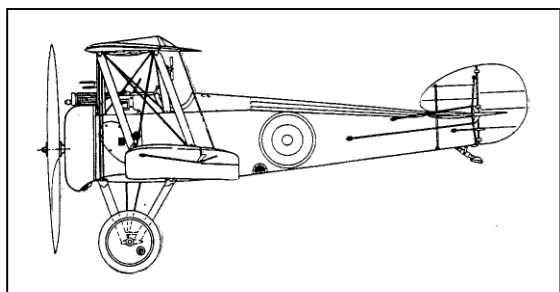
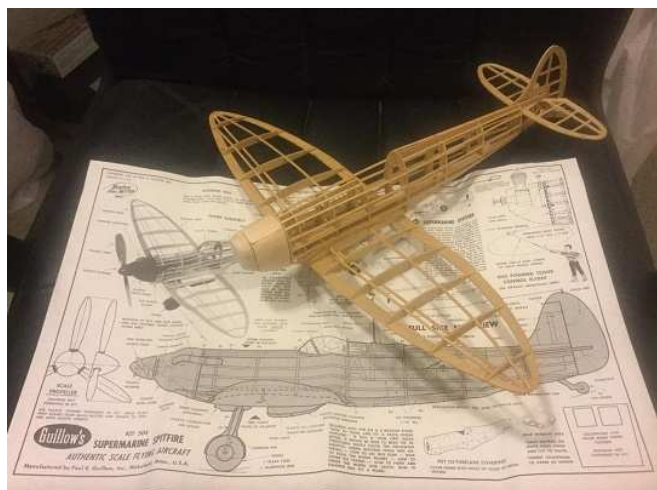
The Author's Debut Embryo Lost Near San Jacinto Avenue, Perris, CA in Early 2019

9. Rubber motor lube on your hands will impair your enjoyment of snacks at the flying field.
10. Fifty percent of the time you will have to re-fill your car with gas while driving home from a contest.
11. If there is a body of water near the flying field, one of your models will eventually land in that body of water too far from the shore to retrieve with a stick.
12. Most of the time you will not have the right size pliers with you and neither will any of your fellow fliers that you ask.
13. If you momentarily put a stab shim down somewhere and then go retrieve something else, there is a 50% chance you won't find the shim again.
14. If it only rains a few days in a month, one of those days will be a scheduled contest day.
15. Weather will be perfect for flying for several days after the day of a cancelled contest.



From the Workbench - J.Merrill

This is a very old Gallows' Spitfire kit that I started years ago. I found it in a box in the garage, so I figured I'd go ahead and finish it up. I built it according to the plans, unfortunately, with the exception of making an all-wood nose instead of the plastic nose it came with. It has a 16.5" wingspan, so it's considered a Walnut Scale plane. Since it's built to the plans, it came out on the heavy side, somewhere just under 5 pounds without prop and rubber. Definitely not expecting record setting flights, but it was still fun to build. I'll try to send in a picture of the finished plane one of these days, maybe even by the time this edition of the E.T. hits the mail, but don't hold your breath. So, what's on your workbench? Stay safe, and stay healthy friends! John

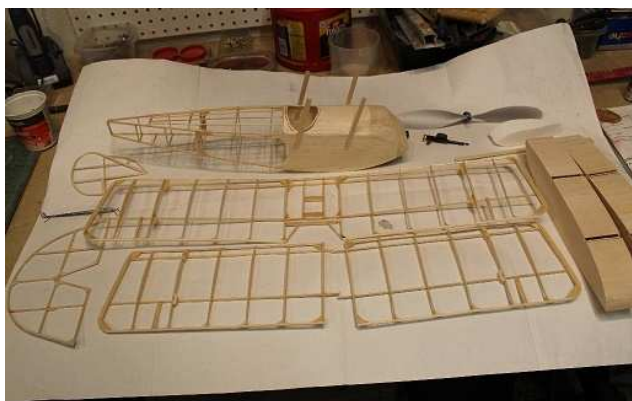


From the Workbench - R.Hodes

My latest project – the bones of a 26" wingspan Sopwith Schneider from Mike Midkiff plans. In 1917, the British Naval Air Service used this aircraft in an attempt to shoot down German zeppelins. I don't know if they were actually successful in doing this.

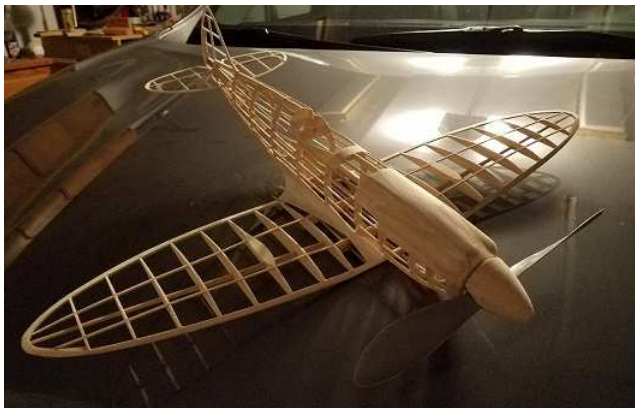
This is the second one of these for me. The first, from the same plans, was built for electric power. It was a good flyer. This one will be rubber powered.

The second photo shows the electric powered version.



From the Workbench - D.Bartick

Current project is a Supermarine Spitfire XVIe from a Bell Model Aircraft Kit produced in 1991. It has a 23" wing span. I won the kit years ago and it has been on the shelf waiting for the right time. The pandemic created the right time. Being a vintage kit, you're dealing with print wood. The kit is extremely well engineered. The wood is hand selected from SIG. The parts are aligned on the printwood perfectly. Every detail has been well thought out by John Bell. To date, I've completed the bones. See pictures. The spinner has been carved and hollowed out. As shown with a gizmo 9" prop, the plane weighs 35.8g. Should finish around 41-43g.



PAPER AIRPLANES - CUSTOM DESIGN

From Don Bartick is the following entry with a flight record of 10 trials and 3.45 secs!



From Howard Haupt with 5 trails and 2.55 seconds.



Perris Field Fun Fly on May 13, 2020 - Photos by Arline Bartick



Bernie Crow



Robb Cobb



Clint Brooks



George Wal

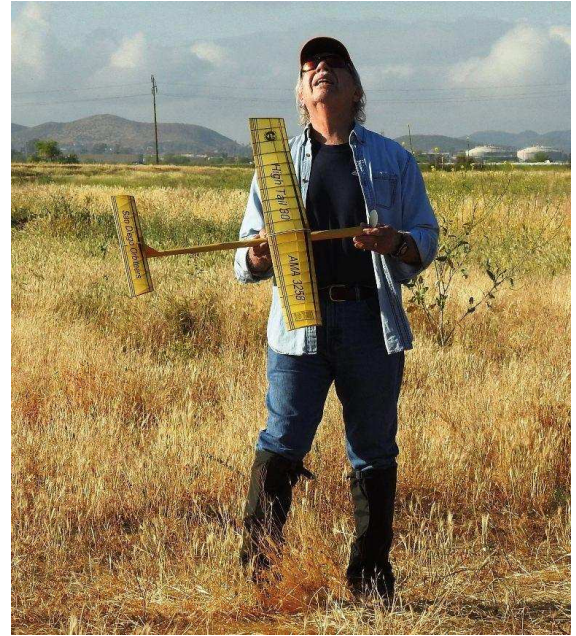


Guy Mennano →





Ray Peel



Don Bartick



Hulan Mathis



Don Bartick →





INSIDE BUSINESS AVIATION

WILLIAM GARVEY

HE WAS PAGING THROUGH AN aviation history magazine when an article about Columbine II, President Dwight Eisenhower's aircraft and the first with the call sign Air Force One, caught his eye. He learned that the government had declared the four-engine Lockheed Constellation as surplus and, in 1970, sold it at auction to a private buyer—something never repeated with a former presidential aircraft.

And now the curvaceous, tri-tailed "Connie" was chocked and wilting under the desert sun in Marana, Arizona, and if it was not moved, it would possibly be scrapped. That was in early October 2014. He put the magazine down and returned his attention to Dynamic Aviation.

By way of background, the reader, Karl Stoltzfus, in 1967 co-founded what became Dynamic with his brother, Ken. Six years later, Ken went into the ministry. Meanwhile, Karl steadily grew the Bridgewater, Virginia, aerial-application operation with DC-3s and Beech 18s and even bought its home airport. Then in 1996, the unexpected occurred.

The U.S. Army announced it was shedding its fleet of U-21 Utes (unpressurized King Air 90s) and asked for bids. Stoltzfus carefully weighed all aspects of the solicitation, did some calculations and, holding his breath, submitted a bid worth \$9 million for all 124 aircraft. And his bid won. What happened subsequently is another story, albeit a positive one (*AW&ST* April 28, 2014, p. 16). The company today has some 700 employees, operates on several continents and counts the U.S. government among its most important customers.

Accordingly, the degeneration of what had once been a symbol of America's technological and global leadership troubled Stoltzfus, a serious student of history. He called the Connie's owner to discuss the situation, and the following week, his brother was on his way to assess the aircraft's condition.

Further background: Karl and Ken's father ran an aerial application business in Pennsylvania. As boys, the smell of avgas and the roar of round engines were constant. Their alternate schoolhouse was a hangar; their mentors, airplane mechanics. When the twin brothers were 23, their father bought five dilapidated DC-3s and sent his sons to fix and fly them home. They did. Karl has since restored a number of winged derelicts.

So Ken's scouting assignment was to determine if the Connie was cancerous with corrosion, for if so, Karl

would have none of it. Ken's report back to Bridgewater: Little corrosion, but "Don't underestimate the work involved." Alas, Karl was to discover: "He was right."

The Connie's owner wanted to sell it to someone who would restore and preserve it and quickly recognized Stoltzfus as that someone. The two men settled on a price somewhat below the \$1.5 million desired, and soon Dynamic maintenance crews were shuttling between Bridgewater and Marana. Laboring in torrid heat, their goal was to get the Connie ready for ferrying to Bridgewater for the full restoration.

Perfect Pairing

The right man at the right time
to save a piece of history



COLUMBINE II

On March 8, 2015, Stoltzfus flew a King Air to Marana to see his prize first-hand. During his slow, careful walkaround, his heart began to sink. The Connie was a sorry pile, and he realized that returning it to glory would be an overwhelming undertaking. When he came back the following day, however, he recalls the airplane seemed to scream at him: "This is something you're supposed to do!" And that, along with encouragement from aviation friends, was it.

On March 18, 2016, the city of Marana hosted an

airport party with Mary Eisenhower, the 34th president's granddaughter, as guest speaker. The purpose was to bid farewell to Columbine II. The following day, the old Connie rumbled into the air for the first time in 13 years. The test flight revealed only minor squawks.

Finally, on March 23, an excited crowd gathered at Bridgewater Air Park to witness history. Soon, Columbine II roared into view and circled overhead. Despite a stiff crosswind, Lockie Christler, a veteran Connie and business jet pilot, settled the belching transport on the center of the narrow 2,745-ft.-long runway, rolling to a stop as onlookers waved and cheered.

Since then, 10-20 Dynamic technicians have been working daily to resurrect the aircraft. Stoltzfus is budgeting \$1 million per year to the effort. Asked when that might conclude, he laughs: "I say, 'Three more years,' no matter when you ask me."

Dynamic plans to house the Connie in a new hangar dedicated to the Eisenhower legacy and will use it to support customers, inspire youngsters and occasionally display at airshows. Stoltzfus says he's thrilled to be "preserving a piece of American history."

Once finally restored, he says, "People are going to love this airplane." ☺

William Garvey is Editor-in-Chief of Business & Commercial Aviation

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WHAT'S HAPPENING

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June 2020

Events will be announced via email.



May 2020 Fun-Fly - Photo by A.Bartick