



FLIGHT LINES

The Monthly Newsletter of The Spirits of St. Louis R/C Flying Club, Inc.

Learn to Fly Day - June 5 Four-Star 40 / Warbirds Races - June 26

PREZ SEZ:

By Bill Lindewirth

If you missed last month's meeting, you missed a great one! I personally would like to thank Vic Bunze for his presentation on the proper handling and charging of Lithium Polymer batteries, as well as Jack Owens, Harold Mantz, Jerry Quist and Les Richman for their outstanding presentations and demonstrations of electric R/C aircraft.

Everyone in attendance appreciated the "Short Meeting Format" which allowed us to devote more time to the "Tech-Session"

Next month, following a short business meeting, we will have our group of experts cover; "Control Surfaces and Mechanisms".

Hope to see you there!

Bill

MEETING MINUTES: APRIL 14, 2003

By Walt Wilson

Meeting was called to order at 7:00 P.M. by President Bill Lindewirth.

Members signed in: Twenty-three members and one guest were present.

Secretary's Report: Minutes were accepted as published in last month's Flight Lines.

Treasurer's Report: Our club membership is ahead of last year with 151 members. We're doing very well in matching the projected budget. The Treasurer's Report was accepted as presented.

Field Report:

All comments on the commercial grass cutting are good! No problems are reported.

Safety Report: Vic Bunze discussed the dangers in charging

Lithium Polymer batteries. They are a new breakthrough in power for electric-powered planes, but are very prone to catch fire or explode if charged improperly. See his Safety Report on page three.

Training Report: Training Chairman Bob Gizzie reports that four new members have been receiving flight training. Three training planes have been lost recently due to the failure of plastic clevises, which are provided in most kits. *Plastic clevises should always be replaced with metal!* See Bob's report on page five.

Membership Report: We now have 151 members. That's the most members we've had in seven years!

Activities Report:

SLRCFA Four-Star 40 Races May 8: Paul Geders reported that the St. Louis RC Flying Association race was very well-done. Charlie Brunner and Ron Hesskamp outdid themselves in making everyone welcome and making it a great day. Paul's report is on page seven.

M&M Topless Fun-Fly May 15: This is expected to be a day of low-key flying and fun. Prizes will be debit gift cards for Mark Twain Hobbies. "Topless" is open to interpretation!

Warbirds/Four-Star 40 Races May 22: The April 24 race was rained out and re-scheduled for May 22. Field and concession stand help will be needed and we're looking forward to a great day of racing.

Learn to Fly Day, June 5: Bob Gizzie has expanded this event to be open to anyone who wants to try flying, not just Boy Scouts. Help is needed for pre-flight and buddy box training. (Continued on the next page)



Jack Owens gave a technical presentation on electric propulsion and his approach with a modified glider. He used an inexpensive geared motor, with a 1900 Milliamp Nicad battery, speed controller with battery eliminating circuit, and a standard radio and servos. The box on the fuselage bottom is for the battery.

FLIGHT LINES

(Continued from the previous page)



Harold Mantz flies a "Miss #2 ARF by the Scorpio Corp. It has a Speed 400 motor, 1100 Milliamp battery, and micro servos.



Jerry Quist shows his Great planes "Slinger" flying wing. It has a Speed 400 motor, 1100 Milliamp battery, mini-receiver and micro-servos. It flies very well but is difficult to launch.



Vic Bunze discusses his electric powered Cub. It has a Speed 400 motor, 2.3/1 gear drive, a seven-cell Nicad battery. It is controlled with two servos and a speed controller. A folding prop would be more efficient for gliding. The fixed prop presents a lot of drag when the motor isn't running.



Les Richman tells about his Great Planes Electric Cub kit, built by Joe Hodge. It has a Speed 600 motor and flies very slowly with three standard servos and a speed controller.

Warbirds/Four-Star 40 Races June 26: Vic Bunze reports that he may not be able to act as CD for the race. More details will be available at the June meeting.

OLD BUSINESS: It will be necessary to renew our club membership in the Missouri Farm Bureau to continue the insurance coverage of our field equipment. A motion was made and passed unanimously to do so immediately..

NEW BUSINESS: None presented.

(Continued on the next page)

FLIGHT LINES

(Continued from the previous page)

Meeting Activity: Jack Owens did an excellent presentation on getting into electric powered aircraft. He handed out CD's and printed information on the subject, as well as describing his electric aircraft setup in detail. Other Spirits showed and discussed their setups and experiences with electric R/C planes.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:25 P.M.

SAFETY REPORT

By Vic Bunze

Lithium Battery Safety Alert! The AMA issued an alert (included in last month's Flight Lines) regarding the potential hazards of Lithium Polymer batteries. In a nutshell, the batteries can ignite if they are overcharged. They can burn with a fierce and hot flame and, if in a plane or helicopter, can destroy them. The biggest issue is the fire hazard for one's home or vehicle.

Lithium batteries have revolutionized the power to weight ratio for electric powered models. They open up all kinds of possibilities for electric aircraft. However, these are not like our trusty NiCad or NiMH packs and are much less tolerant of error.

These batteries require special chargers and will not tolerate overcharging! Even a special charger might not be set to the proper voltage and can overcharge!

A damaged battery might self-ignite some time after being abused, so close attention to their state of affairs is warranted. Swelling of the cells is an indicator that something is amiss. I destroyed a battery by plugging it into the controller backwards. The pack started to swell immediately and I caught the error before something really bad hap-

pened. The pack was destroyed, but there was no fire. These batteries are not "error friendly"! It would be wise to use only Lithium batteries with charge protection circuitry. The following is also recommended:

1. Do not charge the battery in the plane. Take it out for charging.

2. Do not leave the battery unattended during charging and, definitely, do not charge overnight.

3. A fireproof container would be a good idea during charging, such as an ammo box from an Army Surplus store.

4. Use a good quality charger, with enough smarts to recognize the cell count and voltage and with a Lithium charge cycle designed-in.

If you decide to use this technology, be aware of the issues they present and act accordingly.

M&M TOPLESS FUN-FLY

By Walt Wilson

It was a beautiful day for flying! After two days of hard rain, May 15 dawned sunny and dry. There was a moderate wind that kept shifting from north to east, but it only caused problems for a couple of flyers. Nineteen contestants came to fly. The three events could be flown at the contestant's own pace, with no pressure or anyone looking at your every move. It was just like a day of sport flying! Everyone received one or two M&M's for each flight, and they could pick their own colors. Most flyers got the extra M&M for having the engine running upon landing. When flying was done, the colors were assigned points and the selected M&M colors were counted. The first gift certificate went to Jim Rawlings for his efforts in handing out the M&M's and keeping score for the event.

(Continued on the next page)



Most of the flyers, workers and helpers posed for this picture upon completion of the M&M Topless Fun-Fly on May 15. The top three finishers hold certificates to support their "bragging rights" for flying well and picking the right color M&M's.

FLIGHT LINES

(Continued from the previous page)

Jesse Milster came out on top with 26 points, and received \$20.00 and a great looking certificate for his efforts. Jordan Milster tied with Bob Gizzie for second with 25 points. Jordan won the “chew-off” for second place. Everyone else received a gift card for \$10.00 each. Event Director, Les Richman, is to be complimented for adapting the concept and organizing a fun day of flying.



HAROLD MANTZ PHOTO



TRAINING REPORT

By Bob Gizzie

I'm pleased to report that in April the club instructors have worked with four new members with new planes and radio equipment. We continue to have walk-ups and wish to thank the club members who help answer the questions! Please continue to encourage them to join the AMA and become Spirits members. Point out that youth can be members of AMA for one dollar.

Plans are rolling along for the up-coming Learn to Fly Day, Saturday, June 5, with a rain date of Saturday, June 12. I will be enlisting the help of four to six people to conduct 15-minute mini-ground schools in the pavilion. Topics will be how to hold the buddy box; the commands on how to move the control stick; and short explanations on how an airplane flies. The plan is to get seven minutes of stick time in the air with each student! Please invite Scouts and any adults, young and old, to come to the free Learn to Fly event day! Any one that would like to bring their plane and help with the flight training, please contact me 636-441-7924.

One other little note: this past week I have witnessed three aircraft crashes due to the nylon or plastic clevises on control surfaces that have failed. My recommendation is to replace all with metal clevises and control push rods of the proper thread size.

Thanks, remember to keep your eye on the plane you are flying!

You can e-mail me at:
J3heavy@hotmail.com

FIELD REPORT

By Greg Pugh

Nothing exciting this month to report. The grass continues to grow and EB Green Care continues to mow. All reports are good and the field is looking good. Upcoming plans include weed killers, miscellaneous painting and checking into pricing for tarring the pit area.

BIG BIRD

By Bob Gizzie

This model (below) is owned and flown by Mark Trent, a local resident. He has built three of these over the winter and was down to the field on Sunday, May 2, checking out the field. Steve Ramoncuk, Nick Pinkert and I were the only ones there! I started the conversation and asked if he brought anything along to look at it. Man what a plane! The weather turned bad so I extended the invitation for him to come fly another time as my guest. He said he would like that and would come out after work on Monday! He did and put on a flight demo that was spectacular (see picture)! There were other club members present and we were able to enjoy the demo. It was great! We were impressed with the whole plane and asked what a prop like that cost. \$280.00 was the answer! Mark is the current president of the Saints and did accept an application for becoming a Spirits club member. P.S. I invited him back and he said he would be glad to come back, but it would be after the Joe Knoll Flight Rally!



LAVAR KEY PHOTO

FLIGHT LINES

May 22 Four-Star 40/Warbirds Races
Results on Page eight



Cub Scout Presentation

By Bob Gizzie

On Thursday, May 06, 2004, Dave and Justin Rose, assisted by Bob Gizzie, gave Cub Scout Pack 83, Den #1, their parents, and Den Mother Jen Cody a demonstration of RC airplanes. Dave extended an invitation to come to the field to watch anytime. He told of the upcoming Learn to Fly Day on Saturday, June 5, 2004

MOWING SAFETY

The field will be closed when mowing is in progress! Please clear the pit area and do not fly until the mowing is completed.

Please print this in the next news letter if you can.

Jeff Kubik

May 8 SLRCFA Four-Star 40 Race

By Paul Geders

Eureka, Mo. I want to tell you about a great day of Four-Star-40 racing at the St. Louis R/C Flying



Association (SLRCFA) this past Saturday, May 8. Charlie Brunner and Ron Hesskamp really went all out to make everyone welcome...I mean really all out. They greeted each of us and welcomed us to their facility. Very NICE facility I might add. Their runway is 600' long and about 42 feet wide. They have a continuous 90 degree crosswind most of the time. They have all the protective chain link fencing and a lot of asphalt for pit areas and parking. Nice wooden fencing with spectator benches built in along the parking lot. A Johnny on the Spot built into a storage shed for their mowing and other equipment. I am told their next improvement is a 28 x 40 foot pavilion. They have all the amenities of a first class facility. Every one of their club members was appreciative of us being there.

Now for the sad part. There were only three of us from the Spirits, Gene Jones, Lee Volmert and myself. We had eight faithful racers fly five rounds. We all voted to do the landings and go for the extra point (engine running after landing) in the crosswind, everyone did it including a SLRCFA first timer in a racing event! They also had a donation type luncheon spread after the first two rounds. Make it yourself ham and cheese sandwiches, great German style potato salad, chips and beverages.

This was Ron's first contest as a Contest Director so he asked me for advice and help in running the event. So, when he flew, I became the Starter/Assistant CD. I believe Ron learned very quickly that it is not as easy as it may look. In the first heat his engine quit after a couple of laps...duh, due to being so busy with the contest, he forgot to get it fueled up. But, all-in-all it was a great learning experience for him.

All contestants received a soda can foam insulator to keep your drinks cold, and they even offered club hats to the participants, gratis. They had nice wooden framed glass covered certificates thru fifth place. Each person who placed also received a cash prize. Myself and Lee Volmert were tied for third place and had a fly-off, Lee cut and I got third and Lee got fourth. For third I got \$20.00, which I felt embarrassed to take. I don't know what First and Second got...but it obviously was more!

First place went to Steve Meier, Second to Tony Vitiello, and Charlie Brunner took Fifth. There was a lot of close racing and they even supplied Sig 15% fuel and balanced 10 x 6 Master Airscrew propellers for everyone. Even the workers shared in drawings for four Sig "Shrike" airplane kits.

Thank You!

By Jeff Kubik

I just wanted to submit a "Thank You" again to the great members in our club. A few weeks ago Joe Stramaglia, Bob Gizzie, and Mike Roederer helped me immensely with a trainer I was going to fly. They gave me a lot of assistance and guidance to make some modifications so my control surfaces worked better.

Again, I just wanted to say a public "Thank You" to these club members. They have offered to help me anytime and I really appreciate their efforts, as they are a definite asset to the club!

(Continued on the next page)

FLIGHT LINES



Tim Nelson Photo

The SLRCFA put on a great race. If you missed it, you missed a great time. It was hosted by Charlie Brunner and Ron Hesskamp, who also was the CD! Pictured from left to right, holding planes; Charlie Brunner, Steve Meier, Ron Hesskamp, Paul Geders Tony Vitiello, Gene Jones, and Lee Volmert!

(Continued from the previous page)

Ron, Charlie and all the SLRCFA members, who were in attendance, liked the racing and if I read them correctly they would like to see more of it! As a matter of fact, the pylon poles were installed several weeks ago and they were going to take them down...but were told "Hey we kinda like them...let's leave them up!" So they have a permanent race course set up.

We had a great time and I wish more could have been in attendance, but that happens. We got started flying at around 10:30 A.M., stopped and had a leisurely lunch, flew three more rounds and were done with everything by 2:10 P.M. They said they were looking forward to our contest in two weeks. My only hope is that we get even more in attendance than we had last year!

May 22 Four-Star 40 and Warbirds Races:

By Paul Geders

We didn't have any rain this time...but 15 to 25 mph crosswinds greeted us early in the morning and stayed with us all day! A total of 12 contestants signed up, nine in Four-Star-40 and three in Warbirds. There would have had more in both classes but the wind got Steve Cross's Four-Star 40 in practice, and Steve Ramonczuk brought the wrong transmitter for his Warbird.

There were absolutely no frequency conflicts in either class. We had three plane heats with five rounds of racing. Consistency and persistency paid off for the eventual winner of Four-Star 40 when Pat Keebey and Curt Milster tied for first place. In the last heat of the day Pat got about half of his left elevator chewed off but he kept on flying (persistency) and decided not to fly in the fly-off, thus giving first place to Curt (consistency). There was a tie for third and fourth between two ol' racers, Charlie Brunner from the St. Louis R/C Flying Association (SLRCFA) and myself. The wind and dumb fingers put my plane into the safety fence and Charlie got third place. Steve Meier, also from SLRC-

FA, took fifth place. Some really tight racing occurred in every heat as was proven by the points spread between the top seven fliers of only six points! We actually had three sets of ties...so you can see it was truly close racing and anyone could have won! This is what we have all dreamed could happen and it is becoming a reality!

Warbirds had three entrants (could have been four) and in the first heat Curt had some bad luck when the stabilizer on his AT-6 decided to fold. That left Bob Bennett and myself to do battle. Bob was flying the same airframe as I was with an O.S. .46 VRDF engine and Magic Muffler pipe. We flew side by side for quite a while until Bob either lost muffler pressure or had a tank plumbing problem. He worked on it feverishly between each heat...but eventually, I got lucky and won out.

Now for the most important part; the ones who make it possible for us to have fun...the workers. Steve Cross and Steve Ramonczuk did an outstanding job of being cut judges at turns one and two. Jesse and Jacob Milster and David Rose were the lap counters. All received \$10.00 cash for their efforts. We also had food and beverages provided by Bill Lindewirth and assisted by Les Richman. Bill says we made a little money, too! Again, a personal thanks to each of you for making this a successful race!

The Last Word

By Walt Wilson

Well, here's another month with little room left for my column. That's great! Thanks to everyone who has contributed photos, reports and articles for our newsletter. I'm just out of the hospital after having surgery, so all contributions are very welcome. Thanks, too, to everyone who has given Suzi and me support through your prayers, calls, cards and offers to help. Hopefully, by the time the next Flight Lines is due to be published, I'll be back to the field. In the meantime, keep up the great work.

Gotta go build

Spirits of St. Louis R/C Flying Club, Inc.



Presents



Four-Star 40*
and

Silver Class WARBIRDS*
Races

Saturday, June 26, 2004



At Spirits Field
on Amrein Road, ½ mile south of Greens Bottom Road
St. Charles County

Vic Bunze, Contest Director

ENTRY FEE: \$10.00
for one or both races!

Registration starts at 9:00 a.m.

Racing starts at ~ 10:00 a.m.

*Class rules are available on the Spirits' Web Site at:

www.spiritsofstl.com

under the Contest & Events link on the first page!

For more information call: Vic Bunze at 636-541-2094

or e-mail him at: vbunze@aol.com

FLIGHT LINES

Area 2004 Activities Schedule

| Date | Contest or Event | Contest or Event Director | Notes |
|--------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| June 5 | Learn to Fly Day | Bob Gizzie | Introduction to Flying |
| June 26 | Four-Star 40/Warbirds | Vic Bunze | AMA Sanctioned Races |
| July 17 | Fun-Fly | Bob Fiely | |
| September 11 | Four-Star 40/Warbirds | Paul Geders | AMA Sanctioned Races |
| September 25 | Open House | Greg Pugh | |
| October 2 | SLRCFA Four-Star 40 | Charlie Brunner | Eureka, Mo. |



FLIGHT LINES

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**Meeting is on
Wednesday,
June 9
at 7:00 P.M.**