

MODEL AIRCRAFT SYMPOSIUM

An Excellent Example of One of The Hundreds Held Around the Country



You are brand new to the world of model aviation. And, like most new modelers, you have dozens of questions and wonder where to go to get them answered. Coming here to *RC Sport Aviator*, the Academy of Model Aeronautics' (AMA) online magazine is a good first step, but there are also several other options available to you.

Generally speaking your local hobby shop can provide answers to many of your questions. The knowledgeable, experienced staff will help you get your new model aircraft ready for flight and, in some cases, even provide introductory flight lessons. Another excellent resource is an AMA Chartered Club. With over 2,400 clubs throughout the United States chances are there is one near you. There are several advantages to joining an AMA club. The camaraderie of others who have an interest similar to yours is one. AMA Clubs also provide a flying site where you can enjoy your new hobby. They can help get you started in the right direction, and most also offer training programs to help make sure your first flights are successful.

A searchable database of AMA Chartered Clubs can be found online at <http://www.ama-dist-8.org/Clubs/Locator.html>. A search within a certain radius of your home or within your zip code will return a list of AMA clubs along with contact information for a club representative.

Other excellent resources are trade shows, symposiums, and model forums. Each caters to their niche but all can be an asset to the new modeler.

Several trade shows are scheduled annually throughout the United States. The largest of these shows boast participation by hundreds of manufacturers, distributors, and industry representatives. They attend to introduce new items to the modeling public, answer your questions, and help you resolve problems you may be having with their products. It's shows like these that give you an opportunity to see, up close and personal, hobby related items you otherwise may only be able to read about in modeling magazines. Some of the larger trade shows include AMA's annual AMA Convention held in Ontario, CA each January. Others include the Southwestern Areamodeling Conference in Texas, the Weak Signals Annual RC Model Show in Ohio, and the Westchester Radio Aero Modelers (WRAM) Show in New York. A complete listing of model aircraft shows and dates can be found on the AMA Website at <http://www.modelaircraft.org>.

Symposiums and forums are much lower key and smaller than trade shows, most often catering to just the local modeling community. They focus more on informational lectures and hands on demonstrations. A good example is the forum held in Syracuse, New York each January. Simply called Model Aircraft Forum (MAF), this event is organized by two local clubs, The Aero Radio Club of Syracuse (ARCS) and The Syracuse Thunderbirds Aero Radio Society (STARS). The forum was created in the mid nineties to take the place of a much larger symposium organized in the nineteen seventies by the Central New York Model Aircraft Association. In 1995, after twenty years, the Association felt they no longer had the energy, ambition, or manpower available that was necessary to put on a first class event. A few members from the ARCS and STARS felt that it

was important enough to continue to hold some type of get together to help break up the long central New York winters and began to discuss the possibilities. The MAF was born out of those discussions.

The eighth annual Model Aircraft Forum was held this year on January 31, 2004. It has grown in size each year and this year was no different in spite of the several feet of snow that pummeled central New York during the days leading up to and the day of the event.

Exhibitors included TuffFlight Models known for their extremely competitive Radio Control Combat models. Their booth is always popular during the forum but this year it was even more so as they introduced their newest entry into the Radio Control market, the 4D.



Joe Chovan (L) and Mark Mozzo, owners of TuffFlight Models showed off this TuffFlight 4D on skies.

The 4D is a model capable of performing all of the 3D style maneuvers with the advantage of an extra "D" for durability, a definite plus when working yourself through the aerobatic learning curve.

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Ed and Kevin of Great Northern Models made the trip from Toronto, Canada to introduce Central NY modelers to their new jet turbine engine.

A new addition to this year's forum was Great Northern Models from Toronto, Canada. Great Northern Models is heavily involved in the Radio Control turbine model market and was a nice compliment to the Jet Pilots Organization (JPO) booth manned by JPO District 2 representative Art Arro.



JPO District 2 Representative Art Arro (R) spent the day talking RC turbines.

Ed and Kevin from Great Northern actually demonstrated a turbine engine several times during the day in the parking area behind the building. The demos were one of the highlights of the forum since turbine models are still pretty rare in this part of New York.



Ed and Kevin demonstrate a Sim Jet turbine in less than ideal conditions. Great Northern Models is the North American importer of Sim Jet.



Walt Throne, owner of Walt's Hobbies, offered several "show specials" to those attending the forum.

Demonstrations and seminars are always popular with modelers. The MAF provided several for those attending. Steve Scicchitano spent all day answering questions and demonstrating his model covering techniques. Terry Terrenoire gave a well-attended talk on building techniques. Terry is an accomplished builder having built nearly two hundred models in his modeling career.



Steve Scicchitano demonstrates his model covering techniques.



Terry Terrenoire describes one of the many specialty tools he uses to help his model building.

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Matt Kirsch and Ed Britton from the Rochester, New York area manned another popular demonstration booth. Ed and Matt spent the day building Radio Control Combat SPAD (Simple Plastic Airplane Design) models. Coroplast®, a fairly inexpensive and durable material is used in the construction of these models. An important consideration when you're flying RC Combat is the ability to build and repair quickly and easily. Matt said that he is able to build a SPAD wing, ready to fly in as little as 20 minutes.



Matt Kirsch puts the finishing touches on a Coroplast® SPAD wing.

Most forums like the MAF also include "club booths", a place where local clubs can promote themselves to potential members. The STARS and ARCS shared a booth where each club handed out information about their club activities and training programs. This was one of the more popular booths with the kids attending as many of them spent quite a bit of time there

getting in some “stick time” on the two Radio Control Flight Simulators that were running constantly all day long.



No event like this would be complete without a good static display.



This Gee Bee was one of several outstanding models entered in the static display.



This Mr. Mulligan was the static entry of STARS member, Rick Colvin.

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Several impeccable models were stationed on tables around the room. Each attendee was given an opportunity to vote for the model they felt was “Best of Show”. When all the votes were counted, Bob Pickney took first place with his Fairchild NQ-1, Dan Stomka was seconded with his P-51D, and Don Corbett took home the third place plaque for his giant scale Sopwith Pup.



Second place "People's Choice" winner P-51D built by Dan Stromka.



Corbett's Sopwith Pup took 3rd place in the "People's Choice" voting.

Forums like the MAF are an ideal place for those new to modeling to get the flavor of the full scope of model aviation.



Model Aviation Helicopter columnist, Dan Williams (L), talks helicopters with STARS member Phil Morgan.

Whether it be a trade show, symposium, or forum they are all enjoyable experiences, and each offer an opportunity to enrich your knowledge of model aviation. For a list of these events sanctioned by the Academy of Model Aeronautics you can visit the AMA Website at <http://www.modelaircraft.org> or you can find a listing in the AMA's magazine *Model Aviation*.

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