

The Comets' Tale

*The Official
Newsletter of the*



October 2010

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Instructor Pilots

Emery Balasa Steve Billings Andrew Carlson Bob Root Ron Scott

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,
14 Oct, (a week early!) 7:30 PM at the
Oak View Community Center



**Coming
Up!**

**29 October, 4
November**
Comets Field is Closed

16-17 October
Comets Float Fly at Lake
Casitas

22-24 October
Santa Barbara R/C
Modelers Float Fly at
Lake Cachuma

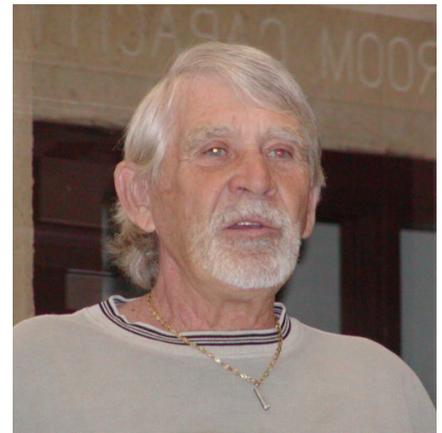
**1st Sunday of Each
Month**
Open House at Santa
Paula Airport

From the President

Hello all. I am sure that many of you have heard the sad news, but if you haven't, Bud Scolari passed away last week. We are not sure of the actual date of his death. He passed away in his sleep between Friday September the 17th to the 20th. As of this date (9-29-10) there have been no services scheduled.

Bud was such a great guy, always cheerful and ready to share a good story. When I first joined the club, Bud was one of the first Comets members I met, and on many occasion he volunteered his time to help me out when I was constantly fumbling around. I remember telling him how much I wanted to have a Quaker, and he immediately stepped forward and said he would contact Murray Cooper, who had

built a bunch of Quakers for various club members. Four months later I had a Quaker that needed covering, and Bud said that he would be more than happy to help me out with the covering. We worked together a number of days, both at my house and his getting the plane covered and ready to fly. The plane came out



looking great, and flies just as well. Bud was out at the field an average of four days a week, in shorts no matter the weather. During the time I got to know Bud, he served as the club Field Marshal and was constantly involved in just about everything going on out at the field. I know that he was a member for many years, and without a doubt a good friend to all. Many of us will truly miss Bud.

Well it's October and that means Float Fly month. Yes, on the 15th through the 17th the club will be hosting the annual October Fun Float Fly. On Friday the 15th flying will be limited to club members only until noon. At that time flying will be open to all those that have AMA membership. Registration will occur on Saturday morning for both Saturday and Sunday flying. Mike and Steve Steinmetz will be working their cooking wonders at the BBQ, and we will be looking for volunteers to help out with set-up, break-down, running the impound, launching and retrieving planes. The monthly club meeting will be held one week early this month to accommodate the Float Fly. The meeting will be held on **Thursday 14 October**.

On a final note, some of our club members enjoy the convenience, and take advantage of camping out at the field. There have been a number of instances where the staff at the entrance gate refuses to allow our members to camp at the field. I have contacted the lake management and got clarification on the procedures we should use for camping at the field. Because our field is not a designated campground, the gate staff does not know how to charge for camping. You should call Ranger Suzi Taylor in advance to your planned camping trip at the field. Give her the dates and she will post a note at the entrance gate telling the staff to allow you to camp out at the field and what you should be charged. You will have to show your Comets membership card at check in. Her office number is 805-649-2233, Ext 101. Her cell phone number is 805-797-1519.

See ya on Thursday the 14th. Take care, and safe flying.

George



ROOT'S RAMBLING

This month I have a few pictures of club members' models (some new, some old). But first, I want to remind everyone that the meeting this month is the second Thursday in order to prepare for our Float Fly on October 16 and 17. To get everyone in the mood I have included picture 1 which was taken by George Boston at our last Float Fly. Come out and enjoy the fun.

I have been saving picture 2 for a long time and have finally decided to include it (one of the great aerodynamic shapes).



2



Picture 3 shows Don Ashworth's Cessna 182 Skylane. I owned a full size one so it has always been a favorite. Don's model is taxiing in picture 4, but it needs a pilot to really achieve the proper effect.



Ken Marsh brought out a Douglas DC-3 twin engine model as shown in picture 5. This model was built by Murray Cooper from a Top Flite kit. I believe it is powered by OS .25 engines. Ken is still trying to get the en-

gines to operate reliably (always a problem on a twin). Ken is shown with the model in picture 6.



Picture 7 is of Ken's Hellcat taxiing out for another flight.

A couple of years ago I built an electric powered model of a Pitts model 12 and then managed to crash it after a few flights. It doesn't take much of a mind burp to crash when flying these small models near the ground. Anyway, I have rebuilt this model as shown in picture 8.



9



Ron Golding's Little Rascal (I think) electric and my Pitts are shown in picture 9 holding for takeoff clearance.

The last model picture this month is the Pitts on a fly by in picture 10 (well it is my column; I guess I can put in whatever I want). If anyone has pictures they would like to get in the newsletter send them to Jerry Deanda or myself and we will try to include them.

10



11

Andy Brennan has detailed scale plans for a 69 in. span Douglas SBD Dauntless which he offered me if I would build it. It would make a great model but after a little research I decided I wasn't ready to start another complicated model. The inflight view shown in picture 11 gives some of the detail on this airplane. Maybe a smaller, simpler .46 powered model would make sense. While I was looking for Dauntless info I found plans



12

for a simple .25 powered Fairey Firefly scale model (picture 12). The full size airplane is shown in picture 13. This was actually a very successful WW II airplane which I hadn't heard much about. Anyway: SO MANY AIRPLANES – SO LITTLE TIME!

Bob Root



13

Minutes of the September 2010 Meeting

The Comets meeting was called to order by President George Boston on September 16, at 7:30 PM, at the Oak View Community Center.

The August minutes were approved. We had no guests and 2 new members – Dave Anderson and Ed McGowan.

Treasurers' Report: We have 83 members and finances are in good shape. Emery Balasa's Treasurer's report was approved.

Field Marshall/Safety Officer: Mike Ambarian repeated his warning to not stick your hand in a propeller. The reseal on the runway continues to come up due to poor resurfacing and we are still having problems with ground squirrels and gophers.

Park Liaison: Ken Marsh got a 'maybe' about getting the parking lot graded.

Old Business:

New signs are up and TJ is fabricating the sign, for the gate to the parking lot, identifying the Ventura County Comets and the contact phone number for the Lake officials. The signs will also state that proof of AMA membership is required in order to fly at the field.

STILL having problems with things not getting locked up - the frequency board was found unlocked the Sunday after Labor Day.

One of our members encountered a problem with a flyer at the field. When he asked the flyer to produce his AMA card, the flyer refused and intimidated our member. If you have such a problem – try to get some ID or get the license number of the vehicle. Notify the park officials.

Don't forget October 14th will be the next meeting, 2nd Thursday of the month, followed by the Float Fly. A flyer has come out announcing the October 16 & 17 Float Fly. Club members only are allowed to fly on the 15th, and non-members can join in after 10 a.m.

New Business:

The flying field will be closed for Lake events on the following dates: 17 & 18 September (Friday and Saturday); 6 October (Wednesday); 29 October (Friday); and 4 November (Thursday).

Marilyn Nash requested Kenny Marsh verify the price of camping for the Float Fly event.

Model of the Month:

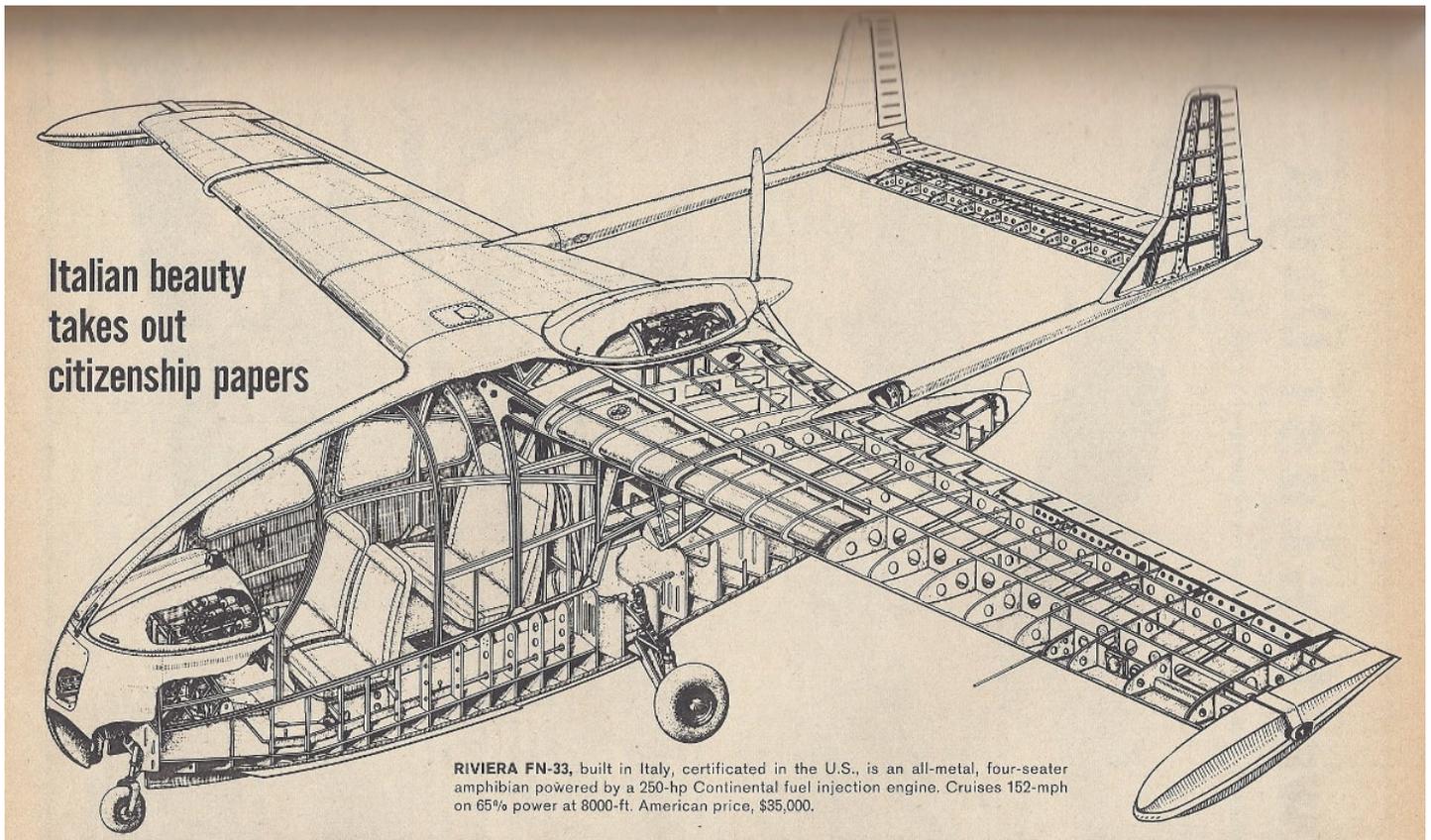
Although it was not brought in for a Model of the Month - our new member brought his glider he is making from broken parts and a golf club asking for assistance in the completion of the building of it. Bob Root volunteered to help.

Raffle was held and the meeting was adjourned at 8:20.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sandy Billings





Here's a cutaway drawing of last month's Mystery Plane, submitted by Bob Root. It's a SIAI-Marchetti FN-33. Originally designed by Fratelli Nardi of the Italian Nardi company, the design was sold to SIAI-Marchetti in 1952 and placed in limited production in the early 60s. The FN-33 designation seems to have been replaced by the name FN.333S somewhere along the way. There were 26 built and about 6 continue to fly. It's a decent performer with a cruise speed of 137 mph and a top speed of 177.



FLOATPLANE FOR SALE

- Ready-to-fly, including Tx and Rx
- Expertly constructed 40-size trainer with two interchangeable wings
 - Original, red wing has one Airtronics 94102 servo for ailerons
 - White wing, from an Airvista Trainer, has wide ailerons and two TS-70 servos
 - Y-harness included
 - can be configured for flaperons with a computer Tx
- Floats are Obag fiberglass 40-size, with silver-soldered wire struts
- Magnum XL91 4-stroke engine with 12x7 APC prop
- Included Futaba Skysport 4-channel, 72 MHz transmitter (Channel 43)
- Matching 7-channel Futaba receiver and NiCd Rx battery
- Water rudder

Fuselage includes three Airtronics 94102 servos

This airplane leapt out of the water at the recent Canyon Crosswinds 2010 Float Fly. It had slumbered in an attic for several years before I shoehorned the XL91 into the nose. What a difference a few horsepower makes! Loops, rolls, spins, inverted flight, stall turns -- no problem. Slows to a crawl for gentle landings. Take the floats off, put on wheels, and let 'er rip from the runway! I actually prefer the white wing; it gives better roll rate and stability in both upright and inverted flight. With either wing, it's ready to fly NOW.

Asking: \$100.00
 Contact: Chris Reiser, creiser@um.att.com, or (661) 478-9321
 Valencia, CA
 Sorry, I can't ship this plane. Let's arrange a pick-up.

Servo Arms

by Richard Lindberg

“Those pesky servos—why can’t I ever find one that’s properly centered? Every time I attach an arm, it seems as though the servo center shifts! What’s going on here?”

Sound familiar? What causes this and what can you do about it?

All (standard-sized) servos today have splined shafts on which those servo arms are bolted. The problem arises because of the number of splines (teeth) on those shafts—Airtronics and JR use 23 splines, Hitec uses 24, and Futaba uses 25. (Your radio may be different—grab a servo and count the splines on the shaft to find out. Use a magnifying glass!) This is a really neat feature, and you should take advantage of it when you set up your airplane!

Put a servo arm on a servo. Now, every time you lift and rotate the arm by one spline, you change its position by a fixed number of degrees: for Airtronics or JR, this is 15.65° , for Futaba its 14.4° , and for Hitec it’s an even 15° . The formula is simple: 360° divided by the number of splines. Now consider that your servo arms have an even number of fingers—two, four, even six. You can see by experimenting that rotating the servo arm and putting each finger as near as possible to where its predecessor was (about 90° , or 180° , or 60°) will result in a shift in position of 3.91° , 3.6° or 3.75° for Airtronics/JR, Futaba, and Hitec respectively. The formula is equally simple: 360° divided by (the product of the number of splines times the number of fingers). So, for Futaba, finger one is assumed at 0° , finger two (rotating clockwise) is placed at 3.6° offset, finger three at 7.2° , and finger four at 10.8° . (For Airtronics/JR, use multiples of 3.91° , and for Hitec use 3.75° .)

“Whoa, that’s too complicated for me!” I hear you exclaiming. Well, don’t worry about it—just keep rotating and pressing on the servo arm until you get a finger as close as possible to that magic 90° position.

One of those fingers will be right. (Actually, Futaba makes it simple—the fingers are numbered! Choose number one and you’re there. JR has a raised dot in the lower right of its number one finger. It doesn’t matter as much with Hitec, as there are even numbers of splines, and two of the fingers (out of four) will be right at any time.

Incidentally, the number of splines being different is the reason why servo arms are not interchangeable between servos of different brands—don’t try to use Futaba arms on JR servos, etc.

This also clears up the apparent servo-centering shift. Most of the servos today have electronics that are so good that mechanical centering is a thing of the past and isn’t necessary. If you in fact have a servo that won’t center properly, or consistently, it’s probably bad! Send it back for repairs!

