

## VMAA TROPHY – 12 & 13 APRIL 2008 – PDARCS – PAKENHAM

There were only 5 clubs entered the interclub competition this year, down from past years. There were 10 events, but only your best 6 events are counted. We entered 9 events. 1<sup>st</sup> place gets 6 points, 2<sup>nd</sup> 5, 3<sup>rd</sup> 4, 4<sup>th</sup> 3 and 5<sup>th</sup> 2.

### **SATURDAY – FINE – COOL – STEADY BREEZE**

First off was John Wessel flying HELICOPTER. Take off from a spot, fly for exactly 60 seconds WITHOUT any timing devices land in next spot, then do it twice more. John got second place for this – an excellent result – though the “flying” demands for the event did not allow him to demonstrate his capabilities. 2<sup>nd</sup> place = 5 points.

We didn't have an entry in THERMAL GLIDER (rudder, elevator, spoilers) - but I think we would have been in there with a chance if we had. VARMS usually does well in this event, but did not enter this year.

FUN SCALE is judged on the execution of the chosen and compulsory manoeuvres and trueness to the flying characteristics of the original plane. David Law flew his ARF biplane and so had a large choice of manoeuvres (particularly when compared with the “scale” manoeuvres of the Cessnas) – and flew it brilliantly into first place. 6 points.

FUN FLY – Cliff McIver's favourite event – in which he usually flies the same plane and wins hands down. Start from level flight – call “now”, then roll-loop-roll 3 times and land – fastest time wins. Cliff can do this in about 17 seconds. Next is roll-Cuban Eight with half rolls-roll-land. About 24 seconds. Despite another excellent performance, competition was extremely hot – with Cliff being edged out by few seconds. Another second place, another 5 points.

SCALE AEROBATICS – Daniel Travassaros flew his Giles, has done this before and did it brilliantly. I was particularly impressed with his transition into and out of knife edge – which looked like it was computer generated. Another first – another 6 points.

### **SUNDAY – CLOUDY – COOLER – STEADY BREEZE – 1-2 SHOWERS**

OLD TIMER – that's the plane – not the pilot – requires a 7 minute flight using an internal combustion engined plane – with a 25-40 second motor run, depending on the motor type. Kevin Fryer's plane had a hot (and VERY noisy) petrol motor with spark plug, and was thus allowed a 40 second motor run – which took him almost out of sight. Kevin achieved his 7 minutes each round without difficulty, but came second on count back by only a few seconds for being a little over time. 5 points.

ELECTRIC GLIDER - previously known as “7 Cell” glider, now changed to accommodate LiPo batteries and brushless motors. Only limitation is battery size based on a “factor” of 6,600, ie 3 cell 2200mAh (3 x 2200 = 6600), 2 cell 3300 or 4 cell 1650mAh. Greg Sleeth had been waiting for a motor to arrive but it didn't and he had to source one at the last minute. He chose a 3200mAh 2 cell Hyperion pack with an 80 amp speed Hyperion controller and drew 79 amps. Also had a new fuselage, under last year's wing, with spoilerons. Aim is exactly 5 minute flights, landings within inner

circle. Climbs were excellent, with 16 seconds of motor run getting him well into thermal territory. Greg was getting into the swing of things nicely in the first round, but had trouble on two rounds with motor cut-out, with causes subsequently identified and eliminated. One particularly good flight was 4 minutes 59 seconds, 18 second motor run and only a whisker outside the inner circle. The last flight was stuffed up by me mis-reading the stopwatch and telling him the wrong remaining time. Excellent flying by Greg, particularly as these were his first real flights with this new set-up and excellent mentoring/guidance by Dennis Travassaros. However competition was tough and we didn't place in this event.

CLUB RACING – Dennis again flew our old faithful – not generally flown as a racer – but it has always been competitive. A number of planes in this year's event were high wing "Trainer" type models (including an ARF "Classic") and were flown remarkably well and without incident. However Dennis was pipped by a fast and very well flown craft built for the event. Another second and another 5 points.

MOST UNUSUAL MODEL – I had a "pie-in-the sky" idea some time ago and so I built a flying pie. I pulled a pie from the freezer and took pictures and measurements of it to get the proportions and colours right, and put a blob of "sauce" on the top in the shape of Australia, of course. Diameter of 700mm, build from 3mm Depron – "biplane" style, powered by a 250 watt 2000kv outrunner with 3s 2200 mAh pack – and requiring lots of lead to bring the centre of gravity a little north of Darwin. Pie presented on the strip in a paper bag with a sauce bottle, with the team singing "Oh what a lovely pie me boy a Four N Twenty Pie" jingle as I took off. It turned nicely and did consecutive rolls left and right, but I did not attempt a loop. (Having suffered foot-flutter at DAC with Superman, I was fearful of pastry-flutter at high speed in a loop.) To finish off, the team gave an even more robust rendition of the jingle – with an almighty "Oi!" at the end, just as it smoothly landed. Second place, 5 points – beaten by a team of great looking internal combustion racing cars (3 flew, one failed to take off and another failed to start). Third place was a magnificent giant flying cartoon style man. Other entries were a Boomerang high wing trainer, converted to a 5 engine biplane, and a plane with wheels top and bottom to land either way up.

MUSICAL LANDINGS – Cliff had built a new foamy for this, and Matt Marino had only one lot of test flights. The first two rounds of musical landings occurred earlier in the day and Matt went out early in both, a victim of long grass, and lack of experience flying this new beast. After the Most Unusual Model event, we were neck and neck with Latrobe, and needed to beat them to win the weekend. Matt was determined to get past his losses in the earlier rounds and dived dramatically every time the horn signalled "down" – but levelled off at the last millisecond to land safely and never last. Matt won the third round. Then came the fourth round – landing after landing – with some spectacular crashing out by the internal combustion fliers. Matt maintained his focus and Cliff his coaching – best circuit to fly – to be ready for the horn – DOWN-DOWN-DOWN and rolling to a halt *after* his final competitor – but – they were in the grass and thus disqualified – leaving DAC with the 6 points for the win – and DAC the VMAA trophy by one point. PHEW! Nail biting stuff and heaps of fun.

We won – AGAIN. That’s 8 years unbeaten! 9 events entered, and 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> in 7 of them. Well done to all competitors mentioned above, who received medallions for getting places and for being part of the winning team. Thanks also to our supporters (James T, Grant, Nik) and to our team manager Cliff. After engraving, the trophy itself will live for the next 12 months on the Travassaros mantelpiece, in recognition of Dennis’ and Daniel’s contribution to the success of DAC in this event, in this and past years, competing mentoring and calling.

Great banter and camaraderie amongst the competitors and officials, excellent field and excellent catering. I have said it before – the VMAA trophy is only in part a competition – it is mostly a carnival.

Ian P