



Radio Control Sailplane TEAM SUPPORTER

U.S.A.

The Greater Detroit Soaring and Hiking Society Snow Fly

BACK IN FEBRUARY 1971 the G.D.S.&H.S., a stalwart group of die-hards, announced a sailplane contest. In Michigan? In February? No other name would be more appropriate than "Snow Fly."



At Detroit Snow Fly (all pix) is Bud Pell, Unlimited Class winner, and Super Cirrus. Below: Bob Hicks, Standard Class Winner and original.



That first contest had a modest entry of ten fliers. February, no doubt, had some effect on such a low attendance and the zero temperature kept all of the fair weather fliers close to the fire.

The records show that the contest was a mild success. Fliers worked when radios didn't and vice versa. Contestants came from as far away as Chicago, which doesn't necessarily make a contest successful.

From that modest beginning, the gents from Detroit had a good thing going, because for the next five years interest and attendance grew. Fliers came from as far as Maryland and Pennsylvania and even some Texans couldn't stay away in 1975.

This year 61 contestants showed up, which proves that the building season isn't long enough, or that cabin fever during the midwest winters has reached epidemic proportions, or there are more nuts in this sport than Ed Slobod ever guessed.

The past five Snow Flies lived up to the contest name. This year, however, the title was a misnomer and Mud-Fly would have been more appropriate.

After an unseasonable warm week before the contest date, the foot of snow that would have periled driving, winching, flying and landing, melted. This left a field of mud which by itself wasn't all that bad.

Sunday, February 15th, dawned and 30 mph winds greeted the 61 contestants. Temperatures were in the high 30's, and with that, Contest Director Art Slagle announced the tasks. Six-minute duration (an optimistic C.D. if there ever was one) would be our goal. Landings were to be made within a circle with a 25-ft. radius—no points awarded for landing within the zone—but you lose 25 points for not making it. The contest would be of three rounds.

Transmitter impound would be on the honor system. Each contestant would be responsible for being sure his TX was turned off (and kept warm) after a flight. This system worked.

Open winches were the order of the day, and after the first few launches we all thought that the contest would be over by lunch time. The planes that didn't fold wings found the challenge to be the two minute mark, with only a few exceptions.

Above: For \$10 become U.S. Team Supporter and receive this bumper sticker (see text). Below: Keith Finkenbinder, NSS Rules Chairman.



The wind now was 20 mph with gusts up to 38 mph.

The winch lines were closer—much closer—to 150 meters in length than 300 meters and those who thought kiting was a means of overcoming these short launch facilities found themselves so far downwind and with no altitude advantage that by the time they released many didn't make it back to the "no point" landing zone (there's a lesson to be learned here concerning the FAI rules winch restrictions).

When the open winch announcement was made Slagle stipulated a time limit on each round. You flew when you wanted to, but if you didn't get your flight in by the time limit, you got zero for that round. The system worked and everyone beat the clock—if they had sailplanes left.

Two classes were recognized: the unrestricted standard class and the unlimited class. Best single flight was by an instigator of this now annual event—Bud Pell of the G.D.S.&H.S. His time—4:07 (that included his no-point landing). Those 247 seconds were tougher than any ten-minute flight in August.

The attrition rate was the highest ever seen by this reporter for any contest. At least two dozen ships fell victim to overwinching, high wind gusts, and a few trees.

When the dust, er ah, mud settled, the

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RC Soaring/Pruss

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standings looked like this:

Standard Class

Winning Score 602

- | | |
|-----------------|----------|
| 1. Bob Hicks | Original |
| 2. J.D. Cochran | Aquila |
| 3. Dave Leach | Aquila |

Unlimited

Winning Score 512

- | | |
|-----------------|--------------|
| 1. Bud Pell | Super Cirrus |
| 2. Dave Corven | Nimbus |
| 3. Bob Robinson | Grand Esprit |

JR — SR

- | | |
|------------------|--------|
| 1. Kevin Pearson | Aquila |
| 2. Jim Steele | Apollo |

Thirty-nine entered standard class; eighteen were in unlimited. There were four juniors in combined classes.

Certain contests around the country have become a tradition among the sailplane fraternity. This is due partly because of their longevity but, more important, for the interest and camaraderie that these contests have generated. The Snow Fly is among these contests.

So, next February recharge those batteries, get yourself a pair of mukluks, and head for Detroit. After all, any club that can produce an ECSS champion, three Soaring Nationals' champions, and two winning teams at the Nationals can't be all bad. Also, their offer of free entry fees to any Californians still stands. Any takers?

Nobody Ever Asked Me, But...

When using resins, dopes or any other materials that give off unfavorable odors, open a bottle of one of those room or air fresheners and place it as close to the work as possible. But, open the air freshener first...

When marking wire that is to be bent, use a small piece of masking tape. The tape can be removed after the desired bend is made... For bends that are 90° or for bends that are parallel, use a sheet of graph paper for a reference to ensure the proper

angle... If you use peg board for a wall in your shop or backing for your work bench, those peg board holes serve as a quick reference when you want to just temporarily "eyeball" wing and tail or vertical fin and horizontal stab alignments... Canopies polish beautifully using plain toothpaste and a soft flannel cloth... A hand-held paper punch die cuts 1/16" balsa neatly. Works great on wing ribs where hole size isn't too critical, e.g., tubing holes for push-rods and thermal sniffer antennas... Reinforce these same holes with Zap or Hot Stuff...

A couple of cheap metal yardsticks are a must for one's shop for several reasons: 1. Sheeting—no matter how selective a manufacturer of kits is—tends to warp as it is exposed and when it comes time to build, the sheeting usually isn't straight. Whether it appears to be straight or not, dress down the two long edges of the sheet. This is especially necessary when gluing sheets together to make a wider sheeting such as that used for wing planking... When building up wider sheeting after the long edges have all been trimmed, lay down a sheet of household plastic wrap on a smooth flat surface. Then, placing two of the balsa sheets side by side, "weld" one end about an inch long by squeezing the two sheets together and applying Zap or Hot Stuff. Do this to the other end and the middle. Then glue the entire seam of the two sheets. Repeat this procedure to produce the desired sheeting width in about the time it takes to read this... Those metal yardsticks can also be used to serve as a guide against which leading edge material is placed when building a wing... The cheaper yardsticks, because they are sheared when produced, may have a burred edge. If so, these edges can be dressed down with a file. However, the Exact Level & Tool Mfg. Company, Inc., High Bridge, New Jersey, makes a 48" rule that can be found in some hobby shops or art supply stores. Price is about five dollars. This rule has polished edges and is ideal for precision cutting and stripping of balsa and Monokote.

F.A.I. Program

Jim Simpson, FAI program manager, indicates that interest is strong all across the country. If you're just thinking about competing, think harder! The competition will be fun; your entry fee will help support the program and, who knows, you could be a part of the U.S. team to South Africa in 1977.

As for further financial support to the team, John Nielsen, financial chairman for the FAI program, has his fund raising well under way.

For ten dollars you can be a U.S. team supporter. For the ten dollars, you get a sticker that you can display with pride. It's not unlike the U.S. Olympics fund raising program. And then again it is; because, besides the "Team Supporter" banner, you get a dozen chances on \$3,400 worth of radios, models, etc. as listed in this column in last month's *Model Aviation*.

Ten bucks? Yep. Let's all kick in. A lot of people already have. Just send ten dollars or a check payable to the FAI U.S.A. Soaring Team Fund to: John Nielsen, 3744 Lake Ave., Wilmette, IL 60091.

You've probably spent a lot more—on causes not as worthy.

Correction. Last month's caption accompanying the Scale Caproni photo incorrectly credited the builder who actually is Chris Adams. Chris also was the photog.

(My address is Rt. 2, Box 490, Plainfield, IL 60544.)

WANTED: ideas, happenings, hints/kinks, how-to sketches, photos, news, etc. Send to columnist of category concerned—at address shown in column. For each photo or idea printed, Model Aviation will pay \$5 to the contributor.

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