



March 2012

Thunderbolt

Editor's Note

So far this winter has been devastating for ice fishermen, downhill skiing, snow mobiling, but rather kind to RC flying. We don't have the enclosed shelter like the one at our old field, Lang Aerodrome, but with the mild conditions, we are making do. In this issue Dennis Kirkwood and Scott Cruzen supplied pictures and have written about one particular weekend in February where Ribcrackers took advantage and got in a lot of flying. See pages 8-10

I got one more response to the battery replacement question asked last month, see page 7, so I'll keep the question open for anyone else who has thoughts on when to replace batteries. Another suggestion has been proposed by VP Scott Cruzen concerning "hints and tricks" that you old salts use when building and repairing airplanes that newbies and all Ribcrackers may find useful. Scott's initial entry can be found on page 7. After reading Scott's trick, let me know one of yours. I'm sure that you have several so give them up Ribcrackers.

There are two or three months left to the "winter building season", so what are you working on? Gus Dabringhaus, Bob Brooks, what are you building now? On pages 5 and 6 you will see what Greg Gordon and Dennis Robbins have been building. Hey Executive Board, these are potential ideas for club meetings, hmmm? If you are working on a project, give me a call and we will work out a plan to get it in the Thunderbolt.

By now you have received the new formatted Model Aviation magazine. What do you think, better? What did you think of AMA President Bob Brown and District VII VP Tim Jesky's comments? Again, Executive Board, how about inviting the VP to one of our club meetings?

Thanks to all who contributed material for this issue. Hope to see you at the March meeting.

Don



March Club Meeting
Monday, March 5, 7:30 pm
Livonia Senior Center
5 Mile & Farmington, Livonia

Ribcrackers February Meeting Minutes - Feb. 6, 2012

Start of the “New Style” February meeting began at 7:32

President –

- Gus let us know that the business part of the meeting will be reporting back to us and will do a presentation of the highlights.
- Walbridge is cleaning up their yard. This may include our storage shed being moved or removed. Let one of the officers know if you have some extra room to store some stuff. It needs to be completed by the end of this month
- Gus has been looking into different styles of fence and would like to recommend a new powder coated aluminum fence for the flight stations. They could be either 36” or 42” high. The fence panels come in 6 foot sections so they would be perfect for a 6’ fence in front with one panel cut in half for two 3’ wings on either side of the pilot.
- Don’t forget to renew membership. End of the March meeting is the deadline.

Treasurer – Dennis rolled out the new budget with very little dissention. He also proposed a call list for people that don’t communicate via email.

At this point we focused our attention on a repair project that Marshal brought in. Marshal brought in a wing from a Tiger II that had been involved in an argument with terra firma. A few key points were identified:

1. Pick up all the pieces no matter how seemingly insignificant.
2. Remove broken pieces carefully so that there is no additional damage and so that they can be used as templates for new parts.
3. Sometimes templates can be made from other wing half.
4. Cracked ribs can be buddied up with a new piece and left in place.

More to come as the repair progresses.

Raffle – Blue ticket was won by Bob Brooks

Accu-Throw gauge.....Matt Jerue

Revell Proto Helicopter.....Gerald Klose

Model of the Month

Dennis brought in a Great Planes Pete ‘n Poke that he built from a kit. Cute plane powered by a Saito 50

Marshal Stern brought in a Phoenix Models Extra 330s powered by an Evolution 100. Also a very nice plane.

Respectfully submitted,

Gerald Klose



Greg Kostyniuk & Hank Wojcik

Don't forget to re-up your AMA and Ribcracker memberships

MODEL OF THE MONTH

There was no official winner for the Model of the Month contest this month. Both Dennis and Marshall displayed their planes as Show-and-Tell.

Editor



Dennis Robbins shows off his "kit" built Great Planes *Pete 'n Poke*, powered by a Saito 50.



Marshall Stern talks about putting his Phoenix Models Extra 330s together. He powered it with an Evolution 100.

Raffle

Revell Proto Helicopter
Gerald Klose



Blue Ticket winner
Bob Brooks

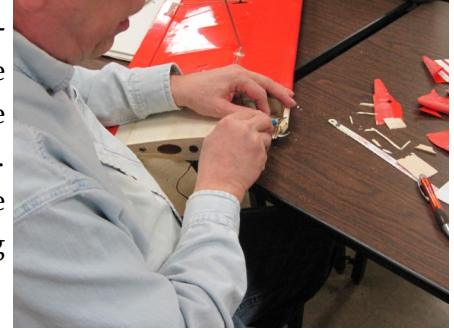


Matt Jerue
won the
Accu-Throw Gauge

Repair Clinic



The February Ribcrackers club meeting included the start of a repair clinic for those damaged plane parts that occur when the ground.....well, you know the rest. President Gus Dabringhaus brought in the tools and Marshall Stern provided a wing that he thought was beyond repair.



Not so says "Master builder & repairer" Roger Wilfong. "Most planes that are damaged can be repaired and returned to flight". Rule #1, collect "all" pieces. They are used as a template for the new part when pieced together.

Phase I of the restoration was completed during the meeting by stripping away all of the damaged area and piecing together what broken parts that could be salvaged

At the March meeting, Marshall will bring both wing halves, wood, etc. so that Roger can show the steps needed to make and install the replacement parts.

The clinic was received very well with lots of questions from Ribcrackers with a wide range of building and repair skills. The March meeting promises to be very informative, so come on out. Hope to see you there.



February Building Project



I've run out of space with my models and had them on an old ping-pong table, plus hanging overhead on some make-shift hangers. I decided to try and make a little more room. Out came the charge card and in came 1" PVC pipe along with a box of fittings. I started with a wing rack and then moved to the fuselages. It's easy to slide the rack around on the table and grab

whichever plane and wing I want. You can see in the pictures the before and after shots. Now, all I have to do is wait until it's a little warmer outside and paint the framing. By-the-way - to insure that the wings and fuses don't fall off, I used rubber bands looped over the parts to hold them in place.

Dennis Robbins

Leaky Gas Tanks

Are you tired of leaky gas tanks? I sure was so I began to investigate different but affordable ways to seal a tank without the use of a fuel stopper. This is where most of my high volume gas leaks would occur.

The rubber stopper seems to relax overtime and needs to be re-tightened from time to time. So I learned to replace the existing Phillips screw that comes with the fuel tank with a socket cap screw. This allows me to get more torque on the screw getting a much tighter seal but care needs to be taken to not strip the stopper nut. This is not a cure but prolongs the inevitable. Also make sure you use barbs on the brass tubing and twist clamps for retaining the fuel line to the tubing and clunk. I have seen more dead sticks because of clunks coming off the line.



I know the fuel systems with rubber stoppers have been available for a long time and can perform quite well for some hobbyists. I'm sure it's operator error in my case but regardless I needed to find a better fuel system for my needs.

My investigations for a fuel tank container led me to using a poly material which is your basic pop or drinking water container. This material is referred to as PETE or recycle number 1 which has a good resistance property to fuel. There are better materials out there but it can be difficult to find the proper volume or shape to be an ideal gas tank. Even though the material

properties indicate good resistance I did some home testing on a 20oz Sprite bottle and a 17oz FUJI water bottle by filling them with gasoline just to make sure. After letting the bottles sit for about 4 weeks I saw no degradation to the bottle and no signs of leakage at the cap.

I proceeded with the FUJI water bottle because of its square/rectangular shape and 17oz of fuel capacity that would work well for a 30cc engine. This was about the perfect size to achieve about 15 minutes of flight time.

I purchased Tetra fuel tank nozzles for the vent and fill line from Central Hobbies and mounted them using a seal at each contact point which was provided. Since I will be using gasoline instead of glow fuel, I also investigated a different internal tank fuel line other than tygon which tends to lose its flexibility overtime. When tygon is used as a fuel line it will last about (1) flying season but it can be much shorter depending on exposure time to gasoline. During my investigation I discovered a material called Viton which is a fluoroelastomer material that is supposed to maintain its flexibility overtime. Thunderbolt RC carries the fuel line but it is a little pricier than other resources. I purchased enough tubing to convert several tanks. I still use tygon fuel line as long as it is outside the tank because flexibility is not as critical. This will also save you money.



I have converted (2) 30cc size planes now with hopes to do away with the gas leaks of the past. I have not converted all my planes until I achieve some success and confidence with this system.

Just a note for glow users the silicon fuel line works just fine and the Viton fuel line should only be used on 16 oz or larger tanks because of the durometer of the material limits the flexibility for shorter lines.

For preventive maintenance I recommend inspecting your entire gas system regardless of fuel type at least once a year.

GREG G

Question of the Month:

What criteria do you use to determine when to change out a battery?

When to replace LIPO batteries:

- 1) When they burst into flames and consume your airplane, it's time to replace
- 2) After a crash, if the battery looks like the main course at last night's taco dinner, it's time to replace
- 3) If they won't hold a charge long enough to get from home to the field, it's time to replace
- 4) When they puff up like miniature Hindenburgs, it's time to replace (otherwise they might soon end up the same way as the Hindenburg)
- 5) Otherwise, you're good to go!

(just kidding) **Scott**

Simple Hints and Tricks *Scott Cruzen*

If you're like me, you're lazy, impatient, and cheap – a bad combination. When it's time to mix some epoxy, I hate waiting for the two molasses-like liquids to ever so slo-o-o-wly drain from the bottom of the bottles down to the nozzles when I flip them over so I can squeeze them out and mix them up. It's especially irritating when the bottles are nearly empty, as it seems to take forever. Here's the lazy man's simple solution. It also helps get the last little bit out of the bottle, so it saves a few pennies as well. I leave the bottles in the stand permanently so they're always ready to go. I've never had a leak with this type of bottle. At least, not yet.





Flying In February

A week ago on Saturday/Sunday, February 4 & 5... we flew both Saturday & Sunday. Saturday was the better day because there was no wind. It was warm enough for both Errol Peschel and me to fly Nitro Planes. Flyers included Dennis Carpenter, Dennis Robbins, Ron McHale, Greg Gordon, Errol, VP Scott Cruzen & me. Matt Jerue & Warren Wells stopped by without a plane..."hello..!"

Dennis Kirkwood

*Just about as good as it gets for
a Michigan winter...*



Scott Cruzen

It seems in January and early February this year Old Man Winter dozed off and forgot about us, leaving us to enjoy some record mild winter weather. Or perhaps he was just focusing his attention elsewhere, since it seems the poor folks in Europe have been taking a more than a bit of a beating this year. Whatever the case, several club members were able to take advantage of the warm weather and lack of snow to get in some excellent flying on the first weekend of February. A lot of us must have had itchy thumbs because the turnout both Saturday and Sunday was nearly as good as we usually get on a nice summer weekend. Quite a few spectators pulled in off Grand River to watch and chat as well.

With temperatures in the high 40's, clear blue sunny skies, almost no wind (check out the wind-

sock in the pic above), and the field in good shape, it was just about as good as it gets for a Michigan winter and the field was well-used all afternoon on Saturday and Sunday both. Planes in the air ran the gamut: warbirds, 3D, scale, sport, classics...you name it. Both fuel and electric were well represented. Ron McHale flew a very pretty electric Rearwin Speedster - as usual doing things with it that I'm sure were never contemplated by its designers - and Dennis Kirkwood had his super lightweight PA Extra 260 doing some impressive aerobatics in the air at the same time. I caught a picture of them doing opposing knife-edge passes over the center of the field. I'm not sure if this was intentional or not, but it makes an impressive picture either way.

“I caught a picture of them (Ron McHale & Dennis Kirkwood) doing opposing knife-edge passes over the center of the field. I’m not sure if this was intentional or not, but it makes an impressive picture either way.”



I brought out a couple of planes and was reminded of an important lesson. While flying the Samson biplane, I just couldn't seem to get the thing trimmed right, the elevator trim seemed to keep changing. On landing I discovered that the bolts that hold the bottom wing to the fuselage had backed almost all the way out and the only thing holding the bottom wing on were the struts from the top wing! I don't disassemble the wings to transport this plane, so I hadn't checked under there in a while. I forgot one of the cardinal rules: check all your attachments frequently, and controls surfaces before every flight. The screws were Loctited, but apparently

worked themselves loose over the past flying season anyway.

If we're lucky, the remainder of this winter will be as mild as the first half and we'll be able to get an early start on the 2012 flying season. I wouldn't bet the farm on that, though. I don't know about everyone else, but I'm looking forward to having a larger flying area once we move the fences back in the spring. I hope everyone is making good use of the building and repairing season. It'll be exciting to see what new and interesting aircraft show up for their maiden flights when the weather warms up.

UPCOMING LOCAL EVENTS

March 4 - Flint RC Swap Meet - Linden, MI

March 5 - Ribcrackers Club Meeting

March 10 - Bay City Flyers Swap Meet,
Land O Lakes, Florida

April 2 - Ribcrackers Club Meeting

April 13-15 - Weak Signals R/C Expo

May 12-19 - Joe Nall

*Check out the details of local flying events on
page 170 of Model Aviation, March issue.*



*To avoid a late fee, 2012 dues must be post marked
no later than March 5. Mail dues to*

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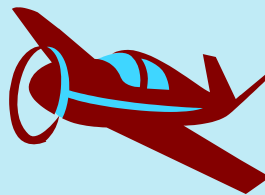
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