

# The Comets' Tale

*The Official  
Newsletter of the*



**September 2008**

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### Board of Directors

Mike Ambarian, Dale Nash, Sandy Brown, Emery Balasa and Steve Billings

### 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, 18 September, 2008, 7:30  
PM at the Oak View Community Center**



**Coming  
Up!**

**18, 19 October 2008**  
Comets' Float Fly, Lake  
Casitas

**25, 26 October 2008**  
Lake Cachuma Float Fly –  
SBRM and Ventura  
County club members only

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

### **Root's Rambling**

This month I decided to include pictures of scale models from two events this summer. The pictures of models at the Condors 08 Giant Scale are available (with about 2000 more) are at: <http://picasaweb.google.com/cicondors>.

The pictures from our Comets Warbird Fly-in were taken by club members George Boston and Steve Billings. Their pictures (about 400) are on two CD's and I have them if anyone wants to borrow them. Since I am missing a lot of names and descriptions (and I don't feel like writing a lot this time) the pictures will have to suffice.

Pictures 1 thru 12 are from the Condors gathering. These are all large models. The B-25 in picture 1 & 2 was about 100 in. span.





2



3

Picture 3 is a Vought Corsair



4

Picture 4 is a Weddell Williams racer from the mid 30's.



5

Picture 5 is an original design Heinkel HE-112B. This airplane lost out to the ME-109 in the late 30's as Germany's primary fighter.



6



7

Picture 6 & 7 are of a fabulous 1/3 scale Sopwith Pup. Picture 8 is my Spitfire in a roll.



8

A Nieuport 28 is in picture 9.



9



Fokker D-7 is in picture 10.



Picture 11 is a P-47



Picture 12 is a P-51

Pictures 13 thru 20 were taken by George B at the Comets fly-in.



Picture 13 is of Andy Carlson's A-10.



Picture 14 is my Fokker and Don Ashworth's S.E.5a.



Details of his great model are in 15.



A P-47 and a Nieuport 17 and are in 16 & 17.





18



19

Pictures 18, 19, & 20 show a Corsair, a great lit-



20

tle twin electric Mo-hawk, and a Stearman.



21

Pictures 21 thru 25 were taken by Steve B. Ken are in pictures 21,22, & 23.



22



23



24

Picture 24 is of a nice flying glow powered semi-scale twin A-26. The last picture shows John Dugan ignoring Ron Scott's Me-109 on a fly by.



25

*Bob Root*

## August 2008 Minutes

The Comets meeting was called to order by Mike Ambarian on August 21, at 7:30 pm, at the Oak View Community Center.

The July minutes were approved. We had no guests and one new member, Mr. Tom Faragher.

**Treasurer's Report:** We have 110 members and finances are in very good shape. The report was approved.

**Field Marshall/Safety Officer:** Steve Billings had nothing to report.

**Park Liaison:** No report.

**Old Business:** Members are reminded; if you camp at the field please carry out any garbage created so as not to attract more bees to the area.

Members who plan to camp at the field should notify Kenny Marsh well in advance. He will relay the member's name, and dates of stay, to the Lake office to eliminate any problems with the Lake personnel.

The Warbird Fly was a success but had some low fly-bys. Please, unless you are taking off or landing, stay at least 10 feet high to minimize any problems. Don't do low flying when there are a lot of people in the area. Campers are around and people are crossing the runway.

Mike Ambarian is getting bids for applying a slurry coating on the field.

### **New Business:**

We recently had the need to call for emergency assistance at the field. Some of the Club members were complimented, by the Lake officials, on their emergency procedure to assist the ambulance to reach the field without any glitches (i.e.: met at the gate, directed along the way for the correct turns, etc). Good Job Guys! Mike Ambarian has volunteered to restock the First Aid kit.

To eliminate any confusion, as to when the VC Comets flying site will be inaccessible, a link to the Lake events will be added to the VC Comets website ([vccomets.com](http://vccomets.com)).

Prior to the September's meeting (before 7:30) there will be a Swap Meet. Bring your valuable treasures to sell.

Also, word has it – the Nashes will be there and there will be a Raffle!

**Model of the Month:** None

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Sandy Brown*

## IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT OUR FLYING SITE'S FUTURE

As many of you may or may not know, the 50 year agreement between Casitas Lake and the Federal Bureau of Reclamation is up for renewal. There is a DRAFT of the Resource Management Plan - Environmental Impact Statement (RMP-EIS) available:

Environmental Quality Act and is available for a 60-day public review. The document may be viewed at: [http://www.usbr.gov/mp/nepa/nepa\\_projdetails.cfm?Project\\_ID=792](http://www.usbr.gov/mp/nepa/nepa_projdetails.cfm?Project_ID=792). *(This document is over 200 pages long on the website, but I used the search function to look up the word airplane and found about 30 references. It appears nobody is talking about removing our field altogether, but there are some ideas about moving it to minimize impact on bird breeding and noise problems with campers.)*

There was a public meeting on this subject at the Oak View Community Center (where we have the monthly club meetings) on Thursday, 28 August at 6:30-9:00 pm.

Written comments on the Draft RMP - EIS should be received by close of business Thursday, September 25, 2008, and should be sent to: Mr. Jack Collins

Resource Specialist

Bureau of Reclamation

1243 'N' Street, Fresno CA 93721

faxed to 559-487-5397, or e-mailed to [jcollins@mp.usbr.gov](mailto:jcollins@mp.usbr.gov). For more information, Mr. Collins may be reached at 559-487-5409.

TJ Moran, Steve Billings and Sandy Brown attended the meeting and the people holding the meeting suggested that the Comets members should send their comments about the field. And, also, how they feel about having the lake open to swimming.



What's This?

# ARF Tips

Manufacturers strive to design and build almost-ready-to-fly (ARF) kits that any RC pilot can proudly show off and enjoy for many years, and more often than not, they are enormously successful. The quality, appearance, and flight capabilities of the airplanes available today are truly outstanding, and I am among those who want to ensure that my new models will still be around for me to enjoy 10 years down the road. Fortunately, a little extra time during the final assembly will help extend the life of that new airplane. Try out some of these tips on your next ARF.

1. Seal down loose covering: This should be the first step in the assembly of an ARF that uses heat-shrink covering. Use an iron or heat gun to remove wrinkles that may have emerged during shipping, and then turn the heat up and go over all the surfaces where the covering overlaps or ends on bare wood. Be sure you don't melt or shrink the covering too much, and pay particular attention to the engine compartment and wing-saddle areas. After you've sealed the covering where it ends on bare wood, apply cyanoacrylate glue (CA) along the edges to ensure that it stays that way.
2. Fuel proof the firewall: After a few flights, the firewall or engine compartment of airplanes powered by nitro and gas engines can incur damage if left unprotected. Check these areas, and if needed, paint, epoxy, and CA can provide the necessary protection. (Heat-shrink covering material will not sufficiently protect these areas from repeated exposures to fuel and gas residue.) The paint can be sprayed or brushed on, and the epoxy should be thinned with a little rubbing alcohol and applied with a brush. Thin CA can be dripped on the surface and allowed to soak in, but thick CA should be rubbed in with your finger. Of course, it's a good idea to wrap your finger in plastic.
3. Check high-stress glue joints: All visible glue joints should be checked for cracks or stress breaks when you unpack a new kit. Damage can easily occur during shipping; changes in humidity levels from one part of the country to another can warp parts and cause cracks or other damage to joints. When checking the joints, pay particular attention to high-stress areas such as the wings, stabilizer, rudder, firewall, landing gear attachments, and servo trays. Repair the damage with CA or epoxy, and reinforce that area with balsa triangle stock, plywood, or fiberglass cloth.
4. Rubber tubing around the clevis: When the control surfaces deflect, pressure builds on the control horn and the clevis. The weakest link is the clevis—specifically, on its tiny pin. The pressure can generate enough force to pop that clevis pin loose but rubber tubing will help prevent this.
5. Reinforce the screw holes with CA: All screw holes in wood (balsa, plywood, and hardwood) should be reinforced with CA, especially those for the control horns, servos, canopy, and cowl. Drill the hole, insert the screw and remove it, and then drop thin CA into the hole. This will strengthen the wood and reduce the possibility of it being stripped.
6. Seal fuel-tank tubing at the firewall: Tubing that exits through holes in the firewall will eventually wear out from vibration, but you can prevent this by sealing the fuel tubing at the firewall with silicone sealant. Tanks that extend through the firewall should also have sealant around the hole; this will stop any fuel from seeping into the tank compartment.
7. Properly installing the hinges: The CA hinges that are included in many ARF kits do a fine job of supporting the control surfaces. They are usually chemically treated to encourage the CA to wick to all parts of the hinge and provide good adhesion, but this process can be helped along by drilling a small hole (3/32 inch) in the center of each hinge slot. This gap above and below the hinge will allow the CA to penetrate all the way to the back of the hinge.
8. Foam tape on the wing saddle: Exhaust residue that enters through the wing saddle can damage unprotected wood in the airplane's interior and will eventually ruin it. You can protect this area by applying foam tape around the wing saddle. It will form a fuelproof seal and is soft, so it won't hinder wing alignment.
9. Thread-lock (Loctite) all bolts: With the exception of engine screws, all of the bolts that screw into nuts, blind nuts, and threaded metal pieces benefit from thread-lock. It reinforces the grip and provides a measure of insurance that the screws won't vibrate loose. This simple step can save you quite a bit of grief later.
10. Keep those wheels rolling: To ensure that the wheels remain in place, use a small file or a rotary tool to grind a small flat spot on the axle beneath the wheel-collar setscrew. This flat spot will prevent the wheel collar from sliding off. Don't forget to apply thread-lock to the setscrew. →