

The AVIATOR

The Official Newsletter of the
Frederick Model Aircraft Club



February 2006

**NEXT CLUB MEETING
MARCH 20—Church, Braddock
Heights, 7:30 pm**

PRESIDENT'S PODIUM

Happy February! As we sit in our workshops during this dreary month, contemplating our next opportunity to go fly, I have good news. I don't want to count our chickens before they hatch, but we have an extremely promising prospect for a **NEW FLYING SITE!!!!!!** Negotiations with Mr. Hugh Warner and his brother Mr. Grant Warner have been very productive. Although we can't seal the deal yet, all the major hurdles have been addressed. So what's left you may ask? We need a club vote to approve the lease agreement, as well as approving expenditures to make the necessary site improvements. We also need to work out logistics of how to keep the field maintained. Needless to say, that means our March meeting will be of VITAL importance. We absolutely need every available member to come.

The field is actually located between Elmer Derr Road and Cap Stine Road. It can be reached in just a few minutes from Frederick. There are some surrounding houses, well away from the field (further than our current neighbors at Toms Creek), but we will need to make sure we respect their property. The new field is actually somewhat larger than Toms Creek, and provides a long, clear approach from the north and south of our proposed runway location.

For those of you that are in the northern reaches of Frederick County don't worry. The Board has recommended that we keep Tom's Creek open until such time as the Church can no longer safely host us. It is our hope that with two fields conveniently located to various segments of the population, we will be able to regain some of our lost membership, as well as many new members. By our estimation, to keep both sites operating, we will need an active membership (dues paying) of about 100. A challenge, but not impossible.

Do you know any former members that left because the field was too far away? Let them know, we'll be back in Frederick this summer. I'm hoping that we'll be able to schedule a work day or two in April to set up the new site. That means mowing (and rolling?) the runway and pit area, constructing some pit tables, putting up pilot stations, installing a frequency control board, posting the flying site rules, and some fencing to separate the pit area from the spectator and parking areas. I know we have a lot of talent in the club, so if there's any project in particular you'd like to help with, please let me know.

On another note, in January it was decided to move forward with the FMAC Youth Open House in May. That means we'll need a good turnout for our May Fun-Fly, as well as some volunteers to take some prospective pilots up on a buddy box. Again – if you're interested in helping, let me know. Stay tuned for more details.

IMPORTANT: If you have changed your email address in the past six months, please check with Bart Schmidt to make sure he has your current email address for his membership list.

NOTE: THE NEXT BOD MEETING WILL BE MARCH 1 AT THE BORTON'S HOUSE, 7 PM.

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Instructors

(IP=AMA Intro Pilot)

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From the Knox County Radio Control club, Knoxville TN

The Three Deadly Sins of RC Flying

by Jeff Procise

In the three years that I've belonged to the Knox County Radio Control club, Knoxville, Tennessee, I've witnessed my share of crashes and even thrilled my buddies with a few of my own. One thing that amazes me about this hobby is how often we crash. On any given weekend, one or two members will probably lose a airplane. What's even more amazing is that the vast majority of these crashes are entirely preventable.

Most crashes are caused by simple errors that we make before the airplane leaves the ground. Eliminate these errors and you'll have a far better chance of bringing the model home in one piece. Here are the three most common mistakes that lead to crashes and simple steps for avoiding them.

Wrong Model Number

Programmable radios make the sport more fun and arguably safer, too. One of the primary benefits of a programmable radio is that it can store settings for several models. With the click of a button, you can call up the settings for your favorite model, complete with trim settings, end-point adjustments, servo directions, dual rates, exponentials, and more.

But programmable radios have a dark side. If you fail to select the right model number before takeoff, you may find yourself flying with reversed ailerons, a reversed elevator, improper trims or throws, or other ailments. Rare is the airplane that lands safely when the radio is set to the wrong model number.

The solution is twofold. One, remember to check the model number the moment you switch on your transmitter and make sure it matches the airplane you're about to fly. Two, always check the movement of the control surfaces before flying. Even if you forget to check the model number, you'll almost always catch the error if you check the control surfaces before every flight.

Having a radio set to the wrong model number is the most common cause of reversed servos, but it's not the only cause. Occasionally we simply forget to program in the servo directions before flying a new airplane. Again—make it a habit to check the control surfaces before every flight and you'll head disasters off before they happen. Before flying a new airplane for the first time, get a second pair of eyes to go over it with you. If the ailerons are reversed and you overlooked it once, you'll probably miss it again.

Improperly Located Center of Gravity

There's an old saying in this hobby that says "A nose-heavy airplane flies poorly; a tail-heavy airplane flies once." Most beginners fail to appreciate how big a role balance plays in the performance of an airplane. Balance is important in full-scale airplanes, but it's even more important in RC aircraft, where an inch or so can make the difference between a model that flies well and one that's unmanageable in the air.

Most construction manuals specify where the model's center of gravity (CG) should be located, and a model shouldn't be considered complete until you've ensured that the CG is at or near the recommended location. If necessary, you can add a few ounces of lead to the nose or tail to achieve the recommended CG. Often adding lead isn't necessary; you can achieve the desired CG by moving the receiver battery backward or forward.

Be certain to check the airplane's CG before flying it for the first time. I usually mark the location of the manufacturer's recommended CG with short pieces of trim tape. That way I can check the CG even if I don't remember precisely where it's supposed to be. Assuming your aircraft's fuel tank is on or in front of the CG be sure to check the CG with the tank empty. Finally,

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if your airplane has retracts that fold backward (like the F4U Corsair) check the CG with the wheels up.

Deploying the gear prior to landing will move the CG forward, but it's better to be nose-heavy during landing than tail-heavy during flight.

Inadequately Charged Batteries

If you crave excitement, try flying your favorite airplane without charging the receiver battery. To double the fun, don't charge the transmitter, either. Then you can take bets on which will fail first. Joking aside, charge those batteries before flying, and check them at the field if you're not sure whether they're charged.

Most transmitters have built-in voltage meters; I don't fly if the voltage is less than 10 volts—just to be safe. You can check receiver batteries with an inexpensive voltmeter (which should be part of every flight box), or you can install an onboard voltage indicator like the Hobbico VoltWatch. Remember—low batteries lead to dead airplanes. This is one case where an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

From the Hi Sky RC Club, Midland TX

Flying with a Plan

by Bill Coombes

One of the benefits of flying Pattern competition (as it was called in the olden days) was that it forced you to fly a predictable, recognizable sequence of maneuvers on every flight. In other words, it imposed some discipline in your flying, and it made you a better pilot.

Although I have not flown in competition in many years, I still try to remember the lessons I learned when I did compete. Every time I fly, I have a mental plan of what I want to accomplish during the flight.

When instructing school children, I've found that making them do repeated maneuvers allows them to move more quickly toward their first solo. They become disciplined fliers.

Planning Prevents the Airplane from Flying the Pilot

Watching pilots at our field and at my electric field of choice, I have seen guys who could be skilled fliers constantly chasing their airplanes through the sky until they find themselves disoriented and their airplanes at risk. They aren't flying with a plan, but rather the airplane is flying them.

With the Commemorative Air Force, I have participated in the hardest kind of flying to learn—formation. Believe me, discipline and a plan are the only things that prevent catastrophic accidents (besides a thorough briefing and an understanding of the flight formation rules). Guys who can fly an airplane well enough when alone suddenly discover a whole new set of skills necessary to master before they are safe in a formation.

I'm not advocating that all of us in the RC world rush out and become International Miniature Aerobatic Club (IMAC) pilots, but I am saying that flying each flight with a specific plan (like really round loops, or skillfully centering maneuvers in front of you, or a perfect landing pattern) will impose some meaning to your flying and you will become a safer, better pilot (and your airplane will last longer as well). With the high price of these Alfa warbirds that I am into right now, economy forces me to always fly with a plan.



Frederick Model Aircraft Club, Inc.

2006 Membership Renewal and Application

Name: _____ Renewal New Member Since: _____

Address: _____ City: _____

ST: _____ ZIP: _____ Phone: (H) (____) _____ - _____ (W) (____) _____ - _____

Date of Birth: ____/____/____ AMA#: _____ (attach 2006 Copy)

e-Mail: _____ Radio Channels Used: _____

How would you like to receive our monthly Newsletter? Print from Website www.frederickmodelaircraftclub.org or US Mail

All members are expected to help with club activities. What areas would you like to help with?

- __ Training/Help with training __ Ground Crew/Maintenance __ Programs and Presentations
__ Fund Raisers __ Flea Market __ Wings of Freedom Air show __ Help Organizing/Run Events
__ Fun Fly's __ Other _____

Table with 3 columns: Membership Fees, January 1, 2006 to December 31, 2006, Amount. Rows include Adult Membership, Senior Members, New Member Application Fee, and Total.

ALL renewals for the current year are due before March 1st. Renewals received after that date are considered new and the applicant will have to be voted in and pay the \$10.00 Initiation Fee.

Conditions of Membership

I hereby agree to comply with the current Academy of Model Aeronautics' (AMA) Safety Code(s) and Frederick Model Airplane Club, Inc. (FMAC) Rules and Regulations. I also agree that I will comply with all changes and modifications that may be made to the AMA Safety Codes and the FMAC Rules and Regulations.

Applicant: _____ Date: ____/____/____

Legal Guardian if under 18: _____ Date: ____/____/____

Mail completed application with your current AMA membership information to: FMAC Membership - c/o Bart Schmidt 101 Linden Ave., Hanover PA 17331 Makes checks payable to "Frederick Model Aircraft Club" or "FMAC"

FMAC memberships are not valid until we have verification of your 2006 AMA membership

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UPCOMING EVENTS 2006

<p>January</p>	<p>HAPPY NEW YEAR!</p> <p>Jan 1st: New Years Day - FREEZE FLY - was CANCELED DUE TO MUDDY CONDITIONS AT THE FLYING FIELD.</p> <p>Jan 16th: Club Meeting, Church - 7:30pm</p> <p>Jan 21st: NVRC Snow Fly 2006</p>
<p>February</p>	<p>Feb 11th: Flea Market - Westminster Aero Modelers</p> <p>Feb 18th: SWAP Meet - Valley R/C Flying Club - see AMA mag. for details</p>
<p>March</p>	<p>Mar 18th: NVRC Auction</p> <p>Mar 20: Club Meeting, Church—7:30</p>
<p>April</p>	
<p>May</p>	<p>May 17th thru 20th - Joe Nall Giant Scale (IMAA) at Triple Tree</p>
<p>June</p>	<p>Jun 24th: NVRC "Biplane Fun Fly "</p>
<p>July</p>	<p>Jul 16th: NVRC "Big Bird Fly In at Arcola "</p> <p>Jul 22nd: Loudoun County Aeromodelers Assn 7th Annual Electric Fly In</p>
<p>August</p>	
<p>September</p>	<p>Sept 10th: Bealton, VA - Airshow and DCRC Model Airplanes</p> <p>Sept 23rd & 24th: NVRC Aerobatics/Pattern Contest</p>
<p>October</p>	<p>Oct 15th: NVRC Auction, Vienna Community Center</p>
<p>November</p>	<p>Nov 4th: NVRC "Toys For Tots Fun Fly "</p>
<p>December</p>	



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Don Borton, Editor
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FMAC is now flying at Toms Creek, Emmitsburg

CALL ONE OF THE BOARD MEMBERS FOR DIRECTIONS TO
TOMS CREEK

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