

Pilot Briefing

Volume 1, Issue 6

July 2009



Upcoming Events!!!

Next meeting: July 10

Field Meeting. 6 PM food, 7 PM Meeting,
Hopewell Field

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Vic Horton

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President's Corner

This month's letter from the president was planned to be a short one. Instead I will share with you a very, very lucky incident I had recently while tuning a Quadra 35 gas engine swinging an 18 inch prop.

This is not something I am proud of sharing with you as I pride myself on being a very safety minded person. For those of you that don't know me very well, I have a business doing Construction work. I have been doing construction work most of my adult life. I have done everything from small jobs to 4 year renovations, to building modular homes. I am used to doing things that are risky. I do not do these kinds of things lightly. They are usually done with much thought and calculated risk and once determined to be to risky I step back and the task is not done until proper safety equipment or other equipment is obtained to make the job safer.

Encounter with a Quadra 35 gas engine.
This could happen to anyone.

Friday evening I decided to test run my Quadra 35 engine for a possible flying session on Sat morning. I took the aircraft fuselage outside, and do like I do every time I test run a giant scale airplane. I tie the tail to something that will not move, usually to my camping trailer jack stand. So I grabbed my usual piece of rope but it was too short for this aircraft so I grabbed a 2nd piece to tie the aircraft down. I tied up the aircraft and proceeded to fire up the engine and the testing went along as planned. What happened next happened in less time than one can blink their eyes. I had just finished revving the engine from idle to full throttle testing the transition of the throttle when in an instant the aircraft broke loose from the rope restraint and was now sitting in my lap. My right leg was now in major pain. My first thought was that I did not want to look down to see how bad this was going to be. When I finally did look down I was totally amazed when I saw no gaping wounds or bleeding. I had received a very nasty 8" long scrap type wound and one very minor flesh cut to the inside of the right leg just above the knee. But the pain was intense. I still could not believe how I had not received more major injuries.

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President's Corner Continued

After doing all the necessary first aid things and some of the shock started to wear off, my son started to pick up everything when he noticed the transmitter was missing its antenna, and some other minor damage to the case. What we think happened is when the aircraft broke loose the spinning propeller hit the transmitter I was holding in my hands as it came at me and took the blunt of the propeller strikes and killed the engine before it wound up sitting in my lap.

Conclusion:

I discovered that the 2nd piece of rope I grabbed was not a dirty piece of polypropylene rope but rather a dirty piece of cotton cloths line rope. I made the fatal mistake of not giving this rope a sanity pull test. This rope turned out to be rotten and broke under the 30 lbs of thrust from the engine. I was very, very luck that the aircraft was at about ¼ throttle when it broke loose and that the transmitter took the blunt of the impact.

I will go out today and buy a brand new length of 3/8 nylon restraint rope and not use it for anything other than to tie town my aircraft.

Far Out Man!- by the Editor

Two or three months ago my best friend and flying buddy Neil Hunt asked me to consider calling for him at a pattern contest that was scheduled for the end of June. The contest was being held in Florida, NY so it would be and easy drive for me. The drive home is just a little longer (inside joke). I agreed and had not seen a pattern contest since 1977!.....I know that is before many of you were born. At that time the planes to fly were Phoenix 6's, Tigertails, and what was the other one? Ron Knapp will tell you. Oh, yes a Kaos. The engines were Supertiger 60 blueheads with Perry carbs and Silanceaire mufflers. The planes were flown fast and fairly in close. Was I in for a rude awakening.....

Pilots were arriving with wings in wing bags and some planes valued at a couple of grand or more not counting the electronics, etc. And the planes were wide body, high body, etc. A new world to me. A good number of pilots were flying with electric engines. There was no transmitter impound area!



To the left is a photo of a few of the planes that were flown.

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Wednesday Morning Breakfast Club– July 1, 2009

What a turn out. With a temporary break in the monsoon conditions, quite a few club members took advantage of the opportunity to fly without pontoons.



Rob and his electric powered P-40 put on a really good show.



P-40 coming in for a landing



Far Out Man– continued from page 2.

Most of the planes at the contest had tuned pipes and all but a select few were flown on 2.4 Ghz. But what really threw me was the speed, size, difficulty and distance of the maneuvers. These big planes with 160 engines not 60 size but 160 were being flown much, much slower than competition planes were flown the last time I attended a contest. And the maneuvers were big and positioned at quite a distance out in front of the pilotsand as I kept saying “Far Out!” A phrase I haven’t used in a long time! OK, I lived through the 60’s too and remember them! I also know that they say if you remember the 60’s you weren’t there. Anyway back to the story. I was even surprised at the altitude at which many planes were flown. They were certainly pushing the envelope of R/C flying that I had seen. The piloting skills of many of the contestants were beyond what I had seen at contests in the past. The FAI pattern maneuvers called for some truly outstanding flying. One of these pilots had just missed making the International team last year. Another was the 2008 National Masters champion. Unfortunately he experienced a midair with another contestant. He was able to bring his plane in with only damage to the vertical stab. The other plane went straight in.

All in all I enjoyed attending contest and met some really nice people. And despite my reluctance, Jim Quinn roped me into sitting in the judge’s chair to judge some of the advanced pattern rounds. My last time serving as a judge was at a Rhinebeck Jamboree many many years ago. I suspect that what I have shared may be old news to many of you. However, if you have never been to a pattern contest or it has been more than a few years since you have been to one, it might be worth your while to check one out.



Jonathan Elie flying in his first pattern contest with his mom Lynda calling maneuvers for him. He did a great job and finished fourth in Sportsman.

Jonathan’s photo of a full size Citabria that did a little showboating at the contest.

CAVU till the next time, Ron