



Our champions by their trophies  
(L-R): Ben Mills, David Fitzgerald,  
and Samuel Londke.

# CL AEROBATICS

**O**n Saturday, we finally crowned our National Champion for 2018. After a week of qualifying, we finally had whittled the field down to the top five. The crème de le crème. The cream of the cream of the crop.

We also crowned our Junior and Senior champions. This year we had two Seniors (ages 14-18) and two Juniors (13 and under) competing for the championship in their respective age groups.

Howard Rush started things off for the Open contestants. The wind was almost nonexistent at first. Later, it picked up to very light. It was almost a perfect day for Stunt except for the times when what little wind there was went directly into the sun. It was a day, for sure, that the pilots could showcase their skills.

On the other circle, the Junior and Senior divisions were duking it out. There was some great family teamwork going on. These teams included James (the father) and Ben Mills (son); the Daly family had a father and two brothers competing; and let's not forget

about Samuel Londke and his father, Mike. It was great to see all of the families pulling together for an event such as this. I mean let's face it—these kids are our future. If we do not get our kids involved, we may not have a future.

During the competition, Samuel had an unfortunate accident with his plane. He tripped over his own two feet and the plane went in hard on an early flight. However, he and his father pulled out a backup plane and Samuel was able to pull out a win.

Ben Mills and Joseph Daly went head to head, with Ben coming out ahead.

In the Open category, it was a lot of back and forth as each round was completed. In the end, David Fitzgerald poured on the coal to pull out ahead of the rest. It still was not over until the very last score, however, when it came to final placement. Derek Barry pulled out a very good flight to just edge Paul Walker for second place by one point. You just never know until the very end.

After the individual champions were determined, the Walker Cup flyoff began.

This is a tradition among the Control Line Aerobatics people. This flyoff is between the newly crowned Open, Senior, and Junior champions. These days, it is mostly a formality, since the Open flier is usually just so much better than the Senior or Junior fliers.

However, David Fitzgerald took advantage of the situation and invited the younger fliers to come out to the center of the circle with him and talked them through his thinking process. This is valuable information that they can use in the future and there is no better way to instruct an up and comer than to actually sit with a professional such as Dave, and learn just what he is thinking while he is doing it.

So, another Nats is now in the books. It was full of drama, excitement, heat, humidity, and most importantly, friendship. And although we gather every year to crown a new champion, we also gather for perhaps something even better, friendship.

Till next year my friends. I can't wait. 🚀

—Matt Neumann



Ben Mills receives his first-place award in the Senior division from Darrel Harvin.



Derek Barry putting his plane through its paces.



Brother helping brother. Stephen Daly is helping his brother, Joseph.



Samuel Londke proudly receives his first-place Junior award from Darrel Harvin.



Chris Cox launches Howard Rush's plane.



David Fitzgerald getting his plane ready for its final top five flight of the day.



During the Walker Cup flyoff, David Fitzgerald gives tips to one of the Senior fliers in an attempt to help him in the future.



Howard Rush patiently waits for the judges to get ready for the first flight of the day.



Our top five: (back; L-R) Paul Walker, 3rd; Howard Rush, 4th; Chris Cox, 5th; (kneeling L-R) Derek Barry, 2nd, and David Fitzgerald 1st.



David Fitzgerald receives his first-place Open trophy from Darrel Harvin.



In a show of camaraderie, James Mills helps out his competition.



See more Nats event photos on AMA's Flickr page: [www.flickr.com/modelaircraft](http://www.flickr.com/modelaircraft)

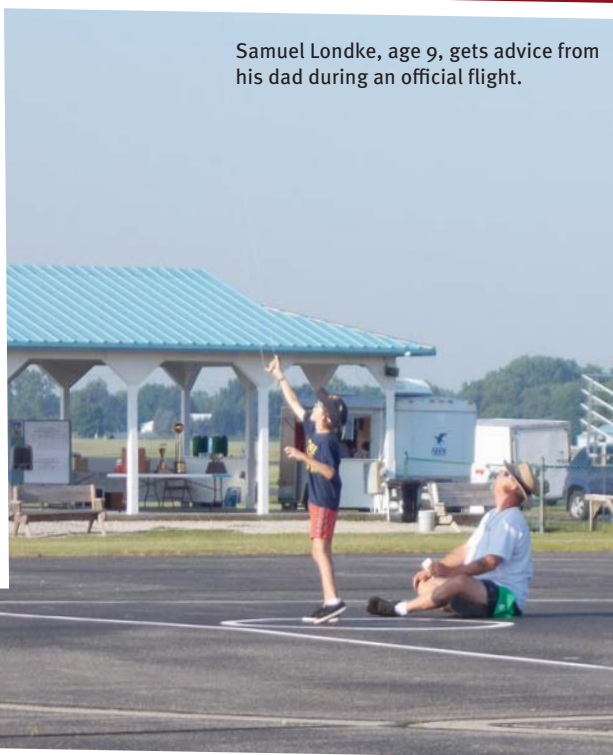
James Mills pits for his son, Ben.



Pit area for the top five. Chris Cox's Hellcat awaits it turn on the circle.



Samuel Londke, age 9, gets advice from his dad during an official flight.





# RC PATTERN

**W**elcome back!

We are back at AMA's International Aeromodeling Center (IAC) for the 2018 RC Aerobatics National Competition.

In 2017, under the guidance of Contest Director Albert Glenn, Mike Harrison coordinated a superbly executed RC Aerobatics National Competition in his home state of Arkansas. Congratulations to them and all who flew in the 2017 Nats.

Longtime Nats participants, George and Sue Asteris, are back this year after an all-too-long absence. George, a strong enthusiast for glow power, is actually flying an electric-powered airplane.

It's not his own airplane, however. George is flying a borrowed airplane after his own airplane and a turkey buzzard had a midair. The report was that George's airplane crashed, but the buzzard flew away.



The last time John Decker was at the AMA's IAC was so long ago that the museum was on the site, but the headquarters building was not yet built.

John had five practice flights early in the morning so he could sit back and relax in the afternoon. John, an avid golfer, said he learns a lot by watching the best golfers. So, John is looking forward to spending time watching our very best fly their very best.



Marcos Malloy is from Brazil. Marcos was last at our IAC in 2011. Yes, he was competing in our world championship. Marcos has represented Brazil in nine world championships. As with all Nats competitors, Marcos' plane needed to be weighed and measured.

Glow airplanes are weighed without fuel. Electric airplanes need to be weighed with batteries. Each flight pack is weighed and a sticker is attached.



**On Sunday**, sound checks were offered on Site 1 as a courtesy. Sound checks will be mandatory at the finals. No pilot can win a trophy at our Nats with a plane that does not meet all of the criteria AMA establishes for safe flight.



We are welcoming back many, many pilot friends who have flown at AMA's IAC. This year, the Team Selection aspect of our annual contest shows so many highly talented pilots. The judges will have their hands full to select only three from such a good representation of this year's aerobatics pilots. The judges will also have a new task to select a new "Junior" pilot to send to the world championship.

Competitors don't just decide one afternoon that they will compete in AMA's Nats. Months, and even years, go into the preparation for this competition. Even-numbered years are even more special because on even years, we also select the next US team to compete in the world championship the following year.

Danny Landis, a regular Nats competitor, arrived for Sunday morning practice at 6:30. It was raining out. By 8:30, things were drying up, so it was time for Danny to get in some early morning practice.



Some of our pilots got some international practice by flying in the French Nationals earlier this spring. Yes, they did a lot of sightseeing, but flying was their primary goal. Mark Hunt finished eighth among a most impressive field of French pilots. Mark had a great time meeting new pilots and making new friends.



Some pilots will do almost anything to get to the Nats. John Fuqua drove into the museum parking lot in a Mini Cooper and started to "shoehorn" his 2-meter Element from the passenger side of the car. There was even space for the wings, transmitter, and batteries!



Event Director Albert Glenn spent a long day checking in all of the Masters and FAI airplanes. As that work was ending, Albert was right back at it, running the pilots' meeting.



John Carter does an enormous amount of work for the NSRCA as judging chairperson. John went over some subtle points of judging. What was most impressive was that John gave a great vote of appreciation for all Nats judges, as well as all judges at local contests.



Joe Walker is the president of the NSRCA. The evening ended with an open meeting of the NSRCA for all the members. Several significant points of business were discussed. They ranged from establishing one common directory of maneuvers, especially to normalize the K-factors for all maneuvers. Changing the deductions for maneuvers and expanding electronic advertising in the K-Factor ended a great meeting. Nice job, Joe!





Finally, there are also some “regular” Nats competitors who did not return this year. Most notably are the legendary Chip Hyde and the current Junior World Champion, Joseph Szczur. Joseph will be flying in the 2019 World Championship, however, as a returning World Champion. As a returning champion, Joseph does not have to qualify for the following world championship.

Sadly, one other “regular” Nats competitor, Ron VanPutte, will not be returning either. Ron passed away since the last Nats. We will all miss Ron, especially his longtime flying partner, John Fuqua. Albert Glenn has dedicated this year’s competition to Ron. 🇺🇸

—Jim Quinn



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