



NATS

2019 NATIONAL AEROMODELING CHAMPIONSHIPS

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RC HELICOPTER

July 22



By Mike Unger (mike97unger@yahoo.com)

The 2019 AMA Helicopter Nats kicked off Sunday at Site 5 on the AMA grounds. This annual contest brings the best precision and scale helicopter pilots in North America to Muncie, Indiana. This year, like every year, it is the opening event leading up to the IRCHA Jamboree that starts Wednesday. Unfortunately, like most places in the US recently, the weather is brutal. With temperatures in the mid-90s and humidity also in the mid-90s, it makes it feel like it's over 100°. That's not terribly pleasant. So, in an effort to beat the heat, the competition will start at 7 a.m. each day and run until early afternoon, when we will stop and give everyone a chance to go cool off. Then if the weatherman is right, Monday and Tuesday's competitions will continue with the normal 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. flights.

This year, we will be running AMA Classes 1, 2, and 3. These classes are designed to be the steppingstones to the top class, F3C. Class 1 is the first step, with a mix of hover and forward-flight basic precision maneuvers. Class 2 has the same kind of mix but adds more difficult orientations, hovers, and more complex forward-flight maneuvers. Class 3 steps it up again with even more complex and compound maneuvers. Once you have mastered them, you are ready for the challenge of F3C.

The F3C class is not only recognized by the AMA but is also an FAI (Fédération Aéronautique Internationale) class that is contested all over the world. So much so, that each country enters a team of precision pilot to represent it on the world stage. So simply put, the pilots at this level are some of the best around. The maneuvers in this class are very complex and include high-speed and compound aerobatic maneuvers. It's very impressive to watch!

Also at the Nats this year will be the F3N class. This class is for 3D pilots and is similar to other classes in that pilots are judged on how well they do the maneuvers exactly as described in the rulebook. These maneuvers are beyond anything that a full-size helicopter could ever dream of, and in many cases, seemingly defines physics. If you want to see things that you never imagined were possible, this is the one.

Besides aerobatics competition, there are also a number of Scale classes at the Nats. These pilots and builders are challenged to build the most realistic scale representation of a full-scale helicopter. Not only are they judged on how real the models look, they are judged on how well they fly like the real thing. In these classes, you will see military helicopters, air ambulance helicopters, and even the occasional Air Wolf Bell 222 helicopter that many of us remember from the popular TV show.

As predicted, the heat and humidity were an issue for the first day of the Nats. We started early with the hopes of getting three rounds in and avoiding some of the heat. So, at 7 a.m., Dan Brickman was on the flightline doing the first competition flight of the day in Class 1. Things went smoothly all day, with every competitor getting three complete rounds in.

In Class 1, even though there are only two competitors, Dan Brickman and Angel Rojas traded the lead back and forth throughout the day, with Dan in the lead by a slim 50 points. With four more rounds to go, this one will be interesting to watch.

Class 2 saw the arrival of a new guy, who drove all the way from Texas, as the surprise leader. Sam Corlett leads the field so far by winning all three rounds. Although there are still a number of rounds to go, someone needs to step up to give Sam something to worry about. That should be possible because previous Class 1 champs are in the mix with 2018 Class 1 second-place finisher Michael Parker in second, and 2016 champ Bernard Shaw in third.

Class 3, like the other AMA classes, is turning into a good battle as well, with Jim Hall in first with a solid lead over Robert Montee. Robert shouldn't be counted out because he also is a previous champion in all three AMA classes and can mount a comeback.

As for the FAI classes, in F3C it's a lower turnout than in years past. The world championships are right around the corner, and many of the Team USA members are busy preparing for the trip to Germany.

The usual suspects are still at the Nats. Dwight Shilling is in first

place, followed by Nob Muraki and Tim "The Master of the Universe" Diperi in third. Tim got that title by being that guy who helps out with the contest but doesn't quite fit into the Contest Director or Assistant Director role. Master of the Universe might be a little over the top, but helicopter guys tend to be a little over the top anyways, so why fight it?

F3N had a surprise turnout this year. Like F3C, the world championships for F3N are also in Germany so turnout was light. But Ben Storik, Aaron Cole, and Greg Jackson are still putting on a great show with some awesome precision 3D flying. After three rounds, Ben is in first, Aaron in second, and Greg in third.

Finally, for the only unofficial class this year, Wes Minear leads the Masters Class, followed by Robert Montee. This class flies only the preliminary F3C maneuvers and is intended to be for those competitors who want to get into F3C competition, but just want to concentrate on one set of maneuvers. Official F3C competitors fly two sets of flight maneuvers, making learning both a huge time commitment that not everyone has.

After a very hot and humid day, all of the classes are tightly contested with very high levels of skilled pilots. With the temperature getting back to a little more reasonable level in the coming days, it will be fun to watch how things pan out.

Monday we will continue with more rounds in every class, as well as see the first rounds of the Scale Helicopter competition. If you are in the Muncie area, feel free to stop by Site 5 and see some great flying. If you aren't, stay tuned to the NatsNews for all updates.











RC HELICOPTER

July 23



By Mike Unger (mike97unger@yahoo.com)

Day 2 of the RC Helicopter Nats finished without any issues ... well I guess I can't say that. The weather made things fun.

After a heat index approaching 100° on Sunday, pilots were greeted in the morning with 60° temperatures and scattered showers on Monday. Sam Corlett, the guy from Texas who was commenting that the hot weather on Sunday was comfortable, wore insulated coveralls all day Monday. Like they say, if you don't like the weather in Muncie, just wait, it will change.

All of the classes completed an additional two rounds of flying, making for five rounds total. By now, the leaders are starting to become clear, although there are a couple classes that still will come down to the wire.

Class 1 is one of those classes. With two rounds to go, Angel Rojas leads Dan Brickman by only 66 points. The last two flights will be critical for these two contestants.

Class 2 newcomer Sam might have been struggling with the 65° temperatures on Monday, but he didn't struggle on the flightline. He continued to put up solid flights, extending his lead over Michael Parker. Michael did take advantage of a small mistake Sam made, giving him the win in round 5 but after drops, Sam still has a comfortable lead. Bernard Shaw and Peter Bisbal still have a tight battle going for 3rd and 4th places.

In Class 3, Jim Hall continues to put up solid flights, distancing himself from Robert Montee. Jim has won every round in the competition so far and looks to have a serious lock on the trophy. Robert has put up solid numbers but just hasn't been able to edge out Jim.

In the FAI classes, Dwight Shilling leads Nob Yasunobu and Tim "The Master of the Universe" DiPeri. The F3C class finished its first round of "F" schedule, providing a more challenging set of maneuvers for the

pilots. Wes Minear has the edge over Robert in the Masters class, with Wes having a 145-point lead. With two rounds to go, Robert needs to step up to get into first-place contention.

F3N Finished its fourth and fifth rounds, which was highlighted by the first round of Freestyle to music. Ben Storick edged out fellow Align Team Pilot Aaron Cole to win that round. Aaron fought back in the fifth round, edging out Ben in the set maneuvers. So, going into the final two rounds, there is a tie for first place after drops. Greg Jackson is in third, followed by Robert and Wes.

Day 2 saw the first rounds of the Scale competition. These models are really impressive to look at in terms of attention to detail and workmanship. Then when they fly, it's even more impressive.

In the Scale class, Emile Sherriff won the static round, followed by Darrel Sprayberry, Bernard, and Mark Allen. In the first round of flights, Emile again came out on top with Bernard and Mark in close competition. Unfortunately, Darrell and his heli seemed to have a disagreement during his flight, dropping him to an uncharacteristic last in the first round of flying. We will see if he can bounce back for the final two rounds.

In Sport Scale, Emile won the static round, followed by Bernard and Mark. Bernard would come back to win the flight round, followed by Mark. This class will be interesting to watch with two more flight rounds to go.

So, there you have it—two days of competition are in the books and for the first time during this competition, the weather isn't raining or oppressively hot. Sunny skies and warm temps are predicted for the last day. If you are in the area, stop by and check out the awesome flying and great Scale helis. If you are not, stay tuned to *NatsNews* for all the updates.











RC HELICOPTER

July 24



By Mike Unger (mike97unger@yahoo.com)

The final day of the RC Helicopter Nats brought mild temperatures and blue skies—a huge contrast to the previous two days of rain and scorching temps.

The first of the final two rounds of competition started at 8 a.m. Tuesday without any issues. Because five of seven rounds had already been completed in many of the classes, it would take a herculean effort to pull off an upset. However, in a few classes, the points were tight and the last two rounds could make all the difference.

Class 1 (Sportsman) was one of those classes in which a tight battle had been going on. In the previous five rounds, Angel Rojas had won three rounds and Dan Brickman won two. Dan needed to sweep the final two rounds to take the top spot. He made a valiant effort, but in the end Angel's consistent flying prevailed, and he won the class by less than 200 normalized points.

In Class 2, Sam Corlett had a sizable lead, winning four of the previous five rounds, so short of arguing his heli into the ground, he had a lock on the win. Down the order, Michael Parker, Bernard Shaw, and Peter Bisbal would battle it out for the best of the rest. Michael ended up putting up his best round of the weekend, winning round 6, which solidified his second-place finish. Bernard Shaw would finish 3rd and Pete Bisbal wound up 4th.

James Hall led Class 3 and, going into the last day, had won all five rounds. All he needed to do was fly the last two rounds and hold his own. That didn't stop Robert Montee from overcoming some mechanical problems with his heli in round 6 to take the win in round 7. But as mentioned, Jim had it virtually locked and in the end, Jim finished 1st, and Robert was 2nd.

In F3C, the first four rounds of competition are called the preliminary rounds and in those rounds they fly the "P" schedule. After round 4, they carry over a normalized combined score from the first four rounds and basically start a new competition. When they start that fifth round, they fly a completely different and somewhat more difficult set of maneuvers in the final. Going into the fifth round, it was Dwight Shilling on top, Nob Yasunobu in 2nd, and Tim DiPeri in 3rd. At the end of the day, Dwight ended up on top, and despite a good effort from Tim, Nob would edge him out for 2nd.

In F3N, the last three rounds are set maneuvers, Freestyle, and the crowd-favorite, Freestyle to music. Align Pilots Ben Storick and Aaron Cole would battle it out for the top spot the last three rounds and put on an awesome display of skill and showmanship. At the end of the day, it was Ben edging out Aaron, with Greg Jackson, Robert Montee, and Wes Minear rounding out the top five.

In the Masters class, Robert Montee would continue to have some mechanical problems, forcing him to abort his flight halfway through—making it nearly impossible to pull off the win. He would come back to win the final round over Wes Minear, but in the end, Wes took away the 1st-place trophy, with Robert in 2nd.

In Scale, there are basically two classes competing. Sport Scale and Scale. In the Scale class, the model presented has to be built by the pilot flying it and has to be built from a kit from the ground up. Pilots and builders in this class go to great lengths to get even the smallest details exactly correct to match the full-scale model they are trying to duplicate. Contestants are judged on the static display of their models in one round and then judged on how realistically they fly those models in the following rounds. In Scale, Emile Sherriff took home 1st place, Bernard

Shaw would be 2nd, and Mark Allen was 3rd.

Sport Scale is a little different. The models are not as detailed as the Scale helicopters and they can come from a nearly built kit. Here, the static score isn't quite as important to the final tally as the regular Scale class. This is to allow for those competitors who don't have thousands of hours to build a super-detailed model to compete. Flying the model in a way that represents the full-scale aircraft is where the points are decided in this class. At the end, Sport Scale saw Emile on top, Bernard in 2nd, and Mark in 3rd.

So, there you have it. After three days of competition, the winners of each class were crowned, and all of the awards were sorted. It was a great competition this year, with high-caliber pilots in every class. A big thank you to all of the competitors and support staff who make the Nats happen.

Also, I want to give a shoutout to all of the spectators who stopped by to see the show. If you are interested in competing, there a few regional events throughout the year to help you get started or as always, we welcome anyone at the Nats. Until next year, keep tearing up the sky ...





RC Helicopter Results

2019 432 Advanced

Full Name	Place	Age Category	Score
SAMUEL CORLETT	1	A	5985
MICHAEL PARKER	2	A	5664
BERNARD SHAW	3	A	4906
PETER BISBAL	4	A	4755

2019 433 Expert

Full Name	Place	Age Category	Score
JAMES HALL	1	A	5974
ROBERT MONTEE	2	A	5617
REZA FATEMI			

2019 431 Sportsman

Full Name	Place	Age Category	Score
ANGEL ROJAS	1	A	5950
DAN BRICKMAN	2	JSA	5761

2019 435 F3N Helicopter

Full Name	Place	Age Category	Score
ROBERT MONTEE	1	A	569.79
BENJAMIN STORICK	1	A	2997.95
AARON COLE	2	A	2969.94
GREG JACKSON	3	A	1920.32

2019 434 F3C Helicopter

Full Name	Place	Age Category	Score
DWIGHT SHILLING	1	A	3000
YASUNOBU MURAKI	2	A	2757.17
TIMOTHY DIPERI	3		2643.31

2019 518 RC Scale Helicopter

Full Name	Place	Age Category	Score
EMILE SHERIFF	1	A	3907.69
BERNARD SHAW	2	A	3121.20
MARK ALLEN	3	A	2918.62
DARRELL SPRAYBERRY	4	A	2540.87