

THE FLYER



Middlesex County
R-C Fliers, Inc.

May 2008



Black Magic v2.2 Pattern Plane. Credit: Cover Photo from the January 2008 issue of the *K-Factor*, the NSRCA's monthly magazine

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President's Message - *Charging into Spring...*

Happy Spring to all my fellow Fliers!

→ You know it's truly springtime when yours truly actually dusts off a glow-powered model and heads for the field. Since our annual Field Cleanup and Maintenance day was a great success (thanks to the **20+ members** who showed up to help!), I knew it was time to go flying.

→ My first attempt to start flying my UCanDo-46 a couple of weekends ago resulted in a reminder that battery maintenance is critical over any long stretch of inactivity. I've got high-capacity NiMh receiver packs in several of my models, and they don't seem to handle being ignored very well. This was especially true here, where I had not flown the U-Can-Do at all last year. I might be able to resurrect the old pack with a little attention, but I've since replaced it with a new one - it's

not worth the risk. Another thing that this episode reminded me of is the need to break in new battery packs. We get so used to doing fast peak charging, but don't ignore the benefits of a nice slow C/10 charge rate, especially when breaking in new packs and reconditioning older ones.

→ As a reminder, "**Training Night**" has reverted to **Tuesday nights** for this year. On Tuesday nights, the field is closed to regular flying if there are instructors working with students. Good safe training is the key to a strong membership, and it is best accomplished in a safe, controlled environment free of excessive distraction. If you have any questions, feel free to contact me.

→ There are good things in store for us this year, and one of them is the upcoming "**Middlesex County Invitational**" F2D Control Line **Combat competition** to be held in the park on May 24th. We'll be hosting this

event at the request of the New England Control Line Combat Association.

(<http://necn.homestead.com>)

Since we tend not to do much flying during the day on Saturdays (during soccer season) this seemed like an ideal opportunity to play "spectator" in our own back yard. Expect more details on the web or by email - I'm really looking forward to learning more about this aspect of the hobby. We should also all be gearing up for the annual **Construction Derby** scheduled for June 8th.

→ This time of year, the phrase "Spring Cleaning" comes to mind, and that applies to **www.mcrfc.org** as well. Keep an eye out for an upcoming "recharge" of the club website! See you at the field (and the meetings), but meanwhile...

Fly safe, and have fun! **Jeff**

Introduction to RC Pattern *by Jim Orsborn*

Okay, so the Intro to RC Pattern that we scheduled for May 4th almost happened. Personal travel, work, and several other distractions got in the way of our early scheduling efforts. But then on April 27th I got an email from one of the speakers asking if we had set the date! Needless to say I went into high gear trying to set the date and finalize plans.

Scott Smith (MA) and John Pavlick (CT) are District 1 Pattern pilots and they had agreed to visit our field for an Informal Introduction to Pattern. Plans were to have them bring several RC Pattern planes, and they were going to make a couple demonstration flights. Between flights, Scott and John agreed to answer questions and show us some of their equipment.

Proposed Fun Fly style Pattern Competition

I am proposing that our club host a new event later this fall. The rules are going to include a Pattern sequence, but I'd like to think we can make it a Fun-Fly type of event like we had last year. I'm offering the following guidelines and hope that I get some feedback.

Planes: We're definitely going to have to exclude the really large ones; say over 80" wing span. But should we limit electric entries? Last year, we let anything fly that could complete all of the maneuvers.

Classes: I'm thinking Novice and Expert. The Novice class will include both rolls and loops, but no snaps or point rolls like the Expert. I think we can add another class with some 3D maneuvers.

Judging: How about using NSCRA Aerobatic Judging rules as the guideline? I think we need some more help in this area; but I'm thinking about adding a timer judge, a safety judge, and maybe an "artistic" judge? More to come. Later.

Sequences:

Novice:

1. Taxi maneuver
2. Takeoff
3. Two Loops
4. Pattern Turn
5. Stall Turn
6. Horizontal Roll
7. Landing

Expert:

1. Taxi maneuver
2. Takeoff
3. Square Loop
4. Humpty Bump *
5. Stall Turn **
6. Cobra
7. Half Reverse Cuban Eight
8. Landing.

Some possible 3D substitutions might include:

- * 30 Sec. Hover and
- ** 360 degree Torque Roll.

I've included the taxi maneuver which would be timed. And a spot landing would get bonus points like our Fun Fly event last year. Notice that there is no balloon bust maneuver. The aerobatic maneuvers will not be timed, because they would be judged for precision.

Feedback:

Okay, this is not going to work without some feedback from you, the membership. I am all ears, so please let me know if you would enter this event, what rule changes would make it more fun, what you think we should offer as prizes, what date(s) do you prefer.

Jim Orsborn
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Is Our Field Suitable?

One of the key things that Scott and John were going to talk about was the suitability of our field for actually flying pattern.

Scott Smith had taken a look at the Google map of the field and was worried that he needed to fly out over the beaver pond — behind the big tree across the runway.

Apparently the normal “flight box” for pattern competitions is 150 meters out from the pilot & judges station.

To understand this perspective, I took a plane to the field the other day and tried to step back from our usual pilot’s station. I put the plane on the ground in the pits, and stayed there while I taxied out to the runway. Just before takeoff, I stepped back further until I was standing just in front of the Frequency Pin.

I was able to fly some basic maneuvers out over the runway. But the “feel” really is quite different being that far away from the plane. Remember, we teach takeoff and landing while standing almost on the runway.

But, I was actually surprised how much better I could see the plane as it did loops. Level passes were also much lower because I was inside the tree line.

I found that the turn around maneuvers at each end of the field were a lot more difficult. I had trouble staying in line with the runway on these turns, so I usually had to make a correction after each turn to push the plane out away from me.

I thought about making the landing from where I was standing, but decided the better choice was to use the regular pilot’s box located beside the runway. By the way, I kept the

same flight line and did not fly over the pit area.

Why the Interest in Pattern?

In this last section I’m going to try and explain why I’m interested in Pattern and suggest how it might just make us all better pilots.

To me, pattern planes and their pilots are what fine cabinets and a cabinet maker are to wood working. Anyone can learn to use a hammer and a circular saw. But you need better tools and more skill to build a fine cabinet.

We use trainers to teach the basics of flight, but our program does not even talk about using the rudder in flight. To fly aerobatic maneuvers well, the pilot must know how to use the rudder with finesse. To fly a circular loop, the pilot also needs to know a bit about throttle management as well.

Did you know that pattern pilots try to have enough power to climb at the same speed the fly level flight? They also try to use props that will help slow them down in dives, so they can maintain the same speed in a dive.

Over the years, model airplanes have become so much better and they can perform amazing feats. But it still takes a lot of skill to fly graceful aerobatics.

I’m told that big (2 Meter) planes fly a whole lot better than the smaller versions. So I guess my dream would be to fly a large pattern plane and have it last for hundreds of flights.

Conclusion

So let me know what you think about a Pattern Fun Fly event. Do I just drop the idea, or should I refine the rules and post some guidelines for flying and judging each maneuver?

Apr Club Meeting *by Jim Orsborn*

Jeff Ward called our April meeting to order with 16 members and 1 guest in attendance. He checked with Ray Capobianco who indicated that our current membership stands at 68 paid up members. If there is anyone who has not yet paid, dues for 2008 have gone up, so please check the Website and Membership application for the latest dues information.

Vic Vogel, our new Treasurer reported that we started with \$5,825 in the bank, but after adding dues and auction income and paying some minor bills, we now have \$6,638 as of the end of March. Pretty good for a small club.

Jeff reported that plans are going well for the Field Clean-up Day scheduled for April 19th. (Sorry we don't

have any pics for this newsletter — maybe next month.) Plans include working on the benches, a new safety fence and a bit of painting in addition to the usual grounds work.

Jeff also mentioned that the Recreation Department had posted an April 23rd Introduction to RC Flight in their Activities Bulletin. He did not know who would show up, but requested help with planes, simulators and extra magazines.

We currently have two club events on the official schedule. June 8th is the next Construction Derby, and June 15th there is a trip to the Windsor Locks Aviation Museum at Bradley Field in CT.

In addition to these first two events, July 20th has been proposed as a Family Fun Day and a date has yet to be set for a Fun Fly competition

in the fall. Yankee Doodle is the weekend of Sept 12-14 this year. Please watch the calendar for event dates as they become finalized.

Dave Varrell reported that the town rolled the runway for free. Not sure exactly how this happened, but the field does look to be in pretty good shape. A few brave flyers have already used it this year.

Ray reminded folks that **Training Night** this year will be Tuesday evening. Soccer and Track continue to be in conflict with our schedule. Contact Ray if interested in training.

Tim Smith, from Acton, was our guest this month. Tim says he has a couple of kids, and he has been flying a Super Cub from Hobby Zone. The problem is it is slow and does not handle windy

conditions well. We suggested that Tim join our flight training program and learn how to fly for free.

His interest in electric planes sparked a bit of a debate. Have electricians risen to the point where they can make a suitable trainer aircraft?

New Business:

Jeff reported that he had been approached by a Control Line Combat group that is interested in holding an event on our upper field. Consensus was that it would not be a problem, so Jeff was asked to finalize plans. (Ed. Note: The date has been set for May 24th. — Check the website for updates.

Raffle:

Pres. Jeff Ward won the raffle this month. He flew the Indoor RTF Ember after the meeting.

Raffle prizes were from **Hobby Fever**. Stop by and say thanks.

Calendar of Events

First, notice that Tuesday has now been designated as Training Night. Last year we had issues with the Track Team having meets on Wed afternoons, so we changed to Tuesday.

Club meeting are the second Wednesday of each month. If you have not been to a meeting recently, we would enjoy having you stop by to renew friendships. Each month we have a show and tell time, so bring something to share and get a free ticket for the monthly raffle prize.

Both Mother's Day and Father's Day are listed on the calendar. Don't forget Mother's day, and maybe you can get a pass to take in the trip to the Windsor Locks Aviation Museum on Father's Day. Rumor is they hold this day special at the museum, and let fathers actually climb into the cockpit seats on several museum exhibits. Make the trip (Contact Dave Varrell) and you

might just get a chance to take a virtual ride in a P-51, a B-25 or some other piece of aviation history.

Our Construction Derby is on the calendar scheduled for June 8th. This is always a fun event. We're looking forward to the possibility of having Andy Argentia, AMA District 1 VP, visit the field for this event. We may even make a photo spread in the District 1 Report for MA.

I have listed two possible Pattern events. These are listed on the NSRCA Website, so if you are interested in more info go to <http://www.nsrca.us> and click on District 1.

We still have a few other events scheduled for later in the year. They include a Family Fun Day on July 20th and Yankee Doodle on Sept. 12—14.

May 2008

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
11 May: Mother's Day				1	2	3
4	5	6 T	7	8	9	10 ●
11	12	13 T	14 ●	15	16	17
18	19	20 T	21	22	23	24
25	26	27 T	28	29	30	31

Sat. May 10: Pattern Primer, at the Aeroguidance Society Airport in Endicott, NY.

Wed. May 14: MCRCF Monthly Meeting, at the Lewis Building on Boston Road

June 2008

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3 T	4	5	6	7
8 ●	9	10 T	11 ●	12	13	14 ●
15 ●	16	17 T	18	19	20	21
22	23	24 T	25	26	27	28
29	30	15 June: Father's Day				

Sun. Jun 8th: MCRCF Construction Derby.

Wed. Jun 11: MCRCF Monthly Meeting, at the Lewis Building on Boston Road

Sat. Jun 14: Pattern Primer, at SIRCM Field on Staten Island, NY

Official Publication of the Middlesex County R-C Fliers, Inc.

The FLYER is the official publication of the Middlesex County R-C Fliers, Inc., a non-profit organization chartered for the promotion of radio controlled model aircraft building and flying. The club operates a flying field located on Treble Cove Road, Billerica, MA. The club offers free flight instruction to any member provided they have a current membership with the Academy of Model Aeronautics. Contact any club member for details. Meetings are held on the second Wednesday of every month between September and June in the Billerica Recreation Dept building at 248 Boston Road in Billerica, starting at 7:30 PM.

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May 14th, 2008

7:30 PM

Lewis Building

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Billerica, MA