

## **Oily Hand Day 30 -31 August 2008**

**David Hegarty**

The country around Canowindra was lush and green. White woolly sheep and big black cattle dotted the rolling hills, grazing contentedly in the warm sunshine.

Cowra M.A.C. had called a gathering of modelers to experience again the pleasures of noisy engines, smelly greasy models and renew once again the acquaintances of bygone years.

The flying field was fairly limited for free flight flying. It was bounded by knee high wheat, armpit deep canola, a railway line and sheep paddocks, with a row of peppercorn and gum trees waiting to ensnare passing aeroplanes.

There were lots of modelers and models, with control-line being most popular. Team race and combat style had the biggest representation and the sound of big unmuffled motors reverberated across the country side. I won't try to list those present but amongst them was Reg Towell with Lyn handing out large chunks of walnut and raisin cake. Reg had his beautiful aerobatic "Matilda". This model has two piece removable wings and landing on rough ground does big damage when the undercarriage is pushed through the structure, as Bruce Hoffmann found last week when trying his new "Firecracker". Reg brought "Matilda" to earth with the gentleness of a butterfly kiss.

Suzanne, recovering from ankle operations was a little unsteady on the sheep-worn ground but managed three flights with her "Peacemaker".

On the free flight scene Ian Le Bronne brought his usual arsenal of weapons. Ian had been there before and was familiar with the limitations of the field so he put a two channel radio in his "Deacon". He still managed to send it out into the sheep paddock across the railway line and then impaled himself on the barbed wire fence and ripped his track suit in so doing.

Another who braved the barbed wire and took off into the canola, was Peter Jackson. He and Kevin Davis brought a squadron of little WW1 scale models. Each is a gem and all can be made to fly nicely. Peter's Fokker triplane (who said that triplanes can't fly???) was the one which disappeared into the canola nearly kilometer away. Peter's wife is off to China so Kev and he had a party Saturday night and didn't make it to the field on Sunday.

I was the only one to land in a tree. I impaled my "Humbug" on a sharp branch high up. A rope thrown over couldn't dislodge the plane and eventually broke, so I had to climb that tree and use a long pole to lift the skewered model free.

My "Tomboy" disappeared into the tall canola a long way off but the hawk eyes of Suzanne and Dave Brown (Brownie) were able to pinpoint its exact location without my having to trample the whole crop flat. The farmer assured me that his harvester would have happily shredded and bagged the entire model without the slightest falter.

We thank Andy Lockett and Ian Cole of Cowra M.A.C. for organizing this escape from the metropolitan madness in which most of us live.