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THE LEADING EDGE

The Newsletter Of Greensboro Radio Aero Modelers #481

WELCOME TO SUMMER 2026!

Hello Grams! What a winter it has been! Spring is just around the corner and its time to get to the field. Take this time to check your aircraft for regular winter maintenance. We've included a spring preflight checklist on page two that should help you get up and flying safely again in no time flat!





NOTE FROM THE PRES:

As we move into the flying Season, I'd like to thank each of you for being a member of GRAMS, a fantastic group of R/C Flying Family of Friends. Or as Roy Johnson calls it, "Grams Field of Dreams".

Think "Safety First" for 2026.
Then have fun and FLY FLY!!!

UPCOMING EVENTS!

April 4, 2026 Club Meeting/Spring Cleanup

April 11, 2026: 5th Annual "Spring Fun Fly"

May 30, 2026: 5thAnnual "Warbirds & Classics"

WWW.GRAMSRC.ORG 7790 Dogett Rd, Browns Summit, NC. 27214

Seasonal Model Checklist

Model _____ Date _____

Finish		
☐	Covering	Check fabric/covering for loose seams, fraying, tightness, and pulling free from structure.
☐	Fiberglass	Check for cracking, delaminating, and durability.
☐	Paint	Check for chipping, cracking, lifting, and touch up any hanger rash.
☐	Markings	Double check all markings if not painted on model to make sure they are not lifting.
Airframe		
☐	General Structure	Check all exposed internal structure elements are secure including servo trays, exposed formers, wing bolt plates, etc.
☐	Control Surfaces	Make sure all control surfaces are tight but not binding, and move within the needed range of motion.
☐	Hinges/Linkages	Verify that hinges are secure and none are broken or worn. Replace if needed. Verify all linkages are secure and not looser “sloppy”.
☐	Balance	Verify center of gravity (CG) and lateral balance.
☐	Contact Info	Make sure your contact information is inside the aircraft.
☐	Other	Make sure all hatches, access panels, and cowl fasteners are secure and not worn/stripped.
☐	Cowl/Canopy	Make sure cowl and canopy are secure and not cracked or working loose.
Landing Gear		
☐	General	Check general condition of landing gear / retracts for proper operation and clearance.
☐	Wheels	Inspect and verify they spin freely and check for tightness of wheel collars/nuts.
☐	Alignment	Verify all wheels track correctly.
☐	Air system	Verify air system holds air in both retract positions (if installed).
Fuel System		
☐	Fuel Tank	Check for leaks and check front screw for tightness. Verify fuel tank is secure in aircraft and that the clunk moves freely. Replace internal lines if necessary.
☐	Fuel Lines	Check for leaks and/or blockage. Replace if necessary.
☐	Filter/Pump	Check for stoppage. Clean or replace if necessary.
Engine & Propeller		
☐	Mounting	Make sure motor / engine is secured to mount.
☐	Muffler	Mounted securely and not leaking around exhaust manifold.
☐	Engine/Motor	Verify engine/motor is operating properly and safely.
☐	Propeller	Check for nicks or cracks and check propeller balance before mounting on engine.
☐	Spinner/Nut	Check condition and tightness.
Radio / Electrical		
☐	Servos	Verify all servos are securely mounted to the aircraft, operating properly, not binding, and servo arms secure.
☐	Receiver	Ensure it is mounted securely but protected by foam. Check antenna to ensure it’s properly routed and secure.
☐	Switch(s)	Ensure they are functioning properly. Old switches can have worn contacts that lead to power interruption.
☐	Battery	Cycle and check charge level and capacity and replace if necessary.
☐	Extensions/Leads	Check all connectors and wires for fraying or breaks.
☐	Range Check	Range check model at flying field before flying it.

“Douglas Skyraider - A Tribute To My Son”
Contributing Article By Steve Ort

Once again Duane has requested an article, I am honored to oblige.
After kicking the tires some I have decided to go back a few years and present a build that is very dear to me. Thinking that Duane may ask for another article in the future, I have some others in reserve I will present in later newsletters.

The short story is that my son’s favorite warbird was the Skyraider. My son, now deceased and I discussed building a Ziroli version on several occasions but never took the time to really make that happen. After his passing, I decided to build one and use his favorite paint scheme as a tribute dedicated to him.

Should anyone be interested in the full build story, there is a thread on RCScaleBuilder.com
RCSCALEBUILDER.COM

After purchasing the plans and parts from Mr. Ziroli, I started by cutting all of my own parts. There are laser cutters out there that I could have purchased the cut parts from but part of the enjoyment is cutting my own and selecting the proper wood for each part. The laser cutters of course do not take the time for proper wood selection and they do not use aircraft plywood for the critical parts such as firewalls and wing mounting supports, etc., they use light ply which
cuts easily with their lasers. AD-1 Skyraider Plan - Nick Ziroli Scale Plans

Building began in January, 2021, one year after my son’s passing, with conclusion and maiden flight November 7, 2022. As typically is the story with Mr. Ziroli’s designs it flies great. With this one, it is the best flying WW2 plane I have ever had the opportunity to fly. There are simply no bad habits, it virtually flies like a trainer. The materials and equipment are:

Balsa USA – wood, DLE-85 – engine, Sierra Giant Scale – retracts, Graupner – radio equipment, Hitec – servos, Ziroli Plans – fiberglass cloth, Z-Poxy – epoxy finishing resin,
Klass Kote – 2K paint, Warbird Pilots,
Callie Graphics

Following are some pictures of the finished plane taken at the RAMS field just prior to the maiden. It now has a flew flights on it but will not be flown a lot. I am thinking of building another one with a different scheme and hang this one from the ceiling in my shop in memory of my son. I sure do miss him.






409
AK
37543
NAVY


AK
409
NAVY



Note: Pilot Mountain in the background at RAMS.

Below is the chosen paint scheme for #2 should I have the opportunity to build it. (I do like camouflage 😋) The full scale is now located in a museum near Houston, TX, I have a commercial airline pilot friend that recently moved there from Dubai that has invited me to visit and stay with them sometime this summer and visit the museum. Time will tell. Please don't be misled, the nose art is referring to Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam's President at the time of the Vietnam war.





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“An Event At CCRC”
Contributing Article By Hanson Gaugler

Way back in September 2025, I ventured to CCRC to attend one of their events. I didn’t want to fly, just take some pictures and see how it went. It was nice to attend an event where I could eat, take pictures, and just enjoy the weather, the people and the flying exhibitions. They had a good turnout and great weather. As with most of these events, they welcomed everyone and made me feel right at home. The old timers had a lot of stories to tell and liked to tell them. Speaking of story tellers, Mike Martin showed up. He did not fly and I think he came mostly for the comradery and the lunch.

The highlight of the event were the contests they put on. They included: a taxi slalom, spot landing, timed flight (2 minutes), and longest duration flight without using engine power after a short climb. They had two categories, electric and gas. Surprisingly, only one competitor participated in the gas category and he won each event!

Like the events GRAMS sponsors, it requires a lot of work to put it all together and get the show on the road. Sherry Johnson provided a list of the people who made it all work.

CDs: Jesse Brinson and Robert Still
Lunch preparation: Nan Brinson
Grill Master: Mike Smoot
Morning pastries: Penny Smoot
Kitchen Crew: Nan Brinson, Summer Curry, Penny Smoot
Judges: Robert Still, Jesse Brinson, David Johnson, Mike Smoot
Registration: Marshal King

It was fun to watch the various contests. I was a little surprised how challenging the taxi slalom was. A lot of pilots either knocked over a cone or even missed a turn, lots of penalty seconds added to the time. Of course, while flying the two-minute flight, the sidelines were shouting out numbers to further complicate the pilot’s ability to concentrate and judge his flight time. All in good fun.

Trophy winners were: Chuck Fruitt, Joe Walton, Owen Shore, Evan Klein, and Covarrubias. But, I think everyone who showed up were winners on that fine September Day.


NEW
FLYING FIELD OF
CENTRAL CAROLINA
R/C MODELERS
SITORS WELCOME




DRINKS $1.00
COKE DIET COKE COKE ZERO
CAFFEINE FREE DIET COKE
CHEERWINE CHEERWINE ZERO
PEPSI DIET PEPSI MTN DEW
DR. PEPPER DIET DR. PEPPER
ORANGE CRUSH BARQ'S ROOT BEER
WATER
CHIPS $1.00
LAYS PLAIN, LAYS BBQ, DORITOS
ICE CREAM $1.00
$10 Fun Fly Special
Cheeseburger OR
(2) Hot Dogs
with all the fixin's
Baked Beans, Ramen Noodle Salad
Caramel Wine Cake
Drink
CCRCM EVENT MENU
HOT DOG $ 3.00
CHEESEBURGER $ 5.00
BAKED BEANS $ 2.00









“My Winter Build Project”
Contributing Article By Steve Vergamini

Many of you have seen me at our Electric Fridays flying a Flex Innovations RV8—a EPP foam plane with a 72” wingspan. It’s a terrific plane and I’ve really enjoyed it. I like it so well, I sprung for the HUGE Flex RV8 70. This is a 35% scale plane, with a wingspan of 120” and a fuselage length of 72”. This is a balsa and Ultracote plane with built-up wings, fiberglass cowl & wheel pants, carbon fiber landing gear and 2 piece wing. It is a beautifully finished plane—the paint and Ultracote are really well done. The plane is designed for a DA70 gas engine or a 60cc electric motor. I’m going to use a powerful Hacker Q80 electric motor, which produces 5500 watts. The plane will use a 12S battery pack, a high-end 160amp ESC and be guided by a Futaba radio. It’ll have full telemetry while in flight, able to monitor battery usage and remaining battery life. The plane is exceptionally well-manufactured, everything fits perfectly. It should be ready for the maiden by April 1st—I’m really looking forward to it!!

As an aside, these pics are taken inside my house. Our temperatures have been so cold lately, I couldn’t get the epoxy to set up in my shop!! So, I had to move assembly into the house.







“Struttin Your Stuff”
Contributing Article By Mike Martin

Strut Your Stuff

Before there was the yellow and silver Sport Cub with all the autopilot stuff, there was a red and white version that you could get in a Plug-N-Play version where you could use your own receiver. I was hooked as soon as this little guy hit the shelves!

I got it home and put it together. I was immediately disappointed in the wing struts! They flexed! They flapped! They were not cool! You can even see it in the picture, taken just before I flew it the first time. After my maiden flight I decided I had to fix this!



The Idea

If you are an old builder you will remember or recognize the K & S Metals displays in the hobby shop. They had sheets, square and round tubes, angles, rods, wire, foil, and other shapes. They were made of brass, aluminum, stainless steel, and copper. One of those other tube shapes is an airfoil that is perfect to make struts! They have these in different sizes, too. This article describes how I used their airfoil-shaped tubing to make new struts! The process can be used on the red and white Sport Cub or the newer yellow and silver version. They are the same airframes. Actually, you could do this with other models with struts that attach like those on the Sport Cub.

Materials:

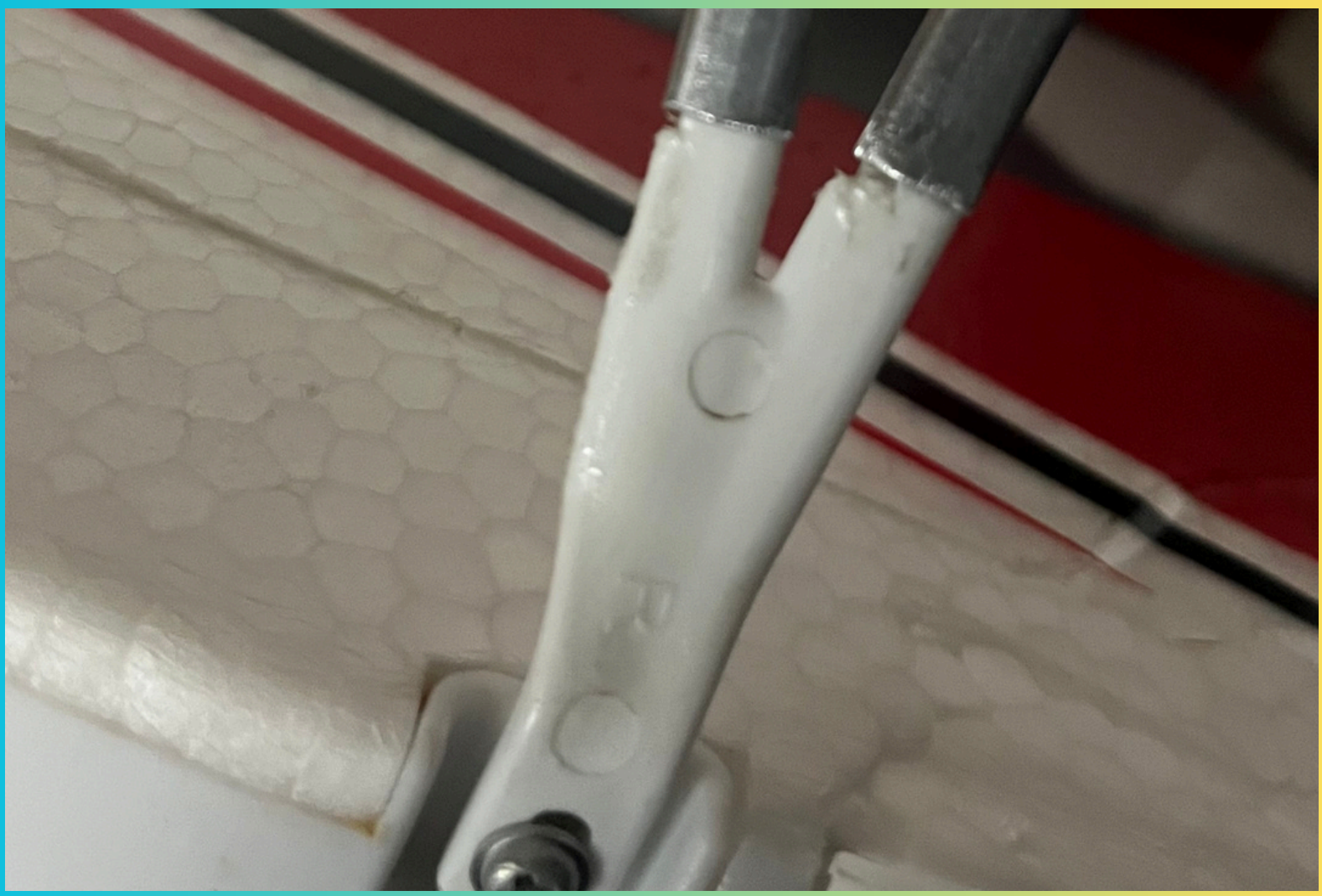
Anderson RC may have the tubing. If not, they can be ordered from www.ksmetals.com. I used their aluminum airfoil tubing, 1/4” wide. You will also need .108" dia. carbon fiber rod and Foam-Tac or a similar glue that will stay flexible. I got enough tubing to make 2-3 sets in case I blew it. The tubing is very easy to kink and bend. I also got an extra set of struts in case I messed that part up. This is not my first rodeo…

Start Struttin’

1. Remove the struts from the plane. There is a left and right. The end attached to the fuse has “R” and “L” molded into it. Be sure you keep up with that. Note that the struts are one piece and “V” shaped, with wing panels ends and a “Y” end at the fuse.

2. Cut the existing wing panel strut ends to 2" long.

3. Cut the fuse "Y" strut end 2.5" long.



4. Cut the airfoil aluminum to 13.125" and 12.625". You need a pair of each length. I used a fine-tooth X-Acto razor saw. Anything else will crush the tube. Deburr and clean out the tubing afterwards.



5. Cut the carbon rods, 11.25" and 10.625". You need a pair of each of these.

6. Measure 1" from the end of each plastic strut and mark it. Using a knife and sandpaper make the ends fit snugly into the airfoil tubing. Cut along the trailing edge of the plastic strut parts and leave the thicker edge. Be careful test-fitting the tubing. It's fragile…don't ask me how I know!

7. Fit the carbon rods. Sand or pull strands from the carbon rods carefully. Avoid breathing the dust and getting splinters! These need to fit snugly but you have to be able to get them all the way inside the leading edge of the airfoil tubing. You should be able to push them through to the other end. Note that the short carbon rod goes in the shorter airfoil strut. The longer parts go together, too.

9. Once the carbon rod fits, assemble the struts. Dry fit everything. Screw them into place carefully, loosely making sure nothing is pressing, bending, or twisting the wings under stress. If it is, trim the ends of the original plastic parts if needed. I used a Sharpie to make marks on the strut parts and the tubing when I dry fitted stuff so I'd know what went where later.

10. When everything fits, use Foam-Tac to glue the rods into the tubing. I shot the glue into the tubing on both ends and then pushed the carbon into it. Put glue on the strut ends at the wing panel ends and at the "Y" end. Remember the leading edge of the tubing for each strut faces forward. Pay attention to the orientation of the strut ends using your marked up parts. Work Slowly and do one side at a time.

11. When you get everything glued and cured you can clean the tubing with some steel wool or a Scotch-Brite pad to make them look like brushed metal, or prep them for painting. I left mine raw.

When you get these done, the wings will be more rigid. More importantly, it will just look cool! You can get different widths and wall thicknesses of tubing. I used the 1/4" width because it was close to the stock struts and I knew I was going to have to cut things to fit snug. I think they have 3/8" and 5/16". They would look OK as well but you will have to fill in around the strut ends and use a larger diameter carbon rod.

Enjoy! If anyone has any questions, or wants help with this, just let me know. I can meet you at the field with my plane....if it warms up!

Mike
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Winter activities and moving forward into 2026!

By Duane

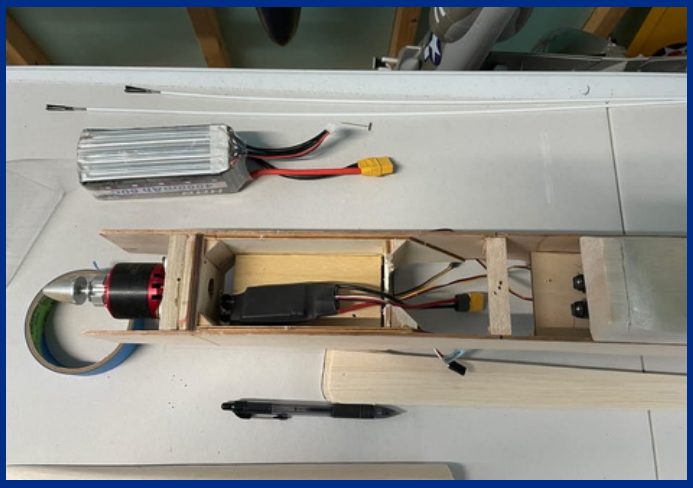
In July/August of 2025, We moved forward with the planning and sanctioning of the 2026 event schedule. As you see on the third page, 2026 is a year of many opportunities to come out and join the fantastic time that we always have together! There is a schedule posted on the shelter wall and also flyers for each event that include better detail about all events for 2026. Hope to see each of you there at all the events!

The Charter and Gold Leader Club status is up for renewal in March and we've just received the paperwork for that from the AMA. So this is currently in the works.

Many of you have been inspecting your aircraft and also building new ones for 2026! (Looks like Santa Clause was good to all of us this year!)

Below are some photos of a Jim Widdis's Balsa USA Smoothie he's been building as a winter project. Looking Fantastic Jim! Jim also has these posted on Facebook.







Roy Johnson had a very successful Maiden and continues to enjoy his new P-51! I cant wait to see him fly it at the warbirds event! Great going Roy! (Easy to see that Roy is one very happy young man!) (Preston Allen in the background seems pretty pleased also)



I cannot offer enough thanks to all that sent in articles, photos and ideas that contributed to and help create this First edition “Leading Edge” for 2026! Fly safe and see each of you at the field soon!

2026 Events

GRAMS Greensboro Radio AeroModelers
"Flying High Since 1959"
AMA Chartered Club #481
www.gramsrc.org

AMA ACADEMY OF MODEL AERONAUTICS

April 11,2026 — 5th Annual "Spring Fun Fly" #19164

May 30,2026 — 5th Annual "Warbirds & Classics" #18948

June 6, 2026 — 4th Annual "Triad Spring R/C Celebration (at WSRC)

June 19/July 17/ September 18,2026 — "Electric Evenings"

June 20, 2026 — "Cub Day" (At: CCRC)

August 8, 2026 — 1st Annual National "Model Aviation Day"#19122 (w/CCRC) (At GRAMS)

September 5, 2026 — 4th Annual "Fall R/C Celebration #19183 (w/WSRC) (At GRAMS)

October 17, 2026 — 3rd Annual "Founders Celebration" #19178

November 27, 2026 — 10th Annual "Black Friday Fun Fly"

December 15, 2026 — "GRAMS Christmas Dinner" (At Casa Vallarta Restaurant)