

FREE FLIGHT DOWN UNDER

NEWSLETTER OF THE AUSTRALIAN FREE FLIGHT SOCIETY INC

VOLUME 57 NUMBER 1

AUTUMN 2025



**FAB FEB
2025 REPORTS**

NEW ZEALAND NATS

**UNORTHODOX DAY
HEROES, LEGENDS AND CHARACTERS**



FRONT COVER:

Junior Houdong Wang (CHN) launches in the Kiwi Cup. China was well represented at Fab Feb.

TONY ACCURSO PHOTO

Free Flight Down Under

March 2025

Volume 57, Number 1

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Free Flight Down Under is the newsletter of the Australian Free Flight Society Inc, a Special Interest Group of the Model Aircraft Association of Australia. FFDU welcomes contributions in the form of articles, letters, pictures, etc on any aspect of Free Flight or related topics. Contributions can be sent to the above address or emailed to the editor. Electronically prepared material is preferred. Please keep photos separate and no smaller than 200 kb each.

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CONTRIBUTORS

Mike Pettigrew
Roy Summersby
Len Surtees
Bob Bailey
Natalie Beckett
Vin Morgan
Tony Accurso

THANK YOU!

PRESIDENT'S REPORT



Well, times up!

This will be my last message as President of the AFFS, so I'd like to take the time to thank everybody for their support over the five years I've been in this role. A particular thanks goes to the committee who travelled on the journey with me, that is, Shayne, Shannon, Gary and Malcolm.

Shayne, Shannon and Gary all work for a living and that makes their efforts even more special because working for a living leaves them so much less time to do all the AFFS work they do, and they've still done it to perfection, so I hope you'll show them some extra gratitude for their work on your behalf.

Malcolm and Gary will be continuing-on. Gary, of course continuing as Treasurer of the AFFS and Malcolm continuing with production of FFDU. While I'm not saying that Gary's spreadsheets aren't in themselves a work of art, I must give recognition to Malcolm for the work of art he issues four times every year and has been doing so for many years! Free Flight Down Under, dates to the 1960's in the hands of others and started life as a couple of pages, with some words and sketches run off on a Gestetner machine, to the modern, multi-page high quality colourful production it is today that we must agree is without equal in the free flight modelling world. Thanks Indeed Malcolm.

I urge everyone to come up with material for FFDU to make the job

easier. A story, photographs of some models (aircraft that is!), a plan or two, or something you've built are all good topics for something for FFDU. I've tried very hard to assist by churning-out numerous articles for Malcolm to use – some will say they're rubbish and hopefully, some not, but either way, it was always intended to help Malcolm to put out the size and quality of magazine he's proud of.

I can't sign-off without thanking Vin Morgan for his "unofficial" special assistance. Vin keeps score for the Team Trials as well as buying on our behalf the medallions for the AFFS Champs and as members will have noticed, he also distributes mail and FFDU to the membership list and provides valuable advice when asked.

All of the above is help that is much appreciated.....

Please treat the new and also the continuing members of your AFFS committee well and remember that they are working for you free of charge; they're volunteers, and without them, we'd be in trouble!

Mike Pettigrew

FROM THE EDITOR



Thanks to a loyal band of contributors, we have a pretty interesting set of articles for you to read in March.

Of course, Vin Morgan and Roy Summersby have produced excellent reports from Feb Feb 2025 at Lost Hills. Len Surtees has reported on the windy New Zealand Nationals and Roy submitted two more articles, a report on Unorthodox Day at Richmond and another going under the title "*Heroes, Legends and Characters*" - Roy lists all of the heroes of our sport he has caught up with before or after the competitions.

It will be sad to say Farewell to the AFFS committee. They

have served us well over the last five years. Well, not all are going. Gary Goodwin and I are still here, unless someone wants a punt at Editor FFDU? My first edition was March 2010 - that's quite a long spell at the printing press, isn't it?

My "*Backward Glance*" is now up to 2023, so it too is due for retirement. Mike has produced an epic for this edition "*Ramblings of an Old Modeller*". It may have to be spread over two editions.

And Bob Bailey has sent an article on old school Open Rubber. Some may remember Bob (Robin) from the 1983 Goulburn Nats. Enjoy the read!

Malcolm Campbell



47TH Australian Free Flight Society Championships and Widgiewa Cup Narrandera & West Wyalong 2025



Widgiewa Cup (World Cup Event) Venue: Narrandera

Sunday 27th April	F1A/F1B/F1C	5 x 1 hour rounds	0800-1300
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AFFS Championships (World Cup Event) Venue: Narrandera

Monday 28th April	F1A/F1B/F1C	5 x 1 hour rounds	0800-1300
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Tuesday 29 th April	Reserve Day F/O day for AFFS & Widgiewa		0700-0900
	Evening AFFS AGM	Narrandera Club	1900

Southern Cross Cup (World Cup Event) (NSWFFS) Venue: Narrandera

Wednesday 30 th April	F1A/F1B/F1C	5 x 1 hour rounds	0800-1300
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Thursday 1 st May	F/O morning for Southern Cross Cup		0700-0800
	Moving Day to West Wyalong		

West Wyalong Competitions Start, Venue: West Wyalong

Friday 2 nd May	Combined Vintage	3 flights no rounds	0800-1300
	E36	3 flights no rounds	0800-1300
	P30	3 flights no rounds	0800-1300

Saturday 3 rd May	Combined F1G/F1H/F1J	5 x 1hour rounds	0800-1300
	Combined %	3 flights no rounds	0800-1300
	Scramble	1 hour Scramble	1600-1700

Sunday 4 th May	Open Power	3 x flights no rounds	0800-1300
	Open Rubber	3 x flights no rounds	0800-1300
	Combined HLG/TLG		0800-1300
	CLG		0800-1300
	Evening Presentation Dinner		1800



Fab Feb 2025

Report by Vin Morgan
Photos by Vin Morgan and Tony Accurso



Roy Summersby, Albert Fathers, Bruce Hao and Vin Morgan went to Lost Hills, California for this year's Fab Feb competitions. We thought there might have been some effect on the field from the unusual weather this year – there had been hardly any rain – but there was grass and in fact the field was in very good shape. There was little evidence of the California fires on the drive up from Los Angeles.

At the end of January SEN editor and Kiwi Cup organizer Roger Morrell reported that there were 118 entries from 18 countries, and he was expecting a few more from the naughty people who hadn't yet entered (they have been reprimanded). The last of the three competitions, the Max Men 107 had entrants, about the same as recent years. There were of course no Russians and just a few Israelis.

It was good to catch up with all the flyers again although, like us they are getting older and there are not many new young people. Increasing age (and the wonderful models from the model factories) have had a marked affect on entry ratios for the three classes. It used to be that F1A had the most entries (gliders were easy to build and fly), with F1B second and still fewer F1C. Now that a top-of-line F1As cost more than F1Bs and F1Cs and the gliders are more difficult to fly, requiring considerable athleticism, F1A numbers are less than half F1B. In MaxMen there were 21 in F1A, 49 in F1B and 16 in F1C.

The competitions ran very nicely as far as I saw – thanks organizers.

The timekeeping problem is still there. This has been discussed at length in the pages of SEN and elsewhere. It is very difficult to time a black dot in the sky, in the presence of a lot of other black dots so it isn't surprising that timekeepers time the wrong model. Altimeters are a partial solution. At the moment there are two brands of altimeter that have been certified by the FAI for timing purposes (the requirements are accuracy and the facility of proving the flight displayed is the correct one), the All-Tee and the MiniNeurone. The All-Tee has been available since 2021, the MiniNeurone (current version) has only been around for a couple of years. I'm not too familiar with the All-Tee, however I have MiniNeurone in my Wakefields. In the MaxMen 6 minute flyoff I was waiting at the pole when a rather unhappy looking Aram Schlosberg arrived and said he had been pressed into timekeeping and had reluctantly agreed. When I told him I had a Neurone system he brightened up considerably. Aram has been arguing for

improvements to timekeeping methods, e.g. by altimeters for some time.

Timing errors have now duded Bruce Hao in three contests that I know of. In each case the timekeeping mistake put him out of the following flyoff. In Mongolia they timed the wrong model. In the Kiwi Cup this year I was timing but I was never sure if I had the correct model so we took the landing time that Sheng who was also watching got. This time gave a sub-max, however when Bruce later downloaded the Simplicity Timer altimeter data it indicated the model had maxed. Unfortunately it was too late and in any case the Simplicity altimeter is not certified and cannot be used to provide a flight time. In the MaxMen 6-minute flyoff, in a huge crowd of models Bruce was again given a sub-max for a flight that, according to the Simplicity altimeter maxed. Obviously the timekeeper was on the wrong model. The Neurone system seems to be an answer because it provides the flight time as well as the time and location of the launch and landing place so you can be sure it was the correct flight.

How did the Aussies go? Roy is providing a story on F1C so I won't go into that, except to congratulate him on the second place and wonder what he is doing about getting the two-pitch prop and less-cambered wings?? In F1A Albert improved through the three competitions. He dropped three rounds in the Kiwi Cup but only one in the North American and only 5 seconds in MM. Albert said he wasn't too unhappy about the 5s because he didn't really want to line up with the fit young guys to go for 11-minutes in the calm of next morning. In fact it was a good flyoff and Jama Danier got 607 seconds.

I arrived at Lost Hills with a box of models that hadn't flown since the NSW/Vic State Championships at West Wyalong in June 2024. The lack of match practice showed with two drops in the Kiwi and one on the North American. Things got better for MaxMen and both Bruce and I got through the rounds. In the 6-minute flyoff in the evening Bruce got away at the start of the round with the crowd. As mentioned before he was given a sub-max. I was a bit behind and since there was some wind I didn't want to fly at the end of what appeared to be a patch of lift. I waited until the very end of the flyoff period. The climb was only 93m however the air was good at the end of the flight and the model DTed at 125m. The next morning I got 103m and 7:24 for 4th.

You can find results on the web.

MaxMen link:

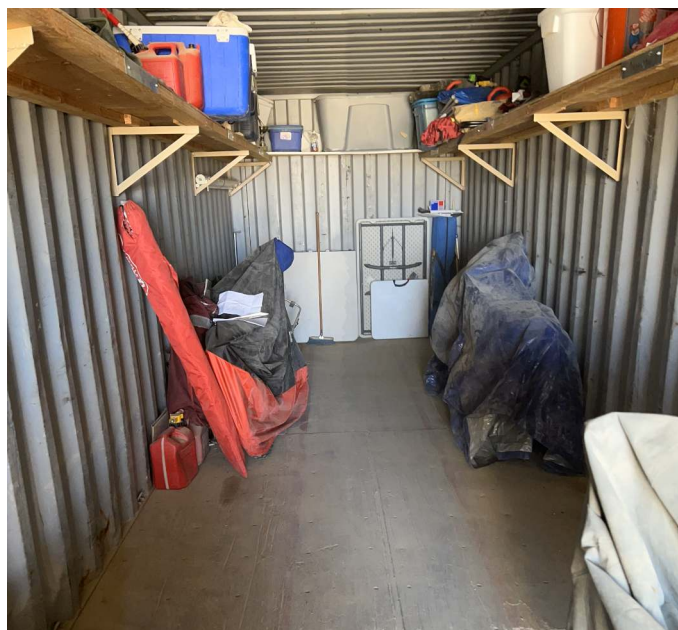
https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1DYprRX4l0OdcSbKcml_yhuxJGO0aL5S-/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=115258522063690735864&rtpof=true&sd=true

North American link:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1F5Gi0n78KYI3BrmALCZmi9xmR22TGoUj07SvYn7nAo/edit?gid=140393409#gid=140393409>

Kiwi Cup link:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/15XO_NoUjJ1q5l9E7K4Pn7oNXi1LpK2uiBuN7kQhtT8/edit?usp=sharing



Bikes in the container under their tarp. This picture is included only to show the freshly swept floor.



In Denny's again. The beer is good enough (no wine) and now we have mastered mix and match ordering. The meals are a pass (just not too often)



Even coupes have the disease. The full carbon coupe. I think it dropped a round.



The bikes are great (special thanks to Craig for the loan of his). We did spend quite a lot of time replacing tubes. And it would have been good if we had found the spare battery in the container at the start of the week rather than the end.



Paul Squires, NZ. Coupes



The Mexican takeaway is OK. Albert lining up.



Bruce readying. Note the lawn in the cleared area.



Roy's birthday cake. Dinner with the Brits. Phil Ball on Roy's left, then John Cooper and Ken Faux, and Mark Benns' nose.



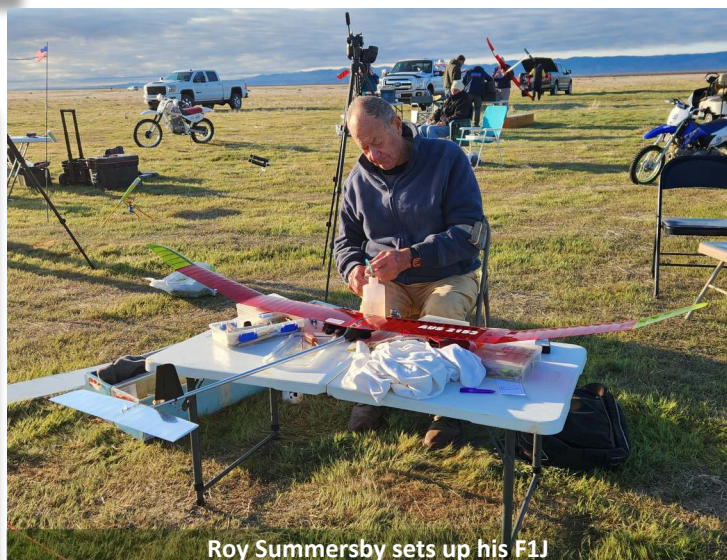
Time one of these. Actually not too hard at this distance. It gets more difficult when they are further away.



Paul Squires NZ Coupe



Paul Squires NZ CLG



Roy Summersby sets up his F1J



Vin Morgan's F1B

These 4 photos are courtesy of Tony Accurso

US photographer Tony Accurso has a Facebook page of his Fab Feb photos. We thank him for the next 3 pages of photos.



Janna and Brian Van Nest with Brian's Shok Ultra



Most likely Per Findahl on tow



The unstoppable Walt Ghio sets up his F1B in Kiwi Cup



Mike Roberts runs up his F1J



Javier Abad launches F1A - I think it's Jama Danier's



John Cooper flew E36 this time



Jama Danier from Canada sets up F1A



Houdong Wang launches in Kiwi Cup



A Starduster, like Dave Shackleford's



Two F1C launches = Mike Roberts left and Ken Faux GBR right



Patriotic F1B stands out in the clear sky



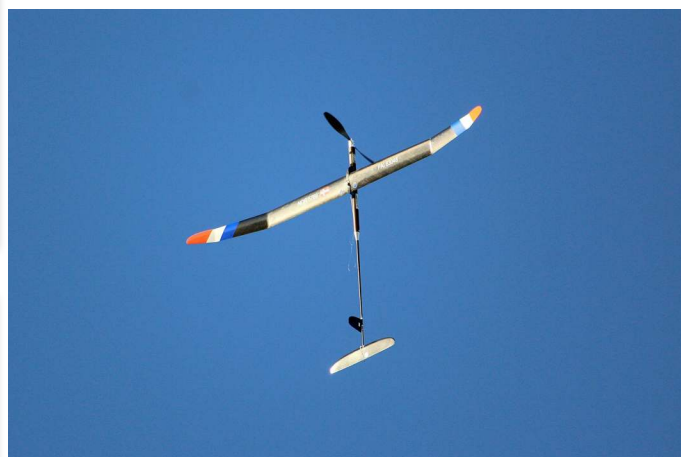
Janna Van Nest and Lynn Edmondson flew E36



Connie Booth NZ CLG



Mark Benns & Phil Ball



Vegar Nereng NOR launches in F1B



Jack Murphy launches his F1Q



Late afternoon landing of an F1C

Fab Feb 2025 Lost Hills USA

Report by Roy Summersby
Photos by Vin Morgan and Tony Accurso

We, the Fab Four (Vin Morgan, Bruce Hao, Albert Fathers, and myself) left Australia on the 5th Feb to once again attend the Fab Feb competitions in Lost Hills. We met up in Auckland as Vin was flying from Melbourne, Albert from Brisbane, Bruce and I from Sydney. While having a beer waiting for the long flight on the Boeing 777, Paul Squires and Connie Booth joined us. Paul had entered F1B and P30 which he won. Why did we go Air New Zealand again, because they have what is called a Sky couch which for old blokes like Vin and myself means we can lay down and get some sleep. It is also a lot cheaper than business class which is just too many dollars for me.

Arriving in LAX we were surprised to find the place empty, so straight through customs etc., no one hour queues as we have experienced in the past. Out of the airport and on to the shuttle bus to the hire car company - Alamo have a great service, no hassles here. We were on the road to Wasco in no time. There we bought the necessary items like a little food and a trolley full of wine, then onto Motel 6.

Next morning off to the container to prepare the retrieval motor bike and pick up other items like chairs etc., then out to the field. I think the field was the best I have seen it in the twenty-five years or so that I have been going. It was magic, short grass everywhere.

The organizers had prepared a large area where most of the flying was to take place. It was a large square, F1A on one side, F1B on another side, F1C on the third side and car parking on the fourth. This worked out very well. The other big plus was at registration, where for the first time we didn't have to pay the AMA a joining fee. I have objected to this every year. Earlier in the year, I asked our MAAA to talk to the AMA re this as we, and all other countries never charge visitors. The AMA fee has always been US\$30 this time it was going to be US\$125 !!!! The reason was they had a big insurance claim. Nothing to do with the free flight comps. A bit more talking and getting CIAM involved we find out that all competitors are

covered in all world cup competitions. The result was no charge to those entering world cup events, and a lot of very happy overseas modelers. All this time, 25 years that I know of, we have been paying US\$30 per year when we didn't have to. Thank you MAAA for getting involved on our behalf!

My report is for F1C only:

Kiwi Cup

This was the first comp and sixteen flyers made a start. 7 rounds, 1 X 240 then 6 X 180. This was reduced to 6 rounds as light rain came and spoilt the day. The fly off was held next morning. Todd Reynolds USA came out on top with 424 seconds in front of me with 405 seconds and Amarotgon from MGL with 366 seconds taking third place. I was the top master in the comp which gave me a very nice bottle of NZ wine that didn't last very long.

North American Cup

This is always a five round comp as they like to finish it in the day so food and champagne can flow freely in the evening. Again, sixteen starters were listed, but one did not fly. 2 X 240 then 3 X 180 rounds. Even though the weather was good, only six of us made it to the fly off. The max was set at 600 seconds; they intended to get a result. Yuan Gao did everything right and made 504 seconds, the rest of us were in the 300s. My flight went in a huge circle only to come back and hit my time keeper's truck!

Max Men International

Once again, a top day weather wise. Seven rounds which included two of 240 seconds with the others 180 seconds. Seven of us made it through to the fly offs, the first being 360 seconds. Only three made the 360, I was looking very good for the first three minutes then the model just fell out of the good air and was down in 262 seconds leaving me to finish in sixth place. Taron USA went on to win with 480 followed by Yuan CHN with 418 and Ulzil MGL with 350.

Summing up

It was once again a great Fab Feb, good organization, generally good weather, cold, yes but that is what you get in February, it's still winter there. Many said the air was tricky and looking over the full results which you can see in SEN I guess it was.

Great to see our friends from all over the world again. I was told that there were 118 entries from 18 countries, down a little, but with wars going on some flyers had to stay at home and do their bit. I know we all have our little problems flying our toys and I was no exception, broke a boom on DT, glided into my time keeper's truck robbing me of a higher

place, and DTing amongst the parked cars, luckily only breaking a tailplane.

One of the highlights was at the beginning of a round in the Maxmen, the air felt good to me and both Albert and I couldn't understand why no one was flying. I had decided to go and, as I was starting, an F1B went up vertically. So I closely followed. In the next 30 seconds there must have been 30 to 40 F1B and C models all gliding away in this massive thermal, it was the biggest group of models I have ever seen. A magnificent sight, why there was no midair collisions was surprising. I was happy with my performance as I didn't drop a regular round max.

Will I be back next year? **I sure will.**

14th "HEAVE HO" Free Flight Glider International Postal held over the period 1 April until 30 April 2025

Sponsored by stingmk2gliders.com (outdoor events) and J&H Aerospace (indoor events).

Indoor catapult and hand launch gliders for both adults and Juniors (age up to 15 years old) flown in category 1 (ceiling height up to 8 meter or 26' measured under the ceiling beam structure excluding lights and fans. Basketball halls are common category 1 sites). I have asked Josh Finn from J&H AEROSPACE to again sponsor prizes for indoor, Josh sells lots of indoor glider kits so check out his range.

Outdoor events, Juniors and adults:

1. Hand Launch (javelin) HLG (Heave Ho Perpetual trophy to adult winner)
2. Catapult CLG (1/16" x 1/4" x 9" rubber loop maximum allowed)
3. Tip Launch Glider TLG.

Indoor events for Juniors and adults:

1. 6" (152mm) wing span catapult, any design (Sting Mk2 6" glider kit ideal)
2. Hand launch, any size or material and can be wing tip or Javelin launched.

RULES:

- For indoor and outdoor there are 9 official flights. Please record all official flights with the best 5 counted for outdoor (multiple series of 9 flights are allowed but cannot mix or combine scores.)
- Times to be recorded by a time keeper. For Outdoor fly to one minute maximum for each flight. If you achieve 5 x one-minute maxes out of 9 then keep flying one-minute maxes till it is missed but include that last flight time.
- Flights are rounded down to seconds. Indoor flights are recorded down to 1/10th second. (eg flight of 23.76 seconds is recorded as 23.7 seconds).
- Time starts at moment of launch and stops when glider comes to rest on floor. Best 3 scores will count or 4th if needed as a tie breaker.

STING MK2 glider kits for prizes and lucky entry prize. Fly safely & responsibly but most of all "Have FUN"

ENTRY is FREE Send results and your country to lensurtees@hotmail.com (scores must be emailed by 14th May). Please check out web site for updated information at stingmk2gliders.com

Happy flying to all, Len Surtees

77th National Model Aircraft Championships New Zealand

Report and photos by Len Surtees



My wife Yufen and I arrived in the New Zealand's capital city Wellington setting down at the airport on the 28th December 2024. Waiting for us was Phil Eldridge who kindly drove us to the Clareville showground where a hired caravan awaited us there. This was only a 1.5 hour trip. The Nat's headquarters were set up here along with the splendid indoor flying site, a communal kitchen and Control Line sites. Carterton was only a few km away and it had restaurants, food outlets and historic sites to visit along with dozens of fine wine vineyards offering good food to eat and of course wine tasting, all first class. The Free Flight site was held on a large farming property near Masterton 20 km north of Clareville.

My friends Rob Wallace and Dave Ackery were CD'ing all free flight events. All the events ran smoothly, even under huge pressure to reschedule many events due to strong wind and rain. Two days were lost to bad weather so several FF events were added to existing events. I contacted Rob Wallace a month before Nat's and offered my help to judge Control Line F2B Aerobatics, an offer that was quickly accepted. I only had to walk 100 metres to the flying circles but due to strong winds only one round was completed. CD Danny Walker had a pilots meeting and agreed to try for a second round the following morning. Unfortunately the wind was stronger so placings were decided on the first and only round. My observations were that, given the conditions, many pilots gave a good account of their ability in blustery wind with no crashes.

I had for sale carbon fibre tubes, some straight and most

lightweight tapered tubes which were keenly bought by Control Line and Free Flight contestants.

As the Tuesday and Wednesday FF events were postponed, the indoor events for Hand Launch Glider and Hanger Rat were brought forward three days and flown in the evening. Indoor Hand Launch glider was keenly contested with several RC glider pilots flying large foam flapped wings which had a great glide despite only transitioning about $\frac{3}{4}$ ceiling height. This hall had very clean walls and a ceiling height of just over 9 meters. My glider was purposely made a little heavy with the idea to get almost to the ceiling with a strong launch but not hit the ceiling. I surprised myself as, with a hard launch, I could easily hit the ceiling which I did on a couple of flights. Other flights had a poor transition due to underpowered launches. There is nothing worse than holding back as it gives erratic transitions. Still I tried my best which placed me into second position with my top two flights being 59.1 seconds, with Steve Warner first at 62.8 seconds. I reckon Steve is nearly 3 meters tall and has arms 2 meters long. Maybe I should have gone to Specsavers? All contestants shared the floor allowing each to continue flying as they wished. All in all, it was a very enjoyable contest with seven pilots having a lot of fun.

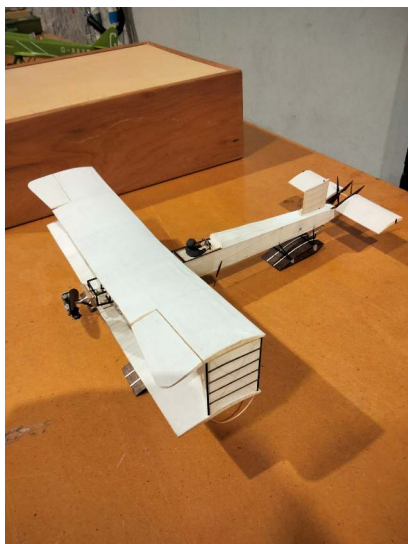
I watched some Hanger Rats for a while but, being tired, I missed the final flights. Alec Fuller ended up Top Rat, winning with flights of over two and a half minutes. It was good to catch up with Alec and his wife. She is also a keen competitor who helped in organising indoor gliders for my



Len and Yufen with the CLG trophy



The free flight field on one of the better days
March 2025 Free Flight Down Under



1. Scale Judging 2. Antony Koerbin's winning Voisin Hydro Canard 3. The indoor hall at Carterton

annual Heave Ho World postal event that is held every year in April. The NZers are by far the biggest supporters of my "STING MK2 GLIDERS" sponsored World Heave Ho fun contest, with lots of glider kits as prizes.

Thursday was a busy morning at the FF field, due to incorporating the rescheduled events. I had registered to fly in Vintage hand launch glider (VHLG), Vintage catapult glider (VCLG), HLG, CLG and Tip Launch Glider (TLG). Conditions were reasonable with some wind and threatening rain. I gave up on flying the vintage events and flew CLG. One flight went some distance and looked like it landed just past an irrigation ditch with electric fences either side. By this time my feet were causing me some stress because they were still swollen from flight over from Australia. Much to my chagrin I had to wade in water above my ankles to cross over. After a long search I gave up and, on my return, a fellow modeller ran over to say they saw it land this side of the irrigation ditch. By the time I finished CLG and then flew HLG, I had little time left for TLG.

By this time my feet were extremely painful and had lost all interest in TLG. When I launched, I found to my frustration I had lost my finger grip power causing erratic launches. With no time to sort out trimming my launches barely reached 50' with a poor transition. This was an event I expected to win but a sobering fourth out of four was all I could expect with such a poor performance. I removed my joggers to find blisters on top of my right toes and a bleeding big toe on my left foot.

Lessons have been learnt and remembered as I would like to return next year to improve in a couple of events. Still I could console myself by winning CLG and HLG. The NZ Aggie event (Scramble in Aust) was a huge success with around twenty entries. I made myself available to help time which I did, and watched as young and mostly older

folk relished the crazy flights for half an hour with only a couple of timers/ spectators hit by wayward models with no injuries.

The indoor FF Scale and Peanut rubber models were outstanding. These are very strongly contested events in New Zealand. Sadly, in Australia, indoor events are almost dead at our MAAA Nationals. (I suggest that the MAAA should copy our American modelling friends who run a successful National school modelling program called Science Olympiad, which is producing so many new talented young modellers to the excitement of sport/fun activity of aeromodelling.)

My thoughts on the NZers are they are a hardy bunch; they are talented and satisfied flyers with no complaints. If health and money allow me, I will return next year, to enjoy the company and friendship shown to me this year.

A couple of footnotes:

* Buy a pair of gum boots*, many modellers wore them.

* My STING MK2 18" outdoor CLG has now won the Australian, USA and NZ Nat's (the same glider). It will now hang on my workshop wall and enjoy a well-earned retirement.

* Heave Ho 2025 World-wide glider postal event will again be held over the month of April, view rules at www.stingmk2glider.com

***ED:** *Gumboots are New Zealand's national footwear of choice, admired by all who wear them. Enjoy the link to Fred Dagg's little song about gumboots(next page). The late great Paul Lagan had 4 pair at the front door and another 4 pair at the back door. Kathy and I were proud to wear them when we visited his lovely home at Cheviot in 2016 (see next page).*



Paul Lagan and Malcolm Campbell in gumboots at Paul's Cheviot home in 2016

Paul Lagan was a true blue Kiwi who knew the Gumboot song by heart. Fred Dagg (aka the late John Clarke) was a country legend and Paul proudly sang the whole song for Kathy and I. In case you have no idea what I'm talking about, click on the link below to enjoy the original version.

URL:

<https://www.bing.com/videos/riverview/relatedvideo?q=fred+dagg+gumboot+song&&mid=FF5B1CAB44BCA8B3E6BEFF5B1CAB44BCA8B3E6BE&mcid=CE70B8A02E784C63A0D137A733EE5F1D&FORM=VAMGZC>

Unorthodox Day

Richmond 2nd February 2025

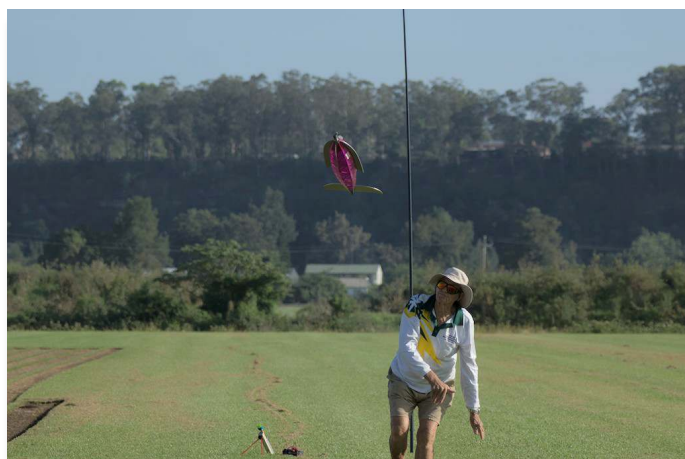
Report by Roy Summersby, photos by Natalie Bennett

What a great day it was, a great idea, it went better than most expected, even the weather was perfect.

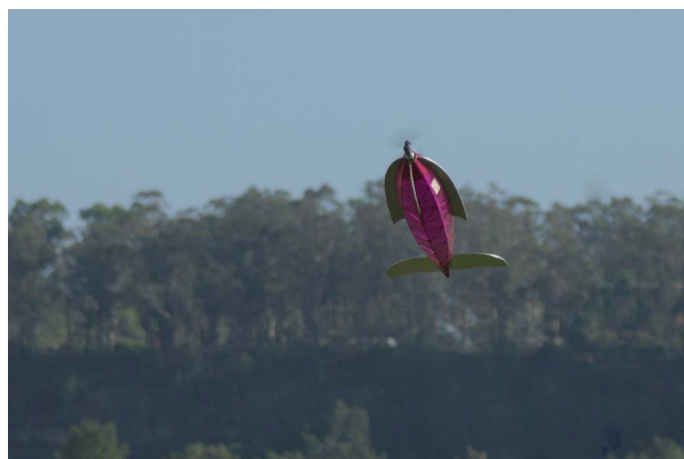
Along with the Windbags which were expected, and I think there were five of them, there were other models that need a mention. Terry's Flying Flea, Michael's sort of helicopter, and some I don't know. I took along my A

Frame Pusher, not many on the field have seen one of these, let alone seen one fly. The model is worth telling its history as I can't claim all its heritage.

About eighteen years ago I was helping clear out the late Bill Gordon's modeling gear. Sadly, Bill was killed while rock fishing; he fell and hit his head on the rocks and we



Roy Summersby heaves his Windbag skyward



And his model dutifully obeyed



Michael Towell also had one



As does Andrew Linwood. I think there were five out there.



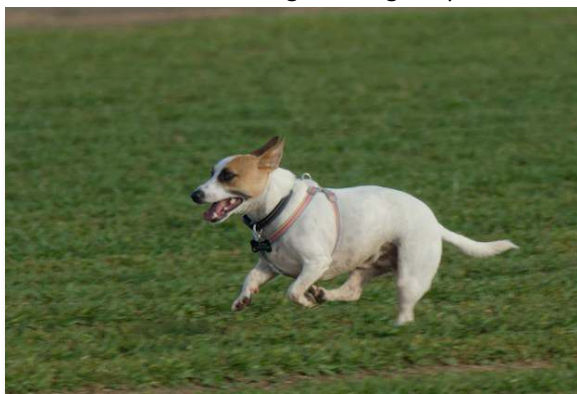
lost one our best open rubber flyers. Amongst Bills gear was the fuselage of an old A Frame Pusher. I couldn't see it go to the fire and promised to myself that I would complete it for Bill. I respected Bill as a fine gentleman and fellow flyer. With a little research I found the plan in an old Frank Zaic year book. Class C Twin Pusher, designed by Carl Schmaedig from New York 1936. It wasn't a completed build and I kept to the plan using bamboo wing tips and Jap tissue on the wing and stab.

With the model finished it was on the field where we were yesterday except this was 17 years ago, boy does time fly. There is a short video clip made by Rob Cranfield well worth a laugh. My original plan was to finish the

model for Bills sake and, if I could manage 30 seconds, I would be happy and I could hang it on the wall. How surprised I was, this thing blasted its way into the sky like an F1C. I took it to the next National's at Springhurst and won Vintage Rubber with it. It also had an outing at Muswellbrook where I dressed in the style of a 1936 model flyer, (Suit, Hat, Tie & Gum boots). This was another good laugh as I was not recognized even by some that knew me well. Friday the 2nd Feb at Richmond I made three flights using the rubber that I had in it from when ever the last outing was. I am pleased to say the model is still flying superbly and good fun to fly.



Andrew's Windbag on the glide path



And Maximus chased everyone of them!



Roy's Class C Twin Pusher



Not sure about this one



Nearly 100 year old design and it flies!



Roy at Muswellbrook in 2007

M Campbell photo

Construction Corner

It seems no one has been building over the Christmas period. Oh well, maybe we'll see a flurry of activity leading up to the AFFS Champs? So, it is fitting that this page carries an interesting article from our most prolific builder, Roy Summersby.

Heroes, Legends, Characters, and a lot of very good friends Looking back, by Roy Summersby

After reading Kathy Burford's article in *Aeromodeller* some time back, I started thinking about my aeromodelling travels, and more importantly, the people I've met in those travels.

My international modelling travelling started in 1997 when the world champs were held in the Chez Republic, I got to actually see and meet some of the people whose names I'd seen in modelling magazines. Things got more serious the following year when the late Dave Anderson sponsored Eugene Verbitsky and Victor Stamov to visit Australia. They both stayed in my home, and one evening while we were sitting at the dinner table, Verbitsky said, "Come to Ukraine, and we will look after you."

That's all it took; Roy and Di were on a plane the next year heading for Ukraine. Our travels since have included most countries in Europe as well as many others around the globe. Along the way I have flown in a huge number of competitions. This has resulted in meeting many people that I can genuinely describe as international friends.

Out of interest therefore, I've put a list together of these people that have either stayed at our house or, Di and I have stayed at theirs. There are a couple of extras thrown in as well that are certainly worth a mention. What a great sport aeromodelling is, to be able to make friends all over the world, as well as in your own country.

My list isn't in any order, it's just how the names have come into my head! I've used an asterisk * to indicate those on the list with whom I've stayed, or have stayed with us, or I've visited their home.

First, if I must pick out just one hero, it has to be the late Brian Allcock, (Aust). Brian was still flying with us at Richmond in his early ninety's. Brian would design his models, build them, and drive himself out to Richmond to fly them. Yes, sometimes we had to retrieve them for him, but not often. I believe if he hadn't fallen on some stairs, he would have been flying with us for another ten years. My aim is to be like my hero, Brian.



Eugene Verbitsky - UKR*, a true F1C legend, what can one say; the father of F1C for many, many, years, world champ, a great character and a really good bloke. We were very good friends, he had many stories, it was a real privilege to have known him as a friend.

Victor Stamov – UKR*, F1A world champ, the same goes for Victor, he couldn't do enough for you, he even gave up his bed for us.

Artem Babenko – UKR*, F1C world champ, perfected the folding F1C wing and helps everyone. A great friend. Stayed at his home many times.

Igor Vivchar – UKR*, F1B flyer/manufacturer. A true gentleman.

Strukov - UKR, I met Strukov when he was past his prime, another F1C champ and was making F1C Kits with geared engines for juniors when he passed away.

Vyacheslav Aleksandrov (SLAVA) – UKR*, F1C world champ and a real nice all-round guy.

Sergei Makarov & Mikhail Karharkov – RUS*, both F1A world champs, looked after us in Russia like we were family. Great guys, a separate story could be told about these two.

Leonid Fuzeyev- RUS, F1C world champ and started the trend to the modern F1C folders.

Reinhard Truppe – AUT*, a character by no stretch of the imagination.

Hans Seelig _GER, father of the multi-function clockwork F1C timer, a gentleman.

Andreas Gay – GER*, another true gentleman.

Alan Jack – UK*, what can one say a, Novocastrian, a Geordie.

John Bailey – UK*, top bloke, left us far too early.

Pieter De Boer – NED*, without doubt a character.

Anselmo Zeri – NED*, another gentleman.

Henning – DEN*, here we have a real nice guy and a character all in one

Thomas Koster – DEN*, world champ in F1A, B & C, inventor of many systems.

Per Findahl – SWE*, F1A world champ many times over.

Pim Ruyter – NED*, of tracker fame. Great host.

Ken Faux - UK, here is a character extraordinaire.

John Williams – UK*, unbelievable hospitality.

Fred & Peggy Chilton – UK*, just the loveliest couple to stay with.

George Fuller – UK*, A legend, father of the Dixielander, a top bloke, great to stay with.

Stafford Screen - UK, another quiet gentleman.

Pete Watson - UK, F1C world champ, a real nice guy.

Phil Ball - UK, full of enthusiasm.

Mike Roberts – USA*, a real nice bloke who makes you more than welcome.

Brian & Janna Van Nest – USA*, always ready to help everyone, great to stay with.

Charlie & Geraldine Jones - USA, the backbone in the world of rubber.

Bernard Boutillier - FRA, F1C world champ and a character.

Shigeru Kanagawa – JPN*, F1C world champ, another gentleman, lovely family.

Tom Oxager – DEN*, a gentleman that loves F1J.

Roger & Lindy Morrell – USA*, SCAT & Lost Hills Legends.

Richard Evans – UK*, Combat legend.

Jeff Stringer – UK*, showed us London.

Kazumasa Sekizawa & Tomo - JPN, good friends.

It amazes even me that I know so many people from afar, but that's the power of our sport.

Roy Summersby 2025

** those on the list with whom I've stayed, or have stayed with us, or I've visited their home*

FOR SALE

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OPEN RUBBER MODELS

Report by Bob Bailey

You invited me to write a contribution to FFDU and I suggested an article on Open Rubber models which I used to fly regularly from the 1960s onwards. The connection was made because I remember Albert Fathers from the early 1960s when we flew models on Port Meadow, just outside Oxford. I had been surprised to see Albert's name in the results for the 2023 World F/F Champs in France. Albert put me in touch with you hence the suggestion of my contributing an article.

I realised that what I could contribute would be seemingly old hat since it consists of development done mainly in the 1960s. I therefore put the idea to Phil Ball for comment since he has done the most recent work. Phil pointed out to me that when flying in contests he uses models such as Eddie Black's Urchin or the Goblin Able for the rounds flights and then the more recent design models for flyoffs.

Therefore it seems logical that any modeller wanting to take up this class should start with a fairly simple structural design rather than trying a more high tech approach. This article will therefore concentrate on the basic development of the designs flown in the 1960s.

Figures 1 and 2 show the plan and a photo of Eddie Black's Urchin model with which he had much competition success in the usual British unfriendly weather. The model was therefore compact at 40" wingspan with a small prop

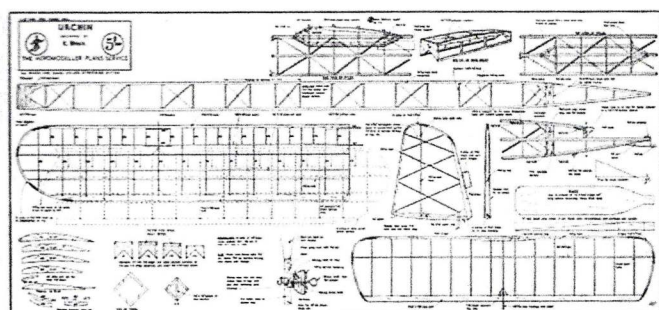


FIG 1
Urchin plan

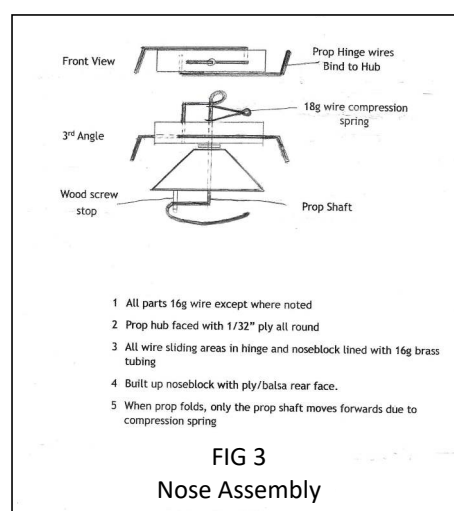


FIG 2
Urchin model

powered by a long pre-tensioned motor which would take about 1,000 turns.

It is important to note that the Urchin has a solid built up folding prop assembly which would hold pitch settings accurately as opposed to wire hinges. John O'Donnell started a series of Expert's Forum in Aeromodeller in 1959 in which he discussed means of avoiding inconsistencies in contest flying. He was critical of wire hinges which could be bent out of shape without it being obvious.

I therefore devised my own nose assembly for the prop as shown in Fig 3 in which all bearing surfaces used brass tubing for durability. The nose block had a central pillar for the prop shaft with extra reinforcement for the adjustable wood screw stop. The faces of the block were 1/16" sheet. Note that the prop does not move forward when it folds, only the prop shaft. The prop blade hinges were skewed outward and backwards at about 15 deg which ensure the blades fold flat to the fuselage sides; the contact point being at about 3/4 radius.



The props had relatively low pitch to diameter ratio of between 1.1 and 1.2 and give a fast climb which is maintained throughout the power run.

In the early stages of my work the models had the rear motor hook very close to the tail LE but were not successful due largely to stability problems. Comparison with successful models at the time showed the rear hook to be much further forward so this change was rapidly incorporated into the model layout.

At this time, Joe Bilgri was one of the most successful US free flight and indoor fliers and his models had the wing mounted at zero incidence ie parallel to the thrustline with the tail at around -2 deg, in common with his outstanding indoor models.

I have thereafter followed Joe's example by using the zero – minus set up on outdoor and indoor models which I believe is more efficient in the later stages of the climb when the power output is low.

Fuselage construction used typically 1/8" sq longerons with straight spacers; although simple, it relies on the stiffness of the tissue covering to resist fuselage twisting under torque. This problem is largely eliminated by using Warren girder zig-zag construction which gives triangular sections for each side as opposed to square or rectangular sections which have little resistance to the shear forces imposed by the motor torque. A further refinement was to use diagonal longerons which save the weight of one longeron. Fig 4 shows the jigs I made for my best model.

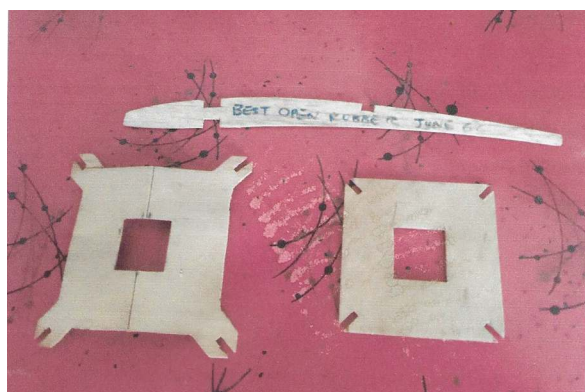


FIG 4
Jigs

The square jigs (for the nose and maximum diameter) are mounted on a 1/2" sq spar which can be slid out when the main fuselage structure is sufficiently complete. The square jigs are hinged so that they can be collapsed for removal from the fuselage structure. Wing tips and fin construction used 4 laminations of 1/8" x 1/32" light balsa, all being laminated round the same template – very strong and light.

The 'Midland style' wing mount consists of a central built up former mounted on the top longeron with the arms from 1/16" sheet extending outwards and downwards to the side longerons to hold the wing secure. I believe that this system was developed by the top fliers from Birmingham and Lincoln areas.

Trimming to control the large amount of thrust at launch can be a bit tricky. The main problem is that the model is likely to stall as the thrust drops. Earlier on in development of the model design the model tended to climb straight, usually resulting in a stall. I tried increasing downthrust but this did not cure the stall. I consequently replaced the downthrust with at least 2 deg right side thrust. This caused the model to execute a steady right turn in conjunction with some right rudder, removed the dreaded stall. As was common with power models in those days the wing was set up with a small amount of washin on the inner starboard panel. The washin helps prevent the model from banking right at launch with a subsequent vicious right turn.

For many years I used this set up which gave a right – right trim which worked fine in most conditions. On successive models I increased the wing span from 48" to 55", each change gave a significant increase in performance.

However I was persuaded to try a set up in which the model flies right on climb and left on glide, the guiding principle being to eliminate inner panel wing warps. These could more easily be checked as necessary. About 4 deg of

side thrust was needed to give the right turn on the climb to counteract the left rudder used for the glide.

This set up was used for by best 1966 model shown in Fig 5. Surprisingly (to me as much as to everyone else) this model won two events in relatively calm liftless conditions with flyoff times close to nine minutes – way ahead of the opposition. The motor was a good piece of Pirelli which took 800 turns giving a motor run of about 1.20. This motor was kept for flyoffs! Unfortunately I lost the model at a subsequent event in heavily wooded land at Woodbury Common in Devon.

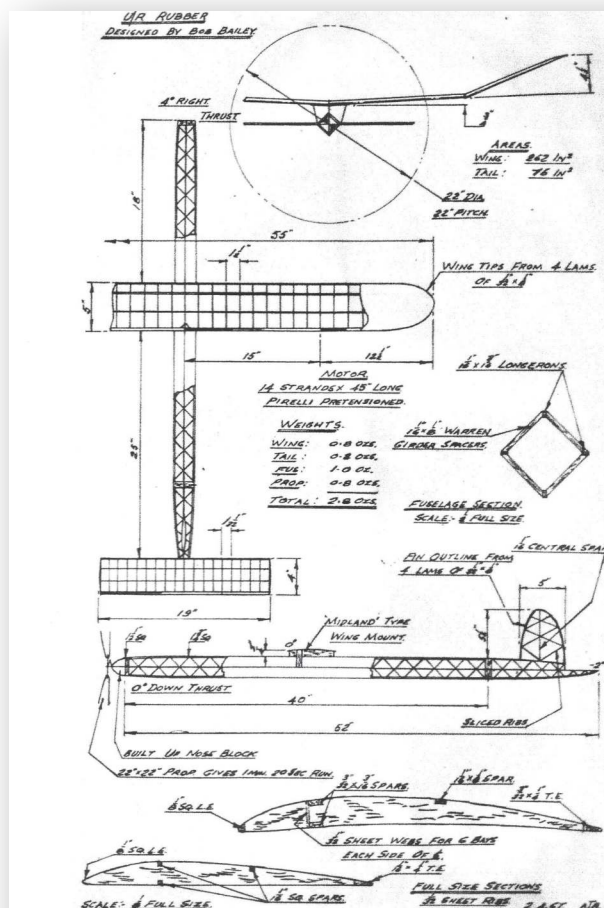


FIG 5
Best O/R Model

I built a successor with some changes which I can't remember – bad mistake! Looking back with the customary 20/20 (feet) or 6/6 (metres) hindsight I should have measured the CG position on the good model, rechecked the prop pitch and build an identical model. The successor model was a rogue, being very inconsistent in trim and prone to vicious stalling on the glide. This could have been due to the CG being too far forward and a badly shaped wing leading edge. No chance of losing this particular model: one of my Aussie friends once told me "You can't throw the dogs away". It took me a little while to understand what he meant!

Having flown power models in earlier days, I felt that I could compete in the F1C class so I stopped development of rubber models at this time and turned my attention to F1C using George French's superb 'Night Train' but that's another story!

Bob Bailey

RAMBLINGS OF AN OLD MODELLER

By Mike Pettigrew

I didn't volunteer to do this story; it was requested of me by our esteemed editor, who *instructed* me to do a story about my aeromodelling history and to help me along, he even gave me a list of topics to cover! I wasn't game to say no because he does such a good job, so I said I'd give it a try, but the fact is, I don't like talking about myself as I'm afraid of appearing somewhat self-indulgent and in any event, who would be interested?

There are gaps in my aeromodelling career because I dabbled in other sports along the way just to complicate things, although, each of these U-turns seemed to have an impact on my modelling one way or another, so I guess I may need to talk briefly about them while I'm at it.

I try to do things properly, and that includes trying to explain these other things that impacted on my modelling journey.



Things like: Building this 15-foot half-cabin plywood boat using old tools such as spokeshaves and block planes (but a bandsaw sure helped) and building a plywood sailing skiff and then sailing it. These are both forms of model building, aren't they? Likewise, if I depart the sport of modelling for a year or two, I guess I should at least give it a passing comment about the direction it took as maybe

some of the diversions might interest someone.

Well, anyway, that approach seemed logical at the time of writing, and I have no doubt that time will prove me right or wrong, therefore I hope those that bother to read this will get that part of it and bear with me as we go along. I'll try to prevent my tale from becoming just another never ending story, so here goes:

I first threw a balsa glider into the air in 1945 as a 7-year-old primary school child at Gordon Public School in Sydney, NSW. I was a young child of the Second World War and had an uncle who had been a fighter pilot in England. I knew him as Uncle Pete, but his name was actually John, and my middle name is attributed to him, I understand. Sadly, I never got to meet Uncle Pete as he didn't survive the war; he was killed in an aircraft collision in late 1944 – he had survived all the carnage to that point, and it wasn't the opposition that got him; he died as the result of a mid-air collision between two Hawker Hurricanes.

I heard stories about him and learned that he was temporarily assigned to the RAF on a short service commission and arrived in England in August 1938 after graduating from RAAF No.1 flying school at Point Cook in Melbourne in 1937.

Yes, this is relevant, so stay with me a bit longer!

That's Uncle Pete second from left wearing the cap and he's with a group of pilots during his time with 247 squadron. They're standing in front of a Hawker Hurricane MK IIC painted black as the night fighters were.



At the time this photo was taken, 247 squadron, which was based at various airfields in the south of England, was tasked with defence against night bombing attacks coming over from occupied France.

Uncle Pete served and survived as a fighter pilot with various squadrons in the early days of the war but as I mentioned, his death in October 1944 was a result of a mid-air collision while serving with the top-secret RAF research facility at Boscombe Down, which was known

as the A & AEE. He is identified in the RAF records during his time with A & AEE as a 'Test Pilot'.

By then, he was Squadron Leader J F (Pete) Pettigrew and was the commanding officer of a group of pilots assigned the task of testing the flight performance of the Hawker Hurricane when it was fitted with what they describe as 40mm cannons and nasty things such as air to ground attack rockets and/or small bombs. My uncle Pete and his squadron tested these weapons on the RAF firing range at Poole Bay in Dorset. One of the developments that came from the A & AEE was the practice of firing the aircraft's machine guns using tracer bullets as a means of aiming the rockets and so all sorts of experiments went on.

The Hurricane started becoming outdated as a fighter aircraft from 1941 onwards, and probably even earlier, so in 1943 this test program began; it was the early days of what was known as the "Hurribomber" era. The powers that be wanted to see if the Hurricane could be re-purposed for use in the middle east as an air to ground attack aircraft using a couple of 250-pound bombs, some rockets and reportedly, those 40 calibre cannons.

We need to appreciate why they were doing this experimentation: Part of it was because the recoil from firing heavy weaponry on fighter aircraft had the effect, amongst other things, of slowing the aircraft down in flight and as an example of that, the P47 Thunderbolt fighter, which became one of the most heavily armed aircraft of its type at that time because of its eight .50 calibre cannons, lost 35 MPH of its airspeed from recoil when firing all cannons at once. Firing rockets also had the same effect. The story going around at the time was that if you fired all the Hurricane's rockets at the one time you could stall the aircraft – unsubstantiated, however.

Another issue was, if you take-off in your Hurricane with two bombs, one under each wing, and came back with only one, it was found to have a significant and adverse effect on the low-speed handling of the Hurricane, particularly so, as it varied depending on which side of the aircraft the remaining bomb was attached. They broke quite a few Hurricanes trying to find out because it made a huge difference.....

Why this diversion in my story? Well, Uncle Pete left for England just before I was born, but I'm told he built and flew model aircraft in his youth as did his best mate and near neighbour, Pat Hughes who also ended up in England flying for the RAF on one of those temporary commissions during the war. Out of interest, Pat was the top scoring Australian fighter pilot during the Battle of Britain, but he didn't survive the summer of 1940; he collided with wreckage of an aircraft he'd shot down one

day. Pat's Spitfire, X4009, is presently being restored (slowly as funds permit) and is considered one of the most significant Spitfires of the Battle of Britain era. Pat was the only one to fly it in combat.

I wonder if these two pre-war aeromodellers were the subconscious reason for of my lifelong interest in making things that fly? Is aeromodelling bred into you, or do you pick it up from life experiences? No one really knows, but theories abound about the possibility of distributed heritability of interests and skills, but I doubt that they will work all that out in our lifetime.....

Opposite my primary school, Gordon Public School, were two shops side by side; I'm not sure what you'd call them but they both sold the same sort of things that kids from school would want such as lollies, ice cream, comics and you name it. They also sold little balsa 'planes in cellophane packets. Pop Harrison owned one of the shops; he was an ex A.I.F man trying to make a living after coming back from the war, and the other shop was owned by 'old man Hagley' as we all called him; a cranky man most times as I recall, but some say he had a heart of gold hidden inside.

I don't know how they both survived in such close competition, but they did. These shops offered the choice of a little flat winged object with a nail in the front that purported to be a glider, or a small wind-up all-sheet balsa, glue-together with Tarzan's Grip "kit" with a wobbly wire undercarriage, called a 'Skeeter'. The glider was much cheaper than the Skeeter, so I mainly bought them although they weren't good for much except for the fact that they sort-of flew! As far as the Skeeter was concerned, my pocket money wasn't sufficient for me to afford them too often, but I wrangled one or two as presents along the way.

This box brownie photograph was taken back in those days of me at age 9 proudly displaying my little "Skeeter".



Like most children of the era, we had no television, just the radio, which was boring to me, so I preferred to make things such as model aeroplanes or build a crystal set or two based on one my grandfather helped me build, and I also made little solid biplanes with paddle pop stick wings and carved balsa fuselages and painted them silver. I reached a stage where my father became tired of me making a mess on his workshop bench – not that he did much on it anyway, so I apparently qualified for my own 'cubby/workshop' and after that, there was no looking back.

On my tenth birthday I was given a bike that came from a shop up in Hornsby run by a man called Harry King. Somehow, Mr King saw some of my little silver aeroplanes and said words to the effect that I should become an aeromodeller and he invited me to visit his shop on any Saturday morning because that's when a group of control line flyers gathered there. He said he also had "lots of model aeroplane kits and sheets of balsa and the like for sale in his shop". Music to a child's ears.....

With that incentive, I wasted no time in turning up. I guess, thinking about it much later, he was probably only encouraging me and others like me, so he could expand his business, but good on him!

I soon became a member of an aeromodelling club called "The Falcons" that flew control line at Hassell Park in St. Ives, an outer suburb of Sydney, and I came to know modellers such as Bob Denning, Bill Norman, and others whose names I no longer recall. Bob had a large CL stunt model powered by an Anderson Spitfire, on spark of course, and the sound it made remains in my mind

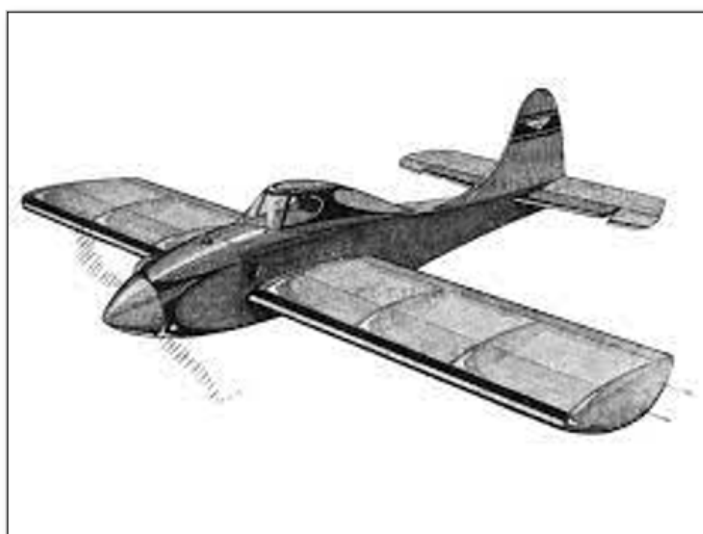
today. I remember him starting it in his front yard late at night after a club meeting. There was much noise, blue and yellow flames, and unhappy neighbours.

I built a number of nondescript CL models powered variously by a frog 150 and a Sabre 250 diesel but I wasn't very good at flying them – I seemed to get dizzy, and I'm told I focussed too much on the model rather than taking a wider view. Too late now, however as I'm now way past being able to fly one.

Every month we would travel by train and then on foot to get to Rockdale Oval in Sydney suburbia where some sort of larger control line gathering took place and that's where I saw my first ever speed model being flown by a modeller by the name of Jack Finneran. Much later, in the late 1960's, I had the honour as Secretary of the NSWMAA, of presenting Jack with a life membership of that organisation. He was a true gentleman, and he also knew how to make speed models go fast; he was well deserving of that award, and it meant a lot to him. I still recall the tears in his eyes when he shook my hand as I handed over the award. I felt honoured to be the one to present Jack Finneran with that award as he was, in my view, one of the early "greats" in our sport and a hero to me.

I also remember a chap by the name of Wally Judd back in the late 1940's who flew team race models, but he was a cranky man at times and intolerant of us "kids" hanging around so usually I kept my distance. I also came across a control line flyer by the name of Max Cummings back in those days and was suitably impressed with his skill; our paths came together again in a business sense, many years later.

Control line flying was big in those days as it had only been recently "invented" in the form as we now know it in 1947, and our better flyers sometimes gave demonstrations at some of the agricultural shows like the St. Ives Show, and we even did a couple of evening gigs at the Sydney Royal Show. My job was to be one of the lighting crew – we'd lie on the ground with a sealed beam car headlight wired up to a car battery and aim it at the model as it went around so the flyer and the spectators could see what was going on. I never did work out why we didn't give the demonstrations in daylight, however.



I built models like the Frog Vandiver and the rather pretty Veron Bee Bug shown in the adjacent photo, but the ever-present failure to be able to fly control line caused me to lose interest to some degree and to become more inclined to watch Bill Norman flying a little Mills .75 powered free flight cabin model as I could see myself handling one of those.

Bill flew his free flight model at Hassell Park, but it was surrounded by trees, and he therefore became very adept at climbing those trees to retrieve his model,

often at great height. I could see the downside of that tree climbing and my mind wandered towards the early radio control articles in Aeromodeller Annual. The early R.C sets were way above my pay grade as I was only existing on pocket money although I got a raise now and then as I grew older. I also built and flew some towline gliders which I didn't tow, I just chucked them and after a few years of inconsistent fiddling and no real success, I discovered girls.

I joined a local tennis club because I'd taken a fancy to a very pretty redhead girl who played there regularly. She was way better at tennis than I was and usually played with and against the top players in the area including people like Lesley Turner and Fred Stolle who went on to be a multiple Wimbledon singles finalist and grand slam doubles winner. That's all another story again for another place however, although the pretty young redhead I discovered at the tennis club did eventually go on to compete internationally and win three consecutive World Masters Ladies Singles titles for her age group in her later years.

My model aircraft were put away in a box for a while as the redhead and tennis racquets occupied my mind.



We step forward to 1958 where at age 20, I had three years' experience at driving a motor vehicle and had become the proud owner of a 1928 Lea Francis – a vintage car even in those days. I joined the Australian Racing Drivers Club (ARDC) and also the Vintage Sports Car club (VSCC) and for a period of around five years, as well as still doing a little bit of aeromodelling and watching the redhead play tennis, I was immersed in all things motor racing where,

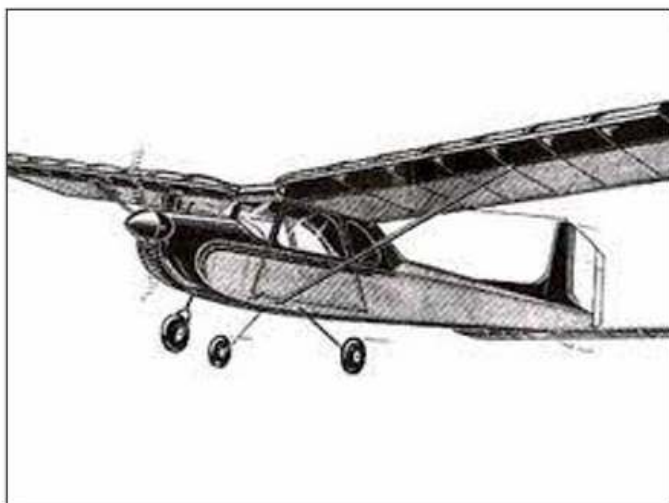
as club captain of the VSCC, I ran a hill climb venue known as Silverdale (now defunct not far from Wallacia in NSW) and I was responsible for the conduct of a number of Australian Hill Climb Championships there during which I met the top people in Hill Climbing at the time including eight times Australian Hill Climb Champion, Bruce Walton, who became a friend. His car, shown in the adjacent photo, was a Cooper MK7 with a supercharged JAP 1100 motor – a very potent machine in its day and it lived, of all places, on a square of carpet in the middle of his lounge room in his Melbourne flat!



In 1962 I was lucky enough to marry the redhead from the tennis club and I dropped-out of the motor racing scene about the same time. I soon started thinking about R.C model aircraft once more as I had been a wage earner for a few years and could afford some of the things I needed. I joined the Radio Control Models Club (RCMC) in Sydney in 1963; it was a club that flew predominantly single channel radio models back then as multi-channel RC was still in its infancy.

My ever-forgiving wife allowed me to build model aircraft on the lounge room floor of our very small flat in Neutral Bay. I'm a messy builder and slowly worked my way across the lounge room floor to get away from the shavings and model building mess until I ran out of room at which point I would have a clean-up and go back to my starting point to begin a new journey across the long-suffering lounge room floor. I built a few models that way, but my first was a Veron Sky Scooter that was over-powered and flew wildly out of control because the R.C set I used had a range of about 20 feet and the model was a missile over which I had no control. I think I missed the bit about properly

tuning the receiver to the transmitter in the instruction book and sadly, the model ended up in a tree and died the same day it first flew.



I invested in new R.C gear, tuned it properly and had another go with a bigger model, more of a “floater” that would fly with or without radio, and away I went. By 1964 I was flying a 12-channel tuned reed system based on a kit of parts a few of us bought from ACE R.C in Michigan. I built a succession of R.C aerobatic models on various lounge room floors as we moved from flat to flat in our early days. We had a Mini Minor back in those days; yes, the small one, not the enlarged version sold nowadays by BMW. Some of the aerobatic aircraft were of 2

metres wingspan so the wing and fuselage had to be angled down through the gap between the bucket seats to make it all fit. The “boot” as the rear luggage compartment was optimistically named was just large enough to carry the toolbox and the odd parts one uses to fly one of those things. We travelled many miles to various contests in that little yellow Mini with an oversized aerobatic model wedged between us. This was a stark comparison to one of our club members who had a 1960’s Chevrolet Sedan with an enormous boot as was the style of the day in America; He could just open the boot, put his model in it still assembled, and shut the lid!

When we sold the Mini to upsize, I still remember the look on the car salesman’s face when I turned-up at the car showroom with my biggest aerobatic model wing to test it for a fit in the boot. That was the controlling criteria, so we ended-up with a Ford Fairlane.....

Photo adjacent shows my “Thunderstorm” aerobatic model with Micro Avionics proportional radio – probably around 1965. It was silver with orange and black trim and vastly overpowered. Everything was set at zero degrees: Wing, stab, thrust line, no dihedral etc., and it went like a missile wherever you pointed it. It only needed to roll along the ground for just over a metre before it was airborne!



Anyhow: In NSW at the time there were a number of us flying R.C aerobatics and to name a few, there were people in our club such as Tom Prosser, Basil Healy, John Marquette, Richard Shaw (who also raced an FX holden car at Mount Panorama) John Quigley, Ken Jack, Bob Bennett (father of the current full size aerobatic flyer Paul Bennett) and myself. In other clubs we had Lyell Winley, Alan Turton who was an air force man, plus some others whose names I confess to have forgotten.

There were, of course, notables in Victoria as well as a guy called Doug Murray in W.A and two crazy but very skilled flyers from Tasmania. Steve Ralph and Owen Babcock, but Steve Ralph was the

Tasmanian I got to know the best of those two. We, the early aerobatic flyers, were a small group and we therefore got to know each other well as we met often at various frequent contests.

With Lyell Winley as president, I agreed in the mid to late 1960's to fill the role of secretary in the NSWMAA as it was known at the time. That was before the days when the various disciplines split-up, so it was all-encompassing back then. I held that position for around three or four years as I recall. It was busy, and I enjoyed it.....

In 1964 the Australian R.C aerobatic flyers and their Kiwi counterparts got together and decided to have an annual "Trans-Tasman" aerobatic contest alternating between Australia and New Zealand with the first of them to be held in the North Island of NZ at a place called Palmerston North. We had some sort of qualifying system in Australia for our six-man team and we also managed to get some sort of early sponsorship from Rothmans in the days before cigarette advertising was banned.

I can't completely remember the composition of our first Trans-Tasman Aerobatic team, but I recently found an article by Basil Healy and Basil says that the first team comprised Tom Prosser, Basil Healy, Geoff Glass, Owen Babcock, Steve Ralph and myself with Lyell Winley as manager. We all had a good time, and the die was set to continue on with it.



This photo, taken in New Zealand during a later event, shows a typical Australian aerobatics team comprising, left to right: John McGrane, Lee O'Reilly (Manager), me, John Quigley (kneeling), Tom Prosser, Basil Healy and Ken Follett.

The Aerobatic Trans-Tasman went on for some years and I usually seemed to be involved, mainly as a flyer but also once as team manager. It was all very social, a lot of fun, and the competition was evenly matched. It was later expanded to include R.C scale as well, and I recall being Ross Woodcock's pilot for scale in those early Trans-Tasman events. Ross was one of our top scale modellers for many years but sadly he passed away only a few years ago. Yvonne and I were lucky to have caught-up with him and Margaret not long before Cancer took him away from us; the four of us had a nice night-out at the Twin Towns Club in the QLD/NSW border, then he was suddenly gone a few months later.

I flew a variety of R.C events back in those early days of multi-channel radio, including Class 2 aerobatics where we could only use rudder, elevator, and motor – no ailerons.....

We flew in an annual "competition" against the Victorians in winter in Wagga every year and for a while, we the NSW boys, were the only ones that could fly the full aerobatic pattern with our class 2 models – mainly because the models we used didn't suffer from rudder reversal when inverted. There was a time when I could explain the aerodynamics involved but not anymore. I recall that it took the Vics a while to work out what was going-on.

We also flew early days Pylon Racing using initially, aerobatic models before the class progressed into purpose-built pylon models, but that was about the time I started to fly free flight and drifted away slowly from aerobatics.

Part 2 of Mike's fascinating article will appear in the Winter edition of FFDU

A BACKWARD GLANCE

Narrandera 2023

Roy was the Ch of Chs. in 2023, a year when we had overseas visitors from China and Mongolia, and they all took home a prize or two. Fly offs on the final morning at Narrandera were in bitterly cold and windy conditions with very long retrieves. Conditions at West Wyalong were excellent for the Minis.



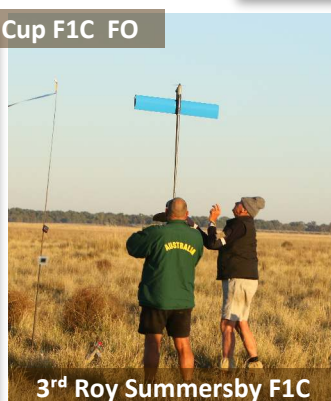
Jackie Wang with ex-Fathers' SHOK



2nd Yuan Gao F1C



4th Ulzil Erdenebayar F1C



3rd Roy Summersby F1C



1st Andrew Linwood F1C

Widgiewa Cup F1C FO



Jackie Wang in the AFFS F1A fly-off



SCC F1C winners (rookie Murray Wilson 3rd)



Starduster 900, Roy & Dave



Dave Shackelford's Jett 35



Canard P30 + mylar streamer!



Ian Haigh's Open Rubber model



Vin Morgan's unbeatable P30



Roy is Champ of Champs



Gary Goodwin's little Witch Hawk

JOKES PAGE

My wife told me that women are better at multi-tasking than men, so I asked her to sit down and be quiet. She couldn't do either.

Cable repairman was on my street and asked me what time it was. I told him it is between 8 am and 1 pm

One day you'll find someone that's obsessed with you.
It's probably going to be a dog. But it is what it is.

MUM, HOW COULD IT BE MY FAULT THE CAR OVERHEATED ?!

NO MUM, ITS BECAUSE OF CLIMATE CHANGE!



CAN SOMEONE UPDATE ME ON WHAT'S OFFENSIVE TODAY.

IT'S HARD TO KEEP UP!

INSANITY does not run in my family. It strolls through taking its time getting to know everyone personally.

Most people are at the age where they are using their phones to document the good times in their lives.
I am at the age where I use my phone to take pictures of labels that I can't read and use my phone to enlarge the print so that I can read it.
#FML
womenafter50.com

SAY WHAT YOU WILL ABOUT WOMEN BUT I THINK BEING ABLE TO TURN ONE SENTENCE INTO A SIX HOUR ARGUMENT TAKES TALENT.



FUN FACT: a majority of archeologists are women due to their natural ability to dig up the past

I was so suspicious and paranoid about my wife having an affair, that we moved to a new town 700 miles away.

I couldn't believe my luck when we still managed to keep the same gardener.

Beauty comes in ALL shapes and sizes...



I ENJOY A GLASS OF WINE EACH NIGHT FOR ITS HEALTH BENEFITS. THE OTHER GLASSES ARE FOR MY WITTY COMEBACKS AND FLAWLESS DANCE MOVES



Being able to respond with sarcasm within seconds of a stupid question is a sign of a healthy brain.

AustralianFreeFlightSocietyInc

A Special Interest Group of the Model Aircraft Association of Australia



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SUGGESTED TOPICS FOR FUTURE EDITIONS OF FFDU:



1. Show us your workbench
2. What is your favourite motor, with photo
3. Send in your aeromodelling profile, with photos
4. Recent builds or repairs
5. Competition reports
6. Handy Hints
7. New products, useful supply outlets
8. What's good about free flight, and what's not
9. Anything about electricity in free flight
10. Wanted and For Sale items



DEADLINE CUT-OFF DATES

- Last day of February for the March edition
- Last day of May for the June edition
- Last day of August for the September edition
- Last day of November for the December edition

Don't wait until the last day, sometimes we close off early.

We always need articles for each edition of Free Flight Down Under

My First FFDU March 2010





BRISBANE FREE FLIGHT SOCIETY

2025 Flying Calendar



Month	Date	Start	Events	Location
February	Sat 22 nd	12-4pm	Bar-B-Que lunch & General Meeting	John's
March	Sat 8 th	3-6pm	Indoor - Delta Dart	BSHS
	Sun 9 th	8-12pm	Club Day 2 min class models/trimming	Coominya
	Sun 23 rd	8-2pm	F1H State Champs (5 flights) and E36 club event (3 flights)	Coominya
April	Sat 5 th	3-6pm	Indoor - EZB	BSHS
	Sun 27 th	8-12pm	Trimming / Reserve Day	Coominya
	Sun 27 th to 4 th May		AFFS State Champs & Southern Cross Cup Narrandera and W.	Wyalong
May	Sun 4 th	8-12pm	Fun and testing day including E36	Coominya
	Sat 10 th	3-6pm	Indoor HLG/.CLG	BSHS
	Sun 18 th	8-1pm	Trimming / Reserve Day	Coominya
	Sat 24 th	8-1pm	F1A State Champs (5 rounds, R1 240 secs)	Dalby
	Sun 25 th	8-1pm	F1B State Champs (5 rounds, R1 240 secs)	Coominya
	Sat 31 st	8-1pm	Reserve F1A	Dalby
June	Sat 1 st	8-1pm	Reserve F1B	Dalby
	Sun 9 th	3-6pm	Indoor - Hanger Rat	BSHS
	Sun 15 th	8-1pm	F1G State Champs (5 flights)	Coominya
	Sat 28 th	12-4pm	Bar-B-Que & AGM	John's
July	Sat 5 th	3-6pm	Indoor - P18	BSHS
	Sun 13 th	8-1pm	Scale State Champs & Open Rubber State Champs	Coominya
	Sun 27 th	8-1pm	Club testing, P20 & 2 Min event (all 3 flights)	Coominya
August	Sun 9 th	3-6pm	Indoor – Peanut Scale	BSHS
	Sun 10 th	8-1pm	Mini Power & QDP (3 flights)	Coominya
	Sun 24 th	8-1pm	E36 State Champs (5 flights)	Coominya
September	Sun 14 th	8-1pm	P30 State Champs (3 flights)	Coominya
	Sun 28 th	8-1pm	F1J State Champs (5 flights)	Coominya
October	Sun 12 th	8-1pm	HLG, TLG & CLG State Champs	Coominya
	Sun 26 th	8-1pm	100gm coupe and A1 Glider (each 3 flights)	Coominya
November	Sun 2 nd	8-1pm	Reserve day	Coominya
	Sun 9 th	8-1pm	Col's Vintage Rally	Coominya
	Sun 16 th	8-1pm	Club fun and testing day	Coominya
December	Sat 6 th	12-4pm	Xmas party and prize presentation	John's place

FIRST DUTY OF THE KEYMASTER ON FLYING DAYS Text Jesse 0417 077 781 "BFFS on the field"

2025 FREE FLIGHT CALENDAR

Ver 4 as at 23 February 2025

CONTACTS: John Lewis 07 3848 4280 Malcolm Campbell 07 3278 7164
March 2025 Free Flight Down Under



NSW FREE FLIGHT CONTEST CALENDAR 2025

Date	Event	Venue	Time	CD
12 th Jan	½ hr Scramble and Combined % BBQ – BYO food	Richmond	7:00am – 12:00pm	Roy Summersby
17 th Jan	General Meeting	Dundas Sport	7:30pm	
2 nd Feb	Unorthodox Day and E36 BBQ – BYO food	Richmond	7:00am – 12:00pm	Michael Towell
16 th Feb	P30 State champs and Combined Vintage	Richmond	8:00am -12:00pm	Peter Scott
1 st – 2 nd March	Hunter Valley State champs	Muswellbrook	See program	See program
9 th March	1 hr Scramble State champs and Scale Rally BBQ – BYO food	Richmond	7:00am – 12:00pm	Roy Summersby
14 th March	General Meeting	Dundas Sport	7:30pm	
23 rd March	E36 State Champs and P30	Richmond	7:00am – 12:00pm	Terry Bond
6 th April	Ebenezer Day and Combined % BBQ – BYO Food	Richmond	7:00am – 12:00pm	Michael Towell
27 th - 30 th April	AFFS Champs Southern Cross Cup for F1A, B and C	Narrandera	See program	See program
1 st – 4 th May	AFFS continued at WW Evening Presentation Dinner	West Wyalong	See program	See program
16 th – 18 th May	Veterans Weekend	Muswellbrook	See program	See program
23 rd May	General Meeting	Dundas Sport	7:30pm	
30 th – 1 st June	F1A, B and C State champs (NSW and Vic) Open Rubber/Power State champs	West Wyalong	See program	See program
15 th June	F1G, H and J State champs and E36, P30	Richmond	7:00am – 12:00pm	Gary Pope
4 th – 6 th July	Scale Trans Tasman ½ hr Scramble and Fun Fly BBQ – BYO food	Richmond	7:00am -12:00pm	Warren Michael
18 th July	General Meeting	Dundas Sports	7:30pm	
25 th – 27 th July	Winter Mini Max Plus George Fuller Event 2min max models	West Wyalong	See program	Shayne McDonald
10 th Aug	HLG/CLG State champs and Combined %	Richmond	7:00am – 12:00pm	Gary Goodwin
22 nd – 24 th Aug	Oily Hands	Cowra	See program	See program
14 th Sept	½ hr Scramble and Scale Rally BBQ – BYO food	Richmond	7:00am – 12:00pm	Roy Summersby
19 th Sept	Annual General Meeting	Dundas Sport	7:30pm	
17 th – 24 th Oct	Free Flight Nationals	West Wyalong	See program	See program
9 th Nov	Combined Vintage State champs and E36, P30	Richmond	7:00am – 12:00pm	Nat Beckett
21 st Nov	General Meeting	Dundas Sport	7:30pm	
28 th Nov	Friday Xmas Party	Richmond	7:00am-1:00pm	Terry Lyn
7 th Dec	½ hr Scramble and Combined %/Vintage Christmas BBQ – BYO Food	Richmond	7:00am-1:00pm	Michael Towell

*** NOTE: ALL SCRAMBLES START AT 8:00AM ***