

# TOSSUP 00



## Third Annual Built-Up / Bent-Wing Contest

From: "Bob" <slickenside@earthlink.net>  
To: <Contestants>  
Subject: TOSS BUBW Contest Results  
Date: Thursday, August 17, 2000 11:32 PM

I would like to thank all contestants and helpers for the great success in our Third Annual TOSS BUBW contest. Many of you traveled long distances and we certainly appreciate your support. It is through supporters like you, we are seeing a new re-birth in 3 function, low tech sailplanes. Just proves that you can have just as much fun without spending the big bucks.

In brief - For the twenty-six participants, the flying was tough and the landings seemed even tougher. The on shore winds made lift difficult to find and chase during the last two rounds. No planes were lost to the trees for the first time in history of this contest. Carnage was minimal with one off-field landing later recovered) and one lost during launch.

Does this indicate that we are building stronger planes? That our glasses are better corrected? Or are we just getting to better pilots? We at TOSS certainly hope that you all had fun.

Attached is a copy of the final results. (*Results on Page 2, Pictures on Page 3*)

Looking forward to seeing you all at the next BUBW contest.

Bob Swet

Tally for the day. One plane was destroyed when it got tangled with an adjacent retriever line during launch. One plane notched a leading edge when it hit the boundary fence while turning on final (it was oversized/XC so was difficult to judge where it was). Edgar's Geminii bent a wingtip attachment rod on a hard landing, was repaired but subsequently jammed its elevator in a 'down' position while at altitude. Mike Regan was flying it (and leading the contest) at the time. The elevator had initially stopped working in level flight which only appeared to slightly inconvenience Mike but when it finally jammed the plane went out of control, looping vertically while descending, finally disappearing into a tree a couple of streets away. It was retrieved undamaged. This was the second lucky incident with this plane in the one weekend. The day previously Edgar had launched it without turning on the radio. It released itself and went for a five minute thermal flight, picking up lift south of Gainsborough and over Feather before finally landing back on the field along the winchline. While there have been a couple of remarks "from the usual suspects" that the plane probably flies best with the radio off Edgar will just say that the plane was nicely trimmed.

There was a raffle. (We think it was rigged since Don Northern and John Hazlewood won most of the prizes.) Many thanks to all the prize donors....

This contest saw Charlie a victim of progress as scoring was not done the usual way with calculator, tables and pencil but with a computer. It looked impressive, sitting in the back of a tent with Bob Swet hunched over it. Next time maybe bar codes on the scorecards?





*The Pilots' Meeting*



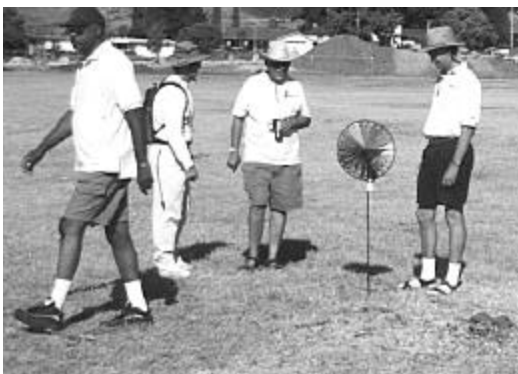
*The Trophies*



*The Winner (John Bikle)*



*Our EmCee*



*A smart new wind indicator. It looks really good in color. BTW. Mike is not wearing a parachute - that pack is a*



*The only real casualty - Philip*



*"Its only a scratch"*



*This contest was scored on a computer - a TOSS first?*

## Flying Hawks

Many people don't realize that those hawks that we fly with can be domesticated and that there are some 7000 people in the US who fly them for sport. I got some information about this about this activity from Kristen Simkins who runs "The Falconry Experience" out of Northern California.

Falconry is probably the oldest field sport. It originated in the Middle East around 2000BC and spread to Europe around 1300AD. Its comparatively new to the US, being introduced only about 100 years ago. Its very much a minority sport because it is very tightly regulated (you require a licence to own and fly hawks) and the birds themselves require a lot of patient training and constant exercise.

Hawks are not very controllable. They are only flown when their weight is within a narrow "flying weight". This weight is how the falconer knows whether the bird is ready to hunt. If the bird is too heavy then it is quite likely to fly away. If its too light then it will probably lack the strength and endurance to be able to hunt successfully. In the field the hawk perches on a glove worn by the falconer. They are sometimes hooded when off duty to prevent them being distracted and they may be tethered by a thin leather strap around a leg when not flying.

The actual hunt is similar to what can be seen with wild birds on Smith Hill. The hawks either sit on the falconer's glove (tame) or cruise around at altitude waiting for a suitable target (wild). Once one reveals itself then.....

As we walk through the field I am suddenly startled by an explosion of feathers that erupted right at my feet. It takes me a second to realize that I have just flushed a huge cock pheasant, and



A "tame" Red Tail with its owner

before I have even thought of shouting "Hey hey hey!" Rio has launched herself from Kristen's fist and is in hot pursuit. The two birds streak across the field and I am amazed by their speed - I'm afraid I'll miss something if I blink. Rio is hard on the pheasant's tail but I see the pheasant begin to pull away as it climbs into the air. Rio makes a wide banking turn and flies back across the field to land on Kristens glove. Rio has an irritated look in her eye but Kristen smiles at her. "That was a darn good flight! That pheasant was smart enough to know that it's only hope was to outfly her - if it had landed Rio would have had him on the ground."

Not all flights result in a kill. We may have seen on Smith Hill how a pigeon will fly in with an erratic, tumbling, motion that's deliberately intended to confuse a persuing hawk. Rabbits seem to be a much easier

meal.....

Kristen brings me out of my musings by shouting "Hey hey hey!". I see a rabbit darting across the field about 100 yards away. Rio is off like a rocket and Kristen and I run across the field in order to be able to see the action. The rabbit twists and turns, zigs and zags, but Rio is right behind it. The rabbit runs towards a large, dense bush on the edge of the field and crashes into it with inches to spare. With the sudden disappearance of the rabbit Rio immediately flies up onto a telephone pole just over the bush and peers intently down at the spot where she last saw the rabbit. The rabbit is invisible to Rio right now, but from where I am standing I can see it lying under the bush, its eyes like huge saucers, its body wound up on its back legs like a tense spring. Kristen has stopped moving and has a finger to her lips. I watch to see what will happen, and don't have to wait long. The rabbit's nervous energy gets the best of it and it springs out from under the bush and runs flat out across the field. Rio dropped like a bullet from the sky when she heard the first rustle of the bush, and pumps quickly after the rabbit. In a few seconds she catches up to it and her powerful talons grab hold of its head. Rabbit and hawk tumble over the ground in a violent somersault as the rabbit lets out an awful scream.

Kristen runs over to where Rio is standing triumphantly over her prize. The rabbit is still now, but Rio is panting too hard to eat. Kristen kneels down and runs a finger softly over the jackrabbits body. "Poor bunny," she says softly, and then looks over her shoulder as though she had forgotten I was there. "That," she tells me proudly, "is falconry." •



