



The R/C Flyer

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June 2006

Next Meeting – June 8, 2006, Clear Lake Park Building – 7:00 PM

May meeting minutes

By: Mike Goza, JSCRCC Secretary

The Meeting started at 7:00pm 5/11/2006

Old Business:

Club fun fly was a success. There were a number of electrics competing. You should try to make the next one. Dave Hoffman handed out checks for the fun fly awards.

Herman and Mike have contacted JSC to follow up on the field improvements. They are currently looking for funds to pay for a runway improvement and electrical. It will be interesting to see what they come up with. In the mean time, we believe we should dismantle the current shade before it completely self destructs. We are proposing that we just fix the overhead shade ourselves. The members seemed to like the suggestion. The club will look into what it would take to fix it.

New Business:

As part of old/new business, James Lemon is going to take an inventory of what it will take to fix the shade. This will include pipes, cables, fittings, and tools. He will put together a price. There will be a special email to approve the cost and the tentative work date is first Saturday in June.

Randy Martin has asked for volunteers to hand out flyers on RC at the Wings over Houston event. We will contact and get Randy to give us some more details. There were a number of people that seemed willing to help.

MOM

No models were entered.

Entertainment

Dane brought a Fundango electric fun fly style aircraft for show and tell.



Meeting adjourned 8:20pm.

Windy Weather Flying

From the Middle Point RC Flyers, Murfreesboro TN

By: Clay Ramskill

All too often, on an otherwise nice but windy day, folks just don't fly. Obviously, for a beginner, that's common sense—but for someone who has some experience, the wind can be a challenge that adds some spice to flying.

While it's easy to see that experience level has a lot to do with how much wind is too much, it may not be quite as apparent that the type of model you're flying also can have a great effect on your ability to handle winds.

Let's go through some airplane design features to see which ones give us the best flying characteristics to handle winds and the resulting turbulence.

Size: In general, the larger the airplane, the better it will handle winds of all kinds; large models don't "flop around" as much!

Dihedral: The more dihedral in a model's wings, the more they are going to be affected by crosswind gusts; it is hard to keep the wings level, therefore lineup to the runway is difficult in a crosswind situation.

Wing Loading: The higher the wing loading, the less an airplane will be affected when hit with a gust.

Aspect Ratio: Lower aspect ratio (stubby) wings will be less bothered by gusts; there is less leverage for side forces to upset the airplane, and lower aspect ratio wings have a greater tolerance to changes in angle of attack caused by gusts.

Power: Having the power to overcome the force of wind is necessary. The same thing goes when you get into a sticky situation.

Lateral Control: Ailerons are beneficial in a crosswind landing and takeoff phases. The ability

to dip a wing into a crosswind without changing heading is essential, as is the ability to rudder the airplane parallel to the runway heading while keeping wings level with aileron while landing.

Landing Gear: Models with tricycle landing gear are easier to land and take off in a crosswind than tail draggers; in addition, the wider the spread on the main gear, the better.

Maneuverability: This one is a bit harder to quantify. You want a model with stability, yet you do need good maneuverability to cope with gusts. Therefore, you want a model that is stable, yet responsive.

Wing Mounting: Generally, a low-wing airplane will handle crosswinds better. This is because the center of gravity of the airplane is nearer, in a vertical sense, to the aerodynamic center of the wing. Therefore, a side gust does not roll the model as easily. Moreover, by mounting the main landing gear on that low-wing model, they can be spread wider.

It's unfortunate that almost every item above is in direct opposition to the characteristics found in many popular trainers. The main exception is the requirement for tricycle landing gear. But even with trainers, there are differences. Compare a Seniorita with the Kadet Mk2. While the Seniorita may be a bit slower and a bit easier to fly, the Kadet, with its ailerons, higher wing loading, lower aspect ratio, and lower dihedral, is a far better airplane when flying in windy conditions. Going a step further with the same kit manufacturer, the Cougar (.40)/Cobra (.60 size) kits embody *all* the right characteristics for windy flying.

In closing, I offer Confucius' only known saying about RC flying: "To learn to fly in wind, one must fly in wind!"

Basics of Electric Flight

*From the Albuquerque Radio Control Club,
Albuquerque NM*

By: Pat Tritle

I really enjoy getting together with clubs and speaking to the group about the basics of electric power. However, because there is so much information that needs to be passed along, it would be difficult, if not impossible, for those attending to remember much of the pertinent information. For that reason, it's better to write up the basic guidelines so that those who are interested in getting into electrics would have the information available for reference at a later date.

Here goes. I'll keep the numbers as simple as possible to avoid unnecessary confusion.

OK, here's how it all shakes out. The basic power required to fly an electric model is as follows:

Direct Drive Systems watts/pound	60
Gear Drive Systems watts/pound	50
Mild aerobic performance watts/pound	70-80
For all-out aerobatics watts/pound	100-110
3-D performance watts/pound or more	150

The above numbers are based on models with wing loadings from 8-16 oz/square foot. As with gas models, higher wing loadings require more power since they must fly faster to support the added weight. By the same token, a lightly-loaded model with a wing loading in the 3-5 oz/square foot range will fly very well at 25 -30 watts/pound.

What's a 'watt'; and where can I get some?

Wattage is the term used in electric flight to relate the level of power that an electric drive system will produce. To relate it to terms we're familiar with, 746 watts = 1 horsepower. To calculate the

wattage delivered by a given system looks like this: amps x volts = watts. So where do these numbers come from and how do I know how many volts and amps are needed to fly a given model?

Okay, let's say you want a mildly aerobic sport model with a 14 oz/square foot wing loading that will weigh in at 2 pounds. We already know that the power requirement for a model like this is about 70 watts/pound, so we're going to need to generate about 140 watts. Let's assume that you are going to use an eight-cell Ni-Cd battery. At 1.2 volts per cell, eight cells will deliver 9.6 volts. To arrive at the necessary current draw to achieve 140 watts, simply divide 140 (watts) by 9.6 (volts) and you arrive at 14.58 amps.

Now, let's assume that you have a three-cell Li-Poly battery for the model, which is rated at 11.1 volts. The formula is the same; 140 (watts) divided by 11.1 (volts) = 12.6 amps. As you can see, as the available voltage increases, the lower the current draw needs to be to deliver the necessary wattage.

Now here's something to consider when selecting your system: the higher the current draw, the shorter the flight duration on any given battery. Therefore, the ideal setup would be to use a higher-voltage battery with lower current draw for maximum duration. On the downside, when using Ni-Cd and NiMH batteries, as the cell count goes up, the weight will increase significantly as well. It works that way with Lithium too, but Lithium batteries are dramatically lighter than the old "round" cells.

Okay, let's say we're going to use an 11.1 volt Li-Poly battery. All we need to do now is select a motor that will swing enough propeller at 12.6 amps to fly the model at a top speed of around 40-45 mph and we're in business. Now that you know the parameters, visit your local hobby shop and select a motor that fits that description.

Gear Drive vs. Direct Drive: Why is one better than the other?

Well, it all depends on the kind of performance you're looking for. If you're looking to go fast, go with direct drive. Going fast requires a high-pitch propeller turning high rpm. The formula to calculate propeller pitch speed is an easy one; it looks like this:

$\text{rpm} \times \text{pitch (in inches)} / 1056 = \text{mph}$

Let's say that you are turning a 7-6 propeller at 14,000 rpm. $14,000 \times 6 = 84,000 / 1056 = 79.55$ mph

Now, let's assume you are setting up a slow, relaxing park flyer with about a 5 oz/square foot wing loading. If we swing a 9-7 propeller at about 3,500 rpm, we'd be looking at a top speed of roughly 23 mph. To swing that much propeller with a small, light drive system, we would use a gear drive unit at a very low current draw and a small, light battery.

Again, to make a known comparison, we can relate all this to riding a 10-speed bicycle. A gear drive swinging a big propeller is like riding your bike in low gear. You pedal like mad with little effort, you don't go very fast, but you can climb steep hills with ease. The direct drive system could be compared to riding the bike in high gear. It'll really go fast, and even though you're pedaling slower, it requires considerably more effort.

What all this boils down to is "propeller disc loading." We all know what wing loading is: it's the amount of the model's weight that each square foot of wing must carry. Prop disc-loading works the same way. A large propeller will be more lightly loaded, thus delivering more torque than a smaller propeller turning high rpm. The tradeoff, of course, will be speed.

One more thing to cover and we'll give you a rest. Batteries are rated in "voltage" and "amperage." Voltage dictates the amount of power the battery will deliver. The amperage rating dictates for how long the battery will deliver that power. To relate

that to glow fuel, consider the voltage as nitro content. High voltage (nitro) means more power. The amperage is related to the quantity of fuel, or simply the "size of the tank."

To figure the size of battery needed, let's go back to our 140-watt sport airplane. If we're pulling 14 amps from a 1400 mAh (1.4 amp hour) battery, we will have full power duration of five to six minutes. In the real world, with proper throttle management, you'll see flight times of approximately eight minutes. These are common flight times, even with liquid-fueled models.

To arrive at that number, divide the battery amp rating by the current draw: $1.4 \text{ (amp hours)} / 14 \text{ (amps)} = 0.1$. Then take 60 (minutes per amp hour) $\times 0.1 = 6$ minutes. Now, to double the duration, you must either cut the current draw in half (to 7 amps), or double the battery size (to 2800 mAh or 2.8 amp hours)—again we see tradeoffs. To reduce the current draw, we can use a larger, higher-pitch propeller turning slower with very little weight penalty. If we double the size of the battery capacity, the weight penalty is quite high unless we go over to the new Lithium batteries in which we will discover we have benefited from a tremendous weight reduction, but at a higher price than conventional batteries.

Okay, I promise I'll quit before we all end up in "system overload." Once again, there's a tremendous amount of information here for a newcomer to electrics to digest. For now, I'll offer up one last piece of advice. To get started, work with a known good design, and use the recommended equipment that has been proven to work. Talk to the people who are successful and copy what they're doing. The one thing I do know about modelers is that they are always willing to share their knowledge with those interested in what they are doing.

Upcoming Events

6/3/06-6/4/06: Bomber Field War Bird Event,
Monaville, TX. Nick Stratos CD, 281-471-6762.

6/18/2006 : Braden Clough Big Bird Fly In, Texas
City, TX. CD is Ken Juneau, 281-996-5711.

6/24/2006 : 2006 Houston Helicopter Fun Fly,
Katy, TX. Contact CD Ty Prause at 979-732-9072
for more information.

Club Officers

President: Herman Burton 281-474-7133
Vice-President: James Lemon 832-385-4779
Treasurer: Dave Hoffman 281-479-1945 (W)
832-689-6201 (Cell)
Secretary: Mike Goza 281-554-4016(H)
281-483-4695(W)

Instructors

Chief Instructor:

Dave Hoffman: 281-479-1945 (W)
832-689-6201 (Cell)

Fixed:

Mike Laible: 281-474-1255 (H)
281-226-4192 (W)
James Lemon: 832-385-4779
Clay Bare: 281-488-2992
Don Fisher: 281-474-4942

Heli & Fixed:

Mike Goza: 281-554-4016 (H)
281-483-4695 (W)
Steve Rhodes: 409-948-2881

The R/C Flyer

Editor/Electronic Distribution

Charlie Teixeira
Articles and Want Ads may be submitted to
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