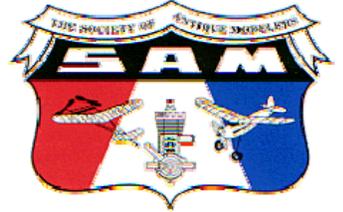




**THE NEWSLETTER OF SAM 26, THE CENTRAL
COAST CHAPTER OF THE SOCIETY OF
ANTIQUe MODELERS. DECEMBER 2011 # 261**



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OUR CHRISTMAS DINNER MEETING will once again be at the Radisson at the Santa Maria Airport. We tend to keep repeating what works well, so please let Jim Bierbauer know your headcount for the Sunday December 18, 2011 event. We'll gather in the lobby lounge area and adjourn to the dining room at 6 PM to take advantage of the early bird specials.

IT'S DUES TIME once again and through frugal management, we've been able to keep our dues low at just \$15 for the coming year. Your dues go primarily for newsletter printing and postage plus a few minor administrative necessities. Just over half our members receive the newsletter via E mail and we encourage this in order to continue with low dues. Just let the Editor know at samrcflyer@verizon.net. A few members voluntarily send 20 bucks, and we thank you for that. Those wearing hats tip them for your generosity when Treasurer Jim mentions this at the meetings. Make your \$15 check to SAM 26 and mail it to the Treasurer at the address on the masthead above. Do it now so you don't miss out on the special swimsuit issue in early 2012.

TANDY WALKER has sold most of his engine powered ships and will be flying mostly electrics. Tandy has had a developing lower back problem, making it harder to do the necessary stooping and squatting needed to effectively deal with "wet" models. His models sold quickly since Tandy is known for his immaculate construction via his descriptive posts on the internet.

2012 SCHEDULES: The **AMA expo**/trade show in Ontario California will be **January 6-8**. In recent years, the show features more AMA administrative matters and meetings, while the trade show things such as balsa and kit sales, swap shop, etc; have diminished. Expect to see mostly ARFs, electrics, and radios on the display floor, plus RTF demonstrations.

The **Southwest Regionals** at Eloy Arizona is scheduled for **January 14-16**.

Our **SAM 26 Spring contest** is scheduled for **March 24/25 at Taft**. The field owner not only won't be running us off, but as a representative of the local Chamber of Commerce actually seemed to welcome us this time.

CECIL CUTBIRTH will be missed, as he recently passed away from lung complications. It's tough to have to make these reports, but most of us are old enough to become "eligible" at any time. Cecil was active in SAM 51, and was formerly their newsletter editor. More recently, as chief Contest Director, he'd been running the SAM 51 events at the Schmidt Ranch for the past several years. His health was probably the reason they had to announce cancellation of the last scheduled SAM 51 event at the ranch. Cecil was also a member of SAM 26.

TACHOMETER TROUBLES: It's not only mechanical failures in our aircraft, but Murphy and his associate gremlins often reach out to our support equipment. This one drove me nuts for over a year until I recently caught on to the problem. I have an engine test stand which I sometimes use briefly in the back yard and also bring to our almost monthly engine running sessions at the local field. I keep two tachometers in my field box. One is a Tower tach, the other a GloBee. By taking both, I thought that if - make that "when" one didn't work the other might.

Here's how it went: I'd start an engine, hit the switch on the tach, but the screen stayed blank. It refused to come back on until I removed the dry cells and cleaned their posts and reinstalled them. That's when I started bringing both tachs, hoping one of the two would work. But both did the same thing time after time. I'd cuss a little, throw each in turn across the lawn in the back yard, shut down the engine, go pick up the tachs and march them into the shop. After cleaning the battery contacts, I'd switch on, check that they registered 3600 RPM against the shop light, and go try again.

The same scene would then be repeated at the test stand. "No go" for both tachs. Throw across yard, retrieve, go clean batteries. Obviously the tachometers somehow got nervous around a running engine, thinking maybe I was going to stick them into the prop. They'd prefer getting thrown across the lawn, landing in the soft grass rather than being shoved into a spinning prop.

With a partial understanding of the problem, I started leaving the tachs switched on after calibrating against the shop light. Sure enough, they stayed lit and working when I re-started an engine and I could then get an RPM reading from either or both. So my flying buddies wouldn't think me crazy, I demonstrated the phenomenon at the field. But it wasn't 100% repeatable, which led me (and maybe them) to question my sanity.

Little by little the rules of failure started to sort themselves out. The tachs didn't like to be switched on near a running engine. Switching on before the start, they worked OK. Finally the best clue came when the problem didn't appear with glow engines. AHA! Only spark ignition engines caused the problem. The clip-on ignition set was getting to the tachs.

But even then the rules were weird. If a tach was turned on either before the engine was started, or from a few feet away from the running engine, it stayed on and worked OK. But if switched on just a couple of feet from the running engine it not only wouldn't turn on there, but also wouldn't switch on away from the engine, or with the engine shut down. The batteries had to be disconnected to re-set the tach.

With two different tachs displaying this problem, I wondered why others before me hadn't reported on it. The answer to that came when I tried to display the problem to the guys at the field. The tachs both worked fine when switched on next to ignition engines running on a couple of different planes. My sanity again came into question.

Another new rule: Only my clip on ignition set caused the problem. It has a stronger than average spark coil and isn't normally used with a resistor in the hi-tension lead.

OK, next problem: why does the battery have to be removed to get the tach working again? Well, the GloBee, being a stinking little computer has a memory which stays with it even when switched off. With no auxiliary battery or capacitor, it must rely on the main batteries for the memory, even with the main display switched off. Proximity to the RF of my clip-on ignition set must blot out its memory, somehow not allowing anything to turn on, until the "master switch" is turned off by disconnecting the batteries.

But the Tower tach doesn't have the retained memory feature, so why does it exhibit the same problem? It probably shares a common chip with the GloBee. I'd never heard of this oddball problem before, but if any of you has had it happen, I'd sure like to hear about it. And with 2.4 radios allowing smaller resistors in the hi-tension lines, the problem might start popping up where it never existed before. If it does, just switch the tach on away from the running engine.

TACHOMETER PREFERENCES: Had I known about the “features” and tricks the GloBee can perform, I would never have bought it, and instead would have first bought the slightly less expensive Tower model. All I want to do is switch on and see a reading, not fiddle around with minor computer programming. It takes less time and less brain power to simply observe and remember a reading than it does to run through a sequence of 3 different retained memories, followed by recalling them later with another series of button presses. But if you like to camp in front of the store for two days and nights to buy the first of the latest electronic gadget, I think you’d prefer the GloBee over the Tower.

BOB HOLMAN was walking with a slight limp at the Pond commemorative meet in October. He has since turned himself in to the medical establishment and they installed in a bionic knee. Bob says it was rough for a while, but now coming along nicely. I guess the mechanical failures aren’t limited to just our equipment.



We should probably commission an artist to do this scene in oils, or at least water colors, and call it **“The Spirit of Taft”!** It comes from the 2010 Pond Commemorative. Here we have Jay Higgs displaying a brand new ship amid wide open spaces, beautiful day, and the famous kitty litter plant in the background. That rising steam column in the background indicates that there’s very little wind.

This year, Jay attended his first SAM Champs at Bolder City Nevada, and says he’ll definitely return next time.

Here's the schedule for the RC portion of the upcoming contest at Eloy Arizona.

Contest Manager: Al Lidberg
1127 W. Dunbar Dr
Tempe, AZ 85282
480-309-6564

Email: aalmps@aol.com

SAM RC Old Timers Contest Director: Bob Angus
6640 N. Columbus
Tucson, AZ 85718
520-299-9034

Saturday Jan. 14 Events	Sunday Jan. 15 Events	Monday Jan. 16 Events
Pure Antique	Antique	Electric LMR
B Glow	Ohlsson Sideport	1/2A Tex. Scale
Electric Texaco	C Glow LER	Brown Jr. LER
C Ignition LER	Texaco	A Glow
1/2A Texaco	Speed 400 LMR Special Event**	A Ign LER
B Ignition LER	Electric Replica***	Spirit of SAM
Wakefield Class LMR Electric*		

For SAM FF events and schedules, contact Al Lidberg (above).

And for lots more detailed information visit the website at: aalmps.com/swrintronu.htm

The web site has a map, places to stay, photos and details about the FAI and special FF events, plus complete contest results for past years dating back to 2002.

MORE ON THE LMA. LMA stands for Lost Model Alarm, the new lightweight low cost gadget we reviewed in the November issue. It measured up to the advertised specs in all departments, but the sound volume was less than expected. Having no sound meter, I can't say whether or not the LMAs reached the minimum advertised 85db level, however the perceived volume wasn't such that the "old ears" at the flying site could pick it up at the 50 meter (164') distance advertised. The reviewer for Model Aviation however said he (or she) could hear it faintly at 316 feet on level ground with no obstructions.

Dick Fischer has normal hearing for conversation and in fact speaks softly while conversing. But Dick couldn't hear the alarm at a 6' distance, probably due to the high frequency. The rest of us could hear it OK up close. I landed a ship in open field, switched on the "A" model LMA and had to move in to about 30' away before hearing it. But I must admit some slight hearing loss from years of running unmuffled engines, playing in a 100 piece marching band, and operating a machine gun in Korea without ear protection. Today I use ear plugs and/or ear muffs religiously. I imagine today's military insists on ear protection.

I Emailed Nik Dobrinski who provides the LMAs asking if it would be possible to raise the sound volume at a reasonable cost in weight and price. I assume he's found an off the shelf product and adapted it for RC use. Here's his reply edited slightly for brevity:

“There may be a technical possibility to design a similar alarm with a louder buzzer, but that may come at an expense of increased weight and price, and may not be commercially viable. We may experiment in the future. Right now we are focusing a single platform (one-size-fits-all) which we would like to improve and popularize. These alarms are a compromise between weight, price and functionality: they can not lead you straight to the downed model; they can only assist you as you get closer to the model. Nik”

After field testing I noticed another use for the LMA, so I'll leave it in the model tested. It could prevent accidentally leaving the receiver switched on if the transmitter is off. I noticed that with either the A or the P model LMA if I switched off the transmitter with RX power on the beeper would sound immediately. Over the years, many of us have left receivers (and sometimes transmitters) on and depleted a battery. If using a Li-PO as a receiver battery, that error would result in destroying the Li-Po or maybe even starting a fire. I also mentioned this to Nik, who replied:

“Regarding the feature of the LMA as reminder of a still powered receiver gear:

This will certainly work for the LMA-P model, regardless if you turn off the transmitter or not; as long as there is no command change for a minute on this channel the alarm will go off, and remind you to turn off your electronics.

For the LMA-A this will work only if the receiver does not have a fail-safe on this channel or the fail-safe is programmed to trigger the alarm on a lost transmitter signal. It will NOT work if the LMA-A is plugged in a receiver channel with fail-safe "hold" functionality. Thank you once again! I welcome comments from all who would like to give some feedback, much appreciated! Kind regards, Nik Dobrinski.”

I had been using the LMA-A model when I discovered that “switch off” reminder, so I must not have plugged into a fail safe channel. In fact, since I don't much care for fail safe, I probably didn't have it programmed into that particular combination. But if you do use fail safe, I guess all you'd need to do is make sure it's inactive on the RX channel you plug into. I preferred the A model over the P model because I could plug into say a retract channel and leave it switched off unless needed. If you were having trouble getting underway, it would be annoying to have the P model beeping at you each time the controls weren't moved for 60 seconds.

I'd also mentioned to Nik, that the more likely market for his gadget would be for our free flight guys, who are far more likely to put a model down into a tree, bushes, or the cornfields at Muncie. This would require a small button battery and should probably be hooked up to a standard FF timer to activate after a delay of 15 minutes or so.

AIR COMPRESSOR TANKS can be a potential hazard by slowly rusting through from the inside out. This was discussed on SAM Talk at length. Most have drain valves that should be emptied of accumulated water after each use. But that still leaves moisture inside. One guy also leaves the valve open between uses. But the hole is pretty small to be effective. Another fellow squirts in WD40 which displaces water. But who knows how effective that is or how long it lasts. Also WD40 might find its way into your spray paint job causing blotches. (continued).

TANKS – continued:

For a very old well used tank, about the only way I can think of to safely test it would be to do a hydrostatic pressure test. It might be no small undertaking, but a possible lifesaver if you're salvaging an old tank of questionable lineage. You'd have to invert the tank, install a compatible fitting in the drain valve, fill with water and apply pressure well above that to be supplied by the compressor later. But if the compressor or its cutoff valve only goes to say, 120 PSI or less, a manual bicycle pump with an attached gauge can put out up to 180 PSI which should do the job.



Van Wilson took this shot of this sharp looking **Clipper MK I** at the concours evening event at this year's SAM Champs. I fly one of these with an O&R 60. It's a competitive ship in the O&R sideport event, but mine would be no competition for the one above in the looks department. I saw more than one of these at the 'Champs with inverted engines and nicely shaped cowls.

The Clipper is an antique design with an original span of 72" and area of 678 squares. That gives it a respectable aspect ratio of 7.6:1 which along with the elliptical planform makes it a fair glider. The 678 sq. in. area would also be a good fit for a .29 glow engine at minimum allowed size.

The MK II Clipper came along a year later (1939) so is just an old timer, not Antique. About the only (maybe "the" only) difference between the two ships is the MK I has straight dihedral while the MK II has polyhedral. That makes the original the probable better choice.

THE ATWOOD TRIUMPH was the new hot engine for control line at one time.



This good looking and nicely built engine came in both .49 and .51 displacements. The one pictured happens to be a .51. The only external difference is a 49 or 51 stamped on the top of a mounting lug. Like other engines of the postwar era, they were soon furnished as glow models. Those remaining today seem to be about evenly divided about between glow and ignition models, and also between the two sizes.

The two sizes came about due to a short lived AMA rule change which created more engine size classes. I can remember many CL construction articles featuring these engines for power. They were apparently successful, but I once bench tested the one above in apparently excellent condition and found it so lacking in performance that I just set it aside into the collection. Later I heard from a couple others who claimed similar results. Someday when I have absolutely nothing else to do, I may try to investigate to find the answer.

This nugget below is a re-run item from January 2006

GORILLA GLUE TRIED: I'd had the bottle sitting unopened, and in wait for several months. Probably not a good thing, because I've heard it has a relatively short shelf life. The proper occasion arose in repairing some hangar rash to a tail section. I needed to insert a balsa reinforcement piece into a small triangular spot, where it was tough to get a perfect fit. There was no weight concern, because I had a small balance weight on the tail anyway. The "Gorilla" did its thing and expanded to fill the small gaps nicely, and even left some squeezins' pushed out for me to have to trim off afterwards. Others report that this glue is probably not the strongest, nor the best choice for most of our work, and I can believe that. But you need to be selective with any adhesive.

SMALL OLD TIMERS: SAM Secretary Tommy Gray has been working to establish a fun class of small old timers. Here is a condensed version of his recent post to SAM Talk.

Hi All. As most of you know we have had for the last three years a group called "SmallOldTimers" that is dedicated to micro versions of our SAM planes. We flew at the 2010 Champs in Muncie and had a ball. Last season we were ready to fly at Boulder, but the winds were prohibitive. This year for the 2012 Champs, we will be exploring an alternative indoor venue at Muncie should the weather be too much for the little birds to handle.

Also for 2012 we are adding a new twist to the mix. We are adding a "Plane of the Year" and will do so each year from now on. For 2012 we will be having a special event for Micro Buzzard Bombshells. Build one and bring it up to Muncie. Requirements for the special BB event as with all Small Old Timers planes, are:

Parkzone motor of your choice
Single cell LiPo max 200 mah
60 second motor run
Hi time wins. Prizes for first 3 places
24" span max WS.
No foam. Conventional construction.
No sheetwood can be subbed for built-up surfaces.

We'll be posting additional information on the SmallOldTimers.com Website as time progresses. If you are building one please post pictures on the Yahoo Group for SmallOldTimers.
Tommy Gray

PURE NITRO? Jim Hainen sent this note sometime back. He says nitro is no longer pure. Here's Jim:

"It's because of the great Texas explosion of many years ago. Even though they call it nitromethane, it really isn't 100 percent pure. That's the law. Now I will tell you how to get the pure stuff. Get yourself a large glass five gallon water jug like they use on water fountains. Pour a gallon of the so called Nitro into it. Then pour in about three gallons of water. Leave sit overnight. Next day siphon off the pure nitromethane. The alcohol will mix with the water but the nitromethane will not. -- Jim."

If what Jim says is true it would affect the percentage of nitro that we think we have in our mix, whether it's from a commercial source, or mixed ourselves. If alcohol actually is mixed with nitro, and if it's the good alcohol (methanol, not ethanol), we'd still be in pretty good shape as long as we knew what the precise mix is. Since we usually mix in some methanol anyway, the problem would be limited to those needing mixes of about 45% nitro or more.

I have some very old stock nitro and another can of newer stuff, so it would probably pay for me to make a small quantity test on each to see just what I have.

ETHANOL QUESTION: It's bad enough that the government requires ethanol to be added to our automotive gasoline. It runs up the price of corn as well as gasoline, causes hot running, lower mileage, rusts the system, causes leakage in older carburetors, and gives higher vapor pressure, polluting the atmosphere by making fuel escape from the old 2 PSI pressurized tanks. Methanol is apparently the superior fuel, so why ethanol? I believe either alcohol can be made from corn. Is it just a matter of a slight cost difference? Does anyone know the answer?



THE FEATHER MERCHANT above could have been built by Mike Myers, but it was actually built (or completed) by Evan Evans. The reason Mike might have built it, is that he has a flair for the unusual, different, (or dare I say oddball?). That could also include color schemes. But some time ago Evan sent this picture across the ether with an explanation of the color scheme. He not only used remnants of covering materials, but parts of one or more other ships that had passed through at least a couple of others hands. Even describes the model as sort of a sleeper that he feels can compete with the best.

Our late chapter member Fred Lehmborg designed the Feather merchant, along with the Goon, which is an even more unusual looking ship. Incidentally, I wonder how long ago someone may have departed this world to still be referred to as “late”. Actually Fred has been gone a long time.

Fred named the Feather Merchant after the term usually applied to civil servants years ago. With his unusual sense of humor, he may have been sort of naming it after himself, since he had a distinguished career working for the government. The Goon name comes from an old comic strip small animal like character. I think it may have been the Popeye strip. I believe Mike Myers has built at least one of each of Fred’s designs over the years.

My older SAM eligible models list shows the Feather merchant as an old time (not antique) design that had a 72” wingspan in 1939 (653 sq. in.) and a 46” span at 288” in 1940. That last size fits and is sometimes flown in the 1/2A Texaco event. Evan also said an 80” version is also listed in probably a later version of my list.

The **Goon** is an antique eligible design, listed as a 75” span with an area of 864 square inches. This results in an aspect ratio of just 6.5 to one, which wouldn’t usually make it very competitive.

However: The Goon has a huge stabilizer area adding to the total lifting surface. Just how efficient (or inefficient) that design may be is hard to tell because not many are seen in competition.

FRED LEHMBERG had a great (and unusual) sense of humor and wrote a fun and fact filled series of model aviation articles for a number of years. He brought forth all sorts of flight theories through a series of conversations by some off the wall characters.

THE FINAL WORD: In the interest of good health, my old Grand pappy sends this tip from his grave. “Always drink good whiskey and you’ll never be wormy”.

MERRY CHRISTMAS from all of us to all of us!

Robert L. Angel
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