KNOX COUNTY RADIO CONTROL

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July 2021 Newsletter

President's Corner

I am very pleased to report that KCRC seems to be running smoothly – courtesy, camaraderie, and cooperation have been the rule rather than the exception. What is most important though is that we are all enjoying ourselves and having fun, which explains why participation remains so high during both weekdays and weekends.

On Saturday, July 3rd, the club hosted an Independence Day cookout with food from Buddy's Bar-B-Q. Approximately 40 club members and family members attended, and a good time was had by all. Thanks to Warren for making the arrangements with Buddy's.

We came across a document written by then-club-historian Henry Morse in 1984 detailing the history of KCRC. The document is full of details about how the club came to be and old newspaper clippings, including pictures of the first-ever wedding held at KCRC in 1982! Click here to read it yourself. Among the many revelations in the document is that KCRC's current site was chosen one afternoon in 1973 when "Ed Hartley and his wife rode their motorcycles out to the Williams Bend area…and knew that with adequate grading to remove the hilltop, the club could develop an excellent flying field in the area."

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Jerry McLaughlin, Left, and Bill Sharp Tower Over Model Airplanes as They Taxi on Runway

Staff Photo by J. Hines Cary

Models Fly Through Air With Greatest of Skill

By JANE GIBBS DuBOSE
News-Sentinel Staff Writer

The takeoff is perfect. A blue-and-white wing grazes a piece of cloud as it glides above West Knox County countryside.

The stationary model pilot is glued to his seat — literally — as the real pilot, a mobile Jerry McLaughlin, calls the shots from the ground. The eight-pound airplane races over a clump of trees, scoots close to Melton Hill Lake and tries another loop — alone, unbridled, but definitely controlled.

The plane is a model, and it is guided by a seven-channel radio and the whims of what is known in the circles as an "RC," or a radio-control enthusiast.

Knox County Radio Control Inc. rents from Knox County a tract of land near Hardin Valley Road mostly for weekend maneuvers. The location is almost perfect for the 10-year-old club, composed mostly of men who double as real-life pilots or always wanted to.

Bill Sharp, a five-year radio-control convert, says he invested in his first airplane because he "wasn't old enough to take real flying lessons."

Now Sharp is old enough, and he has almost completed the number of lessons necessary to get his pilot's license. "I understand the principles of airplanes and aerodynamics. I can better understand how the model flies and how to control it in the air," Sharp said.

Sharp flies a racier model than most, designed for competition in patterns — or a set of maneuvers. Two years ago he placed first in the novice division in a national pattern contest. Last year he competed in the advanced category, and in August he will be an "expert" competitor.

A few seats have been assembled for spectators to the side of a 60-by-370-foot runway. The runway is the pride and joy of members, who no longer battle clogged engines and stalled starts on the dirt.

The hobby appeals to participants on two levels — construction of the model and the flight. It has held McLaughlin's fascination "ever since I was a little boy."

"I spend a lot of time helping other people learn how to fly. Flying is a real challenge, but it seems like the younger people are better at it," McLaughlin, an Oak Ridge resident, says. "It might have something to do with their better reflexes and eyesight."

Models are available in area hobby shops where boxes of unassembled model parts are displayed on shelves.

Many club members steal away for a few hours on the peaceful field to fly when they can. Practice fuels excellence in the hobby.

For McLaughlin, controlling the planes is second nature. He handles the pre-flight with ease, attaching with rubber bands the six-pound wing onto the base of fuselage. The model holds a .6-cubic-inch engine and runs about 15 minutes on fuel.

McLaughlin's 3-year-old model holds servos, or servomechanisms, placed in the rudder, elevator, throttle and aileron, the movable part of the airplane wing. A fifth servo is placed in more advanced planes, such as Sharp's, in the landing gear.

A servomechanism is an auto-

See GROUND, Page D-3

I would also like to say that Jeff Prosise has shouldered the task of creating this newsletter subsequent to the administration change. I think he is doing an exceptional job with a very professional looking format. It was Jeff's idea to pick a specific club member each month and highlight a little about their history. I think this is a great idea that helps us learn a little more about our fellow club members.

Our next meeting is planned for Tuesday, August 10th, at 7:00 p.m. at the field. Please watch your e-mail a day or two leading up to that date in the unlikely event we have to modify the date/time due to weather. Hopefully we will be ready to discuss possible by-law and rule changes. This will be your opportunity to share your thoughts with the rules and by-laws committee before any formal recommendations are proposed.

Treasurer's Report

We had no club meeting in July, but club treasurer Joel Hebert reported that the balance in the bank account at the end of June was a healthy $14,528. The club had $903 in income from the SPA contest thanks to Jimmy Russell and all the volunteers who helped make the event a success and one dues payment of $98 against $275 in expenses, which included fees for mowing ($100) and servicing the porta-potty.

Meet Jimmy Russell

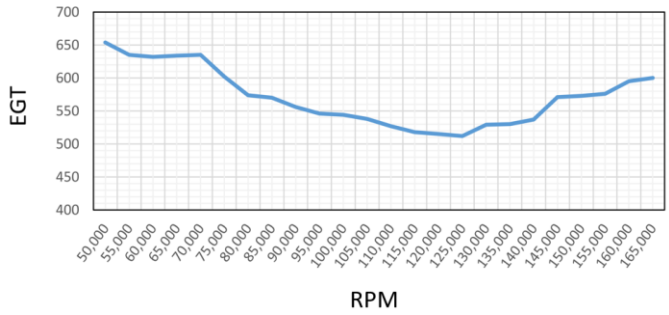
Each month, we spotlight one of our members. This month it's Jimmy Russell, who ran last month's SPA pattern contest at KCRC.

Jimmy was born in Louisville, KY, and lived in Kentucky most of his life before moving to Knoxville six years ago. He and his wife Shannon have a 2-year-old daughter. Jimmy's dad was a machinist and Jimmy attributes that to his love of all things mechanical. Today Jimmy is a mechanical designer who enjoys playing guitar and has built his own tube amps. He prefers cars with manual transmissions, so when his daughter learns to drive someday, she will probably learn how to drive a stick.

Jimmy started building and flying RC airplanes with his dad when he was a teenager. He left the hobby for a few years and then rediscovered his love of all things that fly. He's a balsa builder who loves competition and scratches that itch by flying in SPA contests. Virtually everything he flies today is electric.

Did You Know?

If you've ever attended an event where RC jets are flown, you might have noticed that before shutting down a turbine engine, pilots often run it up to half throttle and let it run for a few seconds. If you're curious to know why, the chart below offers an explanation.



The chart plots engine RPMs (horizontal axis) and exhaust gas temperature (vertical axis). The data came from a JetCat P60-SE turbine, which produces 13 pounds of thrust at 150,000 RPM and idles around 40,000 RPM. The engine runs cooler at half throttle than at idle. When pilots run the engine up before shutting it down, they're actually trying to *cool it down*. It's a little counter-intuitive, but the data doesn't lie. Now you know!