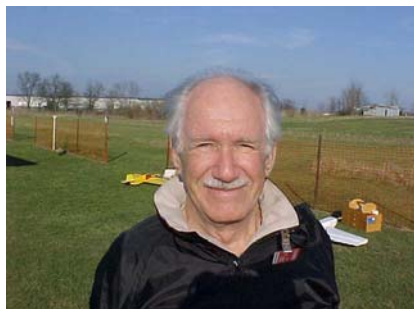


The Flying Times

The Official Newsletter of the Valley RC Flying Club

February 2005



Dave Burgess-Vice President

Always wanted to fly but that was always beyond my means. When I was little, I built a rubber powered helicopter (counter rotating blades) and a couple of planes, you know the Balsa and tissue paper type. Very short flights, so shot them to pieces with my bee bee gun. Mother didn't appreciate all the black dents in the wall paper.

The next attempt was when my son was about 8, buying a \$10.95 .049 glow control line model which I promptly smashed into the Big 1.5 volt telephone battery that was exactly at the same radius that the plane was flying..only did one circle and then BANG. Much disappointed, so I gave up that potential hobby for a number of years.

When working at Green Bank (13 years ago) I used to go on evening walks and ran across a fellow worker (Jerry Turner) who was flying a model (.46 size). After watching and talking to him he said that another fellow worker was also a R/C flier and was wanting to get rid of all his equipment. I ended up with 2 radios, 2 planes and all the needed accessories.

The first plane that Jerry tried very patiently to teach me to fly was called a Pronto, a low wing, tail dragger with a .25 engine.

The strip was a paved 3700 foot regular airplane runway that was 60 feet wide. I can tell you, that some times you have quite a walk to get a plane that you just landed. They just coast and coast on asphalt. The instructions consisted of ---Jerry took off and then he handed the TX to me,. I learned quickly what 3 mistakes high means, and found out soon enough to bide by it. First thing I learned was that I could hand the TX to Jerry very very fast. And hope he could recover from my mistakes.

That got me started and have built and crashed a number of planes since. Currently have about 6 that fly,

crash to flight ratio is dropping with experience. I am working on a couple of others.

Been also keeping the simulator busy trying to fly a helicopter, someday I might make it.

On the whole, I really enjoy the hobby, keeps my mind active in retirement and I absolutely enjoy the companionship with all the others in the club. My other hobbies are Ham Radio and Motorcycle riding. Lately airplanes are taking over.

Club Meeting: February 1, 2005 7:30 PM

As many of you know there is a problem with the library being used as a meeting place. We will be discussing alternatives at this meeting.

Tip of the Month

I heard about a really nice product.

Evercoat Lite Weight, Non-clog Lightweight Filler.

The can says "A tack free, lightweight autobody filler designed to reduce sandpaper clogging and sand to fine finish." Vacuum Processed - no pinholes - no shrinking. Contains: Polyester Resin, Talc, Styrene, Limestone and Magnesite.

Look up there extensive auto and marine finishing and repair web site:www.fiberglass-evercoat.com

This product is available at:

Red Line Automotive Paint & Supply,
2510 S. Main St. Harrisonburg, VA under
the brand name "Dolphin Glaze".

Let's Get Serious About Safety!

Before this flying season really gets under way, why don't we review our personal safety procedures. I seem to recall that last year we had several incidents of parts our bodies coming in contact with moving propellers. I have never known of a case of this to happen where the propeller didn't win.

If you must put parts of your body into props, then by all means, start using wooden props. Some of the props we are using now days in the name of "Better performance" are nothing more than spinning steak knives.

There are several ways to avoid a trip to the emergency room on an otherwise nice flying day.

1. Find another hobby. (not a good choice if you like this one)
2. Get into ducted fans or turbines. They will be harder to get your fingers into.
3. Try sail planes. (personally, don't like'em, not enough noise!)

Actually, there are more practical things to do to avoid contact with props other than the drastic measures mentioned above. (and I don't really dislike sailplanes)

1. Use a chicken stick. Maybe "chicken stick" isn't a good word for the devices some use to start the engines. Sounds like it isn't Macho or something. Maybe they should be called "smart sticks" instead. In any event, they keep your fingers safely away from the props.

2. Use a starter. Yes, I know they are expensive. So are hospital bills and insurance premiums, and time lost from work. Lots of us depend on our fingers to make a living, or at least help with it. Starters work really well and will help protect your fingers.

3. USE A GLOVE! Not just any glove, get a good, heavy leather glove to wear if you insist, (like I do) on starting an engine by hand. If you get kicked by a prop, it might hurt, but I've never been cut through a glove-yet. But I also don't fly those certain type props either. I use a glove because: A. I get a better feel of what the engine is doing, or trying to do. B. I'm pretty intolerant of an engine that I can't start by hand. C. I think a glove is handier to use than a starter or one of those "sticks". I used the sticks before, until one day when I was using one to start a gasser, and within 10 minutes I had ruined two \$25.00 props because the engine kicked and hit the stick before I got it out of the way. Haven't used one since.

Last, if you are fortunate enough to have never experienced shredding your fingers in a prop, try this for a day. Take which ever hand you use to start the engine, and tape up your index and middle finger tightly together so they are basically useless, then go about your normal daily tasks-or try to! After you're tired of that, think that it could be a permanent condition if you get careless around these models. And yes, that prop is more than likely going to get more than one finger!

BE SAFE-Accidents don't just happen--they are caused!!



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