
TOSSUP 96

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December 1996

EDITOR'S SPOT

Happy New Year!

It's 'Boxing Day' (the day after Christmas) and so it's time to look forward to '97. First, though, let's dispose of the last business of '96.

Officers....

Having not heard any dissent about the proposed officers for '97 the meeting on November 27 ratified the list proposed in the last newsletter. This was:-

- President: Edgar Weisman
- VP: Charles Babcock
- Secretary & Newsletter Editor: Martin Usher
- Treasurer: Chase Keightly
- Field Officer: Edgar Weisman
- Safety Officer: Don Northern

These are 'the usual faces' with one exception - Martin



Usher (that's me). I'm relatively new to TOSS since I've only been flying a couple of years. One of the reasons why I volunteered for this spot was that I've got a computer and all the relevant software (and with any luck I'll figure out how to use it by the time I've finished this).

The other is that during the year I've been a TOSS member I've not been getting the newsletter regularly. There are any number of reasons for this - multiple member lists, all slightly different, is one. Whatever the actual reason my goal is to get the production process sufficiently organized that the letter arrives about a week before the monthly meeting.

December Meeting....

As last year there is no meeting in December. The next club meeting will be on Wednesday, January 29th.

"Give Us the Money"

The New Year is also the time to renew your subscription. The rates are the

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same as last year - \$27 Family, \$22 Individual, \$5 Junior. Money goes to Chase Keightly.

December Monthly Contest

(By Thomas Akers)

The December monthly was a bloody affair (but not as 'explosive' as November's - Ed). Damage control was the word of the day. The CD Charles Backock, along with the assistant CD Art McNamee, chose very challenging tasks for the conditions. The tasks for the day were: a three minute precision duration flight, and then three rounds of triathlon. The triathlon consisted of three ten minute target times, with a slight twist. The scoring awards more points for landing on an even minute in the event that you did not make the ten minute target time. In other words, someone who only flew for four minutes would get more points than someone who flew for seven minutes. Much more!

The lift conditions were not exactly ideal. Nobody made all three ten minute flights and many people were severely punished for landing short on odd minutes. In the event that a thermal was found, a

line mystically formed at the winches and everybody tried to maximize on the opportunity. Ultimately, it was the Paragon of Don Northern that triumphed. Congratulations to Don Northern for winning the contest and a special congratulations to Don McNamee for winning the Yearly Standings competition.

Using the Internet

(By Martin Usher)

The Internet has been in the news a lot over the last year, usually hyped in terms that belong more in science fiction than reality. The reality is that information is now a commodity, plumbed into your home just like water or electricity. It has become as easy to use as turning a tap, and like these other utilities its rather difficult to live without once you start using it. Once connected you can tap into some really good sources of soaring information. My favorite is the *Radio Controlled Soaring Exchange*. The RCSE is a 'listserver' that works through electronic mail ("EMail"). People send messages to it on various soaring related topics and the computer that is 'it' relays the

information to all of the subscribers - in effect, the message is mailed to some 800 people worldwide. The result is a stream of soaring related messages - so many that it can overwhelm your 'inbox'. The solution to this is a *digest* where the mailer collects the typical 200 daily messages into two or three larger ones. This keeps your mail traffic down and makes it easier to scan the messages looking for interesting stories.

Who subscribes to this service? Most, if not all, of the 'big names' in sailplanes can be found here - designers, manufacturers, retailers and users. My two favorite writers are a Paul Clark ("Skypilot ONE") who lives in Japan, flies HLG a lot and has a very entertaining prose style and YK Chan, a fellow from Vancouver, BC, who can always be relied on to find a mathematical formula, be it for an antenna or calculating pushrod flex. You will find Messrs Wurts, Perkins, Clerx, Weston *et al* there, of course.

How much does it cost? Its free - if you have access to EMail, you can subscribe by sending a message with the subject *Subscribe to soaring-digest-request@airage.com*.

How come? The list server is sponsored by *Model Aircraft News*. Sponsoring this listserver puts them in the

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center of the soaring world. This makes it very easy for them to find newsworthy stories for their magazine. **What other services are there?** The main RC aircraft discussion area is a bulletin board ("Usenet group") called *rc.models.rc.air*. You see very little gliding stuff there - mainly the occasional "Where are the sailplane people?" post. The other resource is the *World Wide Web*. The 'Web' is like a freebe advertising magazine combined with a Home Shopping TeeVee channel. You navigate around frequently garish, often badly animated, billboards by clicking on text items or picture icons of interest. It is the most consumer oriented and by far the most easy to use information service. Many companies and organizations have 'home pages' on the Web - including TOSS. The TOSS page was put together by Jonathan Spoer last January to advertise the Paragon contest and has all of the 'boilerplate' information that's in this newsletter. Its still accessible. I'm going to try to keep this up to date - its a very good way of keeping TOSS "on the map". Its a good way to track down and order sailplane kits - maybe a little too convenient for safety!

What if I've never used a computer, don't own one and don't like them? Go to the WebTV demonstrator in 'Best Buy' on Moorpark Rd. Access 'Search' and 'Sailplane', then watch what happens! If you're lucky you might get to browse some of the hundreds of items listed before being pounced on by a 'sales associate'.

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"Bonehead Mistakes"

(A sample from RCSE)

These three messages were typical of a RCSE 'thread' just before Christmas dealing with silly things people had done while building and flying planes.

From: Bert <bert2@visitronics.be>
Subject: [RCSE] Bonehead mistakes

Any one of you ever tried to make a plastic fuse in a mold without adding hardener to the resin?
I did.
I can assure you it takes a hell of a lot of time to get the mold clean again.

Bert

Bert Van Kets, Nobelberg 55, 3200
Belgium

From: Djaerotec@aol.com
Subject: [RCSE] Re: more bonehead mistakes

One more and then I'll shut up..

This one happened to a friend in college. He'd come over to my dorm room to borrow my Monocote iron and some tools to cover a "Lil' T" he was working on. A few minutes later he said he was having trouble getting it to shrink up, so I told him to turn the temperature up. I was busy studying, so I wasn't paying a lot of attention, but out of the corner of my eye I could see things weren't going very well. I thought I'd better investigate, just about the time he was trying to finish the last of its 6-

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foot wing. I said "Ed, what's the problem?"

"I can't seem to get this !@#\$\$%^ stuff to stick!"

The cover job looked horrible, wrinkles all over, melted loose edges everywhere. It was bad, even for a first timer. At a loss to come up with a rational explanation I asked the obvious but impossible:

"Did you peel the backing off the Monokote before you put it on?"

"Oh, NO !!!!!"

The look on his face said it all.

Don Stackhouse @ DJ Aerotech

From: "Steve Kerry & Carol Ann Green" <metaphor@enterprise.net>
Subject: [RCSE] Re: more bonehead mistakes

Don Stackhouse wrote:

> "Did you peel the backing off the Monokote before you put it
> on?"
> "Oh, NO !!!!!"
> The look on his face said it all.

Did you know that if you peel the backing off the film but forget you've done it, you can then spend about three hours trying to peel off the backing again? If you are stubborn, you can actually remove the individual layers (glue, binder, pigment etc) one at a time...

Steve Kerry
Yorkshire, UK

(This last one caused me to laugh out loud. I've done it.)

Charlie Babcock	Toss	594	-	-	594	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Michael Stern	Toss	449	-	-	-	-	449	-	-	-	-	-

