

62nd FREE FLIGHT NATIONALS REPORT

Introduction

The free flight discipline of the nationals was organized by the New South Wales Free Flight Society and all events were held on the Springhurst field south of Rutherglen in Victoria. This field is owned by Kevin and Sharon McMahon and they have been long time supporters of model flying for many years. Kevin was incredibly helpful and made sure that his stock was cleared into distant paddocks so we did not have any curious critters chewing and stepping on our models.

The advance party arrived in Rutherglen on 26 Dec 2008 and set up Headquarters in the Woongarra Motel. The Woongarra is situated on the bottom end of the main street opposite the local brewery which is next door to the local wine tasting bar. The local IGA grocer, restaurants and other watering facilities are only metres away.

The 27 Dec 2008 saw the erection of signage on the highway and 100 Chain Road. The mobile toilets were set in position and we had two toilets on the one trailer this time. 'Loouxury mate!!' The ladies soon reserved the best for themselves and put the appropriate signs to make sure this was The Law. The weather did look good but the prospect of wind was a bit daunting. Modelers started to arrive and took the opportunity to visit the field and have a bit of practice.

Day 1 – 28 December 2008

Events were F1G (Coupe), F1H (A1), F1J (1/2A Power). All events started on time and then came the wind. Early morning gusts up to 4 metres per second were recorded. Lift was abundant if you could pick it but it came through so quickly it was very easy to miss.

In **F1G** only two flyers were clean at the last round, Albert Fathers and Jim Christie. Albert got away well but Jim's model was seen to be going backwards and downhill to drop 8 seconds. Jim's model was sucked so severely to earth that in a downward backward slide, it broke the boom. Eleven starters flew and were conquered by the conditions....except three, and one is a lady. Be careful gents three other ladies flew and posted very respectable scores. Results are;

1st	Albert Fathers	600	7	Dave Hegarty	446
2nd	Jim Christie	592	8	Terry Bond	322
3rd	Sonya Burfein	532	9	William Jones	295
4	George Baynes	531	10	Dianne Richards-Smith	289
5	Dale Jones	518	11	Leigh Morgan	120
6	Mark Armour	500			

F1H was a one horse affair. Phil Mitchell had the field to himself. With that high tech pocket rocket on the line and feeling the thermals pass overhead he could not miss, until that dreadful moment. Trimming is everything and he blew it on the 4th round when the model over bunted and flew in for 24 seconds. Phil got the prize but not happy Jan! (Or is it Noels?)

F1J was also fought out in the last round. There were only two starters, but both with high tech models. Roy Summersby and Terry Bond on the start line waiting for good air. Tension is high with the 'gun', Roy ready to defeat all challengers. The lift is going through very quickly and the temperature is going up and down just as quickly as the wind rushes through the start line. Temperature down; Terry launches, Roy looks to the heavens to check lift, Terry is away, Roy goes into the same amazing downer that Jim has picked for a measly 114 seconds.

1 st	Terry Bond	600	2 nd	Roy Summersby	594
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Day 2 – 29 Dec 2008

F1A (A2) and Open Power featured this day and there was some excitement in both events. The two main contenders for the F1A title were Phil Mitchell and Nikolai Nikolav. Both of these flyers have flown at world championship level and done very well. However this was not the day for outstanding performance. The air was difficult to pick and both Phil and Nikolai had problems launching into suitable air.

Ted Burfein frightened the daylights out of the CD's. Ted had an earlier mishap and was late to launch in a round. He was getting very close to missing the round and was receiving a spontaneous countdown from urgers on the side; trying to help of course. Ted did not have a lot of time to pick his air and launched with a chorus from the assembled crowd. As soon as he was off the line nobody paid any attention until there was an almighty bang on the top of the CD tent. Percy who had seen action in Vietnam thought it was an incoming mortar. 'Bang' said Percy, 'Boom' said his offsider. This is an abridged version of some of the words actually spoken on the day. When Ted went to retrieve his model it was found that it actually was a boom, it had broken in the soft landing on the roof of the tent. The offsider was right it was a boom, but a noisy one.

The last round of F1A between Phil and Nikoli was a cracker! Phil went early into super lift which was plentiful this time of day. Nikoli only had to get a max to take the prize. Nikoli circled and was clearly in lift. He gave his model about a 30g pull and released. The line had been pulled so hard that on release the line hit and broke the stab. He was down in 23 seconds to snatch defeat from the jaws of victory.

1 st	Phil Mitchell	1201	4	Albert Fathers	562
2 nd	Nikoli Nikolav	1085	5	David Brawn	496
3 rd	Ted Burfein	789			

Open power was run at the same time and there were four flyers. It was a joy to see Roy Summersby and Colin Collyer fighting it out at high altitude. Both models achieved incredible height with a 10 second engine run. Roy had a converted F1c model with a .29 capacity engine and Colin had a Stafford Screen design model with a .25 heli motor. The battle was joined for a short time by Gary Odgers but he could not get the right trim on his big and light model. Terry Bond pleased his audience with a screaming vertical run which tore the wings off his model. It's time to use some black balsa.

1 st	Roy Summersby	898	3 rd	Gary Odgers	429
2 nd	Colin Collyer	872	4	Terry Bond	10

Day 3 – 30 Dec 2008 Springhurst

F1C was a bit of a fizzer. Terry Bond assembled his model and waited for Roy Summersby to get his act together. This was to be a decider as both had won an important comp in the last year. It might seem simple but Roy had forgotten to pack his stab. If you have not forgotten something you have not lived. Terry did say a few things to Roy but they are unprintable.

1 st	Terry Bond	512	Roy Summersby	DNF
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Open rubber was a well attended event with 14 entries. It seems that all rubber events are gaining in popularity. This was a tough event. The wind was up and the retrieves were very long. It was not just a flying competition but it was also an endurance event. Many models flew two or more paddocks away and were then blown over by the wind. This created some retrieval problems with tracker reception and a number of flyers were confused about direction and distance. This delay puts pressure on the flyer to get a flight in the next round.

High tech models did not do nearly as well as the traditional very light big motored monsters. Special mention should go to Peter Greenhill whose very pretty spiral wound fuselage unwound at launch, Don Boughton rescued his model from a tree destroying it in the process and Fred Roberts was seen slowly walking back after a long retrieve mumbling words to the effect that he had had enough. Fred is in his seventies and is one of the younger members of our flock.

Two flyers made the cut and the flyoff was held early the next morning. George triumphed with a 360 seconds with Mark close behind on 308 seconds. George made sure that everyone knew that he had won and tipped a fair amount of that brown stuff onto the high tech models and modelers not making the flyoff.

1 st	George Baynes	1260	8	Sonya Burfein	697
2 nd	Mark Armour	1208	9	Jim Christie	670
3 rd	Colin Collyer	882	10	William Jones	585
4	Terry Bond	873	11	Don Boughton	503
5	Leigh Morgan	868	12	Peter Greenhill	360
6	Garry Odgers	842	13	Fred Roberts	270
7	Albert Fathers	830	14	Ivor F	DNF

Day 3 – Indoor Albury Stadium, Report Submitted by Tahn Stowe

The indoor events were not as well attended as might have been expected, however the competition was fierce with some excellent flying. Ken Osborne was almost unbeatable taking out HLG, EZB, Peanut and Hanger Rat. Special mention must be made of the junior competitor Yosh Sheik who managed second place in HLG with 6 of his 9 flights being exactly 21 seconds.

Many thanks to Bill and Pauline East for their invaluable assistance with timekeeping, recording scores and static judging.

EZB 1st Ken Osborne 229 seconds

IHG (F1N)

1 st	Ken Osborne	98	4	Brian Bourke	30
2 nd	Yosh Sheik	63	5	Denver Harvison	0
3 rd	Tahn Stowe	56			

Peanut Scale

1 st	Ken Osborne		3	Garry Sunderland	
2 nd	Dianne Richards-Smith		4	Van Richards-Smith	

Hangar Rat

1 st	Ken Osborne	424	4	Terry Bond	DNF
2 nd	Tahn Stowe	143	4	Denver Harvison	DNF
3 rd	Garry Sunderland	133			

Bostonian and hanger Rat scramble were not flown.

Day 4 – 31 Dec 2008

Free Flight Scale was started at 6.30 am. There was some relief from the wind of previous days but it certainly would not last long. The static judging to begin first as the flyers opted to get their models judged before they smashed them to bits in the wind. It is very difficult to understand how these scale replicas do not disintegrate on their hard landings.

Kevin Dodd and Bill East were the judges and being a judge in a scale contest is not one to be envied, and both judges are to be thanked for their efforts. At the end of the scale day only half of one point was the difference between first and second. All models presented were of a very high standard.

1 st	Garry Sunderland	84.5	4	Eric Holland	78.5
2 nd	Garry Odgers	84	5	Fred Roberts	40
3 rd	Ken Osborne	78.5			

Lloyd Willis had offered a kit as a prize for the best presented rubber scale model. Unfortunately no rubber powered models were present so the kit was held over until a suitable modeler interested in scale could be found.

Day scramble is a tough event especially in the wind. Out runners were of some assistance but the going was still hard. Blood sweat and tears always form part of the scramble and this one was no different. The blood from 'bloody' David Brawn when his bald pate was chipped by a hungry Mills, sweat from all the players, except Brian Hammond who cried tears when his beautiful original Mills was lost out of sight towards the highway many kilometers away. Brian was heard to say that he had bought the motor with the money earned from a paper run when he was a kid in the UK. The model was ultimately found some days later by a farmer and returned safely, and Brian was extremely happy.

1 st	Andrew Heath	1007	5	Brian Hammond	512
2 nd	Phil Mitchell	917	6	Ivor F	267
3 rd	Tahn Stowe	708	7	Geoff Woodward	150
4	James McFall	541			

Geoff Woodward, a late entry was so excited and had so much fun that he vowed that he would return next year and do it all again at the Victorian nationals; poor boy!

P30 rubber, once a beginner's event has turned into a very competitive challenge. Those who have constantly railed against the raising of the maximum flight to 2 minutes from 90 seconds have produced models capable of 3 minutes or more in neutral air. The ability to pick lift on this day was the all important factor. Turbulence and massive downers were the fate of many. Former giants of the P30 game were lucky to be found in the bottom half of the draw. From a field of 13 only two flyers, Roy Summersby and Dave Hegarty managed to max out.

A flyoff was suggested for the next day but the CD decided on an unlimited flyoff commencing at 12.45pm. This gave both flyers 15 minutes to prepare their models for flight. On the whistle Roy wound and went. Dave assisted by his daughter Suzanne was winding but broke a motor and could not prepare another in time. Dave definitely had the better model and only had to get it into the air in the time allowed.

1 st	Roy Summersby	549	8	William Jones	308
2 nd	Dave Hegarty	360	9	Josh Hannaford	265 (jnr)
3 rd	Mark Armour	333	10	Terry Bond	252
4	Ken Osborne	331	11	Adrian Bryant	225
5	Tim Hannaford (jnr)	328	12	Leigh Morgan	196
6	George Baynes	317	13	Matt Hannaford	145
7	Jim Christie	315			

Hand launch glider is very much a young man's sport these days. Most of us old folks have thrown our arms away a long time ago. However there have been some significant developments in HLG over the past couple of years. Peter Lloyd is an exponent of the new discus launch HLG and even in difficult conditions he managed 5 out of 6 maxes with his own Morris Dancer HLG design.

1 st	Peter Lloyd	180	3 rd	Ivor F	21
2 nd	Yosh Sheik	150			

Catapult glider is the event for the oldies. That piece of rubber can do a thousand launches where the arm would fail in an instant. The gliders go high but they also must roll out at the top and then glide. It is all in the trimming. The best built and trimmed model has the best chance. There were a lot of events on this day and flyers were flitting from one event to another, no doubt disturbing their rhythm. Phil Mitchell probably the fittest man on the field led the way with his quick retrievals. Ken Osborne is a seasoned campaigner and a ferocious competitor and almost beat Phil on the day. No doubt that Ken was busy flying scale, P30 and catapult at the same time. I am surprised that Ken did not fly scramble and HLG as well.

1 st	Phil Mitchell	235	5	William Jones	110
2 nd	Ken Osborne	225	6	Ivor F	72
3 rd	Yosh Sheik	162	7	Tahn Stowe	68
4	Terry Bond	152	8	David Brawn	26

An unscheduled event arrived at the Woongarra at about 11pm on New Year's Eve. A bright iridescent holy cross was seen to be flying over the motel. Is it a plane? Is it a UFO? Both Tina Kenmir and David Brawn having had a surplus of imagination enhancing fluid swore that it was a UFO. Enter stage right is the 'religious' Colin Collyer as Joker at the 2008 FF nationals in control of the dreaded UFO.

Day 5 – 1 Jan 2009 New Years Day

When the program was being designed it was decided that after chasing models half way around Victoria all of these so called youthful competitors would need a rest, especially if they had gone to bed late or imbibed the previous night. It would also give them a chance to visit the control line speed and racing events and participate if they desired. It was a very good decision!!!! Happy New Year.

Day 6 – 2 Jan 2009

F1B (Wakefield) is run over 7 one hour rounds. The weather was warm to hot and windy with varying degrees of turbulence coming from trees about 150 metres away. The models were flying between 1 and 2 kilometers. Some vehicle retrieval was used along the road and that helped but it was a tough day. Seven hours in those conditions tested all the competitors. Some models were caught in tremendous lift and were in the air for more than 6 minutes. This meant a very long retrieve with the possibility of missing the next round. Reserve models were used in a number of cases. Terry Bond used three models. One damaged and one lost for a round, Leigh Morgan lost one for several rounds until a search after the competition later in the day found it. Of the total field of nine only four flyers managed to complete the whole seven rounds.

1 st	Terry Bond	1143	6	Mark Armour	287
2 nd	William Jones	1023	7	Albert Fathers	273
3 rd	Richard Blackam	1022	8	George Baynes	180
4	Leigh Morgan	1007	9	Adrian Bryant	160
5	Paul Rossiter	528			

OZ Diesel was flown at the same time as F1B but without rounds. Peter Lloyd posted three good flights and pulled the pin while Roy Summersby found sink and some hard dirt. Even carbon fibre oz diesel models break

1 st	Peter Lloyd	356	2 nd	Roy Summersby	338
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Night scramble was held at the McMahon field just before sunset in a moderate wind calming towards the end of the contest. Because of the conditions the CD decided to reduce the contest to ½ hour duration both Ian and Bruce flew very well trimmed “Carpets” that handled the inclement conditions very well Jim Mc Fall flying his own design model came a well deserved third.

1 st	Ian Gapps	366	4	Geoff Woodward	169
2 nd	Bruce Hoffman	352	5	Robert Fitzgerald	100
3 rd	James McFall	280	6	Mark Poochkres	90

Ted Burfein, Andrew Heath and Van Richards-Smith had enough sense not to fly.

Day 7 – 3 Jan 2009

Vintage was the best weather day of the whole competition. Gentle light breeze wafting hither and yon with buoyant air and rising thermals. **Vintage glider** was dominated by Colin Collyer. Three straight maxes left everyone else in his wake. It almost looked like the previous day had sucked the energy from both Albert Fathers and David Brawn.

1 st	Colin Collyer	540	2 nd	David Brawn	267	3 rd	Albert Fathers	180
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Vintage Rubber was a buzz. Six flyers and some even looked good. Jim Christie posted 3 straight maxes and waited in the wings for a flyoff. Roy Summersby managed to get his maxes with a twin pusher which has only done three minutes on two other occasions so was not confident of a win in a flyoff. The rest of the ‘also ran’s made mistakes and waited too long for the lift. The flyoff between Roy and Jim was a tactical blunder by Jim. His Upstairs Maid was a vastly superior flyer that Roy’s twin pusher but Jim chose to go before the lift. Had Jim piggy backed Roy he would certainly have had the win. William Jones had the right idea and had one flight with a magnificently constructed Topsy. He was heard to say that this is what flying should be like.

1 st	Roy Summersby	658	4	Terry Bond	445
2 nd	Jim Christie	655	5	Colin Collyer	348
3 rd	Albert Fathers	455	6	William Jones	160

Vintage power the second last event on the calendar was fought out between three power heads. Roy Summersby flew a Swiss Miss which performed extremely well, Geoff Potter father of the famous world champ Grant, and the entertaining Martin Williams.

1 st	Roy Summersby	495	2 nd	Geoff Potter	358	3 rd	Martin Williams	348
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It was very interesting to see that over the whole nationals the power heads excelled in rubber duration and the rubber winders managed well in power. Perhaps there is a sea change in the wind.

Day 7 – 3 Jan 2009 End of Contest

The last remaining event now started. It is called the pack up and go home event. Signs had to be removed, shade tents dismantled, cars packed, results collated, you name it and it had to be done. There is no doubt that some things could have been done better but in free flight conditions rule the situation. The weather was only against us for five out of the six days of the competition and not the whole seven. How wonderful is that?

Congratulations to the winners and thanks to those who helped make these nationals a success. The next nationals will be held in the same location but managed by the VMAA. I wish them every success. Hip Hip Hooray for another year.

Terry Bond

President NSWFFS