

# Ramblings

Official Newsletter of the Roxbury Area Model Airplane Club

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AMA Charter #429



PHOTO BY DAN VANNIEUWLAND

**In the Fur Ball**- Above just a few of the many planes caught up in the heat of battle at the pinnacle of "Stick Combat 2009" money combat. After three rounds of money combat, Ryan O'Leary and Jurgen Appis battled it out to be king of the sky and to claim their prize. After a fierce and long battle Ryan eventually claimed victory while his many opponents lay on the ground in defeat.

## Club Update

**P**icnic, (Webster) "A meal eaten outdoors on an excursion." derived from the French words "piqueur"- to pick, peck: and "nique" - a trifle. Mr. Webster must have had this picturesque scene of a horse and carriage, a wicker basket, a plaid blanket to lie upon, and a pretty maiden to enjoy a bottle of wine and some delicacies. Mr. Webster, I am sorry, but let's try this again.

Picnic, (RAMAC) "A fun fly with flame charred burgers with cheese, on a potato roll; dish to pass, cold soda, and watermelon (don't forget the watermelon). If you haven't seen a grease fire you haven't been to a RAMAC picnic.

The two we had this year were pretty nice events. There were no contests going on, just members and guests flying, eating, and having fun. The first picnic we had was at the new field near Island Drag way. We

could not have asked for a better day. Bright sunshine and low winds throughout the day. I even got my cub back in the air with it's new scale landing gear. After the flyers got a flight or two in, it was time to sample the many dishes and goodies the members had brought. Of course, most people capped this off with a cheeseburger or two that was cooked by Charlene Harvey. She did all the cooking that day because she is very nice and my grill would not stay lit. And for dessert, a nice big slice of watermelon. The three things we did most were eat, fly, and swap stories under the canopies. There was no shortage of help either, right down to the clean up. Steve Harvey and I would like to thank all the people who brought food and helped that day, since that is what makes a nice picnic for all.

The next picnic was at Pocono field, and it almost wasn't. As I drove to the field that morning it was raining. The forecast I saw that morning was 60 to 70% chance of show-

ers or storms throughout the day. As we set up the canopies, Steve and I both wondered if anybody would show up on such a dreary day. Well, most other members had to have seen a different forecast because they did show up. About noontime, the sun showed up too. I think I'm going to stop using my computer for the weather and get a pet groundhog. What started out to be a lousy day, turn out to be a very nice one. Planes flew, burgers sizzled, (Thanks again Charlene!) and somebody forgot the sauerkraut. So the hotdogs were served "au jus" with mustard and onions if you liked. The three main elements were there again, eating, flying and swapping stories. We even managed to consume two of the three watermelons that were brought that day. (Gotta have watermelon!) Even though the faces were different, the amount of help was still quite plentiful. Maybe we should serve cheeseburgers at the field more often. Steve Harvey and I would like to thank all the people

<u>DATE</u>	<u>DAY</u>	<u>EVENT</u>
All Year		The Great American Crepe Paper Tow Contest CD, Bob Karasiewicz
August 30th	Sunday	Cub Day Bob Clark CD
Sept. 8th	Tuesday	Club Meeting Eisenhower School, Roxbury
Sept. 20th	Sunday	RAMAC Fun Fly Dave Nuetzel CD
Sept. 22nd	Tuesday	Club Meeting Eisenhower School, Roxbury
Oct. 13th	Tuesday	Club Meeting and Indoor Fly Eisenhower School, Roxbury
Oct. 27th	Tuesday	Club Meeting and Indoor Fly Eisenhower School, Roxbury
Nov. 10th	Tuesday	Club Meeting and AUCTION Eisenhower School, Roxbury

KEEP THE 2009 CALENDER UPDATED. CONTACT DAN VANNIEUWLAND

who brought food and helped at the Pocono picnic.

Should we do this again? I think the first go around went just fine. All we need is a rainy day at next year's pattern contest so we have lots of leftovers. Well, I guess not. I would rather have a successful pattern and full pattern contest next year. And so would Joe Lachowski. (and Charlene!)

-DAVE NUETZEL

## Combat 2009 Final Standings

I think it's funny that we have had such a cold and rainy year, but we didn't have to postpone any of the combat rounds. Which is a good thing when you have to go looking for an airplane during the final round. This year the corn was only 3 to 4' tall instead of the usual 10'. Enough about weather and agriculture, here are the results for this year's combat season.

## 2009 Final Standings

Place	Name	Score
1	Ryan O'Leary	82
2	Frank Knox	51
3	Bob Reed	48
4	Bob Clark	42
5	Steve Harvey	41
6	Jurgen Appis	40
7	Ed Smith	39
8	Jim Heinrich	37
8	Bob Karasiewicz	37
9	Dan Vannieuwland	34
10	Tom Noto	32
10	Jim Parker	32
11	John O'Leary	31
12	Lew McCarthy	30
13	Margarite Garguilo	26
14	Dave Nuetzel	21
15	Joe Dolan	7
15	Mark Vannieuwland	7
16	Russell Davis	3

Will you look at that top score! I haven't seen that high a score in many seasons. Well done Ryan. He was the terror of the skies this year. But the terror of the last round was Jurgen App-

pis. I think he had 25 or 26 points for the day and almost won money combat!

Way to go Jurgen. Wait a minute! How could I have completed 9 combat sorties and only have 21 points. There must be some kind of calculating error. Or maybe I need new glasses. The kind that gets me more cuts. (-Ed Jurgen almost won money combat as well going against Ryan "terror of the skies" O'Leary as they were the last two pilots standing. Our thanks to John O'Leary and Bob Reed for running combat this year and also to Ed Smith for making the hats)

-DAVID NUETZEL, COMBATANT

## 101 Ways to stop a spinning propeller

Unfortunately, we are limited to only a single safe one: Stopping the engine. Yeah, yeah. Everyone knows that. Right? Well, if so, then why are more than half of all model accidents caused by model propellers-while turning? Because we do very stupid things sometimes. Because we get careless. Because we get too casual. Because we are inexperienced. Because we are so experienced we think common sense safety is for beginners. Because, because, because. Well, that be the cause!

K&B engines might not be very familiar to newcomers to the hobby, but oldsters will remember that K&B was the leading American manufacturer of model engines for decades, having been started by Johnny Brodbeck back in 1946.

About 20 years ago, I was flying at the pilot's station next to one occupied by my good friend, John Brodbeck; the "B" of K&B engines, and son of Johnny, the founder. John was test flying an engine sent in by a customer seeking a solution to a puzzling problem. (Yes, company owners really used to do such things.) John had made a couple of laps around the field, but felt the engine was too lean, so he landed and taxied to the front of the pit to change the needle setting.

Now here's a fellow who is the owner of a model engine company, who had probably been weaned from Mama Brodbeck to a baby bottle filled with glow fuel, and had been around and using model engines since the earth cooled. One would think he would be extra careful; be sure the model was secure and tune the engine from behind. Instead, wanting to get on with the test, he reached across the propeller from the front. I can tell you it stopped the engine. However, flying was over for the day for both of us because I had to drive him to the emergency room to have a deep 3-inch gash in his forearm neatly stitched.

Yes, he was hurt, but said the worst pain was the embarrassment of being an engine manufacturer who would do such a dumb stunt (his words, not mine) at Southern California's busiest flying field in front of about 60 modelers.

My guess is, there are very few modelers who have been flying more than a couple of years who have not donated a little blood and possibly flesh to carelessness with propellers. For some of us, once is enough. Others have a little slower learning curve. It would be bad enough if their carelessness just injured themselves, but all too frequently an innocent person is hurt; sometimes more than just stitches.

I think I'll cut this column shorter than I had planned to allow you faithful readers (all six) to submit some of your own experiences that might quite possibly make others think twice before doing something stu ... er, ill-advised.

Always glad to hear from you: flyerdon@aol.com or flyerdon@yahoo.com. You will get a reply

-Don Nix  
AMA Safety Column Editor

## 101 Ways a spinning propeller doesn't stop

When I was a boy I had a COX .049 control line airplane. I was never really able to fly it successfully but playing with the engine sure was fun! It seemed like I was always getting my fingers in the propeller with an all too familiar "Ziiiiiiiit!" sound. You know, the one that turns your head at the field followed by asking someone "are you alright"? The really bad sound was a loud "WACK!" followed by the engine sound being replaced with me yelling "AAAAAAH!" The memories are still fresh in my head of having my fingers being wacked by the propeller feeling like they were hit with a hammer in the cold of winter. Thankfully luck prevailed and the engine size and propeller size never seriously injured me. To be clear, I am not saying a .049 can't seriously injure. Both size and luck are the reasons I was never seriously injured.

Prior to finding a club or even knowing the AMA even existed, a .60-sized trainer was given to me by a friend at work. I went on-line and found a few local clubs to join and immediately went into the backyard to start it up. In my younger years I was big into 1/8-scale nitro powered RC cars and had some experience with tuning engines or so I thought. After putting the plane on the grass without a starter stand (I didn't know they even existed) the starter cone was placed against the propeller. The high-end was running fine but the low-end needed some adjustment. My hand was behind the propeller and my screwdriver was on the ground in front of the propeller. You know where this is going... my hand went right into the prop. I had a certified "brain fart". My wife came home to find blood all over the kitchen counter and floor with a terse note "I'm okay, went to hospital". Seven stitches later and my first experience with starting an airplane engine my first lesson was learned... "stay away from the whirling sharp thing in the front". The propeller never stopped. I was lucky.

When I found the "101 ways to stop a spinning propeller" article it really caught my eye. This is a great article with a great message. Stopping a propeller with some part of the body isn't a pretty thing. But what about the times the propeller doesn't stop? Modern engines are putting out far more horsepower with the same displacement as compared to engines of years ago. Four-stroke and gasoline engines while typically more expensive than two strokes, are affordable and pumping out very high torque levels capable of swinging very large propellers. Typically, most fliers use propellers made of sturdy ma-

terials like nylon, composites, and carbon fiber. These materials have allowed propellers to be thinner, sharper, and more sturdy. Great for performance and the occasional nose landing, but not so good for our fragile bodies. How many times have you been at the field and have heard someone say "You don't want to get near that carbon fiber prop. It will cut like crazy and it isn't going to stop."?

The main reason "101 Ways to Stop a Spinning Propeller" caught my attention is the story of John Brodbeck reaching over the propeller and getting his arm injured. An article was written on this very issue a few years ago in our newsletter *Ramblings* about the dangers of reaching over the propeller to remove the glow igniter. Take a few minutes at the field to watch pilots start their engines at the field. Almost everyone reaches over the propeller to remove their glow igniter. There is one major exception Some people always reach over the spinning propeller except when their plane has a large sized prop. Does this mean people are afraid of a large propeller but not a smaller one? The "little" ones can do quite a bit of damage too!

Since reading this article, I went to the field six times and watched to see how many people reach over the propeller. The answer is "everyone with a propeller small enough to reach over". On four occasions the glow igniter was either dropped into the propeller or put right into it. The two times I asked, "Do you want to make sure you didn't damage your propeller?" The answer was "no it's okay".

Remember, the propeller may stop when you stick something in it and it may not. Regardless, it will cut, break, or sever whatever goes in there. Why take the chance to reach over the propeller? We all need to walk behind the propeller to pick up the plane or adjust the engine anyway. Why not take off the glow igniter then? Is taking the risk of getting stitches, severing nerves, or chopping off fingers or worse really worth the 5 second time savings to walk behind your plane to take your glow igniter off? Please think twice before reaching over your spinning propeller. It would be much better to add a few seconds to your pre-flight rather than making it "102 ways you can stop, or not stop the propeller". Be safe!

-DAN VANNIEUWLAND  
NEWSLETTER EDITOR

## Maneuver of The month- Mix it up!

I see lots of guys flying around the field. Many of them will follow a racetrack pattern. That is, they will fly all left (or right) hand turns with long legs on the runway and other side; and short legs in between. It's a big rectangle!

There is nothing wrong with that and I am not trying to criticize their flying. Flying almost all of the time one way leads to boredom, at least for me. I like to mix it up. There are many ways to do a turnaround. Doing an Immelman at one end is one way to turn around. Most fliers can do this maneuver—half a loop then at the top when inverted, do half a roll.

If you stay high on the return line, you can do a split S. Half a roll then when inverted do the second half of a loop by pulling up That's better. That's showing a little class.

But I talked about mixing it up, here's another way to turn around and it looks really smooth.

After take off, fly straight out and after about 200 feet do a right angle turn away from the runway. Taking off from left to right you would do a left turn and be heading directly away from the runway, i.e. across the field. After flying about 200 or 300 feet start a large sweeping right turn. Keep up that large sweeping turn for 270 degrees—until you are flying back the way you came. 270 degrees is 3/4 of a circle. Complete the turn by flying right to left down the runway (maybe 50 feet out from the runway).

Make your turns large. Please none of those screaming pylon turns where you do a 180 in 50 feet. They are great in their place but not here.

If you do these turns at each end to turn your airplane around, you will have plenty of room in the middle for another maneuver. Try to do something in each pass, this will really make the flight interesting and fun.

Some of you will remember the 'dogbone' from your training days. This is the same maneuver but, made larger, smoother and more sweeping. As a result it looks really good. As if you really know what you are doing. If you plan ahead for your maneuvers you can make your whole flight look better.

-BOB. KARASIEWICZ

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