

The National Free Flight Society

is an AMA-affiliated non-profit organization whose purpose is to preserve, enhance, and promote the sport and hobby of Free Flight Model Aviation in all its forms.

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RSVP

NOSTALGIA EVENT--AND WHAT IT MEANS-- by Ralph Prey, Digest Contributing Editor.

It all started in my workshop one rainy night several months ago. Walt and Dave, my two sons, were waiting for the rain to stop so they could hit the freeway to their respective pads and build. They were poring over my thirty year collection of Model Airplane News magazines, and then, it happened!!! On page 20 of the December, 1953, issue was Paul Gilliam holding his Civy Boy 61 sky-bound, complete with tissue decoration "Civy Boy" and AMA number on the wing plus San Valeers on the fuselage. That did it. We three thumbed through years and years of magazines looking for and reading the feature articles on FF Gas designs like Spacer, RamRod, Sandy Hogan, and, you name it, we read it, far into the early morning hours, long after the rain stopped.

Walt cut his teeth on Gas models with a RamRod 600, so he had a fair idea of what Free Flight was like in the early 50's. And now with twenty more years of flying experience under his belt, he could see the FUN we had in those halcyon days. We read about the then super fast Civy Boy, circling right climb with its undercambered wing and flat glide from its 50% stab. The design made sense "then", and still does. The more we thumbed through the yellow-edged pages, the more we realized the FUN to be realized in re-living those memorable years.

The photos showing the longlines at the contest table waiting for a timer proved that there's more to flying a Free Flight model than winning a trophy. And the shots of trophies and card tables surrounded by heaps and heaps of kits and merchandise of all sorts brought out the exclamations like, "Wow, look at all that stuff, and the engines they're giving away---hey, here's Gene Wallock when he was a Junior in the Thermal Thumpers with a Zeek". (He's now the "W" in P&W Model Service making short kits for Old Timer designs as well as supplying balsa on special order to kit manufacturers.) These photographs brought out the smiles. YES, HAPPINESS IS FREE FLIGHT.

The following days and weeks were spent talking about the Civy Boy 61 and the Good Old Days of AMA Gas Free Flight--the days after the Old Timer model era. Building and flying Old Timer models is a kick in the pants, but where can you get an ignition engine these days under a hundred bucks? Even if you did find someone with a \$21.50 Brown Junior, he'd never part with it to put in a model to fly. He'd just tease you with it. But it's no real chore to find a Johnson 29 or lapped piston Torp, or any other engine used in the Civy Boys during the Fifties. There are scads of engines from that period just waiting to be cleaned up and run again. And for less than a "C" note. So why not build some of those designs from the early 50's???? Sounds like FUN, and there'll be plenty of other flyers coming out of the woodwork, or even current AMA Gas flyers, that would build one just for the fun of it--especially if there were a contest for this kind of model. And so Walt's "idea" took off.

We presented the "idea" at the next San Valeers meeting--man, what a reception! Walt started out with the idea of everyone maybe building and flying Civy Boys, which then turned to building and flying all sorts of designs flown during the early Fifties. Seems everyone has a pet design from that period, but never got around to building. Here was a chance to build that "pet," or extra special favorite, and have FUN doing it, besides being able to fly in a contest with others having designs from the same era, only NOT fly for records or go for broke to trophy. For openers, our Club Secretary copied the complete set of plans for the Civy Boy 61, all 4 sheets full size, including ribs, curved parts, fuselage keel, and bulkheads. One full set was even sent to England to a modeler that was trying desperately to get one. The remaining sets went like hotcakes. Word

spread like wildfire about the San Valleers movement to build Civy Boys and others like RamRod, Spacer, etc., and have a contest for these models. I mentioned it in our club newsletter, The Satellite, and from then on, there was no stopping the rumor. It was to be a FACT.

Our Board Members decided to establish a basic set of rules, keeping them as simple as possible, and let the flyers know what's OK to build for the event. I say Event, because at this point in time, we did not have a name for the program. Walt later came up with the present handle for it, NOSTALGIA EVENT. The Board Members created rules that give the flyer as much latitude as possible and still stay within the concept of re-living those moments in history in the development of the AMA Gas Free Flight model from the close of WWII to the mid-Fifties, prior to the advent of one point VTO. We especially stayed away from rules that promote competitiveness and record-setting achievements. "FUN and "SPORT" are primary, and for this reason, flyoffs are the same as for the first three official flights. This was done also to keep from losing a model and to keep from crashing it with reduced engine run. Designs of this era were ROG using 2 point wheel takeoffs, so reduced runs would be disastrous to the transition. Ditto, those that used 3 point VTO.

In establishing the rules, we felt that any number of people out in the hinterlands would build and fly a NOSTALGIA EVENT eligible design and have fun doing it in the spirit we intended. Admittedly, there will be the unscrupulous ones who will try to circumvent the rules and fly models that are ineligible for many reasons. But we feel that they will be the exception rather than the rule, and that the "well-meaning" flyers will overcome this and preserve the spirit of the rules.

With regards to some specifics of the Rules, eligible designs should be built according to the original planforms and construction as shown in the plans. Minor variations are permitted to improve structural integrity--like substituting Spruce for Balsa, or, silk for tissue, etc. The state of the art has advanced so that no doubt many of the designs can be improved on by the use of auto-surfaces, or different wing/stab airfoils. While this may be so, it does not meet the intent of the concept, which is to re-live the development of the Free Flight model--NOT TO DEVELOP the design. Eligible designs are those that were kitted or printed in national magazines from WWII through December, 1956. We purposely used December, 1956, as the cutoff date because designs like the 900 Starduster, Satellite, and Lucky Lindy followed in 1957, '58, etc. These designs are currently being flown in AMA Gas, which takes them out of the NOSTALGIA EVENT concept. The burden of proof of an eligible design rests with the flyer, and he should be prepared to present the kit, plan, or 3-view from the publication used to build the model.

Selecting the engine should be a fairly easy task for the flyer. He can use any engine

manufactured from the close of WWII through December, 1956, or purchase an off the shelf engine that has a bushed crankshaft (no ball bearing support) and is non-Schnuerle ported. There are several excellent engines available from any local hobby shop, such as OS MAX 19, K&B 40 Sport Series, Cox .020 and 049, that are eligible for use in the NOSTALGIA EVENT. We did this hoping to encourage building a design from the era in the event the flyer cannot find an engine from the Fifties. It makes a lot of sense, also, because engine made today that are non-Schnuerle, plain crank, do not have an edge over the engines of the subject era, like a Dooling 29, or an early model Super Tiger G21 Series 29/35. A Combat Johnson 29/35 will still blow the doors off several current engine designs with lapped piston loop scavenge porting. Thus, the 3 classes in the NOSTALGIA EVENT are tailored to the engine displacement, ie, 1/2A=.010 to .050, A-B=.051 to .29, C-D=.30 to .65. Again, the flyer has latitude in selecting an engine for a particular class, and he can make minor changes in mounting to facilitate installation of the engine, such as radial instead of beam mounts, etc. Also, any type fuel system may be used--tank, pacifier, etc.



Sal Taibi ROG's Spacer at Sepulveda

We were very concerned in developing the rules not to be narrow minded and make every-one HandLaunch as in the current AMA events. For this reason, our rules permit 20 second ROG when using wheel takeoffs, and 20 seconds from 3 point VTO. Designs from the era used wheels, either one or two, for ROG. Our rules, however, follow the principle that if the flyer should prefer to handlaunch his Civy Boy equipped with one wheel, he can do so, with engine run reduced to 15 seconds. Those flyers doing VTO must use three points like the original, and the model must remain on the three points unassisted for thirty seconds to verify its VTO capability.

Since the engine runs are longer than current AMA rules, it follows that an Official flight should be at least equal to a CAT I max of 5 minutes. The rules of the era concerned were for 6 minute maxes. Consequently, we have adopted the 6 minute max, and the same for any flyoffs, as discussed earlier.

Naturally, these rules were developed for the West Coast, but should the Event be flown in other areas with limited space, the CD has the authority to establish whatever he feels necessary for the prevailing flight conditions.

PREY/SAN VALEERS NOSTALGIA EVENT RULES

Designs Eligible: Those Gas models from the close of WWII through December, 1956, whether kitted or published. Proof of origin may be required by showing kit, plan, or three view. Airplane must be built to plan with only minor structural changes allowed.

Engines: Event allows engines from the period described, plus current makes of plain bearing, non-Schnuerle porting.

Classes: 1/2A (.010 to .050), A-B (.051 to .29), C-D (.30-.65)

Flight Rules: Six minute max. ROG and VTO (3-point), 20 second run. HL, 15s. 40 second minimum. 6 attempts for 3 Officials. 6 minute flyoff flights till one person drops.

Miscellaneous: AMA Safety Code will be enforced. Two models allowed. Fuel type and feed systems of any sort within AMA rules permitted.

Purpose of event: FUN AND SPORT. No records will be kept or honored. Event designed to re-create development of Gas FF during the period indicated. Write Ralph Prey at address below for fully detailed regulations covering NOSTALGIA EVENT.

So, have at it! Build one and fly for the FUN and SPORT of it. All three classes of the NOSTALGIA EVENT will be flown at this year's USFFC, so, get hot, and I will see you at the entry table.

[The long-awaited Return of Ralph Prey is upon us. Ralph edits the Satellite, newsletter of the San Valeers organization, is a frequent contributor to the national modelling press, a raconteur, engine expert, Digest Contributing Editor in Power, and has a second hobby, yet, showing his dogs on the Championship circuit. Address: 4859 West 97th Street, Inglewood, CA. 90301.]

[It now seems likely that Ralph's concept really has caught fire, and the NOSTALGIA EVENT has been scheduled for many Club and Regional meets for 1979. Should you contact Ralph about the Rules as suggested above, you might also ask him for his list of eligible designs and engines, or, better yet, send him three bucks for a subscription to his club newsletter, The Satellite. Ed.]

RSVP 2

Our recent publication of a proposal for a Novice Gas Event drew the following response:

February 8, 1979

Mr. David Benepe
5901 Wedgemont Circle North
Fort Worth, Texas 76135

Dear David:

Have read your letter to John Worth as published in the Free Flight Digest, and would like to lend my support. Perhaps the proposal will draw some critical fire, but the thrust of it is so well-aimed that I consider it a long stride towards helping kids get into free flight.

Assuming the proposal matures to the point where kits are required, my company will be glad to consider the designs available. Meanwhile, I will continue to watch the Free Flight Digest for developments.

All good wishes,

Very truly yours

(Carl Goldberg)

President,
Carl Goldberg Models, Inc.

