

EL TORBELLINO

NEWSLETTER OF SAN DIEGO ORBITEERS FREE FLIGHT CLUB

OCTOBER 2012



The Prez's Corner – Don Bartick

The US FF Champs at Lost Hills was a very well contested event with 3 outstanding days of weather. The new flight line on the eastern boundaries worked out well. The prevailing light winds Friday and Saturday were to the Southwest towards the tree farm under cultivation. Fewer than 10 flights ended up in the farm field, but all successfully retrieved. Sunday, the breezes were directly West and you could chase forever. The award moneys were well accepted. Terry Thorkelson won all the special awards along with many individual events and went away with hundreds of dollars. Mike P and John O did well in the electric events. I believe Mike got 1st in F1Q and John got 1st in E-36. Starlink added an additional \$100 to E-36. So John came away with \$150. I won ½ A Classic and placed 3rd in ½ A Nos. and Mulvihill. Don't know what Mike was awarded, since FAI awards were going to be mailed to the recipients.

We are going to have to take another look at our monthly club venue. The turnout has been decreasing each month to where we don't have a forum. Either there is no interest to go to meetings anymore or they're at the wrong place or wrong time. We'll visit the subject at the next meeting.

This is a wrap for now. See you at the October meeting. Bring something for Show & Tell and an A-6 to fly.

Remember; idle hands are the tools of the devil. So go build something to fly.

San Diego Orbiteers Monthly Meeting Friday, Sept. 14, 2012

Only three in attendance tonight: President Don Bartick, John Hutchison, and John Merrill.

With only three members, it was decided that there would not be a quorum, so no meeting. We did manage to sit around the table sharing some great conversation about a variety of subjects for an hour or so until the other group in the building left. We then put away our tables and chairs and commenced indoor flying. Along the way, we congratulated John Hutchison on being the first from the west coast to become enshrined into the FAC Hall of Fame. Also, thanks to John H., his wife, and George Mansfield for putting on a great contest for Scale Staffel in August.

Indoor flying only had two flyers, Don and John M. John H. was nice to be the official timer and recorder for us. As the precedent has been set at previous meetings, we used the system of adding the best two flights out of ten attempts.

Don's best two were 67 and 68 seconds, for a total of 135 seconds.

John M. had a 79 and a 76 second flight, for a total of 155 seconds.

Big money was exchanged (a whole dollar!), and we then called it a night.

Next month, let hope to have a better attendance. Be sure to bring something for show-and-tell, and an A-6 of the Mather or Fudo design to fly after the meeting.

Respectfully submitted by John R. Merrill,
Secretary.

2012 ORBITEER FLYING SCHEDULE

- Oct 14 - P-30
Power, P-20, HLG & CLG
- Oct 27/28 SW FAI Champs*, Boulder City, NV
- Oct 27/28 Scale Staffel FAC Contest* (3RD of 3)
- Nov 18 - Old Timer Rubber Stick (Small)
Power, P-20, HLG & CLG
- Dec 16 - Coupe
Power, P-20, HLG & CLG

*** Non-Club Points Event**
Otay Field Weather (619) 661-8297



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ORBITEERS YEARLY MEMBERSHIP DUES

- Junior - \$10
Senior - \$15
Open - \$25
Family - \$30
65+ - \$15
Lifetime - \$250
Non-Member Newsletter Subscription - \$15

Submit Dues to Club Treasurer:

Howard Haupt
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San Diego, CA 92117-4622

THE FINE PRINT THE FINE PRINT

El Torbellino is the official newsletter of the San Diego Orbiteers, an Academy of Model Aeronautics (AMA) Charter Club (#1113) and a California not for Profit Corporation. This newsletter is sent monthly to all paid members, selected exchange and magazine editors. Non-Members may subscribe at \$15.00 per year within the U.S.A., offshore price will be adjusted to reflect the postage required. Materials from El Torbellino may be reproduced on an unlimited basis by other publications, but proper credit is requested.

ORBITEER WEB SITE

www.SanDiegoOrbiteers.com

Webmaster: **Bob Beecroft**

MONEY MATTERS - H.Haupt

September 2012

Income:	
Dues (1)	15.00

	\$ 15.00
Expenses:	
Sept. Newsletter	6.85
AMA Sanction Fees/2012	55.00
St. of CA Non-Profit Regr.	20.00

	\$ 81.85
Current Balance	\$1,108.69

16th SOUTHWEST FAI CHALLENGE

OCTOBER 27 & 28, 2012
BOULDER CITY, NEVADA
(Reserve Day October 29, 2012)

SPONSORED BY THE SAN DIEGO ORBITEERS AND THE BOULDER CITY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
AN AMERICAS CUP EVENT
AMA SANCTION #12-1629

THIS EVENT WAS MADE POSSIBLE BY THE GENEROUS EFFORTS OF JILL ROWLAND-LAGAN, CEO OF THE BOULDER CITY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE. PLEASE PATRONIZE BOULDER CITY MOTELS, RESTAURANTS AND BUSINESSES AND TELL THEM WHY YOU ARE THERE.

For Classes: F1A, F1B, F1C, F1G, F1H, F1J, F1P, F1Q, P-30, E-36 and Vintage FAI Power

Saturday October 27th: F1A, F1B, F1C, F1P, and F1Q

(7) One hour rounds commencing at 8:00AM for all events

Round 1: F1A, 210 Seconds, F1B and F1C, 240 Seconds, Rounds 2-7: 180 Seconds

F1P, 180 Seconds, All Rounds

F1Q will be flown in accordance with current FAI rules. Contestants may use an approved energy limiter or may compute the allowable motor run and post the value on the model. 180 seconds all rounds.

Saturday Fly Offs will begin no earlier than 3:30PM

Sunday October 28th: F1G, F1H, F1J, P-30, E-36 and Vintage FAI Power

Tie-Breaker "Espresso Fly-Off" (No Max): F1G 7:15-7:25; F1H 7:30-7:40; F1J 7:45-7:55, Vintage FAI Power 8:00-8:10

(5) 45 Minute rounds commencing at 8:30AM

F1G, F1H and F1J, 120 Seconds, All Rounds

Vintage FAI Power, 180 Seconds, All Rounds

E-36 and P-30 8:00AM to 12:00PM, No Rounds, AMA Rules

Sunday Flyoffs

No earlier than 12:45PM (30 minutes after close of Round 5) flyoffs will begin. For F1G, F1H and F1J, the first flyoff round Max will be 180 seconds. The second flyoff Max, if required, will be 240 seconds.

Vintage FAI Power Flyoffs will use the same engine runs, with a 240 second Max for the first flyoff and a 300 second Max for the second flyoff.

For all Sunday events, if a winner is not determined at the conclusion of two flyoff rounds, the Espresso Flyoff times will be used to determine final placing.

Awards

Perpetual Trophies to winners in F1A, F1B, F1C, F1G, F1H, F1J and F1Q

Glassware 1st through 3rd place for all events, including F1P, E-36, Vintage FAI Power and P-30. Cups to the Winners of "Espresso Fly-Offs".

Entry Fee: \$30 for first event entry, \$10 for each additional event entry. \$10 for P-30 and E-36. No entry fee for Juniors or Espresso Flyoff

Contest Director:

Bill Booth Jr.
5092 Nighthawk Way
Oceanside, CA 92056
(760) 842-1079

booth@boothsuarez.com

Bob Beecroft
3488 Linda Vista Terrace
Fallbrook, CA 92028
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TheAeroSmith@roadrunner.com



Directions to El Dorado Dry Lake:

On Hwy 95 approximately 7 miles south of Hwy 93. Access through the Desert Tortoise fence is on the west side of Highway 95 on the north edge of where the power lines cross the highway. The flying area is to the west, approximately in the middle of the lake bed. In the early morning, the field is approximately 35 minutes drive time from the Las Vegas "Strip". Camping on the field is permitted.

SEPTEMBER 2012 OUTDOOR MONTHLY - L.Miller

Club Monthly_	16-Sep						
CD: Larry Miller							
Event: Coupe	Design	1	2	3	extra	extra	Total
Mike Pykelny	Candy G	99	120	120	0	0	339
Bob Langdon	Coupe	73	120	120	0	0	313
Miller,L	Own Design	120	120	47	0	0	287
John O	Ice Box 40	75	118	58	0	0	251
Don Bartick	Tail High 180	44	90	73	0	0	207
Mark Chomyn		66	59	38	0	0	163
Event: Power							
	Design	1	2			Total	Total
J Oldenkamp	JouleBox 450	120	120			0	240
Mike Pykelny	JeweBox 36	111	120			0	231
Don Bartick	Privy Boy	120	120			0	
SDO Monthly_Sept_16_2012							
Flying Conditions: Due to early steady breeze heading South,							
CD John Oldenkamp limited coupe to 3 flights and Power to 2 flights.							



ON THE LIGHTER SIDE - H.Haupt

- Due to traveling and being on the road, this issue of the EI Torbellino is late.
- October fun fly results for September are printed with the meeting minutes.
- Thought I would send out an inquiry to see if anyone would like to take over doing the EI Torbellino?

Contrails

"For those who fly...or long to."

Contrails is an Aviation Week & Space Technology initiative to capture the untold stories that collectively make up the rich lore of aviation and space.

A LUCKY FRIDAY THE 13TH

CAPT. RUSS WILLIAMS

Friday, Feb. 13, 1962: As a new helicopter specialist pilot in the U.K.'s Royal Navy Fleet Air Arm, I prepared for my first night familiarization flight since joining No. 815 Sqdn. The frontline unit—my initial posting after completing advanced flight training—was the Navy's first squadron to fly the new Wessex Mk. 1 all-weather antisubmarine helicopter.

Gordon would be the aircraft's captain for this mission. An exchange officer from the Canadian navy, he proved to be an extremely capable and unflappable pilot. Dave, our observer, was a career Royal Navy officer who later achieved flag rank. Don, the crewman and sonar operator, rounded out the night's crew.

During a preflight briefing, we learned the weather had deteriorated somewhat following an earlier, uneventful day flight from RNAS Culdrose to RNAS Portland. The weather officer warned of occasional snow flurries, but thought visibility and the cloud base would remain "reasonable." We were confident, though, ready to cope with anything the elements might throw at us. After all, we were flying the world's first fully instrumented helicopter—an aircraft capable of automatically descending from 125 ft. and 100 kt. to a 30-ft. hover over water, day or night and in all weather conditions.

By the time we located aircraft No. 04, a bitterly cold wind swept the ramp, and the temperature dropped to just above freezing. Water-immersion and survival suits protected us from the elements, but for some reason we were also issued backpack-type parachutes.

Our customary walk-around inspection completed, I took the right, or captain's seat, as the approximately 1-hr. cross-country navigation and night familiarization flight was mainly for my benefit. Gordon settled into the left seat, while Dave and Don strapped into the rear cabin.

Engine running and all electrical and avionics equipment checked, I called Culdrose tower for clearance to lift off and depart. This was readily granted, and I quickly climbed to around 1,500 ft., turning to the first heading Dave had given me. Outside, the night was absolutely pitch black, and it took a while to get the cockpit and instrument panel lighting adjusted properly as our eyes night-adapted. We flew northwest, then north, sticking to the pre-planned route, Dave calling out headings for me.

A persistent strong, gusting wind created enough turbulence to increase my workload. We kept a close eye on the outside air temperature, which hovered around 1C (34F). We were not cleared

The author's Wessex Mk. 1 helicopter made a night emergency landing on the side of a hill, slid backward and rolled onto its right side. The pilot narrowly missed about 70 campers.



for flight in icing conditions, which we took to mean freezing—0C or below. As the meteorologist had predicted, we encountered occasional snow flurries, and soon noted a bit of slush sliding up the windscreen now and then. All available anti-ice equipment was switched on, including engine and windscreen heat, so as long as the temperature remained above freezing, we weren't too worried.

About 50 min. into the flight, RNAS Culdrose radioed that another helicopter was in our vicinity, flying at the same altitude. The cloud base had lowered and we were around 1,200 ft., nipping in and out of clouds. Gordon sensed that I was tiring, I guess—or he simply wanted to fly the last part of the sortie—but I was happy to give him the controls. I settled back into the seat, trying to ease time-aggravated discomfort caused by the backpack parachute.

In a right-hand orbit, I was searching the sky for the other helicopter, when what appeared to be a momentary engine surge caught my attention. Gordon and I scanned the instruments for warning signs, but all seemed well. A moment later, the engine simply died and rotor rpm. started rapidly decaying. Gordon had no more than a second to react, promptly lowering the collective control to maintain rotor speed and start an autorotation and descent. A glance at the compass showed our tail was into the wind, pointing where we wanted our nose to be.

We'll never get into autorotation and recover those rotor revs, I thought. But by pulling hard into a right turn, increasing rotor g-loads and reducing airspeed, rotor rpm. returned to normal.

We lost 600 ft. or more in the 180-deg. turn. I reached forward, switched on the landing lights and was im-

mediately confronted with a wall of blinding snow. Not liking *that* view, I turned the lights off. Meanwhile, Dave called, "Mayday, Mayday, Mayday; zero four, engine failure, emergency landing." He did so very calmly, as if this was all in a day's work. The Culdrose controller immediately acknowledged: "Zero four, roger your Mayday. Out."

Very professional, I recall thinking.

Not a word had passed Gordon's lips. He was concentrating, bringing the helicopter's nose into the wind, maintaining rotor speed and—by monitoring the radio altimeter—judging when to start a flare and bleed-off airspeed to cushion our landing.

I noticed a light passing high and to the right, and wondered whether that was the other helicopter. Later, I learned it was a farmhouse light on top of a hill; we were descending into a valley. Around 300 ft. above the ground, I turned the landing lights on again. The snow had stopped, thankfully, but the landing lights now illuminated a row of trees.

Oh no, not trees! I thought. But there, just in front of that tree line, appeared a most beautiful green field. Gordon also spotted it, and immediately commenced a sharp flare-off, cutting speed to avoid overshooting the field, while also setting up for landing. All seemed to be going well.

However, in the flare, I suddenly saw electrical power cables across our flight path. I recall easing my backside over all 17,000 volts of those cables, clearing them by no more than the thickness of paint on our tail rotor. Gordon leveled the helicopter and, as the machine started a final, almost vertical descent, sharply pulled the collective up, trying to cushion the landing. He was a little ahead of the game, and rotor rpm. deteriorated well before we touched down. In retrospect, perfectly understandable; those trees seemed to be above us by then.

We landed hard, and the helicopter tilted toward its right. I thought we were going to topple over, but the Wessex righted itself. As the tail wheel touched down, we realized we were on a steep hillside, facing uphill—which accounted for Gordon's slight misjudgment in collective control. The helicopter slowly started moving backward. I immediately clamped both feet on the wheel brakes, but to no avail. Even with brakes fully applied, we were sliding backward, tail first, down the hill.

Halfway down, the machine skidded across a small dirt track. The starboard

undercarriage, already weakened, decided it had had enough and collapsed. The starboard wheel buckled upward, appearing outside my cockpit window as the helicopter rolled onto its right side. Rotor blades collided with the ground and rapidly ground to a halt, seeming to wrap themselves around each other.

As the apparently slow-motion events unfolded, I closed my eyes momentarily. We continued to slide backward down the hill, but now on our right side, the grass close to my right arm. Gradually, we came to a halt. I could smell fuel and saw sparks emerging from the port exhaust pipe. I reached forward and turned off the main battery, killing all lights and, hopefully, a potential ignition source for that fuel. As everything went dark, I was aware of Gordon already climbing out the port-side cockpit exit, now above me. I rapidly unhooked my harness and followed him, climbing over the center console.

Crawling out, I heard a sharp cry of pain. Don, our crewman, had climbed through the cabin's port exit, but slipped on a fuel-slickened surface and fell over the side. We didn't know it at the time, but he had broken his leg. Our eyes gradually adapting to the dark, we grabbed and half-carried, half-dragged him away from the helicopter, ever mindful that it might burst into flames at any moment.

We found ourselves in a field of thick brambles, the pervasive odor of raw fuel close at hand. All of us were drenched in the liquid. I noticed I still had that parachute strapped to my back, slowing my progress. The thought of bailing out had never remotely crossed my mind. Just as well, really. From a mere 1,200 ft., opening of the parachute would have been decidedly problematic.

We heard voices approaching, and could see flashing torchlights. Eventually, people appeared and led us to a caravan (camping trailer) site. Once they realized what had happened, they profusely thanked us for avoiding their site of some 70 caravans. We had never seen them, but decided to keep that fact to ourselves.

While awaiting the Navy rescue team, we had a cup of tea with the lucky travelers. I looked at our crew and wondered how they were reacting. I felt perfectly fine—apart from the foul smell of fuel soaking my flight coveralls.

Eventually, an ambulance arrived and drove us back to Culdrose. Doctors looked us over, Don was sent off to the

hospital, and all of us were debriefed and told to write our individual reports.

Tradition dictates that, when you fall off a horse, you should remount as soon as possible. So too, it seems, with helicopter flying. We were airborne again the next day. This time, though, Dave and I were flying with another pilot, Mike, and a different crewman.

Over the scene of our previous night's crash, I was amazed at how lucky we had been to come down in a valley, while avoiding trees, a nearby caravan site, and power cables.

We continued our planned antisubmarine exercise, lowering a sonar ball into the water from a hover and "pinging" for submarines. Relying on the autopilot to maintain a steady hover, Mike released his right-seat cyclic stick and reached to adjust an instrument—precisely when the autopilot decided to malfunction with a left-roll runaway. Mike chased the stick, but an adrenaline surge instinctively made my left hand grab for the cockpit window-jettison lever. My right reached for the harness release. I was convinced we were going into the water.

Ages later, it seemed, Mike grabbed the cyclic and quickly brought the aircraft under control. Starting to breathe again, I asked: "Are you feeling like I'm feeling, Dave?"

"Yes! Let's go home!" he responded. That was it for the day. I remained "twitched" for 5-6 months, expecting the worst at the Mk. 1's every slight, unexpected motion.

I've regularly asked myself: Is Friday the 13th lucky or not? That Friday in 1962 was unlucky in that we suffered an engine failure—thanks to a sudden ingestion of snow and slush that had accumulated in the engine intake. But it was lucky from my viewpoint. Apart from one broken leg, we survived unscathed. Still, I'm wary whenever I take to the air on any Friday the 13th! ❁

Russ Williams completed a Royal Navy tour, flew helicopters for 17 years in support of the offshore oil and gas industry, then served as the head of Flight Operations (Policy) for the U.K.'s Civil Aviation Authority. With 7,000 hr. in rotor and fixed-wing aircraft, he now consults for ICAO and serves as the BBC's aviation safety adviser and auditor.

Aviation Week is actively soliciting readers' aerospace stories for Contrails. Please e-mail your contributions to: AW&ST Rocky Mountain Bureau Chief William B. Scott, at wmbsscott@bigplanet.com.

SAN DIEGO ORBITEERS
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WHAT'S HAPPENING - OCTOBER 2012

- Oct. 7 - Indoor Fun Fly, Grossmont College, 7:00 – 11:30 am.
- Oct. 12 - Orbiteer Monthly Meeting at Scripps Ranch Community Center,
11885 Cypress Canyon Road, Meeting starts at 7:00 pm,
Indoor Fun Fly follows meeting, featuring A-6 One-Design (Mather/Takagi plans)
- Oct. 14 - **Orbiteer Outdoor Monthly**, Otay Mesa, 8:00 am.
Non-Power: P-30 Power: All Classes
Other Classes: P-20, HLG & CLG
- Oct 27/28 16TH Southwest FAI Challenge, Boulder City, Nevada. (See enclosed flyer)
- Oct 27/28 Scale Staffel, FAC Scale Contest, 3RD of three, Perris California
- Nov 4 - Indoor Fun Fly, Grossmont College, 7:00 am.
- Nov 9 - Orbiteer Monthly meeting, Scripps' Ranch Comm. Cntr., 7:00 pm.
- Nov 18 - Orbiteer Outdoor Monthly, Otay Mesa, 8:00 am.