

AMA District II Fly-In

The Academy of Model Aeronautics (AMA), the largest aviation-oriented organization in the world, sponsors thousands of events all across the country. Among these are the U.S. Aeromodeling National Championships (NATS), hundreds of aerobatic scale (IMAC) and precision (Pattern) contests, Scale, both RC and U-Control, Free Flight Duration and Indoor Duration. It is impossible to list even the main contest types. There are just too many as a quick visit to the AMA website (www.modelaircraft.org) shows.

Among the most popular AMA events are the Fly-Ins. Fly-Ins are not contests. Instead they are local gatherings of modelers who are interested in a similar type of model aviation, such as RC, U-Control, Free Flight or Scale. There is no competition and all the flying is very relaxed. No one has to fly, or even bring a plane, to have a good time. It is fun and educational just to watch other pilots flying. Fly-Ins are also great opportunities to meet new friends, learn new techniques and to see what the other folks are doing in model aviation.

One of the best, and largest, fly-in is the AMA District II (New York, New Jersey, Europe) annual Fly-In, hosted by Dave Mathewson the AMA District II Vice-President. This year it was held on October 4 and 5 in Brooklyn, NY. The site was the Pennsylvania Avenue Radio Control Society's (P.A.R.C.S.) flying field at Floyd Bennett Field. Floyd Bennett used to be a military air base. (If the wind is right, sometimes you can almost feel the rumble of those giant radial engines turning over or hear the whine of an early turbojet streaking by.)

The P.A.R.C.S. field occupies a large part of this ex-military airfield. The site is fully paved and has wide-open approaches on each side. The runway is at least 400 feet wide and several thousand feet long, if you need it to be. It is a great field for all types of model flying and perfect for a fly-in.



A view down one side of the wide-open runway.
The blimp is landing at nearby JFK airport

The only non-perfect part of the weekend was the weather. Like most of the weekends in 2003, this one was rainy, damp and cold. Still many fliers braved the weather and had a terrific flying time. Dave (left side) was on-hand to greet all the arriving pilots, including Bill Watson of the P.A.R.C.S Club, one of the first to arrive.



After Dave said hello, the next person attending pilots met was Susan Solomon, right photo) to register. Susan has been flying RC for more than three years and is currently flying a Goldberg Tiger 40. After registering, it was out to the flight line.

On the flight line was Ben Gomez warming up his new Dave Patrick Extra 330L with Allen Berg holding on to it. Well, trying to hold on anyway, it is pretty powerful. Ben and Allen fly with the Radio Control Society of Marine Park. Ben has been flying models for only three years yet has progressed to this highly responsive, competition Scale plane. Ben learned to fly RC on an EZ Stingray trainer.



Bob (left) and Rob Teseo were already out at the pilot station flying their competition plane, a large Cap, in the light drizzle. Both pilots compete in aerobatic competitions using scale airplanes. Regulated by the International Miniature Aerobatics Club (IMAC) these competition events feature replicas of full-size aerobatic planes performing an aerobatic dance in the sky.



Even helicopter pilots got into the act. Unfortunately the rain started again and this pilot escaped before we could get his name. However, he sure knows his helicopter flying. We just hope he remembers which way is up!



Manuel A. Perez (right) brought his big Pitts 12 biplane all the way up from Bowie, MD for the event. His airplane is a remarkable example of great craftsmanship and attention to detail. There are usually items, kits and airplanes for sale at many fly-ins. The District II fly-in was no exception. Pictured on the right is a complete, ready to fly SuperStar 40 trainer. The asking price was less than half the cost when new and looked like a bargain.



Anthony Lacorte flew his Cermak F-16 falcon. This “jet” has a propeller but it is not visible in flight. The plane easily reached over 120 mph with the wheels retracted. Amazingly, Anthony has been flying RC for *only 5 months*. He learned on a Tower 40 trainer and then moved on to a Hanger 9 Super Stik 60.



Tom Hunt from Lake Grove, NY flew this electric powered fun fly plane. With large control surfaces and a lot of power, this plane can do 10 foot diameter loops and hover in place.

It was very unfortunate that the weather was so poor for this great event. The day's flying was followed by an excellent dinner at a nearby restaurant. We met a lot of new faces there that now are friends. And we are looking forward to next year's AMA District II Fly-in. We plan to be there. Let's just hope for better weather this time.

Thank you Dave Mathewson and all the hard working members of P.A.R.C.S. This was really a fine event and we had a lot of fun. See you next year.