

One of our youngest competitors, Joe Graber, with his Balsa USA Sopwith Camel. It was his first scale model build. Photo 2017 Nats.



RC SCALE

Summertime in Indiana, cornfields, sunshine, and in Muncie, modelers from across the country descend for the beginning of the AMA Outdoor National Championships, known as the Nats.

We always look forward to attending the Nats and wish we could stay for the whole thing, which is close to a month in length. RC Scale has started off the Outdoor Nats in the last few years, giving a preview of the competition from scale modelers from across the nation.

We usually try to arrive early and stay back at the campground on Site 4, where RC Scale is flown on a 1,000-foot grass runway. The AMA grounds crew takes great care of the field before the start of flying competition. The grass will be cut to approximately 1/4 inch and vacuumed before the first flight on Saturday.

Modelers enjoy the camaraderie there with other pilots who enjoy building and flying scale models. In the evenings at the campground, the grills will be cooking brats, burgers, and steaks. Some will be working on their models, while others will be just hanging out. Around this time, I'm usually going through several hundred photos for the next edition of *NatsNews*.

On Friday evening, there is usually a pizza party at the main tent at the site for competitors and officials. On Saturday evening this year, the National Association of Scale Modelers (NASA) banquet will be held at the Horizon Convention Center in downtown Muncie. Special awards will be given for the Best Of awards, as well as High Static in different classes. In past years, we've seen birthdays and wedding anniversaries celebrated during this time as well.

You might see anything from a World War I scout aircraft to the latest in jet technology, and everything in between. J-3 Cubs are always a standard at any Scale competition. They can be any size from a 1/8 scale to 1/3 scale masterpieces.

New competitors who are attending for the first time might be trying to figure out what type of flight routine to fly with their models. Judges expect certain types of maneuvers to be performed by different models. Below is a guide written by Cliff Tacie, who ran the Scale RC Nats for several years. It still applies if you are looking for some insight.

Light Aircraft Types ... Cubs, Aeronicas, Taylorcrafts, etc.

- | | |
|---|----------|
| 1. Takeoff (mandatory) | Upwind |
| 2. Fly Past (mandatory) | Upwind |
| 3. Figure Eight (mandatory) | Upwind |
| 4. Straight Flight Out (optional) | Upwind |
| 5. Procedure Turn (optional) | Downwind |
| 6. Straight Flight Back (optional) | Upwind |
| 7. Descending 360° circle | Upwind |
| 8. Traffic Pattern Approach to Landing (optional) | Upwind |
| 9. Landing (mandatory) | Upwind |
| 10. Realism in Flight (mandatory; judged throughout the flight) | |

Aerobatic Light Aircraft Types ... Citabrias, clipped-wing Cubs, etc.

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|---|----------|
| 1. Takeoff (mandatory) | Upwind |
| 2. Fly Past (mandatory) | Upwind |
| 3. Figure Eight (mandatory) | Upwind |
| 4. One Axial Roll (optional) | Downwind |
| 5. One Inside Loop (optional) | Upwind |
| 6. Four-Point Roll (optional) | Downwind |
| 7. Stall Turn (optional) | Upwind |
| 8. Three-Turn Spin (optional) | Upwind |
| 9. Landing (mandatory) | Upwind |
| 10. Realism in Flight (mandatory; judged throughout the flight) | |



Larry Botsford's Me 109E has a distinctive silhouette from the bottom. 2017 Nats.



Jack Buckley's 1/3-scale D.H. Tiger Moth. Almost every part on the model was designed and built by Jack. 2017 Nats.



AMA District VIII Vice President Lawrence Harville starting his Zirol Skyraider at the flightline. 2017 Nats.

Military Fighter Types ... P-51, P-47, etc.)

- | | |
|---|----------|
| 1. Takeoff (mandatory) | Upwind |
| 2. Fly Past (mandatory) | Upwind |
| 3. Figure Eight (mandatory) | Upwind |
| 4. One Inside Loop (optional) | Upwind |
| 5. One Axial Roll (optional) | Downwind |
| 6. Split S (optional) | Upwind |
| 7. Descending 360° circle (optional) | Upwind |
| 8. Retract and Extend Flaps (optional) | Upwind |
| 9. Landing (required) | Upwind |
| 10. Realism in Flight (mandatory; judged throughout the flight) | |

Military Bomber or Transport Types

- | | |
|---|-----------------|
| 1. Takeoff (mandatory) | Upwind |
| 2. Fly Past (mandatory) | Upwind |
| 3. Figure Eight (mandatory) | Upwind |
| 4. Procedure Turn (optional) | Upwind |
| 5. Bomb or Cargo Drop (optional) | Upwind |
| 6. Dirty Flyby (optional; gear and flaps down) | Upwind |
| 7. Chandelle | Upwind |
| 8. Traffic Pattern Approach to Landing (optional) | Downwind/Upwind |
| 9. Landing (mandatory) | Upwind |
| 10. Realism in Flight (mandatory; judged throughout the flight) | |

**With changing rules, we've made very few changes to the list. If you are flying in Fun Scale, you are allowed one mechanical option.*

If you are flying in Sportsman, Expert Sport Scale, Designer, or Open Scale you are allowed two mechanical options, plus multiengine option, if available.

I'm looking forward to seeing everyone. It's sort of like a large family reunion every year. It takes all of the officials, judges, the event director, AMA staff, and a host of volunteers to make the contest work, but it's a time we look forward to each year! See you there! 🛩️

—Fair skies and tail winds,
Stan Alexander



Another young man who took Fun Scale Novice with his Top Flite Spitfire was Brady Ornat and his dad, Glen. 2017 Nats.



Last year, NASA celebrated its 40th anniversary at the Saturday night banquet. 2017 Nats.

Mike Barbee and Frank Noll's aircraft took first place in Team Scale, as well as being named the 2017 Scale RC National Champion. 2017 Nats.



This hard-working group of judges worked all weekend and they had the "best seat in the house."



Just a few of the aircraft waiting for their next flight on Saturday morning.

Steve Eagle's pit area, with everyone watching the flightline action. Steve is second from the right.



Larry Botsford's Fiat CR.32 model was scratch-built from his own plans and finished in a Spanish Civil War color scheme.



Charles Gray's Corben Ace, one of the smallest planes at the 2017 Nats, flew great.



Mike Fearing's Zivko P-38 had a 115-inch wingspan and was powered by two DL-50 engines.



The Stinson SR-10 entered in Team Scale by Jeff Pike and Steve Eagle, finished in Jimmy Doolittle's color scheme.



All of the sponsors are much appreciated!



Greg Hahn's scaled-up Skyraider on a bombing run.



A 1/3-scale Nieuport II by Art Shelton was in Expert class.



A smiling Brady Ornat with the first-place trophy for Fun Scale Novice, as well as the NASA Bob Lirette Flight Achievement Award. The 2017 Nats his was his first year at the Nationals!



Mike Barbee's Stearman Fun Scale entry was powered by an Evolution gas radial engine.

Event Director John Boyko presents Brady Ornat with the first-place trophy in Fun Scale Novice.
Photo 2017 Nats.

