Blacksheep RC Modelers

Danville, IN AMA #3032

Squadron News April 2026

An AMA Gold Club

Upcoming Club Events

May 6 - Monthly club meeting at the field, 7:00pm

May 9 - Spring Float Fly In at Gibbs Memorial Park, 9AM to 2pm

June 3 - Monthly club meeting at the field, 7:00pm

June 20 - Warbird Warmup

July 1 - Monthly club meeting at the field, 7:00pm

August 5 - Monthly club meeting at hte field, 7:00pm

August 8 - Annual National Model Aviation Day rc airshow

September 2 - Monthly club meeting at the field, 7:00pm

September 26 - Fall Float Fly In at Gibbs Memorial Park

October 7 - Monthly club meeting at the field, 7:00pm

October 10 - 19th Annual Blacksheep Warbird Fly In

November 4 - Monthly club meeting at the field, 7:00pm

December 2 - Annual Christmas meeting dinner

2026 area events

June 4, 5 & 6 - EDF Jet Jam at Bill Beach Field,Rosewood

June 6 - IRCM Cubs & Floaty flyers at Morristown

July 17 & 18 - IRCM Warbirds Over Blue River at Morristown

August 15 - IRCM Toys For Tots at Morristown

September 19 - IRCM Fly All in the Fall at Morristown

Blacksheep RC Modelers

April 2026 Meeting Minutes

Rege Hall opened the meeting with 20 members present. He asked if anyone who has paid their dues but has not received their membership card through the mail, please let him know.

Rick Gilmore gave the Treasurer's report.

We will have our Spring Float Fly-In at Gibbs Memorial Park on May 9. We will have hot dogs on the grill. Our Warbird Warm-up event will be held at our airfield on June 20.

John Louden took orders for shirts, sweatshirts and caps and announced that he will be submitting his order in the next week. We will send a reminder to all members via email.

Paul Wycoff showed a sample plaque made with CNC inlay techniques. He plans to make plaques as trophies for our Warbird events in June and October.

We need to replace the storage sheds and are considering purchasing a used 40' shipping container. We will shop around for pricing.

Rege conducted a review of safety procedures that need to be followed by all members. Most items are simply common sense such as not flying over the pit area, the parking lot and spectator seating. With the advent of EDF and Turbine powered planes, care should be taken not to stand beside the plane. If a turbine blade were released, it would likely fly through the side of the plane and possibly injure someone. A prop plane would likely injure someone standing in front of the plane if the prop were to come loose. A reminder that if you were to damage a plane in the pits, it is your responsibility to make proper restitution to the owner. We have first aid kits in the club housek and the fire station is just down the road if 911 is called. Also, we have fire extinguishers for fires, but be advised that a LiPo fire cannot be extinguished with a fire extinguisher. We have buckets of sand for this purpose. If at all possible, try to get the battery to a gravel surface.

Paul Wycoff

Black Sheep Secretary

From the President -

The Month of May is here already. It has been a roller coaster of temperatures and certainly one of the windiest springs I can recall. Having said that, great flying weather has to be on the way! The field is in great shape smooth.

For the meeting this Wednesday night, it is Blacksheep Show N Tell night. Bring a plane that is new and show it to everyone. This Saturday is our annual Spring Float Fly In at Gibbs Memorial Park. We will have hotdogs and chips, bring your own beverages. For you EDF and jet guys, Indianapolis RC Modelers are hosting a fun day of jets the following Saturday, 16-May. They have added an additional 100 feet of runway to the south end of the current runway.

Test Pilot - answers at the end of the newsletter:

1) The Wright Brothers' interest flying was sparked when their father
brought a toy back from a trip in 1878. The toy was a model
A. airship
B. autogyro
C. glider
D. helicopter

2) What was the only Allied jet fighter to see combat during WWII? Also, what was the America's first jet
fighter? These aircraft might or might not be the same.

As always, fly often, fly safe and enjoy! Rege

Tips and Tricks.

LiPo battery tips: From Rege Hall.

STAY IN BALANCE – Always balance-charge your LiPos. Despite most manufacturers' best efforts to provide matched cells in battery packs, slight differences between individual cells always make it into production batteries. If a multi-cell pack is charged without balancing, problems can arise because the total voltage is treated as a single battery versus balance charging that addresses the cells individually. When a cell is low, it doesn't get fully charged, and during discharge it can fall below its safe voltage and cause puffing or life degradation. Conversely, during charging the high cell can exceed 4.7 volts and potentially catch fire. You might be able to get away without balancing charging low-discharge applications like receiver LiPos, but the higher the discharge rate, the easier it is for them to get out of balance.

STORAGE-CHARGE YOUR PACKS – If you're not going to be flying for several days, always store your LiPos in a storage-charge state. This usually means around 3.85 volts/cell or 50% of the charge. Most chargers have a storage setting that will either charge or discharge as needed. Smart batteries have a setting to self-discharge to storage level after sitting for a preset time period, but storing your batteries dead or fully charge will be detrimental to long battery life.

KEEP IT COOL – Another tip to prolong the life of your batteries is to allow them to cool off properly before charging them again. This goes hand in hand with having a proper C-rating for the application you're flying and not over discharging your batteries. Also, storing your LiPos should be done in a cool, dry place, not sitting in a hot car all day.

BE WARY OF DAMAGE – If you drop a battery on a hard surface such as asphalt, crash a plane, or otherwise inflict any physical damage on a battery, be very wary of it. Look for physical damage to any of the cells, wires, or connectors. Look for puffing and monitor the pack carefully during the next several charge cycles for a spike in heat in one or more cells. When in doubt, discharge the battery completely using a small light bulb and take it to a battery store for recycling.

Landing by Donald Winsor

One of the biggest mistakes beginners make in RC flying is treating landing like an afterthought — something you just “figure out” once you’re ready to come down.

That’s exactly how you end up chasing the plane all over the sky, overshooting the runway, or dumping it in short.

A proper circuit isn’t just for show — it’s the difference between controlled flying and hoping for the best.

When you fly a circuit — upwind, crosswind, downwind, base, final — you’re doing a few critical things whether you realise it or not:

You’re setting up early, not reacting late

You’re keeping the aircraft in a predictable position relative to yourself

You’re managing height and speed gradually, not all at once

And most importantly, you’re giving yourself time to think

That downwind leg is where the landing actually begins — not final.

That’s where you check your height, reduce power, and decide if things look right. If they don’t, you’ve still got options.

Turn base too late? You’ll overshoot.

Turn base too early? You’ll cut in short.

Rush it? You’ll chase it all the way down.

The circuit fixes all of that.

It builds rhythm:

Downwind → settle the aircraft

Base → position and descend

Final → line up and commit

No panic. No last-second corrections. Just a controlled sequence.

And here’s the part people don’t like hearing — you shouldn’t even be thinking about landing until you can fly a consistent circuit every time.

Because landing isn’t a separate skill. It’s just the last part of a good circuit.

Modern trainers and stabilization systems can hide bad habits for a while. They’ll keep the wings level and smooth things out. But they won’t teach you spacing, timing, or judgement. That only comes from flying proper patterns over and over.

Watch experienced pilots — they don’t “come in and hope.”

They fly the same circuit every time. Same spacing. Same turns. Same setup.

That’s why their landings look easy.

If you want to improve quickly, stop focusing on the landing itself and start focusing on the circuit. Get that right, and the landing almost takes care of itself.

Skip it, and you’ll be fighting the plane all the way to the ground.

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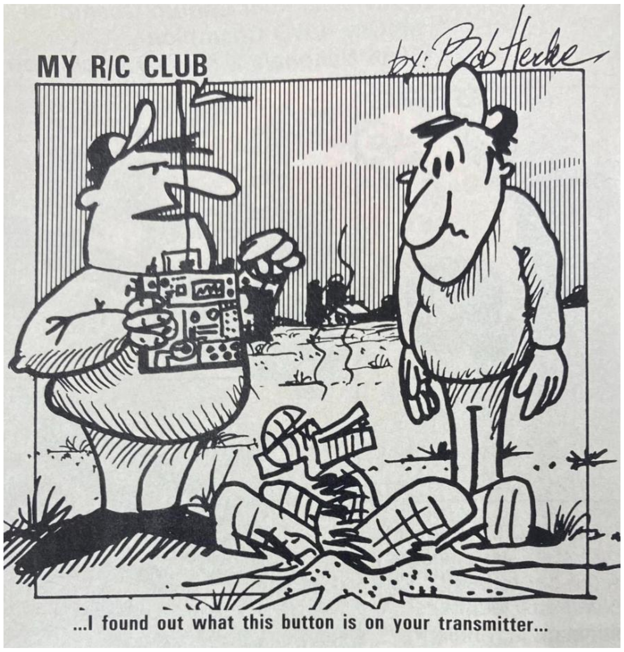
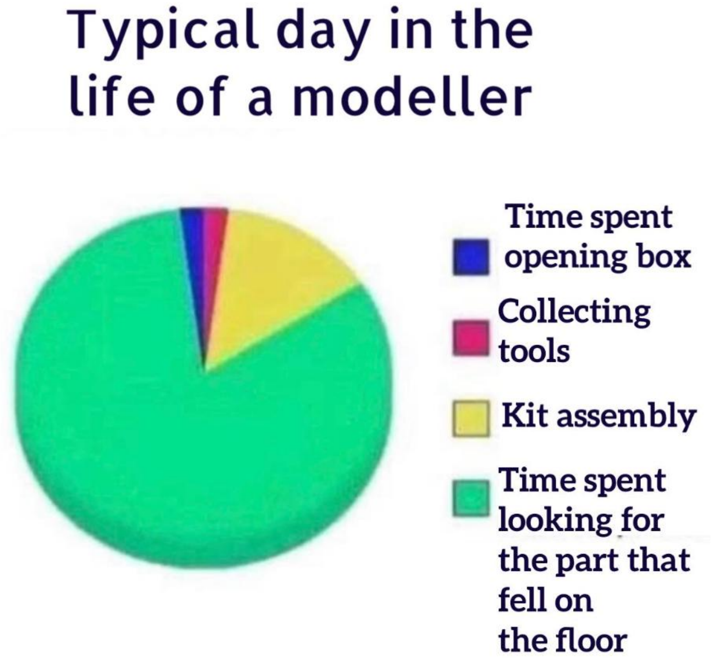
Funnies

ARTWORK: JOHN DOWNER

“Isn’t it supposed to float?!”





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Dealing with In-Flight Failures

Model Airplane News

Featured News, How-tos

Sooner or later, every pilot will encounter a situation where something within fails during flight. Even though you may not be able to predict all types of malfunctions, it is important to know some common problems and how to react when a malfunction occurs. Let’s explore some unknowns — electrical and structural failures, pre-flight problems, and common engine issues. While not every situation can be prevented, it is best to be ready for when, and if, they do arise.

Electrical failures

It is important to always use good-quality equipment. Today, manufacturers usually list the components they recommend for their specific airframe. These can include heavy-duty switches, redundant battery systems, voltage regulators, and so forth. This is a good place to start but if you have any doubts, seek the advice of other experienced giant-scale enthusiasts.

Generally, I think it’s best to use electrical accessories from the same manufacturer of your radio system so everything is consistent throughout your aircraft. Dual battery packs are preferred to power the receiver with two separate switches and heavy-duty servo extensions throughout the entire airframe. For those that prefer 4.8V or 6V (4 or 5-cell) Ni-Cd or NiMH batteries, a voltage regulator is not needed. Newer LiPo and lithium ion packs require the use of a voltage regulator for power. Using higher amounts of voltage to power a servo will increase the overall torque, if the servo is designed for higher voltages. Using higher voltages with servos intended for 4.8V can lead to servo damage and failure. Always check the specifications for your electrical components and follow the factory-recommended settings.

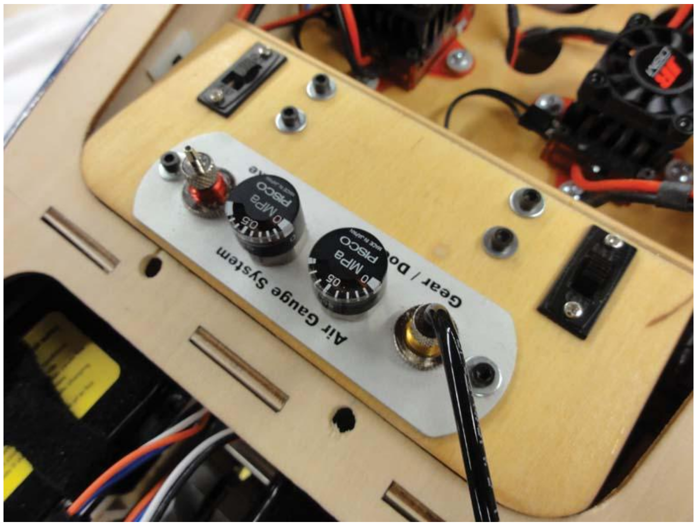
Also, when it comes to airborne battery packs, you should always charge, cycle and/or balance them properly for maximum performance and lifespan. It is also important to routinely check all the electrical connectors and monitor battery voltage between flights including the engine’s ignition battery. Engine vibration can take a toll on the aircraft, and can lead to electrical components becoming disconnected or fail.

Over the years, I’ve had situations arise where either a battery, or a voltage regulator failed. As voltage begins to decrease, you’ll find that the aircraft’s response is becoming rather sluggish in the air. Should this happen to you, decrease throttle and prepare for an emergency landing. Keep control surface corrections at a bare minimum and once safely on the ground, check your battery voltages. It is not uncommon for one of the two battery packs in a redundant setup to fail. Don’t push a bad situation.

Wing failure and flutter

While building a giant-scale model, it’s important to follow proper build practices to ensure a structurally sound aircraft. Wing panels have to withstand the forces that act upon it during any given flight so don’t take shortcuts with wing construction. Ensure the spars are installed properly. If the plans show the use of shear webbing that connect the upper and lower spars, ensure that the balsa grain is in the proper direction. For the best strength, the grain should be in an orientation that is perpendicular to the spar and not running span-wise. Since giant ARFs have become so popular, I think it is very important to really check out all the critical areas within the wing, and the airframe. If you feel an area on an aircraft appears questionable, don’t be afraid to reinforce that area. Spending a few extra hours reinforcing a spar, a servo mount, or any other area can save a lot of grief down the road.

One summer, while pulling out of a vertical down-line, I experienced “wing flutter” on an all-composite aircraft. The wingtips began to flutter which resulted in stripping out both aileron servos in flight. One servo was locked at full deflection! Immediately, I throttled back and the aircraft began to roll. I was able to stabilize the aircraft while it was in a constant roll and applied the inputs to perform a 180-degree rolling circle to bring the model to the outer edge of the runway. Decreasing altitude with throttle management and various rudder and elevator corrections, I waited for the airplane to be in an upright position and forced it onto the ground. Post flight inspection showed that the wing’s trailing edge and the ailerons’ leading edges had de-laminated in flight. A crack was also evident on the wing at the end of the wing tube. Surprisingly, the fuselage and the tail were in perfect condition! It was difficult to predict this type of failure as the entire aircraft had a full-composite fiberglass, Kevlar, and carbon-fiber airframe. The important thing is to keep flying the plane and don’t just give up.

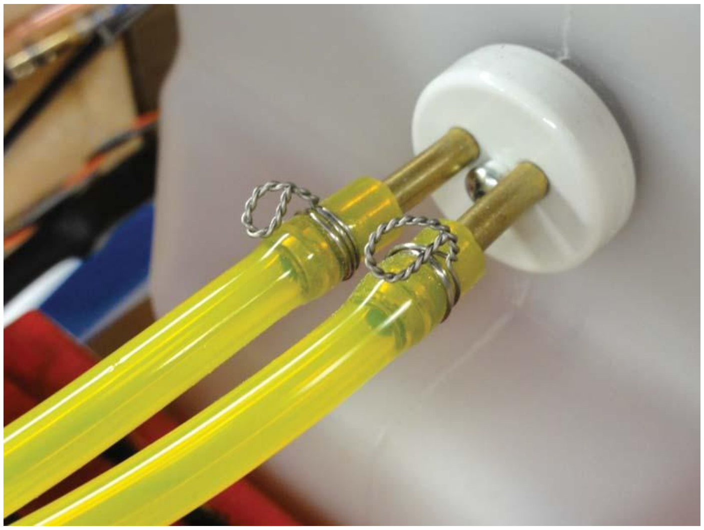


Two receiver switches and a minimum of two flight batteries to power the receiver are mandatory for all giant-scale models as in the event that one component stops functioning, the aircraft will have power the pilot will be able to land the model safely.

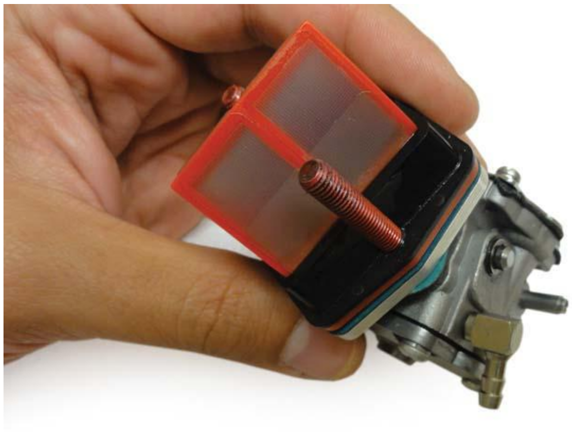
Control direction

Far too many pilots have lost their models as a result of having the control surfaces reversed. To prevent this, perform a control surface check before takeoff. Check the direction of each control surface and from behind the aircraft. Don't perform the check with your plane inverted on a stand. It's too easy to get confused about what's up and what's down. If you sent your radio system in for service, perform a ground check for all your planes using that transmitter to ensure no settings have been accidentally changed.

Finding reversed controls once in the air is a bad thing. Only an experienced pilot can react quick enough and apply the control inputs needed to safely return the aircraft back to the runway. As a tip, let's say you notice the ailerons are reversed after takeoff. It is crucial to switch to using only throttle, rudder, and elevator to get the airplane back on the ground if it is too difficult to use reversed ailerons inputs.



Using twist-tie clamps from Sullivan Products is the most effective way to keep fuel lines from coming loose while an aircraft is in the air.



After you notice a problem with how your gasser operates, its best to remove the carburetor and ensure that no debris is found. Shown here is the carburetor on a Desert Aircraft 120cc engine.

Engine Failure

Gasoline engines have a strong reputation of being reliable. However, proper setup is key for the engine to perform properly. Always ensure the throttle linkage is firmly secured and that the throttle travel volume is similar between the high and the low throttle setting. A reliable idle and a smooth transition to maximum power is also mandatory.

A variety of synthetic oils exist today that have a recommended mix ratio of 100:1. It is extremely important to precisely measure the oil and gasoline quantities. Always go through the proper engine break-in process and if an engine is not performing as desired, don't attempt to fly the aircraft. Also use fresh fuel and high-quality fuel filters to ensure that debris does not find its way to the carburetor. While all giant-scale gasoline engines will exhibit some level of vibration, excessive vibration is typically caused by an unbalanced propeller or an engine that is inadequately secured. Always check the engine is properly mounting bolts and that the firewall is properly glued in place.

When an engine abruptly quits, you have to react quickly. Get the nose down relation to the horizon and keep the airspeed at a moderate setting to avoid a tip stall. Speed is important! Occasionally, the engine will quit when the aircraft is too far from the runway or too low to the ground. If this occurs, quickly observe the surroundings to find an area that is flat and safe for the model. Don't try to stretch the approach! Attempt to land the aircraft in that area with a minimal flight speed as it contacts the ground. For a giant aerobatic model, flaring the aircraft at a 20-degree angle of attack before it touches the ground will help minimize any damage.

When an engine failure does occur, like the left engine on this twin, a pilot must be prepared to execute an emergency landing without hesitation. (Photo by David Hart)

Always perform a visual inspection on certain critical areas, like the elevator joiner on this beautiful aircraft. Typically, stress cracks will appear before a given area fails completely.

Despite the fact that structural failures can occur at any time, a pilot must always react with safety as the most important concern. Always keep the aircraft away from the crowd and make every last effort to land the aircraft. (Photo by David Hart)

Final thoughts

As an RC pilot, you must always be ready for the unexpected, as a failure can occur at any point during the flight. Try to figure out what’s wrong, make your decisions quickly and maintain airspeed. The best way to avoid problems in the air is to set up your airplane and its equipment properly while still on the workbench. BY JOHN GLEZELLIS

Updated: September 14, 2025 — 2:02 PM

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Anwsers to Rege’s Test Pilot

Answers for the end of newsletter:

1) D.helicopter
2) The British Gloster Meteor accomplished its first victory on August 4, 1944, when it downed aa German V-1 buzz bomb. America's first jet fighter was the Bell P-59A Aircomet, which made it's maiden flight on October 1,1942, but did not see combat.

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****** Till next month may all your landings be wheels down. ******