

July 28, 2017

WNYFFS July 2017 Update

FAC Non Nationals

This year's FAC Non Nationals were held on July 19 through the 22ed. For this year's contest FAC GHQ tried out several new ideas for registration, compliance checking and scale judging. Prior to the meet, each contestant was expected to register the models they intended to fly at the contest. This was done via computer and was relatively painless. At the contest, flight times were handed in on a score sheet created by GHQ and printed by the individual modeler. This part of the score keeping process was very much like the one followed at the ESFFC and GGG with one card used for the entire meet. Having a pre-printed form made it easy to record times for your fellow fliers; no need to remember or write down the time on a scrap of paper while waiting for the flier to fill out an official timing slip. There was some confusion when one model was eligible for more than one event; it wasn't always clear which event was being flown at the moment. Nevertheless, this system was much easier than filling out dozens of time slips, to be sure.

Throughout the day, the time sheet was turned in so that the flight times could be recorded. Each time this was done it was clear how much easier it was for the scorekeepers to enter the data. Unlike the situation with individual timing slips which were simply deposited in the box at the table, the contestant waited while his/her data was entered. It usually only took a minute or two. The process was quite painless, in part, due to all the contestants having their registered models entered in the computer. If one wished to spend a couple of more minutes, scores could be checked on a large display screen. An LCD monitor replaced the dozens of paper printouts which could never be kept quite up to the minute. Any mistakes in data entry or whatever could be quickly detected and corrected. What a great system. At the end of the day, the timing records were handed in once more to record the last flights for the day and to allow checking the data already entered. The system was so simple and quick, there was really no excuse for not reporting your results several times throughout the day.

In another big change, scale scores and compliance checks from previous contests (2015 & 2016) were accepted for this contest. This made check in and scale judging Sooo much easier. There was so much less to do that judging was pretty much complete by the late afternoon. Not only was the work done early, there was time for the judges and compliance checkers to shoot the breeze and easily complete their own model checks. Overall, the whole check in day was much more relaxed. Even with the extraordinarily warm and humid conditions, it was much less stressful.

This editor wishes to go on record thanking the crew at the contest & GHQ for putting in all the effort required to make a great contest even better. Stew, Rick, Fran, Ross, Dave, Bubba and everyone else who worked on creating and running the process and infrastructure, you did a great job. Thank you.

Enough with the changes to the process how was the contest? Flying weather was pretty darn good at this year's contest. It was HOT on Wednesday (check in day), Thursday and Friday. On Thursday we were treated to a torrential downpour that ended flying early in the afternoon. At least one event, Low Wing Military Trainer, had to be shifted to later in the meet. Other than that, wind conditions were not too bad. Gusts could be a problem but by and large flying was reasonable. Wind direction kept shifting but everybody seemed to deal with that pretty well. Saturday was another story altogether. Temperatures were down significantly although the humidity remained unpleasantly high. Wind direction remained variable but the breeze was so light that the direction was of little concern most of the time. On one memorable flight of my Moth almost achieved a LOT (Landing On Table) to compliment the ROT by landing not more than 10 feet from the launch point. That was following a two minute plus flight.

Now for a few pictures:

Gerry Crawmer prepares his Chambermaid from the Easy Built kit for the Greve Mass Launch event. Gerry has done well with this model over the years. This year Gerry managed to take third place in a very hard fought event. Congratulations Gerry.

Next up is the editor's Cessna C-34. a recent trimming session, Jim DeTar had suggested an enlarged stab as a possible remedy to the Cessna's erratic behavior.



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Lo and behold the model now exhibits a much more consistent behavior with its enlarged tail feathers. Climb out had typically been pretty good. Now the model glides much more consistently except when the motor bunches in the rear. An adjustment to the motor stop has already helped with that. Although the Cessna will not likely turn in consistent max flights, it should be able to produce 90 seconds consistently. Here's hoping anyway.

Here is Jim DeTar testing his replacement Great Lakes Trainer. Jim's original GLT served him well for many years. This one has not found the groove just yet but you can be sure Jim will get it worked out.

Next up is a new friend from Colombia South Carolina, Larry Sweat. Larry asked if I could time his P-38 flight. Larry's model managed an official flight and looked pretty good in the air. In addition to witnessing Larry's model, I've heard from a couple of other sources that the Comet kit can turn in respectable times. I have had a soft spot for the Comet P-38 since struggling with the model as a kid. None of my friends were interested in free flight so every model was an adventure in the dark. For now the next model in the queue of Comet kits is an F6F; a laser cut short kit is available for that model and is just waiting for winter. If anyone hears of a short kit for P-38 let me know.

Wrap Up

On the weekend before the FAC Non Nationals, the National Warplane Museum held their annual air show. As part of the suite of attractions, they have frequently held a dance in the big hangar on Saturday night of the show. This year, Mary Jo and I attended the dance so we could try out the Lindy Hop we had recently learned. We had a great time. A ten piece band called Swing Dynasty provided outstanding music for three hours. The crowd was terrific. It was pleasant to see a huge mix of ages especially with a good number of single attendee's partnering up as the mood moved them. A good number of participants came in period dress and made the whole affair that much more fun. If you are at all inclined, check it out next year.

Our next local Free Flight event is the Empire State Free Flight Championships (ESFFC) scheduled for August 11-13. Following closely on the ESFFC is the Pirate Challenge on August 25-27. Looking forward to seeing everyone at those meets as well as the GGG in September.

