

# The Comets' Tale

*The Official  
Newsletter of the*



**May 2008**

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*George Lanquist TJ Moran Steve Steinmetz Alastair Brennan*

The Comets' Tale is the official newsletter and record of the Ventura County Comets, AMA Chartered Club #173 and is published monthly at the Comets' Tale Plaza, somewhere in Ventura.

**Editorial contributions are welcome.**

**Next Meeting:**

**Thursday, 17 April, 2008, 7:30 PM at the  
Oak View Community Center**



**Coming  
Up!**

**Saturday, 10 May**  
Balloon Drop, Comets'  
Field

**6,7 & 8 June**  
Santa Barbara R/C  
Modelers Float Fly  
Lake Cachuma

**18, 19 October 2007**  
Comets' Float Fly, Lake  
Casitas

### **Root's Rambling**

We have had some nice flying weather and I will include a few pictures of models I have seen at the field. Another month has gone by and I haven't finished the electric Pitts model 14 biplane I talked about last month. There have been too many other things going on.

Mike Ambarian built a nice flying Eindecker which is shown in picture 1. This model was built from a Balsa USA kit. I believe it has a wingspan of about 90 inches. It is quite light and flies great. Picture 2 shows a nicely finished Ein-decker which I saw at the giant model fly in at Sepulveda basin a couple months ago. It was also built from a Balsa USA kit. A couple of weeks ago Ken Marsh and I brought our radio controlled old timers out on the same day. It seemed like the perfect chance to get a picture of them flying together. Picture 3 was taken by Don Ashworth and shows Ken Marsh's 1936 original Quaker



design flying above my 1937 Cloud Cruiser. These were originally designed as free flight models. The Original



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Quaker came out a couple of years before the more popular Quaker design that many club members are flying now. The same day Ken and I were having a good time Joe Akridge was flying the wild 3-D plane in picture 4, and Dale Nash was flying the shoulder wing plane in picture 5. Joe's plane is powered by a .55 cu. in. 2 cycle and Dale's has a .91 cu. in. 4 cycle engine. The model shown in picture 6 is an Ultimate biplane built from a Goldberg kit by George Lanquist. Dan Elsasser bought it,



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covered it, and converted it to electric power. It flies great and is surprisingly light. Dan feels it needs a little more power for his flying style (at least that's what he said).



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Last weekend my grandson and I went to the Camarillo Condors model club gathering of the giants which is a fly in for large models. We took four models:



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my 1/4 scale Extra 330, my 1/4 scale Fokker tri-plane, my 1/5 scale Spitfire MK-14, and my 1/6 scale AT-6. We flew all our models and had a great time. There were a lot of nice models in attendance, although it seems like there were fewer than in years past. I hope this isn't a trend. Picture 7 shows some of the models. On Sunday, after fiddling with the on-board glow driver and the mixture on the Walbro carburetor I finally got the MVVS 1.2 cu. in. twin cylinder 2 cycle



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engine in my AT-6 running properly. I got to fly it in formation with two of the P-51's and the B-25 (toward the back) shown in picture 7. The four WW-II models flying together was an awesome sight! The B-25 is shown in a fly by in picture 8. This is a



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big model built from Ziroli plans with two gas engines and a span of over 100 in. It flew very well. It is on the approach with gear and flaps down in picture 9.

Today (May 8, 2008) Don Ashworth and I brought out our Great Planes kit built Skybolts. These models are shown in picture 10 and they each have a 57 in. wing span and are powered by .91 cu. in. four cycle engines. We have had these models a long time. I don't think the kit has been available for quite awhile, but they do have an ARF version available now. It is a great flying design and I would recommend it to anyone who is looking for a good fun flying scale model. Since Don and I had them out on the same day we decided to try to fly formation

with them. This is not as easy as it looks, but the results can be seen in picture 11. Maybe we shouldn't use the back to back technique shown in picture 12. Actually we weren't flying together at this point. He had just landed and I am cruising by. The final picture 13 shows my Skybolt on approach. These pictures were taken by Andy Brennan. Well, that wraps it up for this month. Come on out and enjoy the good flying weather.



### *Bob Root*



## April 2008 Minutes

The Comet meeting was called to order by President Mike Ambarian on April 17, at 7:30 pm, at the Oak View Community Center.

The March minutes were approved. There were no guests and no new members.

**Treasurer's Report:** We now have 87 members and finances are in very good shape. The report was accepted.

**Safety:** Nothing new reported by Dennis Fingold.

**Field Marshall:** No report.

**Park Liaison:** Ken Marsh reminded all, prior to putting any plane into the water at the Float Fly, the floats will be inspected by a Lake Casitas Park Ranger at the flying site. A Ranger would be teaching VC Comet member how to inspect the floats. An Inspection Form will be filled in, and signed, by the flyer and, after passing inspection, by the Inspector. The flyer must agree they had not flown off any infected lakes/ waterways, listed on the form, in order to pass inspection. A sticker will be applied after a plane passes inspection. If there is no sticker on the plane – it will not be launched. A boat has been rented from the Lake for the Float Fly.

**Old Business:** The one-time runway fee paid by new members, which was voted to be increased, will be postponed until new forms are created. The increase to the one-time runway fee, from \$25 to \$100, will go into effect January 1. The motion to postpone was passed.

**New Business:** The Contest Director (CD), John Dugan verified he had the necessary workers to work the Float Fly for the impound area, breakfast burritos, cooks, and plane launchers. The usual crowd stepped up to volunteer.

**Model of the Month:** Ron Scott brought a Neptune plane, made by League. The plane is electric and has a Miller 60 motor which draws 700 watts. The Neptune has a 60" wingspan, weighs 6.5 pounds and uses 2 2300 milliamp 3 cell li-po batteries. Ron won by default as his was the only plane.



Raffle monthly drawing was done. Since all 40 tickets for the Futaba 7-CH 2.4 GHz FASST radio had been sold, the winning ticket was drawn. Jimmy Harvey is now the proud owner.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:20.

Respectfully Submitted,  
*Sandy Brown*

## **\*\* DISPOSAL OF LIPO BATTERIES \*\***

Unlike NiCd batteries, lithium-polymer batteries are environmentally friendly. For safety reasons, it's best that LiPo cells be fully discharged before disposal (however, if physically damaged it is NOT recommended to discharge LiPo cells before disposal -see below for details). The batteries must also be cool before proceeding with disposal instructions. To dispose of LiPo cells and packs:

1. If any LiPo cell in the pack has been physically damaged, resulting in a swollen cell or a split or tear in a cell's foil covering, do NOT discharge the battery.

Jump to step 5.

2. Place the LiPo battery in a fireproof container or bucket of sand.

3. Connect the battery to a LiPo discharger. Set the discharge cutoff voltage to the lowest possible value. Set the discharge current to a C/10 value, with "C" being the capacity rating of the pack. For example, the "1C" rating for a 1200mAh battery is 1.2A, and that battery's C/10 current value is (1.2A / 10) can be used, such as a power resistor or set of light bulbs as long as the discharge current doesn't exceed the C/10 value and cause an overheating condition.

For LiPo packs rated at 7.4V and 11.1V, connect a 150 ohm resistor with a power rating of 2 watts (commonly found at Radio Shack) to the pack's positive and negative terminals to safely discharge connecting it to an ESC/motor system and allowing the motor to run indefinitely until no power remains to further cause the system to function.

4. Discharge the battery until its voltage reaches 1.0V per cell or lower. For resistive load type discharges, discharge the battery for up to 24 hours.

5. Submerge the battery in a bucket or tub of salt water. This container should have a lid, but it need not be airtight. Prepare a plastic container (do not use metal) of cold water. And mix in 1/2 cup of salt per gallon of water. Drop the battery into the salt water. Allow the battery to remain in the tub of salt water for at least 2 weeks.

6. Remove the LiPo battery from the salt water, wrap it in newspaper or paper towels and place it in the normal trash. It is landfill safe.

-from the Thunder Power website, <http://thunderpowerrc.com/PDF/DISPOSAL-OF-LIPO-BATTERIES.pdf>

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### **From the Transmitter, Bloomington, Illinois**

#### **Tips provided by the members of the Suburban RC Barnstomers, Bloomington, Illinois**

Ron Hilger had a tip for simple aircraft brakes. Just put a fuel tube between the wheel and wheel collar to add some friction. These can be adjusted by compressing the tube more or less when adjusting the wheel. These work well for paved runways.

Mert Mischnick had a tip to help save your propeller spinner. Many use self-tapping screws that go into plastic. Over time, these can become stripped from rethreading the plastic hole. To prevent this when replacing the screw, put the screw in the hole, but slowly back it out until you feel it drop into the previously tapped thread. This will greatly extend the life of your spinner.

Mert had another tip to help make your Dean connectors easier to pull apart. Lubricate them with plain old Vaseline. Works great!

Jim Scahill shared his secret for great fillets on models. Fill the fillet with baking soda and let some thin cyanoacrylate soak in. This can also work for V-joints.

Tom Lyons suggested using some silicone sealer on the end of the wheel wire to hold lightweight wheels on. It is cheap, simple, and easy to remove when desired.

Dave West said he likes to put a rubber band around a used battery pack to prevent mistaking them for a fresh pack. A simple solution and we all have rubber bands! →