

The Comets' Tale

*The Official
Newsletter of the*



November 2012

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Instructor Pilots

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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: 7:30 PM,
Thursday, 15 November, at the
Oak View Community Center**



**Coming
Up!**

**Fri., Sat., Sun.
16, 17, 18 November**
Comets Only Float Fly, Lake
Casitas

Sunday, 25 November
T-28 Day, Camarillo Flying
Circus

Thursday, 20 December
Comets Christmas Party

First Sunday of each Month
Open House at Santa Paula
Airport

From the President

Hi everyone. The Oct Float Fly was a lot of fun. I got to fly my never-flown Sea Master on Friday, and it flew great. Dale Nash helped out with getting it trimmed once I got it in the air, and it's a great flying plane. The weather on Friday was clear and sunny with little wind. Unfortunately on Saturday it was overcast most of the day, but there was virtually no wind. We had 33 registered flyers and somewhere around 75 planes. The inspection of the planes by the lake rangers went without any problems, and we had 5 planes in the air all day, except when we broke for lunch to enjoy the tri-tip and fixings prepared by Mike and Steve billings, with help from others. The lunch was excellent as always. Sunday morning broke with overcast skies, but the sun was trying to poke through the clouds. By mid morning the sun was out and there was no wind. As normal, there were fewer flyers on Sunday, but everybody had a good time. Marilyn and Sandy were doing their best hocking raffle tickets (you felt guilty if you didn't purchase a bunch), Don Ashworth registered a few more flyers, Mike Ambarian was having trouble staying awake in his Safety Officer chair, and TJ was busy counting the money. The Steinmetz boys were doing their magic at the grill, and I was trying my best to look official in my CD vest. We wrapped everything up around 1 PM, but there were still some die hard flyers in the air. I believe everyone enjoyed themselves, and thanks to all who helped out with making this

another memorable Float Fly! Oh, and don't forget that we get to repeat this event, for club members only on 16-18 Nov.

At the Nov monthly meeting we will be electing new officers. So please mark your calendar for Thursday 15 Nov at 7:30 PM. Take care, and safe flying.

George Boston

Root's Rambling



We had great weather (low wind and temperature) for our October Float Fly. There was less attendance than at previous events but everyone was able to fly the entire day. It was dead calm on Saturday. I took the picture of the old design Seacat shown in picture 1. I remember seeing the construction article in one of the model magazines probably in the 50's. It was a free-flight model as I recall. The fellow who brought it to the Float Fly said it had been hanging in his garage for 30 years. His son talked him into putting an electric motor in it. There was insufficient power to take off so they will have to change something to get it to fly. I guess I'm a sucker for these old designs. The rest of the Float Fly pictures were taken by George Boston.

Picture 2 shows an autogyro which flew surprisingly well. It landed essentially vertically.



This model seemed to handle the water very well and looked great in the air. I understand the builder has spent several years making changes to get it to fly so nicely.



Pictures 3 and 4 show an original design twin electric ducted fan powered scale Martin P6M Seamaster flying boat.



The young pilot in picture 5 flew up a storm all weekend. We should all be able to fly so well!



I have to include the beautiful Boeing 314 Clipper shown in picture 6, which was seen doing rolls on Friday.

The big Grumman J2F Duck shown in picture 7 always puts on a great show.



One of the faster models was the Supermarine (S6B?) racer in picture 8.

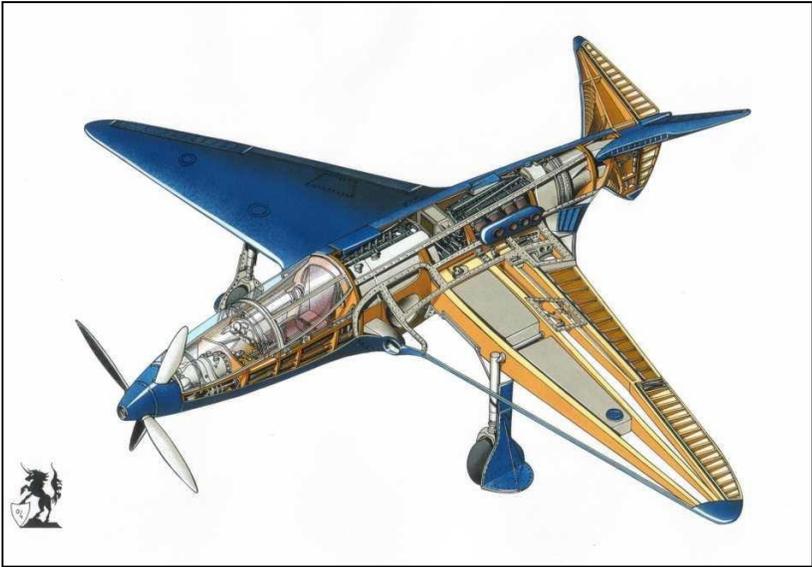
The articles I wrote in the last couple of newsletters about 1/2 A engines caught club member Berny Hammer's interest. He dug in his closet and came up with the mounted collection he is shown holding in picture 9. He wanted to point out that my discussion didn't include two engines in his collection, the Wen Mac and the Fox .049. The Wen Mac only came in a ready-to-fly model which I don't think I ever saw in Portland. I do remember the Fox. I had a Fox .09 or .10 in an early original rudder only R/C powered glider.



The engine in Berny's collection which really caught my eye was the Anderson Spitzzy shown in picture 10. This was my very first gas (glow) engine which powered a lot of models for me as a teenager.



One of our new club members likes to build unusual models. Richard Metzger built a scale Bugatti 100P air racer. Development for this airplane (detailed in picture 11) was started in 1937. Ettore Bugatti was well known for his WW I airplane engines, race and sport cars, and



his high speed train. The airplane was very complex utilizing two 8 cylinder lightweight engines located behind the cockpit and wasn't completed before Germany invaded Paris where it was being built. Surprisingly it survived the war and is now in the EAA museum. Richards's first model was too fast and hard to fly so he built the profile ver-



sion shown in picture 12. He utilized a thicker wing and this model is a good flyer. Don Ashworth has a friend, Mike Cleary, who rebuilt a 1937 (I think) Bugatti race car. It was suggested that we get the two Bugattis together for pictures as shown in picture 13. Is this hobby great or what!



Bob Root

MINUTES of the AUGUST 2012 MEETING

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 by President George Boston. We had 21 members and 2 guests.

The meeting Minutes were approved from last month and Treasurer TJ gave his report. A summary of the treasurer's report is; there was no (zero) income last month and the expenses were food for the upcoming Float Fly. We are closing in on the end of the year with 79 members.

The safety officer said that he has had no complaints. The Park Liaison was not present at the meeting.

The Lipo battery policy has been approved; it was included in the last month's newsletter and is available on the website (www.vccomets.com). The policy goes into effect Feb 1, a little over 90 days from the meeting (Oct 18) or about 2 ½ months from the publishing of the newsletter. The board members and the majority of the club feel this puts us in a good position with the Lake management.

There was a quick note about the Condor field in Camarillo. Rumor has it that they are working the issues out with the university and hoping to use the field again soon.

By the time you have read this the Float Fly has come and gone. Thanks to those that helped:
Mike and Steve Steinmetz for cooking.
Marilyn Nash and Sandy Billings for running the raffle booth.
Mike Ambarian for being the safety guy.
Prez. George Boston for being the CD.
George Lanquist for the boat and retrieving the planes that didn't make it back to base for whatever reason.

We have some openings on the Board: President and Field Marshal. The Treasurer's position and club Secretary positions are up too, but T.J. and I are staying on. If you want in on leading the club, please see Dale Nash and/or he may come looking for you.

Berny Hammer brought another Quaker. Isn't this the 3rd Quaker this year from this guy?

--->copy and paste July's model of the month write-up here<---

Actually this one is different. This one, is a Quaker 54, "54" being the wingspan. George Lanquist helped with the build and 'donated' the motor (O.S. .15). Weighs in at a pound and a half. The model is covered in transparent red to show off the craftsmanship of the built-up fuse/wing/tails.

Meeting adjourned at 8:10.
This was a quick meeting as the Float Fly members/campers had to get back to the Lake.

Respectfully Submitted,
Alastair Brennan



Mystery Plane



OK, here's an easier one. Our more 'seasoned' members may remember this being a construction article in R/C Modeler Magazine. I guess that would include only members who even remember the magazine, long gone. Yeah, it's an odd airplane and I was betting that some of y'all would recognize it. Well, whoever did didn't communicate with me, except for Cap'n Leo, somewhere in Arizona. He correctly identified this thing as a Transavia PL-12 Airtruk. Believe it or not, those Australians built around 120 of these airplanes between 1966 and 1985.

They were all metal, shoulder-winged gizmos powered by a 6-cylinder opposed Continental O-470 making about 260 horsepower, and later by the 300 hp IO-540. There's room for a couple of passengers in the back, or a big hopper for crop dusting, or a litter with a patient and an attendant. The goofy tail allows a vehicle to back right up to the airplane for easier loading, and the pilot sits on top of it all for a better view. Seems like there is currently one still flying. If you saw the movie Mad Max Beyond Thunderdome back in 1985, you saw one of these.

By the way, I was going to crop this photo to get the airplane centered in the frame, but that sign on top of the hangar was just too good to remove.

Here's another one, shouldn't be too hard to identify. And no, it's not a modified P-38.



Here's an overhead shot of the Float Fly, shot by my wife Dianne from Lola the RV-6. This was Sunday afternoon, and I guess the attendance was down a bit by then.

Is Epoxy Resin or Polyester Better for Glassing?

by Jim Cook, Shakoppe MN, printed in Replica, newsletter of the National Association of Scale Aeromodelers

Both produce sufficiently hard surfaces, but polyester is softer. This makes polyester sandable. Epoxy is harder; therefore, it is more difficult to sand. Wet sanding works best for both types. There is no difference in weight.

Polyester can be spread a little thinner, however, and it is sandable, so less of it tends to remain on the model. But polyester stinks. It takes weeks for the smell to go away. Epoxy is nearly odor-free.

Epoxy favors peace at home.

Polyester cures with a slightly sticky surface. Primer adheres well. Epoxy requires a light scuffing.

Epoxy resin must be mixed exactly. Try this experiment. Mix some epoxy resin precisely and pour it on waxed paper. Now mix some epoxy at 45:55. Pour it out and let both batches cure. Note that the mismatched batch is softer and has a waxy surface—it didn't cure completely. Polyester is not fussy about proportions. A variance in the amount of catalyst affects only the setting time. The catalyst of polyester resin has a short shelf life. Don't use old stuff—it won't cure.

Polyester catalyst is more toxic because it is more concentrated. Always wear latex gloves when working with any kind of resin. For large jobs, wear a respirator and use a window fan.

Don't thin either. Try this experiment. Mix some resin (either one) and pour half of it on a sheet of waxed paper. Dilute the remaining 10% with alcohol or a thinner of your choice. Pour it on waxed paper and let both cure. Observe that the thinned resin is soft, flexible, and it has an oily surface. Thinner resin prevents complete curing.

Epoxy resin seems to adhere to balsa slightly better, but that might vary with conditions.

The Right Tool for the Job!

—by Gerry Roedel, from the Tri-County R.C. Club, New Jersey

Here is a tip for those of us who have had the frustrating experience of ruining the head of one of those little Phillips head screws in an engine, or when assembling an ARF airplane or helicopter. It might not have been entirely your fault. You just may have been using the wrong type of screwdriver.



Since most ARFs, helicopters and even engines are built in the Far East, many manufacturers use what are called "JIS" crosshead screws; JIS meaning Japanese Industrial Standard. The screws look almost identical to Phillips, but they are just different enough to make you a little crazy. Of course just like metric screws and bolts, the manufacturers may include both JIS and Philips screws in your kit.

The JIS can be identified by a tiny dimple on the head, or by the fact that you can only get them out by using vise grips! You won't find JIS screwdrivers for a dollar at Harbor Freight, but they are available online in a wide range of prices. Just do a Google search for JIS screwdrivers. Try them; you will be happy you did!

Image from www.instructables.com.