

RC
PRECISION
AEROBATICS



NATsnews
NATsnews
NATsnews
NATsnews

JULY
22

Jenni Alderman photo.



RC AEROBATICS

Event Director Bob Kane faced yet another problem on Monday: low ceilings. By day's end, however, the sun was once again shining, all of the flights had been completed, and no problems were encountered.

Fathers and Sons: Here are three more father-and-son teams at the 2015 Nats. We will publish the final two teams tomorrow, making for an amazing nine teams of fathers and sons this year!



Dave and Ron Lockhart.



AC and Albert Glenn.



Steve and Brandon Sobolewski.

The Passion: Bill Aherns introduced another new airplane for the 2015 Nats. Bill had watched Jason Shulman and Brett Wickizer both flying biplanes and knew he wanted to try one himself. Biplanes fly a little differently than monoplanes—especially Bill's Passion with a full-flying stabilizer.

In short order, however, he was hooked on this new airplane. Bill is using the new Futaba S.bus servo setup and loves it. He says, "It snaps like the dickens!" Knife-edge is effortless and the speed range is outstanding. It is great in crosswinds as well.

Bill is convinced on the future of the biplane and, if the situation was right, he would trade in his current back-up airplane, an Episode, and replace it with a second Passion.



The Invitation: Larry Kauffman introduced us to the Essence's sister ship: the Invitation. Although the Invitation could be set up for glow, Larry's preference is electric-powered airplanes. After 250-plus flights, Larry is right at home with their flying stabilizers. He really likes the constant speed the Invitation offers. Larry says that if you just let the plane fly, it helps do its own correcting, especially in crosswind conditions. If you want a good spin or snap entry, try this airplane.



The Encore: After such planes as the Rhapsody and the Symphony, it only seemed logical that Mike Harrison would be flying another one of his unique, original designs, the Encore. Mike is a long-standing regular at the Nats and he always comes with an original design. Yes, they are also always YS powered.



Challenges: Bobby Satalino is another long-standing regular competitor at the RC Aerobatic Nats. Over the years, certain health issues have made it harder for Bobby to stand for long periods of time. Not to be deterred from pursuing his love of aerobatic flight, Bob has found a classic solution to resolve this issue.



Field repairs: Robert Green found a spot at Site 1 to do some work on his propeller and spinner before his next flight.



Another challenge facing all of us who come to AMA's International Aeromodeling Center (IAC) is how we get around this vast 1-square-mile facility. Sue and JR Orliro have a simple solution to this problem. It also gives a special treat for their dog.



Site 4: From the first year AMA opened our beautiful IAC, Bobby Stout has been the site director on Site 4. For 2015, the rain has decided that Bobby move to Site 3 to work his magic from that location. This year Bob has the assistance of Tom Stennis as line chief.



Wednesday will be the final day of competition for Intermediate, Advanced, and Masters pilots. As a consequence, many of them will not be there for Day 4 and the finals for the FAI pilots. To be sure we all read what could easily be the outstanding closing story for our 2015 Nats, it is included in this report.

Nick and Diane started out for Gatwick airport in England. It started out like another day of international travel for them. Nick was off to Houston on business for the oil industry. Diane was finishing a visit with her son who was stationed in England with the USAF.

With a fond farewell, she boarded the same flight as Nick, returning to her home in Houston. Neither of them would have ever dreamed that this international flight would be diverted to Gander airport in Newfoundland, along with 37 other jets bound for the United States. The day was September 11, 2001.

They spent the next 30 hours on that same airplane, eating sandwiches made by people in the nearby village. The only beverage was water, also provided by the villagers. Neither was aware of the other until they were in line getting a blanket after they had been transported to a lodge that could house up to 80 people.

Imagine the problem this small village had trying to feed and house passengers from the 38 jets diverted there. By the third day, they were taking walks together to help pass the time. That evening they became honorary Newfoundlanders when they were asked to have a drink of Screech (a local favorite beverage) and kiss a cod fish, which they both did.

The mayor thought they were a married couple. When they said they were only friends, the mayor asked if they wanted to be married. In the lightness of the evening, Nick said yes.

Finally, on the fourth day, they were put on a school bus back to the airport to finish their flight to Houston. Overcome with emotion, Diane began to cry. Nick leaned over to give her a little kiss on the forehead.

To Nick's surprise, the kiss was diverted by Diane to her lips and their first "real" kiss was part of the rest of the story. Nick finished his job in Houston and returned to his home and job in England. Over the next few months, Nick "fabricated" jobs that he had to go back to Houston to supervise.

The next few months saw more than 600 emails and thousands of dollars in international phone calls. The "big" call finally came when Nick proposed to Diane on the phone. By December, Diane moved out of her apartment and bought a house. Nick was transferred to his company's office in Houston.

It took months to resolve a variety of issues for residents from two different countries. Finally on September 9, 2002, Nick and Diane were married. Of course, their honeymoon was in Newfoundland for the first anniversary of 9/11. They still have many friends in Newfoundland and are in regular contact with them.

In 2009, Tom Brokaw of NBC News did a documentary about them. They are also part of a play, "Operation Yellow Ribbon." In this hour-long interview, there were many smiles and laughs. As it ended, however, Diane was overcome with emotion all these years later, remembering those who perished that day. There is much more information online about them than what is offered in this very short article.

—Jim Quinn



Nick and Diane.



