



# The Flightline



Volume 39, Issue 10

Newsletter of the Propstoppers RC Club

AMA 1042

October 2009

## President's Message



Well where did the year go there was a lot of thursday evening flying and the weekends were also busy. We had three great Picnics.

Maybe next year we could have the same number of get-togethers with some events. I would like to see a committee organize picnics and fun-fly's and maybe a trip or two.

The meetings are at the library again; doors open at 7:00 Meeting start at 7:30 .

**October is the meeting for nomination for club officers.** If you want to offer your services or nominate a member for club office this is the time to do so.

If you have any new planes bring them in. Show & tells are always good for the indoor meetings.

Bye the way that Mini Pulse plane I landed in the highest tree; the motor came apart in the air. I will bring it to the meeting. It took a 75 ft. bucket truck to get it. Carney Tree Service \$\$\$\$ I didn,t get the bill yet

See you at the meeting.

Dick Seiwell

*Agenda for October 13<sup>th</sup> Meeting  
At the Middletown Library;  
Doors open 7 pm, Meeting 7:30pm.*

1. Membership Report
2. Finance Report
3. Nomination of Officers Process
4. Plans for Indoor Monthly Meetings
5. Show and Tell and more flying

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## Minutes of the Propstoppers Model Airplane Club Meeting September 8th, 2009 at the Middletown library

The meeting location was changed to the library due to weather. Call to order took place at 7:30 p.m. by Vice President Dave Bevan Roll-call by membership chair Ray Wopatek showed 14 members present

Minutes of the July meeting as printed in the newsletter were approved Treasurer's report was presented by Pete Otinger to the membership

### Old Business:

President Seiwell noted that the club membership has been growing slowly. He discussed having the postponed Walt Bryan fun fly this Saturday September 12th from 11 to 3:00 p.m.. This was approved by those present.

### New Business:

Dave Harding told us that rep Lenz is holding a senior Expo at the Brookhaven gym. It takes place on Thursday September 17th from 11 to 2:00 p.m.. He would like us to set up a demo table for the general publicity value of the club.

### Show and Tell:

Dave Harding showed his home built foam Delta with electric power. He also showed his 2 horsepower motor set up that he is using in the Boehle giant. He also showed his Forster 99 old-time spark ignition motor to be used on the same plane in the upcoming SAM champs.



John Moloko showed his rebuilt T-28 Tree-slayer II that had an unfortunate meeting with a local tree.



## Calendar of Events

### Club Meetings

**Monthly Meetings**  
Second Tuesday of the month.

**Middletown Library**  
Doors open at 7 , meeting at 7:30 pm.

### 13<sup>th</sup> October

**Tuesday Breakfast Meeting**  
Tom Jones Restaurant on Edgemont  
Avenue in Brookhaven.  
9 till 10 am. Just show up.  
Flying after at Chester Park 10 am.

### Regular Club Flying

**At Christian Academy; Electric Only**  
Monday through Friday after school till dusk  
Saturday 10 am till dusk  
Sunday, after Church; 12 pm till dusk

### Special Club Flying

**Saturday mornings 10 am**  
**Thursday evenings**  
**Tuesday mornings 10 am weather permitting**  
after breakfast at Chester Park.

### Beginners

**Beginners using due caution and respecting club rules may fly GWS Slow Stick or similar models without instructors.**  
**The club also provides the AMA Introductory Pilot Program for beginners without AMA insurance.**

Mike Williams showed his simulator (Real Flight) running on his laptop. He noted that this was extremely helpful in building up his flying skills. (see article on Rep. Lenz Senior Expo).

Dick Seiwell showed his Pulse plug and play model. He is flying it with a new Spectrum 2.4 Gigahertz radio. He loves the way it flies. (and he flies it well. Ed.)



Adjournment took place at 8:45 p.m.

*Richard Bartkowski, Secretary*

### Walt Bryan Memorial Picnic

Third time lucky; we postponed the Walt Bryan picnic twice due to weather but on the third try the weather cooperated and although the turn out was low the enjoyment was high.

In the absence of our President, Dick Bartkowski did the culinary things. He planned the menu, bought the stuff then showed us his virtuosity with his old Coleman gas stove. The stove was run on Dave Harding's Forster 99 fuel! Craig Meyer brought his son, a canopy, some models and ice pops for all; a welcome addition to a warm day. He also took these pix. Eric Hofberg brought his usually reliable T-28 but had a couple of Oops moments in successive flights. Reading the stars and whatever other 'fluence there may have been hanging over him he decided to take a long break from flying but enjoyed the conversation, which progresses incessantly without glitches.



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Mike Williams continued his flying skills development with helicopters and planes and he took time out to have another look for the missing parts from his Mick Harris Fairey Topsy Junior, the plane that had difficulties and crashed into the far trees at the prior picnic. The model also was carrying his new Flight Cam Two. This was one of the missing parts together with the motor and cowl. You may remember that we had a substantial storm series the prior week; the reason we canceled from the originally scheduled date so Mike thought the parts may have been dislodged from the trees.

Sure enough within five or ten minutes he returned triumphant with all three parts and the throng continued the discussion of what might have caused the incident in the first place.

You may remember that the model had been flying well but on this flight about four minutes in the motor began to stutter then it stopped completely. On the dead stick approach the model stalled and dove into the trees. You may also remember that the search party quickly found the airframe less the parts described above. The only obvious problem from the parts recovered was the ESC had clearly burned up. Now we could clearly see the motor was toast; literally. The armature of this brushed Astroflight 035 was a dark brown burned mass. Mike said he had checked the current draw with a Wattmeter and it read about 30+ amps, well within the motor's capability. But he also said the readings occasionally would twitch up to 60 amps. The assembled "wise men" declared that the armature windings were going away; the insulation on the wires was breaking down causing short circuits and spikes of high current. This causes the armature to heat even more and accelerate the breakdown of the insulation until there is a clean dead short whereupon the armature burned up and so did the ESC.

His new camera looked sorry as there was water behind the lens and probably all through the electronics. Remember, this was a heck of a storm and these parts were out in it for the duration. The remarkable thing is (well maybe not remarkable) the memory card survived and so did the movie of the flight! You can watch it at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ble07y30uNM> This is a fascinating record of this incident, and it is a pretty good movie of our field and the surrounding areas.



The first thing you notice is the "shuttering" or interference of the prop passing the camera and the camera frame rate. I suppose you could figure out the rpm from the direction of the pattern movement and the spacing of the prop lines.



But if you just watch this phenomenon you will see the motor slows for a short while before it stops and then slowly windmills. This happens high over the edge of Sweeney's lot and you see Mike flying dead stick and aligning with the strip. But perhaps he is not accustomed to flying these relatively heavy models dead stick because he pulls the nose up just a little but it is enough to cause a stall and subsequent spiral into the trees.

Anyway, problem solved and Mike vows to install a modern motor and ESC and get it flying again. Not so sure about the camera though.

Rick Grothman joined us with some models we don't see very often. He first flew the Playboy Old Timer he built for the club team effort in the Electric Texaco Postal Competition.



Seemed like he had a good flight but got caught way downwind and struggled to get it back over the tall trees and onto the patch, but he succeeded. Next he flew his Hotliner; fun in the higher winds because of the high power and wing loading and very low drag allow you to range anywhere in the sky and get back. They are very aerobatic too; fun but they can be a handful.



Then he flew the three meter high-tech powered sailplane he got from Mick Harris. These things are usually a dream to fly. They climb fast, float for ever and can dive at high speeds to move from thermal to thermal. Spoilers allow you to bring them back steeply into a small patch. Well that is your expectation with such models, but Rick is having other experiences.



First he had a wing spar failure. Rare with these quality built ARFs. But he repaired it and added some further strengthening in the form of some graphite. Back in the air he was having all kinds of difficulties the worst of which was a tendency to flutter. Certainly the wing fluttered but it seemed the V tail did too. We spent some time examining the parts to see what may be causing the problems. These high aspect ratio big wings are usually made in three parts or more and there are joiners of various configurations to hold the parts together and in alignment.



Rick's model was a bit soft in this area allowing some motion of the outboard panel. Then the whole wing seemed torsionally soft a deadly attribute particularly if there is other slop or softness in the wing/control structure. Even the tail seemed torsionally soft, so we discuss several approaches to try to fix these problems; first among them a torsional wrap of fiber reinforced packing tape. Rick says he is close to bagging this model. It has caused him much grief and rework with little flying and no thrilling flights. Can't say I blame him, but these things should work well.

Your editor brought out his favorite new airplane, the big foam delta, now repaired after the last cartwheel landing. I have been making takeoffs from two foam boards but they don't always work. Then again, I have had some success in just honking the power and struggling to lift the nose. Sometimes it works sometimes it doesn't and in the process it takes its head and lurches in various directions before settling to a pitch up attitude and a climbout. It has no nosewheel steering, a modification for later! Anyway, I made one good flight enjoying the maneuverability before making a lucky smooth landing.



The next flight attempt was less successful. First it lurched around more than usual, but determined to get it off I persevered until it did break ground, but with a good deal of roll and flying low and slow towards the far tree line.



This model is quite sensitive in roll and when you (I) don't have it together the flight path, or flight attitude see saws back and forth while trying to gather up the other axes. This time I ran out of time, space and technique and once again made a nose-in arrival. Oh well, I know it is easy to fix, and worth doing.



Others flying at this meet were Dick Bartkowski practicing with his SAM contest ships, Mick Harris playing with his Old Timers and Chuck Kime playing with something but I can't remember what.

Tom and Pat Tredinnik joined us and engaged in the conversations which were a big part of this fun meet.



President Dick Seiwel wonders if we are having too many picnics and he worries about getting volunteers to fix the hot dogs and burgers.

He shouldn't worry. The picnics are the best events we have had for years. They are well attended and members obviously enjoy them. As for hot dogs and hamburgers, well, 'nuff said, there are alternatives and we can take care of ourselves. So, bring on more picnics next year, I say.

*Dave Harding*

## *Propstoppers at the Senior Expo*



Pennsylvania State representative Lenz arranged a Senior Expo in the Brookhaven Borough Hall. This event is an opportunity for various organizations of interest to Seniors may display their programs and offer services. You editor observed that a good portion of our members are seniors and indeed many aeromodelers are seniors returning to the hobby of their youth. So this seemed like a good opportunity to solicit some new members. It was also an excellent opportunity to get some publicity and community recognition, both factors in acquiring and maintaining flying sites.

There were 47 organizations at the Expo. We were allotted a table each, but we managed to get two tables and because we were against the bleachers we went home to fetch more models to display. Mike Williams and his wife came up with a Propstoppers banner design and the club bought one from Kinkos. We can use this at our various meetings etc. Mike also brought his flight simulator and his laptop to host it. This was the hit of the meeting as all kinds of people wanted to "fly". Several of them high time pilots in the big world.



Dave Bevan brought a stack of magazines which were also popular factors in our organizations interest. Most of these magazines came from Sam Nevins and Sam also donated an RTF model new and complete in the box. The event featured a door prize activity and we decided to donate Sam's offering to this cause.

Fortunately the winner was Tom Lukens, one of the military pilots that had taken so much interest in the simulator. He is a former plant manager at Boeing Vertol. We hope he either enjoys it himself or shares it with a grandson (or daughter).



Chuck Kime and Mick Harris made up the rest of our volunteers team and we were all kept busy answering questions.

There was a third reason to attend this Expo too. The Brookhaven Borough gymnasium is an excellent indoor flying site. Some of us have flown in there when supporting Penn Delco school Delta Dart programs, Brookhaven is in the Penn Delco district. We have made approaches in the past to see if we could fly there regularly as a club, but to no avail.



This time we had the opportunity to talk directly with the council members and let them see the senior (voters) interest in such activities. During the Expo I explained our interest to one of our council members who put me in touch with the person responsible for such activities. He asked me to call and discuss our needs. So don't hold your breath but it was a good first step.

I shall be contacting them on my return from California and Nevada.

*Dave Harding*

## *Fun in The Sun, Again*

I am writing this from California as I prepare for yet another SAM Champs in Las Vegas. Well, actually Boulder City claims the El Dorado dry lake. Boulder is the city built in the 1930s for the Hoover Dam construction workers. Although it is in Nevada Boulder City has no gambling. So it is that we stay just outside the city at the Railroad Pass Casino, the oldest gambling establishment in Nevada. Not that it is the reason we stay there; it is closer to the field (yeah right!).

It is now Tuesday afternoon of the meet and I am writing in our casino room to meet the Propstoppers deadline.

It has been an interesting adventure so far. I drove up to LV on Friday morning so I could help out with the organization tasks with SoCal friend and Contest Manager Mike Myers and Registrar Dave Meriwether. They were staying at the contest HQ hotel/casino the Fiesta Henderson and Mike had the Presidential Suite which included a large entertaining room. The weekend chores were complicated because Mike's wife had an unfortunate medical emergency necessitating Mike complete his activities by Sunday night and returning to Glendale. Others among us stood up to the various tasks to handle during the subsequent week.

Dick Bartkowski and Chuck and Tina Kime arrived Saturday evening and Seattle friend Colin Widdison came in Sunday afternoon to complete our crew.

Sunday afternoon we all pitched in helping with registration for the 150 or so entrants. We carefully observed all these activities because we have volunteered to manage the 2010 SAM Champs to be held in September at the AMA site in Muncie.

Dick Chuck and I had shipped models in our usual large box via Greyhound. I had bought a double sized golf bag shipping container in which I brought the Giant wings and tails. The fuselage was shipped in the big box. I drove up from South Pasadena in my daughter's Subaru wagon, filled with all the support equipment and the golf bag.

Sunday morning early Dick and I picked up the box from the Greyhound bus station; whew! You are never shure that these things will actually happen although Dick had shipped it several days early to give us some slack in the schedule.

Our original plan was to do some test flying on Sunday but the winds in southern Nevada were in the 20 mph range with much higher gusts. The forecast was for the winds to abate late on Sunday and diminish further during Monday to a modest level for the rest of the week. Temperatures were forecast for the high 70's early and low 80's later in the week.

So we began our Monday activities preparing models for test flights and were delighted to find the winds had dropped to an almost imperceptible level; perfect flying and testing weather. But the first thing was figuring out how to take the Giant from the hotel to the field. I had made some overhead straps to support the wing halves in the Subie and we were delighted when we found they just fit, allowing us to close the tailgate. But what about the complete fuselage? Again we lucked out as the whole thing could sit comfortably on the roof rack with the landing gear overhanging the tailgate. Two bungies snugged the wheels back to the tailgate "wing" and another held down the front so we were in business as the rest of the gear fit inside.

Tina and Chuck drove with Colin and brought Tina's wheelchair too. Tina is the meet's RC registrar, keeping track of the scores for each event. She sits at the CD's tent for the duration of the meet. We had a canopy and all the rest of the support equipment set up on the flightline.

Our first event was to be a Spirit of SAM mass launch. These are small RC versions of pre-war rubber powered models. The rules only state the battery as a 45 gram NiCad. You pick the model size, the motor etc. The flight is a Texaco type where you can run the motor as often as you like until the battery is exhausted then you glide to land in the designated space. Naturally, if you can find thermals you use them and maybe shut down the motor to conserve energy. Dick is a perennial winner of this event and I have won or placed high too. This was Chuck's first attempt I think.

There were ten entries and as usual a few did not survive long after the launch, your faithful editor included. I had tested the model the week before and it went well, so I don't know what happened. But Dick was off to a magnificent flight. Chuck did ok finishing in mid field but Dick outlasted them all for the win. I think this is three in a row for him; great stuff.

Next we turned our attention to the Electric Limited Motor Run

event where you get to climb for 90 seconds then glide. The initial three flights have a maximum of ten minutes and if more than one competitor has two maximum flights there is a flyoff.

I have described my adventures in designing, building and testing the Boehle Giant in these pages before and I have recorded them on the web at: [www.dhaerotech.com/giantblog.htm](http://www.dhaerotech.com/giantblog.htm) My aim was to fly it in the Electric Texaco event where you can run a low power motor for as long as you want to make the longest flight, like SoS described above but with a battery sized to the model weight. Last year I had an upset that caused the gearbox to fail so this year I repaired it and further optimized the power system to include 36 1000 mah NiCads arranged in three parallel packs of 12. As I worked through this process I ruminated on the idea of also preparing a power system to fly the model in the Limited Motor Run event, originally dismissing it as too costly as I would need about 1.2 kilowatts of power to be competitive. As I refined the ETexaco power system I began to examine using the Neu 1506/1Y motor I previously used in my 4 pound 1100 square inch Stardust Special. I found that if I added a 2:1 gearbox reduction to this motor, with its current 6.7:1 gearbox (13.4:1 total) I could turn a 23 x 12 prop near 5000 rpm and stay within the rpm limit of the motor and current limit of my 125 amp Castle Creations ESC. And this I did but not before some gearbox and prop retention failures. I had two good test flights at Christian Academy before I packed for Vegas.

Monday morning on El Dorado dry lake I needed to make one trim test flight to ensure the control connections were Ok, and this I did with Chuck's help. It looked good so we charged for a competition flight. Meanwhile Dick prepared his trusty Record Hound for his first flight.

So with the batteries fully charged I took off for the first flight straight and true into a deep blue still sky. It tracked perfectly but I had not made a full duration full power flight before so I shut off at about 70 seconds preferring to fly out a complete flight without risking a melt down first time out. The model handled the glide portion very well too although with the reduced run time it landed just short of nine minutes; a great start, so charge again for the next flight, this time with full duration.

Dick's flight was also pretty good and he too landed just short of nine minutes. Chuck was to fly one of my Stardust Specials but since it is a handful to fly and he had not flown it before we set about making a test flight or two. This we did with some success and he then charged that model for its first contest flight.

Then I flew the Giant for its second flight gaining good altitude again in a smooth climb and then proceeded to find some lift which I followed some distance downwind. Oops, how can you get such a large model out of sight? Easy if you are enjoying yourself, but I just managed to bring it back into clear view and then struggled to bring it down. I could have stayed up forever I think, but it was a clean maximum flight in the book.

Dick's second flight was a poor one. He used another battery pack which looked good on the charger but significantly underperformed in flight, scratch this one and charge the good battery for the last flight.

Chuck then made his first flight and although the Stardust Special went almost out of sight in the climb he managed to control it into a smooth glide. He also found the same lift I had found earlier and the model climbed really high, so high that Chuck could not see it much of the time and neither could I. But he had no experience in flying this model much less spiraling it down to lower altitude so he struggled to maintain heading, mostly with my voice commands, but it became hopeless and I took control to spiral it into the outer rough for a zero score and who knew what condition. Chuck trudged over the horizon and two of our Aussie friends drove round the field to help.

Meanwhile I wanted to get in my last Giant flight so unhooked the charger and proceeded to the flight line with great confidence and humor. The takeoff was perfect as before as was the initial climb out, but then after about 30 seconds the model seemed to stop climbing and turned to the right. It seemed that I had no control and the model proceeded into a steadily steeper dive until it began to shed parts; first the fin then the wings folded and departed the fuselage which proceeded vertically into the desert on the far side of the highway.

Several helpers walked and drove to collect the various parts, all of which we recovered. The wings had separated in the middle jointer, which was broken in the center. The outboard left hand wing panel consisted of the spar and leading edge, all the ribs, covering and trailing edge were lost. The right hand wing was largely intact as was

the right horizontal tail. The fin had separated and was damaged and missing from mid-span down although the spar was intact, in place but bent half way up. The horizontal tail spar was broken at the fuselage on the left hand side and the LH horizontal was in two pieces joined by strands of fiberglass reinforcement. It showed evidence of being hit obliquely by a long straight implement; the LH wing outer panel probably. The fuselage was largely complete and intact. The nose forward of the front bulkhead including the motor/gearbox and propeller was in one piece and separated. The bay behind the nose former was damaged and the cabane took on a peculiar shape. The two forward members were splayed outwards; the RH piece to 90 degrees and the LH to about 130 degrees. The aft cabane pieces were undamaged as were the two longitudinal wing support members; rubber bands still attached.

Subsequent examination showed the radio and both servos to be functional and surprisingly, the prop turned the gearbox smoothly. The motor / gearbox assembly and propeller seems to have survived a vertical dive into the hard packed desert floor with the only evident damage being a bent output shaft (I have a spare).

What happened, I don't know but I suspect it was one of the smallest things in my long consideration of this model's design; The wings are in four pieces with substantial joiners. I tested the strength of these parts but the parts are held together with electrical tape, a practice widely used, indeed used for years on my other models. This time I had new but narrow tape and did not wrap it all the way round the center joint. I thought about it, and so did Chuck, but neither of us mentioned our thoughts or did anything about it. The model sat out in the desert sun all day while charging. The sun is very hot in the desert, particularly when the desert floor is at altitude like in El Dorado. I believe the tape joint slowly let go from the front during the flight. It would have allowed the wing halves to sweep back, a little at first; which would have appeared like moving the wing back or the CG forward. This would account for the initial loss of climb trim. Then as more and more tape let go and the speed built up the separating loads would have increased allowing the wings to slip out of engagement with the cabane and so forth. I will be doing more forensic evaluations and publishing more here in the next issue, meanwhile my Giant flying at the 2009 Champs was over, and I planned to fly it on each of the five days in different classes.

Chuck found the Stardust Special, undamaged and near the field so he charged for his second flight. Dick meanwhile had charged for his third flight which turned out to be magnificent and into a huge thermal. He landed with an easy maximum.

Chuck tried again but this time lost control in the upper portion of the climb where it is hard to see and control the model's attitude. It dived and reached the speed from which there is no recovery and into the desert floor vertically; strike two models. Chuck was to fly this model in Tuesday's Electric Texaco and I was to fly it in Thursday's Speed 400 event, so I am down to one model with two events to come. We are trying to modify Chuck's Ed Goretzka Kerswap so he can fly in ETex with it today and speed 400 Thursday.

Meanwhile, Tuesday was forecast for low winds but broke with a howling gale. Winds were in the 15 mph range this morning and although they have abated somewhat we may not get to fly today.

So, I will finish my report at this point, no pictures I am afraid as I did not bring the necessary cable to download them, but the report will continue in the next issue, complete with illustrations of the flying and crashing.

Isn't this a fun hobby?

**Dave in the Railroad Pass Casino, Boulder City, Nevada**

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# Propstoppers R.C. M.A.C



***Dave Harding and Dick Bartkowski on El Dorado Dry Lake in 2005 with their Spirit of SAM models. That year Dick won and Dave placed second. This year they both flew the same models. Dick won and Dave finished well down the order***

## *Propstoppers Indoors*

Fellow Propstoppers Members,  
 I obtained the required Principal's signature and submitted the required forms for the following indoor dates at the Tinicum School: They are all first Fridays with the exception of January and flight time will be from 6:30 – 9:30 PM.

November 6, 2009

December 4, 2009

January 8, 2010

February 5, 2010

March 5, 2010

Look forward to seeing you there!

Mike Black