



Skyhawk Report

January 2015

Next meeting is January 19th at **Epic Corean Restaurant**, 1455 Woodruff Road
Dinner at 6:30 Meeting Begins at 7:30

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Quotes of the Month

“I hate it when people see me at the supermarket and they’re like, “Hey! What are you doing here?” So, I tell them, “You know ... hunting elephants!”

- An Old RCer

“My boss asked me who is the *stupid one*, me or him? I told him everyone *knows* he doesn't hire stupid people.”

- Anonymous

“Ever since it started snowing my husband is standing in front of the window and watching. If the snow gets much worse I might let him inside the house.”

- Rita Rudner

“The difference between stupidity and genius is that genius has its limits!”

- Albert Einstein

New Members

Wow! We signed up five, count 'em, five *more* new members at the December club meeting. These folks are: Garret Hancock, Pilot; Ed Enggasser, Pilot; Adam Enggasser, Pilot; Austin French, Novice; and Linda Davenport, Novice. Welcome folks! And, this club is *on a roll!*

Communications

President's message:

As we exit 2014 I would like to reflect for a moment on our achievements. We had two fly-ins, including one to raise money for The Cancer Society of Greenville, and the club raised \$3000 for that organization in loving memory of Gerri Dunann. We had 134 members at year end with a lot of novices, who will soon “earn their wings”. None of this would have been possible without the tremendous assistance from our member volunteers who donated their time, money, and effort to make it all happen.

I thank our volunteer instructors whose diligent efforts helped our novices get certified, and helped make our club stronger.

And I thank the club officers, without whose assistance I would have not been able to pull all of this off.

My fellow officers and I are looking forward to serving you in 2015 and making it another memorable year. We wish you and yours a Merry Christmas and a happy, healthy, and prosperous New Year. And I hope to see all of you out at the field soon!

John Dillewyn

Upcoming Events

Eh, there ain't none around here this time o' year.

Huh?

Some of you may know that I have a Hanger 9 “Beast”, a truly great flying bi-plane designed by QuiQue Somenzini. I have flown it quite a few times, but in the past couple of months there have been some issues with the Smart-Fly electronic system I use. That system provides precise constant power to the servos and also provides redundant battery backup in case one of the batteries fails. The system has saved my plane at least once. Yet, a couple of months ago the electronics were behaving erratically and, no longer being an RC *dunce*, I would not even attempt to put that plane in the air until any flaws were discovered and resolved.

OK. So I put “The Beast” up on my workbench (my dinette table, actually) to go through everything electrical with a fine-toothed comb. I checked every lead connection, but since I had used retainer clips on all of them they seemed to be fine –

nothing loose, snug fits on all of them. I unplugged all the servo leads from the Smart-Fly channel connectors which lead to the receiver pack, then plugged them back in one-by-one to see if anything happened as I plugged in the next one. All checked out OK. Then I did the reverse, that is, I unplugged them, one at a time, to see if that caused any hiccups anywhere. Everything continued to work perfectly. So, then I examined all the mechanical servo connections to see if any were binding up. They all seemed fine. I rechecked all of the specifications for the servo linkages in the Hangar 9 manual – all were within specs.

So. Then I put all the control throws to the test ... not one was out of spec. But, since there had been some “intermittent issues” I was not going to take anything for granted without being able to explain *why* things had gone wrong in the first place. Then, I noticed that every time I deflected the ailerons I could hear some servo noise “singing” to me. It didn’t matter whether the ailerons were up or down, I could still hear servo noise, at high rates as well as low rates, slow or fast deflection. Then I disconnected the four servos one at a time until I found the one that seemed to be binding (these old ears ain’t what they used to be, so I had to check them one at a time and when I found the noisy one I unplugged that one and re-connected the others, just to be sure, and the noise was no longer evident), in nearly all positions ... low rates, high rates didn’t matter ... which was on the upper aileron on the right side of the plane. So, I figured “bad” HiTech servo, right? Uh, uh. Not that simple. See, I used ball links on all the servo linkages. When I took the offending servo out to examine it ... now wait for it ... the beveled brass spacer which is supposed to be installed between the “ball” in the ball link housing and the servo arm, was actually installed below the servo arm, which meant the “ball” was making direct contact with top of the nylon servo arm which, I believe, was creating undue friction, putting a load on the servo and of course on the batteries as well. Not only that, *all* of the balls in every single ball link housing were “tight”, hard to move. Those were the “gray” ones, don’t remember where I got them.

Now, I think the reasons this makes sense are two: First, the plane flew well the first few times I had it up, and only later started acting up on me. I am guessing the incorrectly installed “spacer” may have caused the “ball” in the housing to be wearing on the nylon servo arm to the point that it might not have been swiveling as it should, putting a strain on the servo, and the batteries. And second, the technician I spoke with at Smart-Fly had asked me if the battery packs had “overload protection” strips installed on them, and I think I remember the guy at Batteries Plus who built the packs told me he had done that. The technician at Smart-Fly told me, “In RC, nobody ever does that to his batteries!” So, I believe the batteries were “cutting out” because of the load placed on them by that offending servo link, as well as the others, and maybe because of the overload strips as well.

Ergo, here’s what I am doing: replacing the four servos on the ailerons with JR 8711’s using aluminum servo arms; replacing all the ball links on those servos with JR ball links; getting new battery packs without any overload protection and, humbly, teaching myself to double check everything before I put another plane into the air! Oh, yeah, I’m going to do the same thing with the elevators ... at least one more lesson learned!

This Month's Special

Ya just gotta love those Germans!



Is there anything they can't do?

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