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The Johnstown R/C Club

Digital Dope Sheet

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November 2013 Newsletter

2013 – Johnstown RC Clubs 51st Year

Join us online at: www.Johnstownrc.org

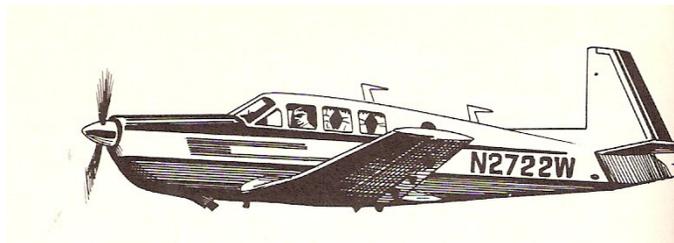
Upcoming Activities.....

Work Day: We have scheduled a Fall Work Day for Saturday, Oct. 26th, 9 am. A rain date is the following Saturday, Nov. 2nd. If you can make it, we would like to see YOU at the field, Thanks!

Sunday, October 27th, Depending on the weather, we may have our last monthly family picnic, 5pm at the field. (Or at least a hot dog cookout) Don't miss this one!

Wednesday, November 6th,..... Regular club meeting, nomination of officers for the coming year! ... 7:30 pm at the Richland Twp. Municipal Buidling. Note, our meeting night is one day later due to election day falling on our regular meeting date.

Tuesday, December 3rd: Regular Club meeting, 7:30 pm. Election of officers for the coming year.



It's Been a Great Year:

We have had a wonderful flying season during 2013. The field has remained in remarkable shape, with no brown-outs from lack of rain any time during the year. Our grounds keeper Don Hoffman has kept the field mowed, and treated it for bugs and grubs and it's looked sharp all season long. We have had quite a few picnics, hot dog cookouts, and Saturday morning flying along with good evening flying also. The corn which was planted around our field did us no harm. I guess we will have to "wait and see" about next year.



Above is a picture taken on a recent Sunday afternoon with Scott and Rick posing with Rick's Cub.

By now you have all gotten your AMA renewal letter, please take care of this right away, and then pay your dues for 2014 so we don't have to scratch for money during the coming year. A dues form is enclosed in this newsletter. When you think about it, for around \$100 a year you can enjoy a wonderful hobby, fly at a surpurb flying field, and mingle with some really great guys at the field!

My Favorite Model.....



Roger Luther and his Pulse XT

I'm starting a new column in our monthly missive, called "My Favorite Model". Since I'm the editor, I picked my favorite, the Pulse XT. Both Ken Reese and I have owned several, and really love the flight characteristics of the Pulse. It's available from Horizon Hobby, but unfortunately like most things has gotten more expensive over the past few years. Ours is the 40 sized ARF version, but it also comes in a 60 sized plane, plus a 25 sized Electric version. The darn things fly so well and each time we lose one, the temptation to buy a new one is so great, we just can't resist. The 60 sized version has a different look and has 60+ inch wing span and costs \$219.99 plus shipping. The electric pulse comes with a 25 sized E-Flight electric motor. This version costs \$189.99 plus shipping. The version that Ken and Roger have flown is the first, or original Pulse XT 40 sized plane originally designed by Mike McConville. All are made by Hanger 9 and are well built airplanes. They are not for beginners, but great for a second or third plane after you have mastered the

basics of flying a trainer with no problems. We usually put a .40 or .46 size engine on them, and they really zip and can do all the fancy moves.



Pulse XT 60 ARF

By: Hangar 9

Item: HAN4130

Above is the 60 sized Pulse XT



Pulse XT 25e ARF

By: E-flite

Item: EFL4100

In Stock

Above is a photo of the Electric Version

If you want a great flying model airplane, you can't beat a Pulse. You can buy cheaper second planes, but none that fly any better. The Escapade, available from Tower Hobbies is similar, and flies almost as well, and only costs \$129 as an ARF, so it's a good option. In any event, these are good suggestions for your fall/winter project!

By Terry Dunn

The Maiden's Allure

If there is such a thing as a “maiden flight junkie”, I would definitely qualify. Between my own projects and those that I fly for others, I probably average more than twenty maiden flights per year. Despite all of the anxiety and nervousness that usually surrounds first-flights; I actually enjoy the opportunity to fly unproven airplanes. Sure my knees knock, and my heart races, but isn't it that brand of visceral excitement that draws us to aeromodeling? Otherwise, we'd all be happy building static display models.

I have experienced and witnessed my fair share of failed maidens. To my recollection, none of these crashes were caused by some random equipment failure. Each ill-fated flight began with problems that were either ignored or unrecognized. While many of the necessary preflight focal points are obvious, some others may be less apparent. I'll give you a hint: it isn't all about the airplane.

In my day job at the Johnson Space Center, we frequently use the term “go fever.” It refers to the tendency of humans to ignore problems and take shortcuts for the sake of achieving a milestone. If you are part of a team that has spent years preparing for the launch of a satellite, an intangible momentum builds as you near the planned launch date. Your urge to maintain that momentum might sway you to dismiss an abnormal voltage reading on launch day as just a finicky sensor. Maybe you're right; or maybe that abnormal voltage reading was your one chance to prevent disaster.

Applying the concept of go-fever to RC and maiden flights, it's easy to understand how someone would be tempted to overlook any number of small quirks on their new model when the sun is shining and there's a light breeze down the runway. How many of us have tinkered with a rough-running engine or jittery servo at the field, only to decide “it will probably get better in the air”? I admit that I'm guilty, and I've paid the price. My urge to feel the exhilaration of a maiden flight clouded my ability to make sound technical judgments.

In addition to the problems that we choose to accept, there are also those that we simply do not

recognize. Whether these things are missed because we fail to look for them, or because we misunderstand how they should work, the result is the same. As operators of potentially harmful vehicles, we have an obligation to understand how those vehicles should work and confirm that they are doing so.

Let's take the example of reversed control movement, which has claimed many a new model. I think that most of us know which way the elevator and ailerons are supposed to move in relation to your control inputs. Having them reversed at the field probably just means that you didn't bother to check. But what about an airplane with a V-tail or elevons? Their operation is not intuitive to everyone, so don't assume you know the answer. Take a minute to verify that your particular set-up is correct.

Improper center of gravity (CG) location is another big model killer. For conventional airplanes with Hershey bar wings, determining and achieving a valid CG location is pretty straightforward. Add a little taper or sweep to the wing and things begin to get more complex. Biplane? Canard? Whatever the configuration of your airplane, the CG is critical. Make sure you know where the CG should be and do what it takes to get it there.

You may think that all of this is a bit much to remember amid the excitement of flying a new airplane...I agree. Therefore, I have created a [maiden flight checklist](#) that I use prior to that first takeoff roll. It forces me to evaluate the flight readiness of the model in terms of aerodynamics, mechanics, and electronics. Just as importantly, it guides me in assessing field conditions, weather, and my own mental state. There's even a place for me to jot down any unplanned risks that I've decided to accept (there's that jittery servo again).

Using a checklist is not a guaranteed way to avoid a maiden flight debacle. However, I have no doubt that taking an honest and thorough assessment of the whole scenario will certainly improve your odds of success. If the worst should happen, at least you have a complete picture to help you determine what went wrong.

My checklist is not comprehensive. It is simply what works for me. You may wish to add or

subtract elements to suit your needs. Just keep in mind that the point is to hold yourself accountable for the flight worthiness of the plane you've built and the situation in which you will fly it. In that sense, it could also be applied to helicopters, control-line, free-flight, whatever. The intent is the same across all aeromodeling disciplines.

I think that by doing all of your homework before the maiden flight, you will begin the endeavor with much greater confidence. Not only will that increase your airplane's chances of having a second flight, it may also help you to enjoy the event. Too many modelers view the maiden flight as a necessary evil that must be endured. With some basic preparation and a positive mental outlook, you may, like me, embrace maiden flights as a source of adventure and excitement.

This article was picked from the AMA official website from the AMA Flight School page.

How to Select Your First Radio

by Ed Anderson

[\(aeajr@optonline.net\)](mailto:aeajr@optonline.net)

If you go through the beginner section on any of the major forums you will frequently see this question, or some version of it. And you will see it in the advanced flying sections, too. That's because a radio is the most important tool you will use to fly your model aircraft. Without the radio-control system, there is no RC flying. So, how to choose?

If you are new to the hobby, have never flown, and if you plan to learn without a buddy box, I recommend an RTF package that includes the airplane, radio, and all of the electronics already installed in the airplane. It typically includes the battery and charger, too.

This eliminates so many decisions, considerations, and points of confusion. It allows the pilot focus on learning to fly.

Which RTF? That is a question for another discussion but there are plenty of good ones out there. They all come with a radio that should be

adequate to the task of flying that aircraft. And the value of the radio, in that package, is typically so small that even if you never use it for anything else, that's okay.

When you have mastered your basic flying skills, it's time to consider what you want and need in a radio. You may have begun to learn about the aspects of RC flying from other pilots. You should be better prepared to understand the information below and to address the questions we will ask as we try to guide you.

Standard vs. Computer Radios

A standard radio is one without model memories and few, if any, mixing capabilities. The Spektrum DX5e or the Hitec Laser 4 would be examples of standard radios. These are fine when you get them in RTFs or if you plan to have a dedicated radio for each airplane. Otherwise, purchase a radio that has model memories. (This is typically called a computer radio).

Brands vs. Off Brands

There are plenty of good radios out there. The major brands in North America are Futaba, JR, Spektrum, Hitec and Airtronics. I am going to add Tactic here because it is sold and supported by Hobbico, a major distributor/retailer that also distributes Futaba. I don't think Tactic's market share is all that big, but I think it will grow. All others have relatively small market presence, but that doesn't mean they are bad.

The major brands are all safe bets and have great service. You will find those who love one over the other, and those who hate one vs the other. But in the end, they all have good products. If you use different brands you may get a great radio too, but the level of service and support may not be up to the standards of the aforementioned brands.

If you choose an off brand, consider where you will get help if you need it. This could be easy if your friend has one or if you a member of a forum with plenty of users of this radio.

Budget

How much are you willing to spend? As you shop for radios notice that they often come packaged with other stuff. That might include receivers, servos, cables, switches, etc. When you evaluate the

price of one radio as opposed to another, you must take into account what is included in the package. A \$150 radio is not cheaper than a \$180 radio package that comes with a \$50 receiver.

The more you can spend the more capable radio you can buy and the less important the rest of the questions become. After you get over \$400 for one of the brand-name radios, they all can do what you likely will need to fly nearly anything, as long as they have enough channels.

You will get various opinions from advanced pilots as to what is better for what, but they are talking shades of gray here. If you can spend \$400 or more on a major-brand radio, then buy whatever you like, whatever your friend has, or what you see the champion pilots flying in the radio ads.

If you don't have \$400 for a radio, then you have to be more selective. But you can still get a capable radio for less than \$250. You have to be more specific as we start finding limitations. Of course, these limitations may not matter to you.

When discussing budget, state a number. Asking for an inexpensive radio means nothing. When considering my needs, I consider \$250, for the radio alone, an inexpensive radio. How about you? No matter what it is, start with a number. Does your budget include a receiver? Servos? State a number and then define it.

Naturally, there are plenty of used radios. Buying a used radio is similar to buying a used car; it may be great or it may be a lemon. When you buy used you take a risk. As long as you accept that, you can consider used. My two main radios were purchased used.

Last, forget about the "best" radio or the one that will last you for the rest of your flying career. There is no best and we all tend to want to trade up after a while. But even a basic six-channel computer radio can serve you for decades of flying fun if your needs are basic.

Application for Membership in the Johnstown RC Club

Date Paid: _____ Check #: _____

Name: _____

No & Street: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Email: _____

AMA #: _____

Spouse's first name: _____

Make checks payable to "Johnstown RC Club"

Send Application and Check To: Ken Shilling

109 Hoyt Street, Johnstown, PA 15904

Note: All club members must have a current AMA card to fly.

What Channel's do you use:

Do you use 2.4 Mhz: Y N

Date of Birth: ____ / ____ / ____

OK to receive your Newsletter

via Email: Y ____ N ____

Membership Catagories:

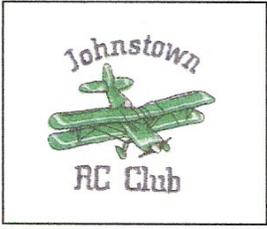
Full-Open Member: \$55 _____

Non-Flying Member \$20 _____

Jr. Membership \$10 _____

(Under age 19)

Dues are for the calendar year



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