



Old Fokkers

Futaba's authorised Australian agent, Brian Simpson, has transferred his RC Wholesale sole agency agreement to Hobbies Australia. Congratulations.

Brian's previous RCM News magazine advertising account and editorial support provided me with the latest product. Not once was I ever told how I should report it. That puts him up there with Carl Melvey of Dawn Trading fame. Two big players who never tried it on and understood what a hand shake deal meant. Hand shake deals and LAME was something Brian Simpson had in common with my Father too. Licensed Aircraft Maintenance Engineer. Dad was airframe, piston engine and gas turbine. Brian helicopter. For the benefit of those who don't know, signing off work not done as per the book could be subject to Criminal Prosecution. Both Dad and Brian applied that background to their model aircraft and business operations.

When I was a teenager and started competing in aerobatics and pylon, Dad being current F3a Champ, had the best radio control flying hobby shop in Australia. We sold RC flying. Not plastics. No trains, slot cars, dinky toys or dolls houses.

A few years after Sandown 2015, when I bet the Australian hobby industry would support me, I catered specifically for Futaba owners with a wide range of product in stock here, in Melbourne. Which could be purchased online, or in person, by appointment. It was not a drop ship business. It operated from secure "bricks and mortar style" commercial premises. The new agents have their own ideas about only supporting bricks and mortar businesses. Nice idea but as far as aeroplane and heli segments go, that sentiment is decades too late. Dad moved Flite-line Models from its traditional bricks n mortar retail outlet, on a typical high street address, to a light industrial location. In 1978.



1972 - Flite-line Models Clarendon St Sth Melbourne

Nick Politini, owner of Hearn's Hobbies and the Hobbyman, and David May, owner of Metro Hobbies have recently done the same. The last two big hobby retailers left in Melbourne. I met both after Publications and Exhibitions took on the aeroplanes for its Train and Hobby Expo at Sandown. The pair have excellent retail outlets yet both paid lip service to the concept of selling Futaba and getting behind Sandown. Couldn't see the value.

David was up front and told me he saw that as contrary to the Plastics Modelling Expo held at Sandown in June. Yep, the scale championships. Displays of kits assembled and painted by a bunch of old fat fokkers. The highest speed by any plane achieved at that event was the car trip to the venue. Politini on the other hand entertained the idea. In 2017 he was happy to have me hang my 220 kph Cassutt racer above the counter at Hearn's Hobbies. Flinders St Melbourne CBD. Hearn Hobbies F1 Air Race. Had a pretty nice ring to it. The staff were rapt. Nick, not so happy next year when I asked a few hundred bucks for air race naming rights. Even less happy when I refused to sign off as Display Director for the drone racing. Most of that radio gear was not C Ticked.

Existing Hobbies Australia dealers were being supplied with Futaba but after three weeks since the change, I would have thought contacting Futaba dealers would be a priority. I've heard nothing. I could be wrong, but, gut feeling is that "Victoria's largest Futaba Air stockist" operating from a large retail storage and business hub, will have a problem opening a trading account. Not a problem. I've done my time. Changing of the guard also represents a change for me. I've decided not to bother with the RC hobby business anymore. Remaining surface product and air radios are being cleared out. The rest of my investment in bits n pieces has been stored. I have all the Futaba gear I need for personal use and commercial RC flying.

Futaba is good business. Virtually no promotion it started paying its way. All I did was stock the brand. Advertising in Wingspan may be free, thank you, but MAAA policy of not making it available on the website misses this point. Get



2024 - Metro Hobbies Station St Box Hill



Cassutt's Rule

1972

one new young bloke in and he usually brings two or three mates. I've tried numerous times to subscribe to Wingspan and I never get it. Ditto for banner ads. Tried getting on their too. OMP seems to have that tied up. Perhaps the new people might have more success with the world leading brand.

The only traditional model plane specialist left I can recommend for Futaba expertise is Model Sports in Wollongong NSW. Dave McFarlane is a highly qualified F3a and IMAC competitor. Known the McFarlanes since I was a teenager.

BIG EVENTS

Festival of Aeromodelling is now the biggest event in the country. In some ways I liken it to an old fashioned MAAA nationals where one gets to see a wide range of aeromodelling pursuits. Not a competition though. Victoria had its chance. Promoting the hobby at Sandown was my long term vision/ dream if you will.

Neil Tank warned me about VMAA. He was right. It chickened out on the ten grand spend. My plan was to find someone and hand it over to someone qualified to run the event. That would free up my time, because I never quite got the chance to create the sixty second commercial needed to knock on doors and attract an overall sponsor.

Keith Quigg put his hand up to take on the event. November is the deadline to commit to the rent for the race-track. Unfortunately we both ran headlong into dealing with VMAA president Reeve Marsh. Keith went first. Deadline approaching, no actual answers forthcoming. Keith bailed out. Good decision. I suffered the same all talk no action and came to the same conclusion. Not at VMAA meetings. No this was at Train and Hobby Show meetings.

Just before Easter I learnt that a Melbourne based club member has been offering to print RCM and/or C Tick labels for members. RC Wholesale spends a considerable sum of money to have those labels applied at the Futaba factory. In



2026 - Metro Hobbies Notting Hill



2014



2016

the event of a large insurance claim, transmitter serial numbers will expose that fraud. MAAA published in Wingspan that Affiliate Members might cause problem with insurance coverage with non compliant radio gear. How I dealt with that was published in the rules, on one page, at the speedweekend. Melbourne website. Club presidents would be well advised to seek independent legal as to potential liability of committee members. That touchy subject was covered in my March and February newsletters, but it would not sit well with me not to mention it, one more time. Things change. The new awesome is not the awesome I grew up with. Air racing still has unrealised potential, but to watch it dwindle away to the present scene has been really hard. I've finally convinced myself to park my racing planes and do something else.

Dealing with amateur model clubs a constant impediment. Everyone's an expert, except I don't see them putting up meaningful dollars. The Monty Tyrrell at PDARCS is a fund raiser for the next F4C scale team. For minimal outlay the scale air styled event would shit twenty grand in. I trial closed that SIG with a \$1,000 offer. Wrong type of scale I guess. Perhaps it's my surname. That old chestnut.

Whether it be public display or specialist competitions, meaningful sponsorship from the RC industry left the building a few years ago. Old fashioned print magazine advertising is what got Cobram and Sandown off the ground.

Should there be a younger person or two thinking to have a go, and not wish to go cap in hand for a paltry amount of VMAA/MAAA money, the events page at www.rcmnews.com has a very brief summary of what it's like building big events in Victoria. Not bitter and twisted, yet again just reporting the more things change the more they stay the same.

Cassutt's rule! S J Green. Old Fokker Aus 5932.



2026 - Hobbyman Hallam



1972



Wrong type of “scale” but the public don’t know

Cobram Air Races

What started with a hand shake agreement between Bryan Harper and myself, the Cobram Air Races grew from nothing. This year it was expected that entries would reach one hundred. We thought Cobram would top ten grand after expenses. Pretty good for a small country town. And it only tied up the field for two days. Substantial grants extended to the Moira Model Aircraft Club by Council, were awarded on the basis of the Club's five year plan, and the Air Races being an ongoing annual event. Field improvements were an integral part of attracting competitors to Cobram. It's now a great place to fly.

How the members, and what's left of the committee, arrived at the decision to cancel the Air Races is a mystery to me. I thought that the three-odd grand I put into the event would have at least warranted a phone call. The only contact I have had received from the club since Bryan Harper resigned as President in December, was a text message received in February. On the opposite page is an explanation on the club website. If the club is so enamoured with MAAA procedures, why would no-one would sign the Display Directors form?

Adjacent to the flying field is the local tip and a motocross track. The motocross club is looking to extend its track. Now that the club has duded the Council, should a problem occur, members should direct their comments or criticisms to the three slack-jawed yokels who used the insurance argument back in November to knobble the Air Races. The ones who don't understand how to read a balance sheet or why a bank balance increases. There are other reasons, such as duty of care, why the other members of the committee have resigned.



The additional cost of a \$1200 Lloyds of London event insurance policy was more than easily covered. Some \$2900 was raised selling advertising signs to twelve local businesses along with Fisher Paykel sponsorship.



Some club members are under the impression that the Air Races only made three grand. Tractor must have been donated.

Now that the Public Officer has to be the Club Secretary perhaps the member who persists with smoking in the pits could volunteer for that position. Then he can be held responsible for his own actions. The scrutineer whose decisions I had to override, and be responsible for, in 2012 will have to gain a better understanding of how Insurance and the Law works if he chooses to act as Display Director. Complying with MOP's designed to lower insurance costs can compromise safety at times. These factors can be mutually exclusive.

The reason I have been banging on about MOP 019 7(a) for the past twelve months is quite simple. In the event of a catastrophic failure, and the Display Director being required to give evidence at a formal inquiry, how would the procedures that he or she employed minimise the risk of a pilot losing control or orientation be explained? If on the receiving end of an aggressive barrister's line of questioning, would that wording come back to haunt him? I have one reader who has been through that process and it was awful. And he was the one actually hit by the model!

One of my advertisers is a retired CEO of a major insurance company. When someone with those credentials says "you'd have to have rocks in your head to sign that MOP", that's worthy of consideration. The wording of that particular procedure may, or may not, be legal. How would I know? I'm neither a lawyer nor a judge. Mid February I received advice from the MAAA Secretary that answered most of my concerns about how to cover myself running an open competitive event, as a public display. It now seems okay to me, but as a layman, why doesn't MAAA have a published procedure on what is expected for a Display Director? After all, there are procedures for everything else. If it had done so when that MOP was changed, we would still have an event.

There's a bit more to running a club than just standing back and criticising! Just as there is a bit more to making a quid out of public displays than just turning up on the day. Good people make things look easy.

Under Bryan's stewardship, the Moira Club grew from twenty five members, with just enough in the bank to finance the fuel bill for a Victa lawn mower. To a membership now hovering around fifty. As at November 2012 there was enough money in the bank to fund both the 2013 race meeting and the club's annual operating expenses. Even after a tractor was paid for. The cost of the alternate event insurance policy was also covered by Brian's fantastic salesmanship. The signs along the pit fence promoting local business paid for that.

I would like to thank Bryan Harper, Chris Graham, Bruce Hobley and Frank Retke for making it so easy to get that event off the ground. Also to Colin Booth, who is a tireless worker. Bad luck guys.

www.mmac.asn.au

UNEDITED TXT FROM CLUB WEBSITE
As of the 10/2/2013 Club Meeting (our first for the year) the Moira Model Aircraft Club put to a vote the air race situation. Unfortunately due to the insurance issues (maaa) it was voted that the club should not go down the path of obtaining another insurer just for the air race.

We feel that there are far too many gray areas that are left to interpri-

tation and potentially not a very nice outcome. We feel that it would be unfair to all the sponsors if we were to make it a "closed to public" event, as the whole purpose was to encourage new membership and hold an event for the public to come out and enjoy.

We as a club feel that we are part of a great association (VMAA /

MAAA) and are familiar with the procedures that this governing body has put into place and do not want to break away from this not for one weekend or for any weekend.

I'd like to apologise if we have caused an inconvenience to anyone.

Acting president MMAC
Jason Sagaidak

RCM News Issue 119 May - June 2013 59

Flyboys at Sandown

Aviat 70 was a series of airshows at Moorabbin Airport in the 1970s. Regulations have softened since the P-51D Mustang was cleared for an aerobatic display, to not below 1,500 feet and one low altitude pass at 500 feet agl. Wow! RC Models were a hit with the crowd. One reason being we get up close and personal. There was a break in the program and Dad told me to fly my three channel trainer. A kid doing touch n goes and few loops. Hardly exciting, but talking to people along the fence, they were fascinated. Ever since then, talking to spectators along the fence at the Avalon Airshow and at all of the major motor sport events I flew at, models still are a hit. The public knows they are hard to fly, and land. Even today, they still think of us as tinkering about in the garage to build, then fly our creations. Much like the appeal of the big air races in the golden years of aviation. Often small hometown folk were the heroes against the big boys. We cannot compete against the ground shaking spectacle of the FA 18, but we can certainly produce great economical family entertainment.

At the Exhibition Buildings in Carlton was a huge banner promoting a Quilt Exhibition. My mother is into quilts and the like so in the normal course of events, I would not even dream of casting aspersions against that activity. But really? They do that for quilts? What does aeromodelling do? We do it in the dirt. If your club is thinking of purchasing a flying field or

needs funds for improvements, MAAA funds are available for that purpose and one good display day can go a long way towards repaying the loan. The Monarto field in SA was paid off quite quickly by hosting a number of events. Jet Action was their big one and the club did extremely well to drag people from Adelaide to Murray Bridge. But that is the exception rather than the rule.

Gold coin donations to enter a display day may seem like doing the right thing by the locals, but does low pricing undersell the entertainment value? We got \$10 per head at Cobram, children under 18 free. Put it another way, basically it's \$20 per car. At that price though, the event has to be run snappily. And be entertaining. Scouting the Moira Shire for an alternate venue for the air races, the Cobram Trotting Club is a lovely facility, right in town. Instead of inviting the public out to a venue that is most likely next to a smelly tip, a noisy shooting range, motocross track or dog kennels, why not let them sit down in grandstand comfort. Less work for the members too. No toilets, fences or car parking to worry about. Most country towns have a trotting or horse racing track which can be hired for a very reasonable cost.

And in the city. For example, the LDMFA club, on the outskirts of Melbourne, could hire the Yarra Valley Racecourse for \$3000 for a day. PDARCS could hire the Cranbourne racecourse for a similar amount.



Kids have grown since the year 2000

44 Please tell advertisers you saw it in RCM News

Charge more, get more people, more money for the same result. We look more professional too. Upsizing the wheels on the 40-60 sized models and being a little more choosy with the pilots would be the main operational difference. Small clubs can rally around to find enough qualified pilots and the hobby trade is always keen to help out.

The difference a bit of real estate makes to the general public's perception of model flying is amazing. Allocated a spot in the pits for my models at the 2001 Motor Cycle Grand Prix, the difference in respect the display received from the punters was incredible. Not just the punters either. To this day I still get asked by one of the MCA Trustees, who also happens to be a petrol head, to put on something for the AFL Grand Final. Flying over the roof, towing an advertising banner then descending into the arena seemed perfectly possible to him. Technically possible, with 36 MHz, but who would want to do it? Not me! One idea in the back of my head has been to sell the ad rights to Four n Twenty and do sixteen flying pies. With light weight airframes and electric power being what it is today, one could make a show. Pies decked out in different Footy Club livery. Then smack Collingwood out of the sky.

At most public displays there is just a puny little sign on the side of the road. It's like we don't want to risk being over run by spectators. For the last Cobram Air Races we took out a half page ad in the local paper. Looked great and it really helped build expectation, but a page has so much more impact. But it was a bit beyond the budget.

Air Racing is the one thing that we do that cannot, or should I say is not, replicated in full size anywhere in this country. Whilst I would dearly love to run a Large Scale Air Race in Melbourne, a suitable venue is yet to be found to conduct an open meeting and invite the public along. It is my intention to run another large public display at Sandown Raceway. Fisher & Paykel and Beta Electrical put up a grand for 1st place at Cobram. After witnessing the spectacle at Cobram, Blanco and Harvey Norman will put up \$2000 cash for first place at Sandown. Anyone who tries to get sponsorship will appreciate how hard it is to get cash. Actual folding money. Those who saw the potential from the crowd reaction

Australian Formula 1 Air Race Championship



A thrill for the entire family

Fisher & Paykel

Australia's leading model racing pilots dice 250 kph 55 cc powered Formula 1 scale replicas around the pylons. Airshow - Freestyle Aeros - Jets - Helicopters - Gliders - Combat - Car Races - Boats - Trains - Subs - Meccano - Dolls - Diecast - Rockets

If it floats flies or fangs - be there - one day only
 Sunday January 12th 2014
Sandown Raceway

