

The Trailing Edge

Whether it be at Local, State or National level one thing I've noted is decisions have been more beneficial to growing the hobby/sport when the man at the top is an active flier. One or two on committee who have run a business serves the membership even better.

One club that is doing it right is BADMAC. Three hundred acres great facilities it has room to punt a 400 kph jet and stay within the boundaries. Over flying rights not required. In two decades how will overheads for flying fields like this be covered?

Promoting the Hobby

The average age of Model Aeronautical Association Australia Affiliate Membership is now sixty six. What shape the hobby will be in twenty years time is subject to much consternation by people wanting to make a difference. As a long time Affiliate Member of with fond memories of National Championships, with control line free flight and radio all in the one place long gone, I have no objection to MAAA funds supporting the non radio control

sections of the hobby. But there are limits.

Just like the overwhelming majority of Affiliate Members I have had little to no idea what is going on come the next MAAA conference either. It is refreshing to see MAAA Council Minutes are now available via its website. Show Cause notices issued to one Ordinary Member and three Affiliate Members makes for some interesting reading. Free Flight fraternity proposed a no confidence motion in the current MAAA Executive. Free Flight's motion of no confidence in the Executive was soundly defeated.

What a few free flight Old Fokkers could possibly offer radio control modellers escapes me. VMAA voted for the no confidence motion against the MAAA President too. Its reason for doing so is yet to be reported in the minutes. Victorian Clubs it represents have a right to know why. Tim Nolan is not standing again as President. Hopefully someone equally capable will put their hand up.



ANSW airshow, vision under Tim Nolan's leadership

BIG PICTURE EVENTS

Building an event so they will come is a hard gig in this country. Recently I got involved with behind the scenes issues about the Festival of Aeromodelling. Which was something of no direct concern to me. Issues with the event that did not pass the pub test were sorted out then MAAA threw them a bone just in time. It would be great to see that Queensland event continue to grow to be a major event on the calendar. Everyone I've spoken too really enjoyed it.

Claims the Festival being the biggest event on the calendar throws down a challenge to this Victorian who has always been in interested in promoting big picture events. Put

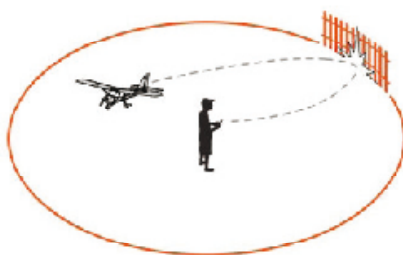
Take off with



Get your family into the thrill of flying with the World's most popular radio control trainer



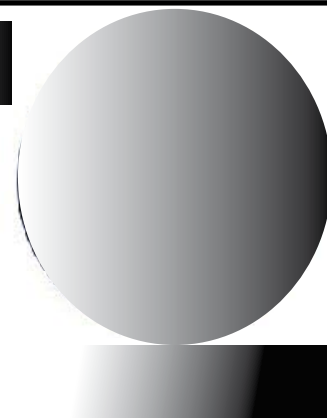
E-Flite Apprentice STS Ready to Fly



Revolutionary SAFE Technology makes learning to fly a breeze



Free 32 page E Book



Get into the air the fast easy way with 1  Victorian Model Aircraft Association

Apprentice S RTF \$649

Four FREE introductory flying sessions at your local VMAA registered airfield
Offer Ends June 30 2023

Discounted Club 2023-2024 membership



YouTube

aside the 1991 World Champs, which is what kicked RCM News off, Peter Cole's Grand Southern Cross Scale Rally is the best model event I have seen. Ever.

Dad's South Pacific Scale Masters was yet another example of a committee boycotting a great idea to fulfill self importance. Advertising revenue from RCM News magazine is what paid to fly out a Word Champs credentialled competitor and his Sopwith Snipe from England. The net result of the boycott was most of that SIG's Victorian members missed the opportunity of competing in an International event.

One of my efforts was Cobram Air Races. I thought that was well on the way towards becoming a big event. Advertising revenue helped with promotion and a great club President resulted in 68 entries and a two day competition that covered the clubs annual overheads. What would entry numbers have been a decade later if it hadn't been nobbled by self interest?

Another big picture event by RCM News to grow the hobby too has faded into oblivion too. 2015 Sandown F1

Air Race. The difference between Sandown and everything else was this put aeromodelling on display just 20 km from the CBD. From 2017 to 2019 the Train and Hobby Show picked up the \$10,000 tab for the race track and grand stand hire. COVID put a dent in its coffers and like other exhibits the airshow now has to pay its way.

The Expo Manager talked me into sitting in on its working group for the 2024 event. The first condition I set was there is no point considering the airshow unless he got the Victorian Model Aircraft Association involved.

VMAA has provided a static exhibit and it supports the Avalon Airshow but unfortunately the State Association doesn't see any value in an RC airshow close to the CBD where RC flying is the feature event. I am unable to reconcile why the VMAA committee has supported Drone Racing at Sandown with member funds to the tune of a few grand at Sandown but not aeroplanes, helis and gliders. At a working group meeting for that event I asked VMAA President Reeve Marsh that question and did not get an answer. He went on to explain to the other groups, quote,

"we are administrators not marketers".

Which is at odds with TO PROMOTE line that begins the first three lines in its Statement of Purpose. At one meeting we were told VMAA does not even have a marketing budget. With a few hundred grand in the kitty it should have one.

A few years back Reeve asked me to come up with a metric to persuade committee to support the event financially. He needed to make a business case. Accounting for member funds I understand but running a Not for Profit with an annual turnover of a hundred grand is not what I call a business. That doesn't apply here.

Asking ten RC business owners to put in \$1,000 each could work but I can't think of ten who would. For the 2024 event I created this basic retail proposal to assist Reeve during a face to face meeting with a business owner who operates two hobby shops in Melbourne. See below. Its aircraft section is a wall of foam aeroplanes. The other business I thought capable of entertaining such a spend was Hearn's Hobbies in the CBD. Which also owns The Hobbyman in an outer

Exclusive RC Airshow Sponsorship Opportunity



Four in-flight demonstrations on the race track



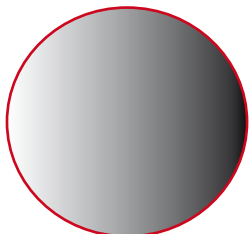
Return On Investment

Revenue from just 52 sales of this basic package over four months = \$33,748

That's twenty six new customers per retail outlet

Plus additional up sell revenue opportunities for the Sales Team

Extra Battery Packs - Charger Upgrade - Radio Upgrade



trainandhobbyshow.com.au

2024 Train and Hobby Show

Trains Planes and Automobiles plus new attractions featuring Trading Card Game Tournaments, Trading cards, Pop culture, Dungeons & Dragons displays.

Plus model railways, radio control vehicles (cars, trucks, tanks, plane, helicopters, drones and boats), crafts, clubs and vendors all to showcase what hobbies offer

In conjunction with the Victorian Model Aeronautical Association, (VMAA) the F1 Air Race and model air show spectacular and R/C car race demonstrations



Expected visitor numbers is 20000 + over the weekend

Advertising Schedule to benefit your business

CH9/ 90 / 94 / 99 TV advert Reach 19.7 Million Viewers

3AW / LightFM radio advert Reach 1.5Million Listeners

Advertisements over the PA on all three days Reach 20,000

Signage rights Reach 20,000

Front Cover shot on Model Railways in Australia magazine Circulation 15,000

Article in VMAA Newsletter Circulation 2500



suburb. Coming up with a metric for that was easy. Based on the average spend of getting into the hobby today sixty beginners would cover the cost. Anyone with a sales background would understand that is easily achievable. In the aeromodelling world however the commercial reality is different.

If this sixty beginner program was successful how many would be persuaded to join a club in Melbourne? Anyone in the hobby trade knows the answer to that. This is why.

One large rural town in Victoria has two model clubs. It also has a traditional High St bricks and mortar hobby shop. Which does not send beginners to one of the clubs because committee members there openly tell newcomers they cannot fly that model because it wasn't purchased from its preferred garage based business. This has been going on at model clubs for years but not as overtly as happens in Bendigo. Adding flying instruction that takes a long time into the mix is why industry produced ready to fly foamies with stability systems.

Any club that does not cater for this is sealing its own fate. If the Commercial Instructor MOP becomes too arduous that will dissuade anyone offering that vital service. Any club official sprouting we don't want that sort of thing here is in noddy land. There has always been a need. Operating from my own field in the 1980s I had three instructors and twenty plus students on Saturdays. Tired of waiting and feeling guilty taking up someone's time for nothing was common.



Just another runway for the capable

The second condition re Sandown was sighting the Area Approval. Despite repeated requests this was withheld until I bought it up at a meeting. Where I was shown the document on a mobile phone, in front of non aeromodelling people. Whilst the 400 feet ceiling isn't a problem I could not see what radius from the pilots was allowed. The original permit allowed 500 metres either way. I requested that be changed to allow a greater distance to the Northern end to allow more room for high speed heavier loaded aircraft to position. A legally binding document I have every right to see kept hidden. Why? The President was a bit miffed I didn't trust his judgement.

Years back VMAA told me it did not approve of my commercial flying operations at motorsport events. It told CASA too. Then it lowered the standard required to fly at the Avalon Airshow. The result was a jet crash into the spectator area. No one hurt, aircraft and one wheelie bin damaged. Chap being the Airborne magazine jet columnist gave me no joy either. A few years back this organisation told the regulator that binoculars could be

used to sight old timer models at 2500 feet. Considering our operations were coming under the spotlight this was embarrassing. It also threw me under the bus withholding a Display Permit for Sandown at the last minute. NSW supported me. VMAA did not

Jets

Problems with model jet flying at airports emerged years ago. It was not helped by self serving jet engine retailers who held club committee positions. Eighteen jets totalled in a three day weekend at Temora Airport and a few fires my dummy 2015 magazine article emailed to NSW Jet Flyers President was never published but it sure stuck a chord.

Rather than acknowledge the problem two jet clubs, with jet engine retailers on committee, complained to their two jet buddies Kevin and Tyson Dodd. VJAA banning me from jet events didn't change anything. Now they are getting change forced upon them. The difference between flying at a club field day and an airport where aeromodelling is in the public spotlight is this. Even if the public are not invited the aviation community is still there. Loudmouths espousing they know better today should keep their mouths

Fifty Grand Festival of stacks

Each of us is only as good as our last landing but seriously, fourteen crashes at a GA Airport should ring alarm bells. Pretty embarrassing! Articles of this nature would be best dealt with in house but the chance of this appearing in a State newsletter is remote. It would never happen. In the meantime, any club president considering inviting a jet flyer to your annual display is welcome to contact me as to the pilots' credentials. If I don't know them a couple of phone calls is all it takes.

Over the years a lot of people have done the hard yards to organise events such as this. Considerable space in this magazine has been devoted to promoting flying at major public places in an effort to raise our public profile. In a positive way. As usual a small minority spoil it for the majority who do the right thing.

The advantage that endless bitumen for test flying models at full size aerodromes comes with an extra level of responsibility. It's a public place. Aeromodelling is on show. Even well heeled modellers couldn't buy enough hot dogs to keep the aero club happy if one disgruntled operator wanted the whole show shut down. Is that why they were moved away from the largest flying collection of warbirds in the country?

Getting a few self titled "Jet Jocks" to remove a hand from their jocks



to fill out a form or two would good start too. For the second year in a row I have been asked not to publish the weight of a model. This happened at Temora 2014 and also at Wangarratta. That isn't a civil aviation offence but if the person who signs for the event is not interested in that, he or she should not be signing for it. Relying on model insurance liability cover depends on complying with MOPs

Orientation has always been a potential issue flying swept wing planforms. As speed creeps up towards 250 kph flying skill can be found out rather quickly. All very cosy for the firms selling this gear but the full throttle brigade screwing bigger and

bigger engines are getting further and further behind the model. Higher speed is making this a bigger issue. More and more pilots are becoming momentarily disoriented.

Take off and landing rolls longer than the 300 kg aeroplane I flew up is not a civil aviation offence either nevertheless it is a reflection of our flight training regime. Does anyone else find that embarrassing? Take off procedure used previously at Wangarratta that increased safety for pilots and callers standing on the edge of the runway was missing.

If carnage is your thing, pencil it in for next year, but go on the Friday.



300 kg dry



A great scene, most do the right thing but there are problems

thing. I supplied phone numbers of the other jet flyers for MAAA President Neil Tank to contact for their view if Bartlett was up to the required standard.

Ultimately Dodd's decision to ignore the advice so one of his mates could fly resulted in onboard video footage busting the thirty metre line after take off and over flying houses posted on You Tube the next day.

Yet one more embarrassment in front of the aviation and general community. I was thinking to disable his model with a powder fire extinguisher and cop the bill. Blocking the runway to prevent Bartlett taking off was easier but in the end it was not my problem.

Offering younger flyers experiences afforded to me by my Dad was Sandown. A big picture event to grow the hobby. Bigger event than NSW or Queensland. One of my own personal goals was to use that event to drive people to an air race meeting in Melbourne the following month.

In 2019 I handed the keys for the Sandown to Keith Quigg who took it on with gusto. Shops and importers still keen to support the event



My NSW versus Victoria theme never happened

his ten grand proposal was stifled by VMAA. November deadline looming and no decision in sight Keith gave up and quit. Turning up at Avalon and Sandown each year to wave the VMAA there's no denying Reeve Marsh's dedication. Spending time with Reeve at Train and Hobby Show meetings demonstrated to me he does not have the negotiating skills or understanding of the radio control segment for MAAA President. RC is the majority which pays the bills and an avid free flight and controliner negotiating with the regulator would not be in our best interest.

Nor is accumulating large piles of cash in bank accounts for a rainy

day. Four one hour trips in the car to support VMAA exhibit at Avalon Airhsow. Talked my way in without a pass using the Spitfire. Treasurer Arthur Bablis handed me \$25 for lunch money and commented something along the lines he was doing me a favour because protecting members money so they get no complaints was the go. Give me a break. Three hundred grand in the coffers and it won't spend ten on Sandown. Member complaints is the same line Old Fokkers at PDARCS use when they don't want to do something. Where's the evidence? Who did they ask? If a model club with twenty grand in the bank does

SUGGESTIONS to REVAMP the 2023 VMAA TROPHY

1. The event was designed to promote interclub competition. It was never envisaged to promote aeromodelling to the general public.

2. To encourage as many clubs as possible categories should reflect a mixture of competitive fun flying tasks. Scored by way of counting or a stop watch.


3. With a few hundred grand in the bank the VMAA does not require sponsorship by selling the naming rights. Promoting one brand will alienate a certain percentage of modellers.

4. \$1000 is not a substantial prize today. Selling sponsorship for individual categories would work. If I were selling the concept I would make \$250 Ampol Fuel Vouchers available for country clubs to enter and attend.

5. Tradition has its place. Leave the name alone.

6. Modellers are a pretty resourceful bunch. Set a simple set of rules that can be easily policed for each event then let ingenuity run its course. Built, ARF, Glo, Petrol or EP in Aeros, Scale and Heli? Leave it to them.

7. Specialisation of traditional FAI categories makes it too hard and too

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| <p style="text-align: center;">AEROBATICS A</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">Biplane*</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">CONTROL LINE</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">or a Twin.</p> |  <p style="text-align: center;">Junior Entry. Two flights. Judged by model coming to rest closest to the spot</p> |
| <p style="text-align: center;">AEROBATICS B</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">3 Channel rubber - elevator - throttle</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">SCALE VFSAA Flying Only Rules</p> <p style="text-align: center;">GLIDER VARMS ALS Rules</p> <p style="text-align: center;">HELICOPTER Ask two Helicopter Clubs for suggestions</p> <p style="text-align: center;">FPV DRONE Ask DRONE CLUBS for suggestions</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">FREE FLIGHT</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">Maximum wingspan 24" Best of two simple hand launch chuck glider timed flights.</p> |

expensive for many clubs to be competitive. From a personal perspective this event is not as satisfying for competitors from those disciplines. They enjoy a better experience at their own SIG's State Titles. It also offers competition modellers a way to put back into the

hobby at local club level
8. These suggestions are not dumbing it down rather looking back at what previously worked or would work at club level today. There is a lot of expertise in country clubs. Most cannot field a full team but those who choose six categories

can still be competitive. Anyone who attended a Nationals in the 70s would have witnessed control line and free flight. My favourites were Indoor Rubber and Wakefield, Team Race, Speed and of course Combat
Stephen Green



Don't bullshit a Bullshitter

not promote itself and needs a new mower make it buy one. Put more meaningful money into promotion. Why VMAA voted in the affirmative for the no confidence in MAAA leadership would be good to know as well. A rhetorical question really it seems executive bullshitted committee members by not involving them. Were they consulted? I've asked around. Will that be reported in the minutes? Not likely.

Successfully selling the concept of model plane displays to the Australian Grand Prix Corporation and the owners of Calder, Winton, Phillip Island and Sandown motor racing circuits was done with a flying demo. The sponsor was happy to pay three grand for my air displays at those motorsport events. Which paid my rent once a month and gave me a pretty good feel for what public acceptance of model plane flying is about.

At a National level, for yonks I've been thinking about a proposal to Airshows Downunder to get RC flying back into the program. Flying off that runway is a peace of piss. Volunteering to become involved with Avalon again won't happen if the static exhibit remains the same. It's a cheap and tired old look. I'm not on my own with that view either.

As far as passing on skills to promote the hobby I have done my bit. RCM News gave me a national voice and matters of such ilk were represented impartially to the best of my ability. Before publishing the MAAA Duds Rural Communities piece (Page 79) a journalist was asked if she thought it was objective.

Victoria's aeromodelling community benefited when a businessman used to writing million



Futaba Pilot Link, twin RX and differential wheel brakes

dollar checks was at the helm. We now have four State Fields. A number of clubs also own fields here as well. Hopefully NSW can get another state field North of Sydney. Hopefully the noddies running Hawkesbury will get be put back in their place soon by it members. The late Bob Carpenter must be turning in his grave. Bob understood what promoting was about.

The number of forums on RC Groups Australia forums shows how much activity has reduced in the past decade. RC Groups Australia is down to one page. I don't see anyone park flying these days either. Will renewals will fund model club overheads two decades time? A doubling or tripling of fees seems inevitable.

F 1 Air Racing Inc

At age sixty four and before I get too old I just want compete against top competitors in a race meeting that is worth winning. Putting the hand out for sponsorship from the hobby trade won't happen until we have something worth sponsoring so the air racing club has to start by paying its own way.

Generating funds from spectators at the gate is the only way I see it will prosper. 1997 Yarra Valley Air Races charged \$10 per adult children free. It took ten grand at the gate. Vic State Field Melbourne and Vic State Field Eastern have been booked. This club is how I intend putting back into aeromodelling. Putting the past aside I took a deep breath and registered it through VMAA.

Shooting the Messenger

It's really hard to get an event going and so easy to have it torn down.

My credentials will never be good enough for VMAA. Getting bagged each time my name is mentioned continues. A hangover from previous incumbents who have continued to hold back change at Burley Field. Sandown too. Mike Close's unilateral change to Display Permit obligations in 2012 is what led to the creation of AMAS. Neil Tank saw the value in main stream media promotion. That that costs money. Now everyone is second guessing decisions. Tim Nolan inherited the problem of ageing demographics and cut costs accordingly.

In memory of the late Peter Bons raising the issue of ACMA Compliance will probably put me back into the trouble maker category again. An article in Wingspan would be timely but unlikely. I bought it up here because this goes on at club fields every day and people look the other way.

When I hear people bagging me or my Father, whether that be at club, state or local level, I ask myself this. What have these people ever achieved? If you are on a committee and don't like how business is conducted say something. Have your say. Don't ask me to do the bidding anymore. Reporting issues raised in these final few pages is no longer my problem. RCM News magazine is over and out. Done and dusted.

Glider Towing

One thing I've longed to do is spend a weekend towing gliders. BADMAC has one on the Australia day weekend and the Cassutt is getting a hundred hourly done and a few gadgets added.

SJG. AUS 5932.