

# Soaring Dan Pruss

WIND, rain, and cold! That's the way Walt Good described the weather for the soaring event at the A.M.A. Nationals. As a matter of fact the week should have been renamed Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Wind, Rain, and Cold. Held at the Springfield municipal airport, an excellent site, the events included two-minute precision, ten-minute duration, and, as an unofficial event, Scale.

On Thursday the 20- to 30-mph wind met the 79 entrants head on. And, if the wind wasn't enough of a challenge, the visibility—or lack of it—was. Using tow lines of 300 meters many modelers and timers had a difficult time of determining just when lines were released from their models.

The pattern for the tasks was similar to those used at the A.M.A. soaring event last year and for the 1975 and 1976 Soaring Nationals. Nine rounds were scheduled to be flown in three days. During the first minute of a flight the contestant had to determine whether to go for a two-minute precision or a ten-minute duration flight. At the end of round eight, four flights in each task were to have been flown. The ninth round was to be used as a "wild" round with which a flier could better either of his two- or ten-minute efforts. Whichever task hopefully was to be improved, the respective lowest score was to be scratched before the ninth flight and, whatever the outcome of that ninth flight, those points had to be accepted.

That first day saw many two-minute tasks flown, as the strong winds were too much for the lighter wing-loaded ships to ride out for a ten-minute max and then

hope to get back for bonus landing points.

On rainy day two, contest director Bob Miller and his crew pitched tents, strung out the winches, dodged a few dozen puddles and said let's fly. The 79 did. And for three complete rounds. Truly, it was a day to be concerned about glue joints, arthritic

## Results

### Class I

Pl.	Contestant & State	Model	Pts.
1	K. Bates, MI	Olympic II	4221
2	D. Leach, OH	Olympic II	4013
3	S. Richmond, FL	*Florida Flyer	3668
4	D. Beltz, PA	Pokey	3580
5	J. Martz, OH	*Thermalaire	3518

### Class II

1	D. Edberg, CA	Aquila	4408
2	J. Wolf, OH	Aquila	3832
3	M. Fox, CA	Aquila	3695
4	D. Renskers, IN	Aquila	3630
5	D. Harris, OH	Olympic II	3497

### Class III

1	T. Williams, TX	*F.A.I. I	4725
2	D. Clark, CN	Kurwi (Mod)	3988
3	R. Robinson, MI	Grand Esprit	3973
4	R. Curry, PA	Grand Esprit	3794
5	L. D'Attillio, WI	Maestro	3674

### Jr.-Sr. Class I

1	J. Martz, OH	*Original	2719
2	T. Wolf, OH	Questor	2318
3	A. Epps, IL	Olympic	2174

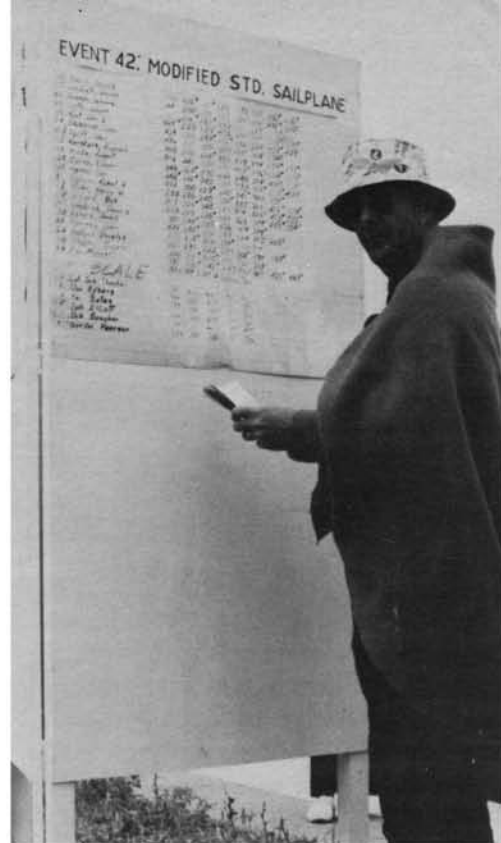
### Jr.-Sr. Class II

No Entries

### Jr.-Sr. Class III

1	J. Mrluk, MI	Astro-Jeff F.A.I.	4636
2	S. Bress, MD	Hi Fly	985

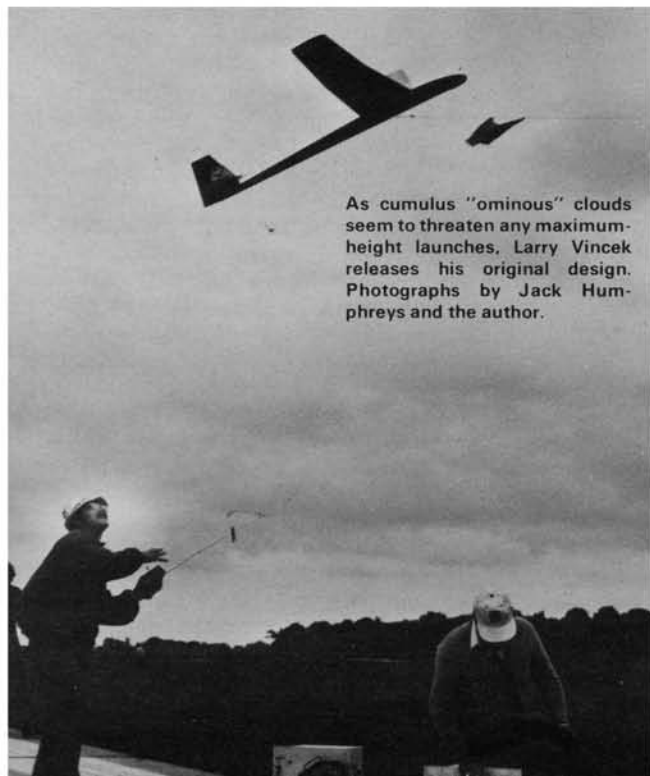
\*Original design.



Ron Stanfield tries to stay warm yet look cool as he updates 3-sided scoreboard which accommodated three classes of competition and Scale as well. Was a quick and handy reference.

## Scale

Pt.	Contestant	Stat. Pts.	Ft. Pts.	Model	Tot. Pts.
1	R. Thacker	381	480	Baby Bowlus	861
2	D. Edberg	309	450	Duster	759
3	G. Pearson	406	340	Vector	746
4	K. Bates	273	460	ASW-15	733
5	R. Elliott	266	460	Glasflugel 604	726
6	R. Boucher	86	340	ASW-17	407



As cumulus "ominous" clouds seem to threaten any maximum-height launches, Larry Vincek releases his original design. Photographs by Jack Humphreys and the author.



Unusual "Florida Flyer" an original design by Stu Richmond used undercambered airfoil with reflexed top section aft of the main spar. He finished third in Class I.



**Shades of 1937!** Three of five who competed in RC that year compete again in '76. L to R: Leo Weiss, Chet Lanzo, Walt Good. Chet holds '39 design which shook up power boys and rules committee. Wheels were used—back then, too—so Chet could hand-tow/ROG alone.

**Right: "Texas" Tom Williams—Class III winner—shows he's a sport about it all as he launches Walt Good's Kurwi. It was a cold day!**



**Umbrellas and rain gear was the basic covering material on wet Friday. Two-minute precision and 10-minute duration wasn't a challenge—finding high ground was. Results showed it.**

joints, wing coverings, and spoiler openings. Fuselages filled with water, hot dogs got soggy and Gordon Pearson's pet parrot darn near drowned.

Those that took three two-minute flights on the first day were faced with the problem of maxing out at least twice on Friday. In spite of such uncontest type weather a few did get very respectable duration flights.

Saturday was cold with temperatures in the 50's, and more wind, sort of a warmup for Detroit's Sno-Fli. The clothes and blankets modelers wore that day would never make the pages of a summer issue fashion magazine. Pat Flinn's wife wore a parka and mittens. How did she know? Bob Boucher, from California and Astro Flight ran around in Bermuda shorts because, "Dayton in August is always 95 degrees and humid—I've been here before."

This was the day Scale flew. There were six entries and, by a unanimous decision of those six fliers, two rounds were flown back to back. When the scores were tallied Col. Bob Thacker topped the pack with 861 points. This win was a repeat of his feat in Lockport, Ill. two weeks earlier with the same plane—a Bowlus. The next four places spread over only 33 points!

With Scale not being an official event at

the Nationals it took outside support to help make it successful. Airtronics and Lee Renaud provided the trophies and Gordon Pearson volunteered his services as event director.

As the contest closed the wind subsided as if it was a part of the contest package. The 79 contestants were divided into three categories; Class I (standard class) 29; Class II (modified standard class) 20; Class III (unlimited) 30. Class III included the allowance of thermal sniffers.

Maximum points attainable in a two-minute task were 700, while the ten-minute task (Task II A.M.A. rule book) with 100 landing points had a potential of 800 points. Maximum possible score was 6000 points and nothing more need be said about the weather when we compare the winning scores against the 6000 point potential. Awards were to fifth place for best overall in each class, to third in Junior-Senior categories for classes I, II, and III.

Bob Miller and his club the D.A.R.T.S. (Dayton Area Radio Thermal Soarers) are to be commended, not only for taking on the job but for pulling it off during three days of the most inclement weather any of the fliers ever experienced.

By the way, on Sunday it was sunny and in the 70's.



**Don Goughnour launches Class III "Rattler." Now we know how he gets those maxes—where's the timer? Yeah, it was windy, too.**



**Dick Beltz helps to steady Gene Shelkey's Pokey as 20- to 30-mph winds challenged contestants during Thursday's flying. Dick, who designed the plane, flew a Class I version.**