

 The **SKYWRITER** 
Merced County Radio Control On-line Club Newsletter Merced,
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MERCED COUNTY RADIO CONTROL CLUB OFFICERS 2011-2012	
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ALL MEMBERS ,... SAFETY OFFICERS	CLARENCE CRAIN ,..... SENIOR FLIGHT SPECTATOR

*******SCHEDULED EVENTS, AUGUST*******

CLUB MEETINGS, IHOP, MERCED, 7:00 PM August 3th! Raffle! A CLUB CARD DRAWING FOR **\$30!!**
CLUB FIELD FLIGHTS, WEEKDAYS, AT THE MCRC FLYING FIELD, 7761 BERT CRANE ROAD, ATWATER. Turn left into the dirt road at the green Frisbee nailed on the post!! Drive slow, reduce dust! PILOT INSTRUCTIONS AVAILABLE :MON., WED, FRI. (BETTER CALL FIRST!) **HELICOPTERS!!**, SUNDAYS, AT YOUR CLUB FIELD!

YOU GET WHAT YOU PAY FOR

It might not be exactly a new concept, but recent unfortunate experiences have again demonstrated that the price, reputation, experience and reliability of a certain product might just have something to do with the expected proper operation of the device. It sounds perfectly normal that a pilot might buy a low-priced device and expect it to perform as well as a more expensive device. When you make such a decision, you are betting that an unknown manufacturer without any history of reliability will make a very cheap device as good as the device made by a reputable maker! This is known as the “Snake Oil” variety of a sales pitch. We all know of advertisements which lie. We *expect* such lies. A recent radio ad claims that adding some gunk to your car’s gas will increase mileage by twenty percent! If we add spark plugs which add ten percent to mileage, increase tire pressure to add another five percent mileage, we will need to remove overflowing fuel from the tank! We know ads about everything can lie, why don’t we believe that Chinese model makers can lie too?? People love to believe that any well-known maker is ripping them off by charging a fair market price for their products.

For instance: Futaba has been making radio control gear for a long time. They employ skilled electronic designers. They use the best machines available for assembly. They have a reputation to protect by the maintenance of very high quality products. The prices set for the devices they produce are fair compared to the rest of the field. When an anonymous maker decides to offer a copy of the true device, that well-hidden maker has no reputation to uphold, no investment in design, research and quality. When one decides to buy and use such “imitation” devices, that decision might just him cost an expensive series of airplane crashes! In two recent occasions, Member Wayne Frazier watched his plane perform “autonomous maneuvers” wherein the radio decided to do a low-altitude loop while in the landing glide. Needless to say, this was an extremely bad idea and smeared a plane. The radio was installed into a second innocent plane --and guess what? It smashed the second plane too! The inputs to the radio were not sent by Wayne and it is almost impossible to interfere with 2.4Hhz radio gear, therefore the radio receiver module was found to be at the cause of two crashes! A particular device which has proved to be a great plane smasher is the \$69 2.7Ghz module and receiver from “Dymond”. It and some others have proved to be undependable and incapable of reliability. Recently a series of very low quality imitation Futaba servos managed to show up on the market, much to the dismay of bargain hunters. Only a slight difference in the print font served to disclose the bad servos. There are many bad reports on certain Chinese radio control components. For a person who insists on reliable tires on his car, smoke alarms in his home and all manner of high quality aspects of his life to decide that some unknown Chinese

manufacturer will produce high quality, low price radio devices has too often proved to be a bad idea. In case that you need a testimony to prove this concept, just talk to Member Wayne Frasier. Additionally, our Web Guru, Eduardo Alvear has had trouble with a Chinese ARF. The battery of the thing should have been cycled and the condition caused the plane to bounce off his leg! Futaba and other major manufacturers have not come easily to their excellent reputations. They have all earned their respect and our appreciation of modelers by making good STUFF. The Chinese may not yet have earned an equivalent respect. To be fair, it might be mentioned that the HobbyKing "Orange" RX and many other Chinese offerings seem to be dependable, for some of them are flying around our field. We wish the low-priced Chinese manufacturers some good luck, but we should watch out carefully for the failures of their "fakes".....

******* WHO WAS THE PROP FLIPPER! ? *******

During the early years of airplanes, nobody knew what they should look like, how to make efficient propellers, what engines to use, etc.. There were some wild-looking planes. One plane, the "Taube" (German for Dove) had strange wings with rounded wing tips laid back to look like the seeds of a tree which had seeds which could glide. The wing was a thin sail-thing without strong spars and the entire wing was supported with many, many wires. It had a strange exterior wire-laden wing spar about a foot below the wing. They called that arrangement a "Bruke", or a bridge. As primitive as these planes were, one of them flew for seven hours and another climbed to 21,000 feet! There were so many wires that someone said that if you let a canary loose from the cockpit and it flew away, there must be some wires broken somewhere!

The pilots called the spider-web looking planes, “Sparrow strainers!” Anthony Fokker’s first plane had so many wires that it was called “Spin”, (German for spider). My son took a picture of it hanging in a dense cloud of supporting wires from the ceiling in a German museum. In one of my new books I recently found that there was one pioneer who powered a primitive early plane with a huge two-cycle engine! I will not rest until I find out just who it was that hand-flipped the prop of a such a big two-stroke engine to start the thing! I’ll bet that he was one BIG Hun with a long, thick right arm that dragged behind him on the ground!!

***** **RUBY!!!** *****

MCRC Club President Mike Daniels is a “Beta Tester” for the “Ruby” autopilot device. I had the pleasure of flying the twin-engined foamy plane which carried the thing. I must say that the thing is IMPRESSIVE! There are many modes of automatic operation and it has the ability to provide safe operation in holding altitude in an orbit of the field, to land automatically and to perform many, many desired operations. I was especially impressed by the little thing’s ability to remain at altitude in all degrees of aileron input to make it turn. In general, some control input is needed to keep altitude as the plane rolls with aileron deflection. No matter how I cranked it over, the thing automatically put in elevator control, it stayed exactly at altitude! The plane retains altitude automatically within a few feet! I don’t think that many pilots could retain altitude as closely as the Ruby does for the reason that an altitude loss must be seen by a pilot before he puts in a correction.

The Ruby will not allow any loss of altitude at all! I believe that the thing is simply magical, i.e., Voo-Doo!! It knows where it is, it knows where the runway is, it knows how fast it is flying and more! People on the ground can hear the motor power automatically changing as it turns upwind or downwind! The single visible input to the device is a transparent tube from the nose of the plane to the Ruby. It is possible to take complete command of the plane at any time, so all the automatic stuff is on hand - but on your demand! This is the same case as real planes which are flying in all directions high over our heads now on autopilot from one radio beacon to the next one. *(You didn't believe that they flew all day and night manually, did you?)* I believe that it will eventually be possible to install "way points" into the Ruby, meaning that it could fly from an initial take-off point to a "way point", turn to another "way point", turn to other designated points to a final destination, take up a holding pattern and eventually land automatically there! This "way point" capability would be very handy and much safer than flying directly from one point to another by flying over a flock of people and such. A "way point" designator would allow a route avoiding risky areas by flying *around* the hazardous area. I find it easy to believe that the FAA will show some interest in the Ruby! If you want one, see Mike. It will always be possible to update the Ruby's ability the device on your computer as the types of automatic flight are widened. Anything that makes it less likely that you bring your plane home in a garbage bag will certainly be appreciated by all of us! There are people who will resist the addition of a new device to their airplane. But—there are cameras, instrument TXs in the plane and more gadgets than can be imagined!! Why not??????????

LAST MEETING

When Treasurer Winter made the payment to the Clark Contractor, he attempted to politely hand the check to the generous company in person, he was told that it would be satisfactory to simply mail it in. The bill for the runway has been paid and we have a fine runway, taxi strips and “pit” area! Our field far surpasses any field that I know about. The presence of so many starting tables is impressive! The smoothness of the runway is impressive! The common skill, the reliable airplanes and the un-common courtesy of our pilots makes a trip to our field a pleasant event, as it should be. Our Members have learned to leave bad attitudes, personal troubles and grouchiness at home. Congratulations to all of us!! There is a detailed report of the Castle Event on page 157 of your AMA magazine. Some details not included there are: renting the field cost \$800 a day, plus Port-a-potties, etc.. Under the **Heading of Reports, Treasurer explained some things. Castle Field Manager Scott Malta bravely “put his butt on the line” and made a great personal risk to schedule the Event, an action which brings him our great appreciation and deep respect! Treasurer Winter has sent letters of appreciation to Scott and to Tom Moore, both of whom contributed greatly to the success of this Event. There may have been a considerable profit for the operators ---and they earned every penny! Treasurer announced under the Heading of **Old Business** that the Annual MCRC Club Picnic will take place at the Merced Lake on Saturday, the seventeenth of Sept.! There are no funds to support this expense, therefore it is being considered that all attendees may be required to provide their own meat, steaks, chicken, lamb, lobster, or porpoise, etc.. More info is pending...**

Under the Heading of **New Business** it was discussed that the Official name of the flying field shall remain as: the “Merced County Model Airplane Field”. Under the Heading of **Safety**, Club Web Guru Eduardo Alvear flew an electric plane without ample battery power. In resentment, the plane chased him down and crashed into his leg! A second takeoff resulted into an enthusiastic crash. The battery involved was not properly cycled and charged to capacity. Treasurer read from the “Con Trails” magazine concerning the peril of faulty high RPM ducted fans. These things may rotate at very high speed and therefore they are subject to heavy forces! Gory pictures in the magazine showed facial damage caused by fans which failed under the terrific structural stress of above fifty-thousand RPM! The impact power of such broken parts is stunning! Be aware that such failures are completely possible and although some of the light foam plastic ducted-fan ARFs seem toylike, they can certainly severely bite careless folks! Keep all body parts out of the line of rotation, particularly if you want to keep those parts for later use! Under the Heading of **Show and Tell**, MCRC Club President Mike Daniels spoke on the “Ruby”, a gadget which may become common in our planes. (See previous article....) Mike is an Official “Beta Tester” of the unit as it is taken into final sales status. The Club Card Drawing disclosed the name of Gabe Martin, who immediately donated the \$25 prize back to the Club! There were eleven great Raffle prizes and the night was called to a close. Next Meeting is at the Merced International House of Pancakes, seven PM, on the evening of the third of August. Please come and let us speak about planes!!!

7 PM, AUGUST 3, MERCED IHOP!!

The Official Newsletter of the Merced County Radio Control Club