



The R/C Flyer

Volume 37, Issue 04

April 2012

Next Meeting – April 12, 2012, Clear Lake Park Building– 7:00 PM



IN THE PITS

by Michael Laible

I can't believe it is April already. It sure seems like time flies the older I get. Somebody once told me that, "Life is like a toilet paper roll, the more you peel the faster it turns". Oh well.

April 2012 finds our club in great shape. Our membership and dues are up from this time last year. We also have a new canopy already paid for and waiting to be installed. However, it seems like the old one just won't give up. I always thought that our logo and "FLY RC" would be great to be painted on the canopy so it would be visible from Saturn Lane. Hummmmm. Anyway, this makes for short business meetings and we can get right to the fun stuff.

It was nice seeing everyone at the March meeting. It turned out to be a great meeting with Randy Stone and Bill Schwander providing entertainment with their model descriptions. Bill was the only MOM entry so it gave us time to just socialize and talk. It really makes for an enjoyable meeting.

We discussed the fun fly coming up on April 14. We will talk about this more at the April meeting, but the basics are 3 fun fly events starting at 9 am, lunch provided, and make sure you have your guest list up to date. This can be checked by going to member list and using your last name as username (all lower case), and password as your AMA number.

I bought the Top Flite P-47 Giant Scale kit about 5 years ago and just now have put it on the building board. Below is a pic of the top half of the fuse with tail feathers installed. All I can say is after 3 models built from plans, it nice to build from a kit.



That's all I have. This letter is chuck full with member contributions, Enjoy.

As always,

Godspeed and safe landings

Mike L.

MARCH MEETING

by Michael Laible

I am going to use the same words as I started this column with last month. The March meeting picked right up where the February and January one left off. We had over 35 members and guest in attendance. We also had three nice models and plenty of discussion to fill the hour. It is always nice to see Bill from the great white north.

The first pic is Randy Stone with his Rise of the Phoenix (twice that is) SPAD XIII. It's really a nice looking model and flies great for 7/8s of a loop. It was the last 1/8 that was a killer. He has rebuilt and since wrote me that he has all the bugs worked out and fly's nice.



Bill has to be part Italian. He always uses his hands in his presentations. Bill talked about his PT-19 y Top Notch and J-3 Cub. Both are nice looking models.

The second pic is Bill's PT-19 and J-3 Cub. The cockpit is shown in the inset and really looked nice.



See what you are missy at the meetings. I usually try to keep the business to 30 minutes and use the rest of the time for membership camaraderie.

See you at the meeting.

MARCH MINUTES

by Kent Stromberg

5 guests :
Louis Flour
Brian Berry
Mahesh
Greg West and Alicia
Glen Jenkensen

Refreshments next Month Bill Schwander

Discussion of NODAM as President Flying in Friday – no flying 4:15 thru 9:30 30 miles radius

Treasurer Report \$5481.97 on hand Dave talked to scheduler of meeting room. All is well now as they put us down for Tuesdays instead of Thursdays. That is corrected.

Membership committee Chair Herman Burton advises:
Membership 94 members as of tonight.
Reason for new app every year is to get current guest list and new email addresses.
Visitors or new members allow 2 weeks after sign up for security list to get to Guards

Mike to discuss with Nasa MOU now with a different person at NASA

Would like info on Club for JSC Historical Preservation

Fun Fly 4/14

Show and tell Electric Fly Spad
MOM Bill Schwander J-3 he Also brought his PT-19

MARCH MODEL OF MONTH

by Michael Laible

This month's winner is Bill Schwander with his J-3 Cub.



B-24 PAINTING

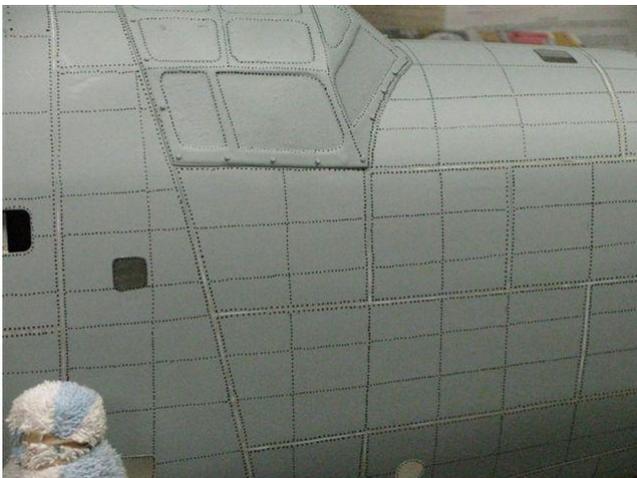
by Herman Burton

The construction of the giant B-24 at the manufacturing plant in Seabrook has been completed. All that remains is for the plane to be painted. The Seabrook assembly line was requested to be turned over to other tasks, so the painting was sub-contracted to a northern town where the humidity is lower, and where special expertise is available.

All WWII aircraft, whether they be fighters or bombers, look better with panel lines and rivets. The B-24 is no exception, and the next photo shows the progress being made in this regard.



Simulated rivets are also a great feature of R/C aircraft. The next photo shows a few of the thousands of rivets being hand-applied, one-at-a-time, to this aircraft.



The canopy of the B-24 is shown in the second photograph. Masking has been applied over the clear portions of the canopy, was applied in a liquid form, allowed to harden, and will be removed after all painting is accomplished.

Production at a nearby city north of Houston continues. The contractor has been commended for superb performance to date, and will shortly complete his portion of this big, beautiful WWII bomber.

HIGH ALTITUDE FLYING

by Terry Dunn

My family recently took a last-minute spring break trip to Colorado. We decided to stay at a ranch house in the Rockies about 40 miles west of Colorado Springs (www.pumahillsriverranch.com). Based on the photos we saw on the internet, it looked like there would be plenty of space to sneak in an RC flight or two. As I packed the minivan for our 1100 mile journey, I made sure to leave enough space for my FlyZone SkyFly Max and a transmitter box full of stuff I'd need to fly.

When we arrived at the ranch, it was immediately apparent that the internet photos didn't do this place justice...no photos could. It is simply gorgeous. My kids bolted from the car and instantly began climbing the huge rocks and making snowballs from the icy patches that still remained. For a guy who has spent the vast majority of his life living within 30 miles of some beach, I found it easy to appreciate the allure of mountain life.

It was a day or two into our stay before I was able to get out my RC gear. This would be my first time flying at high altitude (8400 ft) and I wasn't really sure what to expect. Conventional wisdom dictates that you increase both the diameter and pitch of your prop to compensate for the thinner air. However, the SkyFly's pusher motor is located above the tail boom and even the stock 8x4 prop provides minimal clearance. The best I could do was move to an 8x6 prop, so that's what I did.

Rather than just logging some stick time, my true incentive for bringing the SkyFly was to capture aerial video footage of the area. My SkyFly is rigged to hold a Flip Mino HD camera in the nose. I've made many video

flights around the Houston area with this combo and I was ready for a new setting.

Before leaving Houston, I removed the landing gear from the SkyFly. I presumed that the ground would be muddy from the spring thaw and I wouldn't have a decent runway. As it turned out, the Tarryall River that runs through the front yard was still quite frozen. In fact, we were able to walk across it easily. It would have made a perfect runway, had I brought the landing gear along. I convinced myself that I was better off without the weight and drag anyway and accepted the necessary hand-launch.

My first flight was made without the camera installed. To my surprise, the SkyFly flew just fine. Other than carrying more speed to maintain level flight, there were no drastic differences caused by the altitude. At times, I thought it seemed "looser" in the turns, but I'm still not convinced that it wasn't all in my head. During the five days that we stayed at the ranch, I was able to put in 3 flights with the camera. Everything went well. I even managed to avoid the plentiful cow patties on landings!

On the advice of the ranch owner, we drove 10 miles deeper into the mountains to Wilkerson Pass. Here, expansive fields are ringed by 14,000 ft mountain peaks. The hay from these fields was once considered top-notch stuff and was shipped to Saudia Arabia for their horses. As the kids ran through the fields, I took advantage of the bright sunshine and light winds to get in one more flight.

I was really glad I had brought along my RC equipment on this trip. I only wish I'd had more time to shoot footage of the area...maybe next time. I've posted some of the video on my [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com/channel/ucrboaw) channel "rcrboaw". Have a look.



20 YEARS AND NINE LIVES OF A PLANE

by Jon McFather

This is a story of a plane that started its building journey about 20 years ago (I am guessing). It is yet to fly, but has been patiently waiting through at least three owners and two decades of construction/reconstruction/destruction to get to the point where it is at today. Fortunately for this plane, I am naive enough with my building skill and confidence to play a part in its story (with me at least). I guess some planes are like cats and have nine lives.

About six months ago I responded to an ad in the JSCRCC Swap Site for a partially constructed 81" Top Flite Cessna Skylane kit. About that same time I had decided that I wanted to build a float plane and began looking for a good candidate. That's when I saw the ad. I paid a visit to see the plane, decided it was a good candidate and the price was right so bought it on the spot. (Plane Life #3) Leading up to this purchase, I was trying to decide between a Piper Cub J3 and a Cessna of some sort. This visit made that choice for me. I was under the Cessna spell.

Because of the current construction state of the plane, I felt that my build time was going

to be greatly reduced because the wings, ailerons, flaps, elevators and rudder were already built and either sheeted or covered with MonoKote. Additionally, the fuse was framed out, but not sheeted. Excellent! - a great head start. Taylor Lake – Here I come!

Plane Life #1: I was told that the partially completed kit had been purchased (by the seller) in the mid to late '90s from a local hobby shop. The hobby shop salesman said that they had received the plane because the previous owner had died and was asked by the family to help sell it. Plane Life #2: The current owner had made great construction strides over the past 10 or so years, but did not see himself completing it any time soon so he decided to sell it.

Back to Plane Life #3. Once I got the plane home I opened the kit and spread it out to see what was and wasn't there. Fortunately, as promised, it was all pretty much there. After pouring over the instructions I quickly began to realize though that whoever started the build had taken several liberties with the plans and building sequence. I found that three types of glue had been used though the build: Ambroid, Epoxy and CA - all in various states of adhesion from broken to solid. In many places the glue had dried out and lost most of its "stick". Additionally, a lot of the wood had dry-rotted and separated around the joints. Apparently raw balsa does not prosper when left in the open air over a couple of decades. In response, I meticulously examined every connection/joint testing for strength. I re-glued or replaced wood where needed. Also, the plane suffered from a whole lot of hangar rash and in addition to unfortunate repair attempts – mostly in the fuse. Additionally, the ABS plastic parts (cowl, wheel pants, wing struts) were each glued together with far too much glue effectively doubling the weight to the original parts themselves. Finally, the tail

cone was missing. So I tossed all the ABS parts and ordered a new cowl and tail cone from Fiberglass Specialties. Based on the quality of what I received I am very happy with that decision. Finally, I found a NOS (New Old Stock) O.S. FS 120 engine on e-Bay for a steal. It should be more than enough power to get this girl in the air.

Once I had the joints re-secured I began thinking about how to convert the landing supports from tricycle gear to float gear. The landing gear mounting blocks were not located in the correct position for float so I had to add additional structure.



To help save on weight I removed the original wheel gear mounting blocks. I am completely committed to a float plane now.

I purchased a pair of 43" balsa & ply floats (already built) from e-Bay that had not yet been finished. They were standard flat top floats. To get that scale look, I added a hump running the length of each, mounting blocks, and a servo bay to the rear to get that scale look.



I had found a picture of a 1970 Cessna Skylane that I wanted to model this plane after and began building up the floats as a copy. I am a product of the '70s and love the look of this paint scheme. I know - my wife can't understand it either.



Next I had to figure out the landing gear wire. There is very little fabricating advice available on the web other than float positioning and attitude to the plane. Using nothing more than blind confidence and an easy configuration, I cut the music wires, bent and braze welded them together. I plan on wrapping them in teardrop shaped aluminum tube "pants" for that scale look. I will also run the rudder servo wires through the rear tubes to the fuse and receiver using silicone to water seal. We'll see if that was a good plan on flight day.

Now for the fuse. When I read the plans, a specific set of sequential instructions were

clearly provided by Top Flite. Well, the fuse builder must have had other inspiration. The plans call for the bottom half to be built and sheeted much like the hull of a boat. Once finished, the hull is supposed to be flipped over and the top of the fuse is to be built up at the back and working up to the front in a precise order ending with its sheeting and the adding of surface features. Whoever built this baby built the entire top and bottom at one time disregarding symmetry and instruction -sheeting nothing in the process. Many parts were prematurely attached that should have been added after the sheeting was completed. As a result, the fuse is slightly taller on the right side than the left because the joints were not connected correctly leaving gaps. I broke the joints and re-set where possible, and reinforcing those where it wasn't. In the end the fuse is a good 98% where I would like it, but isn't as square as it was designed to be. There isn't any twist, but is slightly oblong at any given cross section. Also, the builder went slightly crazy laying stringers. I had to cut away about half of what was originally added (too soon), and replace the other half because they had been either broken and poorly repaired or were dry-rotted. At this point I really had to wonder if this build is worth it. Fortunately like I stated earlier, the wings and control surfaces had all been built well by a different builder so it wasn't a complete basket case. I just had to be diligent when stabilizing, squaring and finishing the fuse and its integrated tail surfaces. Finally, none of the Top Flite supplied tail feather control hardware (other than one control arm and the welded control push rods) were in the box. I came up with a control system (based on what I read in the plans/instructions) that I believe is dependable enough to stand up to the test of time and forces exerted from the tail feathers. It was a little nerve wracking permanently enclosing the mechanics in the fuse.

It's been about 4 or 5 months now and I am getting more confident each day that this project will be airworthy when finished. I am predicting that it will be ready sometime in late April. I have decided to completely fiberglass the entire plane. All the wing control surfaces had already been covered in MonoKote and had the characteristic Cessna ridges applied to the MonoKote skin. I had to carefully remove each ridge from the ailerons and flaps (top and bottom – about 300) without destroying them so I could use them once the fiberglass had been applied.



I used my heat gun to help remove the MonoKote leaving a lovely layer of white goo to remove before I could prep the surface to be glassed. In the process I also found out that the original builder had the same idea of fiber glassing but must have given up when the epoxy did not completely cure. After all these years the epoxy was still a little gooey/tacky. Add the leftover goo from the MonoKote and ailerons could second as quality fly-paper.



Here is how the plane pretty much looks today. I am finishing up the window and window frame installations. Unfortunately, one of the previous owners had cut out the front and rear window inserts prematurely. They were cut too small for their frames so I had to build up extra framing to compensate. I found the windows in the box warped and covered in a green fungus (from being left out in the elements). Fortunately, they cleaned up pretty well, but were badly bent out of shape. As for the finish, I am about one final coat of epoxy and a sanding frenzy away from applying the primer paint. As in the picture above, she's going to have a white base coat with brown and tan trim. Additionally, I have a very good friend who has a computerized cutting machine who has cut the graphics/logos for me out of color true MonoKote. I look very much forward to the day that I can add those on. This chapter of the story is almost over, but not quite. A new chapter will begin on the water hopefully sooner than later. I will definitely think twice in the future when given the opportunity to pick up a project that has already been begun. For this project, I believe it will all be worth the effort and risk. As one of my building mentors tells me all the time – “The saga continues”. Hopefully, this plane only uses one more of its lives – Plane Life #4 – the flying for many years life.

Upcoming Events

April 7 Texas City War Birds
April 14 Livingston Fun Fly
Apr 21-22 Prop Nuts Swap Meet & Fun Fly
Apr 28-29 New Waverly Big Bird
May 5-6 Kingsbury Fly-In
May 19-20 Prop Nuts Tru Turn
May 19 Texas City Big Bird

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Club Homepage

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FOR SALE

P-47D built from Zirol plans. It is their smaller version with a wing span of 72". Has a Saito 1.80 four stroke engine, 16 oz fuel tank, Robart retracts and an on-board glo driver. Includes all installed Futaba servos (no RX or TX). The plane was JSCRCC's Model of the Month in March 2010. The plane has been flown once, flew great. The plane has no damage and is in like new condition. I have too many airplanes and not enough time to fly them all. Priced to sell at \$750.



Call Charlie at 281-642-4557.