

Radio Control F3A Aerobatic Contest Report.

The 58th Nationals RC aerobatic championship has been conducted successfully by IMAC at Wollongong early in the nationals program. Despite heavy rain on registration day of Friday 8 July, Saturday dawned fine with moderate winds. Eagerly we began the trip from Sydney to Wollongong expecting good conditions for the start of the 3 day contest. The entrance to the IMAC field looked wet but solid under wheels with a fair number of vehicles parked around the headquarters building. However the final 150 meters of the roadway was a quagmire of black slippery mud. Great just let it idle until we get through. With several side slips (on the ground) we arrived wet and dirty but in one piece. Several followed us to the parking lot with Brian Dooley making things look easy with his brand spanking new wagon with traction control.

The flight line was awash with "Lake Connelly" covering a significant part of the northern section of the field. After a relatively dry patch of runway was found Brian McFarlane called the 21 contestants to order for a pilots' briefing. Grace and Tony Law had done some homework with the scoring program resulting in a quick start for the Masters and Advanced flyers. Yes you guessed it; Peter Nieuwenhuizen was again chosen to commence proceedings.

With the cooperation of all, the contest proceeded smoothly with Alf Pye's new Pinnacle performing well and Tom Koenig's new Synergy making short work of the P05 schedule. This reinforced Tom's ability to build a superb looking and performing machine. John Payne's bi-plane Cyclone derivative was surprisingly light but scored relatively low due to the lack of practice (only 8 flights) with this aerobatic configuration. At the end of the day Masters and Advanced pilots had completed 4 rounds while Expert and Sportsman 2 rounds.

Sunday was hurricane day with very strong winds and lots of rain. Brian surveyed the situation and declared no contest for the day. This was unfortunate since with 21 pilots the contest could easily be completed in two of the 3 days allocated. This resulted in several pilots (two masters, 1 expert, 3 advanced and 1 sportsman flyer) making their way home early due to other commitments for Monday.

Monday was very flyable so the contest recommenced with Expert completing rounds 3 & 4. Rounds 5 & 6 for masters were completed by all without incident. For the finals flights John Payne left the Bi-plane in the car and used the familiar monoplane Cyclone. He indicated with several thousand words that this was a good idea.

Brian McFarlane assisted by MAAA President, Mike Close presented the trophies to the winners. Again many thanks to the Illawarra Model Aero Club for the use of the superb facilities at short notice and the undeniable efforts of legends, Cynthia and Ray Woods and Bruce in the canteen keeping us warm with hot beverages and the gastronomic delights for breakfast and lunch. Well done, it is most appreciated.

It was also very good to see several interstate contestants from ACT, Queensland and South Australia (Neil Martin and support crew making the longest trip of all competitors) making a significant contribution to a successful contest.

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