

## Welcome to the 2017 Nats!



Larry Botsford and his wife hold his Fiat CR.32 for static judging. Entered in Designer Scale, the model was scratch-built and had a wingspan of 98 inches. Photo from the 2016 Nats.

**To start this off,** I have to go back to last year and think about all of the great times we had at the AMA Scale RC Nationals. It's a long list—some of which I'll try to include here. There were a lot of changes between 2015 and 2016. Most noticeably was the site where everyone flew.

My wife and I went up to Muncie early for the 2016 Nats and camped all week on-site. Our site was at the main campground with hookups for the camper. The washroom with restrooms were there as well.

It's my understanding that AMA has recently installed water connections at site 4 for all of the hookup sites there. I'll be glad when they get sewer connections as well! I wanted to get there early and get some practice in. At site 4, the campsites are within walking distance to the flightline. Cool!

But let's talk about the field, which has been developed by AMA during the past two years or so and is now one of the premier grass fields in the US. The field has been leveled, sown with grass, fertilized, and a watering system was installed for those weeks in the late summer when things dry out. The field is large enough to accommodate any—and I do mean any—size model with regard to wingspan, weight, or speed. Jets are not a problem; small wheels work well on this field.

Before the 2016 Nationals, the grounds crew mowed the entire site, vacuumed the runway, and mowed it again down to 1/4 inch. It was truly fun both taking off and landing on the grass—not having to worry about obstacles or running off the runway or flipping over off the asphalt.

National Association of Scale Aeromodelers President Mike Barbee donated a machine to roll the grass as well. The large piece of equipment will be an asset to field preparation and maintenance.

I brought my Sig T-Clips model this year, which has a 70-inch wingspan—small by today's standards. It is electric powered and has wheel pants. I was wondering if I would be able to fly it off the grass at site 4. *It was not a problem!* The model actually took off and landed better on the grass than it did on site 3 with asphalt.

Event Director John Boyko and all of the other volunteers who worked at the Nationals, are to be commended on the jobs that they did last year. The folks who worked in scoring, registration, judging, safety, and all the other tasks made sure that everything was taken care of.

Friday is the day that many have their models static judged and get in some practice, set up their pit area, and touch base with friends—many they haven't seen since this same time last year. Scale competition isn't what I would call “dog eat dog” competition. It's more of a friendly competition where your closest competitor may loan or give you a part or propeller so you can fly the next round.



Terry Nitsch's MiG-15 entered in Fun Scale Open is seen here on takeoff.



Last year, this Curtis Jenny was entered in Fun Scale.



Builder Mike Barbee and pilot Frank Noll finished in first place in Team Scale and were named the Scale RC Champions for the 2016 Nats.



Built from a Top Flite kit, Mike Wartman's Hun Hunter XVI makes another flight.



It's a fellowship of modelers who enjoy warbirds, racing airplanes, or who just like to see a yellow J-3 Cub put through its paces. We all learn from each other. Questions such as how you did this or that, what brand of paint you used, or where you found your lighting system, are often asked.

I've heard some modelers say, "I've never flown in competition before, how would I get started?" Well, it's pretty simple. If you have an ARF, you can fly in Fun Scale Novice for beginners. There are only 10 maneuvers that you have to fly with a J-3 Cub, for example:

1. Takeoff
2. Flyby
3. Figure Eight
4. Landing
5. Realism.

These are required and you do four of them every time you fly. Then add the five optional maneuvers for an airplane that can include a stall turn, chandelle, straight flight out, procedure turn, and straight flight back. That's it—you've just made your first scale flight routine for competition.

Everyone will likely help you—even the judges and competitors—and you can pick someone to call for you there at the field. The caller is essential to keep you and everyone else safe and keep your flight maneuvers in order. When you get to the

flightline, just concentrate on your model and what you are doing and you'll be fine.

The Saturday night banquet held at a local downtown restaurant went off well last year, and everyone had a good time after figuring out all of the road closures in that area. We even had one couple celebrate their wedding anniversary: Dale and Mary Arvin. At the dinner Saturday night, special awards were given out, including Best Static Score and many others.

Sunday is a day for the final two rounds of flight competition and things seem to come to a close way too quickly. When you are photographing the event and flying as well, you see a lot of it and at the same time miss some things you wish you hadn't. But it's a great time, and we usually don't leave until Monday or stay a day or so later.

In some ways, I miss the traveling Nationals where we descended upon different states every year across the country. The EAA had the right idea, I think, with Oshkosh (Wisconsin), to have a site and develop it for the members, which is what AMA continues to do in Muncie.

Oh yes by the way, while you are in Muncie, be sure to check out the AMA's National Model Aviation Museum, the library, and take a day visit to Dayton, Ohio, to see the National Museum of the U.S. Air Force. You will have a great time there, and the area near it is great!

I look forward to seeing you at the 2017 Nats. Remember to *have fun!* 🛩️



A Gee Bee Model Y Senior Sportster entered in Fun Scale makes a takeoff.



Greg Hahn built and flew the largest model aircraft (17-foot wingspan) in the competition with a World War I Gotha G.IV twin-engine bomber.



Mark Radcliff, AMA District III Vice President, flew this Cessna 150 aerobat in Fun Scale Open.



This ARF has been refinished in American markings and entered in the Nats. It's a great-looking model!



Art Sheldon's 1/3-scale scratch-built Nieuport II makes a flyby.



Mary Arvin, Carol Peck, and Al Kretz enjoying the shade and some fellowship at the 2016 Nats.



This large P-38 built by Mike Fearing makes a successful belly landing in the soft grass.



This ARF Tiger Moth entered in Fun Scale Novice is about as simple as it gets! Just have fun!



Part of the crowd at last year's Saturday night banquet held in downtown Muncie.



Cindy and Mike Wartman prepare Mike's Top Flite P-47 for another flight.





The 82-inch electric-powered twin D.H. Sea Hornet is caught in the middle of a roll. Keith Numbers entered it in Expert class.



This radial-powered Waco Cabin by Adam Grubb sounds great in a flyby.



Mike Barbee with his first place Expert class-winning T-34.



Carl Handley's P-47 Hot Body built from a Top Flite ARF was recovered and new markings and additional details were added.

## THE 2017 NATS IS SPONSORED BY



Hal Parenti (R) receives first place in Designer Sport Scale with his Ryan Fireball. Nats 2016 photo.

