



# The *SENIOR PATTERN ASSOCIATION*

Official S I G (Special Interest Group) of AMA

**Dedicated to the building, flying and competition of vintage Pattern model aircraft**

SPA NEWSLETTER [www.seniorpattern.com](http://www.seniorpattern.com) NOV/DEC 2013

## *PRECISION AEROBATICS from PATTERN'S Golden Age*

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## **SPA 2014 SCHEDULE UNDER CONSTRUCTION PLEASE STAND-BY ('till next issue)**



**In all the years of competition flying**, I honestly, cannot recall a more perfect contest season, weather-wise. Only Douglasville, Ga. allowed a "bull session" under a covered area while waiting out a thundershower. I couldn't believe how nice the weather Chief was to us in the SPA East. From the accounts of SPA West, almost the same applies.

The addition of the **ADVANCED** class proved to be more of an attraction than did the B-Novice additional class. Dave Phillips and the Alabaster, AL club promoted an additional 1-day contest on Saturday Nov 9 which was highly successful. The report from Dave and the hosts should appear in this edition. The adrenalin started flowing when us guys in the East read all the accounts and viewed all the photos of the Thunderbirds OPEN in Big-D. Here is another big contest covered in this edition. Honestly, to see SPA growing out West, is a hope and dream of Mickey, our Founder Emeritus and our Board of Directors which include Lindy Quinten, who not only serves as a Board member but doubles as the SPA Website Webmaster. Incidentally, when you direct modelers to our website.....[www.seniorpattern.com](http://www.seniorpattern.com), most of their questions regarding SPA can be answered.

Our Discussion List contains lots of hopes for Christmas presents (new kits, modeling tools and modeling goodies). If you don't belong (to Discussion List) just ask an SPA member in your club about joining. You may do so from within the SPA website.

While on the subject of Christmas and New Years, let me be one of the first to wish you and your family a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. 2014 will be the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the current 2 year cycle, IE: Same patterns and same officers, etc. for 2014 as this year. All the Competitors Guides, pattern call sheets, etc from 2013 remain effective. 2014 will be an election of officers year, naming of a pattern committee who will probably include some maneuvers that extend beyond January 1976 and preclude the "turnaround" era. The new pattern committee will be named at the annual Business meeting of the BOD the last weekend of January or first one in February of 2014. This will give them almost a full year to gauge your input, practice the suggested patterns among themselves before deciding on the 2015-16 schedules.

For suggestions on contest dates, etc. please be in touch with Dan Dougherty, our CSP (chairman special projects) for he is well along in his scheduling of events for the coming cycle.

Hope you find it easy to determine your "winter build" for the New Year which will be here, probably just in time to motivate that "rush" to complete the new model and the accessories you plan to add to your flight box in 2K14. My sincerest thanks to all that have made 2013 a "treasure" in our cache of SPA memories. ....BRUCE



**Join our Discussion list from within the webpage or inform any officer and we'll "sign you up". It's like a gigantic Mailing-list, but at NO CHARGE. A service to membership and potentials from SPA.**



**Bruce & Jane Underwood**

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## ***A Great Year... for SPA...by Jeff Owens***

**The year started off slowly** with the first two SPA East contests being cancelled, but it picked up rapidly from there. Knoxville, Hodges, Hotlanta, Chattanooga, and the Masters in Asheville made for a tremendous season in the East. Not to be outdone, the action was fast and furious in the West with contests in Texas and Arkansas and culminating with the new SPA Open in October. This season has seen its share of new faces, in addition to the tried and true road warriors. For SPA to grow it is vital that we encourage new members. To aid in this effort, several Novice/B-Novice contests are being planned for next spring, so start working on your fellow club members to get them to give SPA-style pattern a try! Dan Dougherty has taken over the scheduling of contests for next year and he is getting an early start on lining up a great list. He is busy trying to establish new contacts to expand the list of sites available during the season. All of this bodes well for next year.

The off-season is a time to reflect, regroup, and (re)build in preparation for next year. Already we have seen a number of winter projects being listed on the discussion list. Perhaps the most unusual is Kevin Clark's Sunray biplane. I'm looking forward to seeing that one! It is also a time when we can reflect on what went right and what might be improved. To that end, I encourage all SPA members to contact the elected or appointed members of the Board of Directors with any questions or suggestions you might have. You can send me email at [jf\\_owens@comcast.net](mailto:jf_owens@comcast.net).

As I mentioned in the last newsletter, I would like to use this column as a sounding board to solicit input on various items that come up from time to time. In the last issue I raised three items: the use of the term "Novice" in our two entry level classes, the question of why only the Expert class has an age division, and the absence of a rule mandating a cut-off year for our pattern sequences. In what follows I will summarize and respond to some of the points being raised.

Regarding the use of the term "Novice", it has been suggested that experienced fliers may balk at this term, even though they may be flying in their first pattern contest. There really hasn't been much reaction to this yet, perhaps since so many of us progressed through AMA Pattern when the term was used there, and it feels familiar. Some point out that if this is someone's first pattern contest, then that person is a novice at pattern flying. Perhaps so, but names do affect some people more strongly than others, so keep the comments coming.

Most members recognize the impracticality of having age divisions in each class – there would need to be too many trophies! It would be like Lake Wobegon on the PBS show *Prairie Home Companion* – we would all be above average! On the other hand, there is some support for another age division in perhaps one more class, but no agreement on which one! Right now the numbers just aren't there to support it. But, let's keep exchanging views!

On the issue of allowable maneuvers, I have encountered some misconceptions. Some have claimed that maneuvers after 1976 were designed for planes with tuned piped and retracts and therefore our planes could not fly them well. Actually, if you look at the maneuver sequences, most of the maneuvers in the late 70s and early 80s, i.e., pre-Turnaround, were the same or similar to the ones we fly now. Tuned pipes were introduced to give pilots an edge – much like some SPA members prefer the OS91/95 4-strokes. Our planes weren't designed for them, but some perceive a power advantage. Think of maneuvers as sequences of rolls, straight lines, and segments of loops. Some interesting variations were added after 1976 and it would be a shame to arbitrarily exclude them from consideration. We already have vertical half rolls in the Figure M with half rolls and the Top Hat. Maneuvers like the Double Stall Turn, Figure M with 1/4 rolls, Triangle Rolling Loop, and Square Loop with 1/2 Rolls don't require any more power. Some, like the Downward Aileron Turn and Downward 4-Point Roll require less. The 4-strokes would be good at these last two because of the increased downline braking compared to 2-strokes. The main point here is that we do not have a cut-off date in the rules for maneuver choice and 1/1/76 has been used by choice. We have the option to choose "SPA-like" maneuvers from later years in order to add flexibility in sequence design (we sometimes run out of choices that flow well for an upwind or downwind maneuver) and to add some fresh interest and challenges for the pilots. As always, please let me know your views on this or any other topic.

***"Be Cool"...Be Part of the "In Crowd".....Fly SPA!!!***

# Texas Wings **Sept 7th & 8th**

By... Tim Reed



**17 registered participants with 16 pilots flying** enjoyed the fellowship and fun at the 2013 Texas Wings contest Saturday in 98 degree temperatures with a mild wind and a few clouds 3 rounds were completed with a single flight line. 14 pilots returned on Sunday to finish round 4 and 5. No planes were lost and everyone had a great time.

<b>Class</b>	<b>First</b>	<b>Second</b>	<b>Third</b>
<b>B-Novice</b>	Frank Reed	Greg Fierst	Charles Dixon
<b>Novice</b>	Gary Nelson	Tony Stelly	Tim Reed
<b>Sportsman</b>	Gary Alphin	Mark Ehlers	Johathan Efinger
<b>Advanced</b>	Ken Knotts	Michael Clements	Chris Berardi
<b>Expert</b>	Dave Dingman	Blake Arnold	

The new novices all did really well for the limited practice they got and since they are fairly new pilots. Greg won the engine raffle taking home the NovaRossi and I think him and Tony have come up with a plane that will do the engine justice. Charles was flying with a Tiger2 which is a good starter plane. Frank Halpin made it out despite some problems, and won the Dirty Birdy raffle. Mark Ehlers won the NovaRossi 60CR and muffler combo and Greg won the NovaRossi 60CF. We had a few small raffle items that we did not get to so we'll pass those on to the finals at Thunderbirds.

I had a lot of support from Wings this year

as well as Terry from Thunderbirds. We had Elton, Billy, Gabe, Terry, Terry, Jeanne, Brian, Joel, Tonia as well as other Wings members that stopped in to help. It was AWESOME, they helped so much!

My good friend Rod Balch sang for us at a great Mexican food restaurant. Rod is doing well on the charts 6 spots above his inspiration Bob Dylan. I know it's not the norm but the last 3 events set the entertainment value high. Saturday was a partly cloudy so we got some relief from the sun. We had a small microburst blow through from a rain cloud about 20 miles away that blew a tent over while Frank Reed was flying but he was not phased.

We had a couple Wings members sitting behind the judges and learning about scoring and watching the pilots and it opened their eyes to numerous things. A couple people were only able to make the event on Saturday so I held the raffle that evening. We had hamburgers and hot dogs for lunch and Tonia and her sister made great potato salad

Sunday we had clear skies and a slight breeze. We finished our rounds and had hot dogs, sausage links, and 'hamburger bits'. We lost our original photos so we took our individual photos with our group photo before lunch. The award presentation was made and we concluded with a volunteer raffle for those that helped out for 2 SPA West hats that I had made for the 2013 season.

Thanks to all for the great help and to all the pilots for coming out and supporting the event!

(Left) This is an intriguing picture—what's going on here anyway? Looks like brothers act like brothers at any age. Bros Frank and Tim Reed are either re-enacting a "midair", or some other kind of kidding around. Wonder if they're making "airplane noises"? (kidding—ed.) (Rt.) Meanwhile, Michael Clements works on his Dirty Birdy.



# *"The Masters"...Asheville, N.C.*

*The SPA EAST Masters Leaves the Tri-State Region for the First Time*

**The weekend of Sept. 14 & 15, the SPA EAST spotlight was on the mountains of North Carolina,** Asheville, for the 2013 MASTERS championships. This season-ending festival was more than just a contest but the EPITOME of this season's events.

The weekend opened with the traditional "Wilson Welcome"....at Duane and Penny's lovely home where Penny was joined by Dan Dougherty and Mary Nessler serving that delicious "low country boil". Loads of "fellowshippin", storytelling, consumption of loads of food and drink. Penny climaxed the evening with a drawing for the ladies present for two items produced by Asheville area candy manufacturers. Peggy Phillips won one and Jane Underwood, the other. She planned the next days "shopping tour" for the ladies as well. (Ladies went on the shopping tour while the guys flew most of Saturday). This Friday gathering, an Asheville tradition, is solely a courtesy of Duane and Penny, it was and is, greatly enjoyed and appreciated by attendees.

The weatherman blessed us with near perfect weather...cold on Saturday and a bit milder on Sunday. The winds that blew were, naturally, cross the runway and at the field's altitude of 2146 feet swirled from the valleys and adjacent mountains. The lovely view of the "Smokies" was preserved on many cameras & camera phones. Honestly, the sight is more rewarding than viewing a genuine "Picasso" painting!

Contestants included Beppe Fascione who drove the 800 miles from Rochester, NY to display and fly his Phil Kraft replica KWIK-FLY III. Beppe was one of three "first-timers"...the other two were "pattern-great" Mark Radcliff, Dist 3 AMA VP-(Ohio, Pennsylvania and West Virginia). from West Virginia and Matt Balzas (rhymes with Dallas) from Greensboro, NC.

Incoming ABA club President Dave Bowman personally greeted each contestant and extended his and the clubs gratitude for flying at ABA's field which initiated its' newly installed "GEO-TEXTILE" runway. Dave expressed his apprehension about filling the shoes of outgoing President Will Hicks who had doubled as our CD for Asheville since it's inception there with a one-day contest in 2006. Other club members served as luncheon servers, runners, equipment installers, etc. and always dependable Debbie Hicks did all the scorekeeping. ABA lived up to, and exceeded, all expectations.

After the day of contesting on Saturday, it was off to J&S Cafeteria where the food was delicious and the meeting room was just "super", providing an excellent facility for quick dismissal of absolutely NO SPA business and on to Mark Radcliff's narrative of his super Slide-show presentation of the "golden era" of pattern.. Mark gave his presentation a title of "My Heroes". He opened with a B&W shot of his Dad made in the early 40's, his recollections of World Team Selections and competitions, funny inputs on his diligence to "making the team", sidelights of his travels to participate in world competitions, then concluding with the B&W photo from the model magazine of the Nessler family in action at an AMA pattern contest. It was so enjoyable, at times you could hear a pin drop as the attendees just "loved" his presentation. He defined his ascent to his current AMA status as District III VP.

Electrics were utilized by Warren Oliver and Kevin Clark. Kevin powered his Austrian designed (Hanno Prettnner) Curare (see photo) with an OS motor. His beautiful ARF weighed a scant 6 1/4 lbs. Spectators and judges were "awed" by Oliver's LEDs on his OLIVER TWIST, model designed by his Late Dad, Ben.



The annual "fly-off" for the MEMORIAL TROPHY was conducted Sunday morning first thing with the sunshine behind the pilots. The "fly off", consisted of just one round, judged by 5 judges, with the "high" and the "low" thrown out. Last years holder, Bill Dodge was outpointed by Jeff Owens 118.2 to 104.5. As always, these two contestants drew the attention of everyone there.

Typical modeler "courtesy" and willingness to assist fellow modelers was evident, an example was the retrieval of Jim John's DR-1 which went down about 100 yards shy of the runway in weeds. Kevin comes from "good stock". His Dad, Hugh, assisted your PIO a few years back in a similar incident.

Dan Dougherty, did an exact copy of Doc Charles Grays "thud" maker in Douglasville, GA, with the pull instead of pushing elevator at the bottom of the reverse outside loop. The pieces to his pretty DB were retrieved very quickly by volunteers at the "POI" (Point of Impact) just outside of the safety fence on flight line two. DD immediately shouted, "I did it". He finished the meet with model number two.

The NOVICE class had two entries, Joe Grant outscored Duwayne Lindsey 3937 to 3869. SPORTSMAN class had 7 entries. Vic Koenig was perking along while King the first 3 rounds on Saturday but didn't return on Sunday, opening the door for Jim Johns who eventually carried the 1<sup>st</sup> place plaque to Dutton, AL with his total score, best 4 of 5 of 3776. DD won round 5 with his "back-up" for a 2<sup>nd</sup> place 3725. Carter Pounders of the local ABA club took third with his score of 3605.



*Misty Mountain Sunrise*



We were honored to have pattern great Mark Radcliff with us. Mark is now District III VP. His presentation Saturday night was great!!



Mr. May, Scott Sappington, flying his aged KAOS showed the finesse of his increased hours of practice winning ADVANCED with 3 K's and total score of 3988. Dennis Sams, with a round-4 victory copped 2<sup>nd</sup> scoring 3932. John Nessler, Jr (Dad) took 3<sup>rd</sup>, scoring 3863. Four flyers participated in ADVANCE. Charlie Johns kept the pressure on the above placers.

Seven, yes, (7) EXPERTS flew in the MASTERS. What tremendous competition this was as Eric Nessler jockeyed his PHANTOM-1 to first place K-ing 3 of the 5 rounds for a final score of 3998. Jerry Black earned 2<sup>nd</sup> with final of 3979.

The "old guys", SR. EXPERT had 6 entries with Jeff Owens winning all 5 rounds for a perfect score of 4,000. Russ Chiles drew lots of compliments on his painted ATLAS flying to 2<sup>nd</sup> place with score of 3564. Keith Watson was 3<sup>rd</sup>, scoring 3471. Bill Dodge, Dave Phillips and Bruce Underwood finished in that order.

Dave Phillips, representing Buddy Shores owner of NOVI ROSSI brought a donated new ROSSI engine and some ROSSI caps, the engine and cap was won by ABA President, Dave Bowman. Mark Radcliff won the T-28 "park-flyer" airplane. 50/50 gas money was won by Jeff Owens.

What a story behind the SPORTSMANSHIP award. Duane explained the effort put forth by Keith Watson to attend, like working all day Friday, then being called to work 2 hours overtime, driving all night, etc., said he "just wanted to see and hear Mark Radcliff at the annual MASTERS banquet". Mark



Keith Watson — Sportsman award



NOVICE winner Joe Grant & Crew Chief

was standing close to Keith and led the applause when Duane presented Watson the well deserved award.

Beautiful loving cups adorned with the Male Victory figure were presented the SPA EAST season points champions. The NOVICE champ was Joe Grant with a total of 18.5 points. Jim Johns was SPORTSMAN points champ with 39 points. Mr. May (Scott Sappington) is the ADVANCED points champ. Eric Nessler nosed Brother John III by a mere 2 points, Eric's total was 47.

Congrats to these participants, real WINNERS!

ABA, many "kudos" to your excellent efforts to accommodate the 2013 MASTERS contest, the first year the MASTERS has been held outside the 3 states with the largest membership. You guys and gals deserve a "blue ribbon" for your hospitality and execution of same. "Our gratitude would overrun a gallon pail"!



Friendly judges ready for the fly-off first thing Sunday



Two conversations going on...one of them about airplanes.....

NOVICE		EXPERT	
Joe Grant	3937	Eric Nessler	3998
Duwayne Lindsey	3869	Jerry Black	3979
SPORTSMAN		John Nessler III	3905
Jim Johns	3776	Warren Oliver	3755
Dan Dougherty	3725	Mark Radcliff	3706
Carter Pounders	3605	Kevin Clark	3675
Duane Wilson	3561	Matt Balzas	2142
Charles Gray	3516	SR. EXPERT	
Beppy Fascione	3265	Jeff Owens	4000
Vic Koenig	3000	Russ Chiles	3564
ADVANCED		Keith Watson	3471
Scott Sappington	3988	Bill Dodge	3258
Dennis Sams	3932	Dave Phillips	2430
John Nessler Jr	3863	B. Underwood	1855
Charlie Johns	3569		



Bruce Underwood, cub reporter



Mark Radcliff & John Nessler





# Fort Worth THUNDERBIRDS

**OPEN  
OCT  
12-13TH**

## The SPA West Open Championships...

What a weekend for flying! The wind usually blows 10 to 20 MPH this time of year, as it did on Friday during practice. The forecast was for showers for Saturday and Sunday. Sometimes the forecasters miss and this time it was good. Pilots were greeted with light winds from the south on Saturday and light north to east winds Sunday with enough clouds to cover the "in your face" sun.



**With a dramatic sky for a background, SPA-West again shows us in the East how to stage an attractive group shot of the pilots and their planes**



**Chuck Lee's Tiger Tail 4**

**Looks like Knife-Edge to me! Beautiful finish!!**

After a brief pilots meeting, flying began with two flight lines going all day with a brief break for hamburgers, chips and drinks.

Expert judging was provided by Chuck Ezell and Dale Sparks on Saturday and supplemented on Sunday by Rick Byrd, along with pilots. There was only one crash when Jerry Joyner, who is a past pattern pilot just coming back into the sport, was flying low and apparently thought he was inside the tree line, smacked his new Dirty Birdy into the top of one of the tall trees. Jerry said he will be back to fly SPA again. The fierce competition between first and second was decided by less than 50 points, except in Expert where Jamie Strong won every round and won by over 135 normalized points and there was some excellent flying by the other experts. Novice was decided by less than 18 points and Advanced by about 20.

Doug Harvel and Tom Stennis again kept us entertained with their Mississippi, (pronounced *Mis'-sippi*, -editor) humor. We had pilots from Oklahoma, Mississippi, Kansas and Alabama join the Texas guys.

The help we had to keep things moving was excellent including flight bosses, score entry, score runners, registration, cooks and scoring. A special thanks goes to Leo Steck at Klass Kote Missouri and Allen Worley of Planet Hobby for the donation of a Nova Rossi engine and Roy and Pat of Roy's Toys for Boys for the donation of an OS 55AX engine for our pilot raffle and Leo Steck of Klass Kote Missouri for the donation of a pint of their paint and hardener.

We love to fly models and we must also love to eat. Hamburgers, chips, cookies and drinks were provided both Saturday and Sunday. Saturday night had the biggest pot of chicken and dumplings I have ever seen.

Here in Texas we are seeing a great improvement in all who are flying the SPA Pattern venue. It is great to see the improvements of most of our pilots who are working through the maneuvers and seem to be enjoying it immensely. We are hearing a lot of pilots say how much fun they are having practicing, the fellowship, flying, and of course a bit of friendly competition to brag about is always fun. But most of all it's the fellowship and friendship with the common interest which is bringing us all together. Scores have been posted on the SPA Forum and the Thunderbird website forum so I won't repeat them here. Thanks to everyone who came and thanks for all the kind words. We really appreciate it.....Ken Knotts



**Gary Nelson-NOVICE**



**Mark Ehlers-SPORTSMAN**



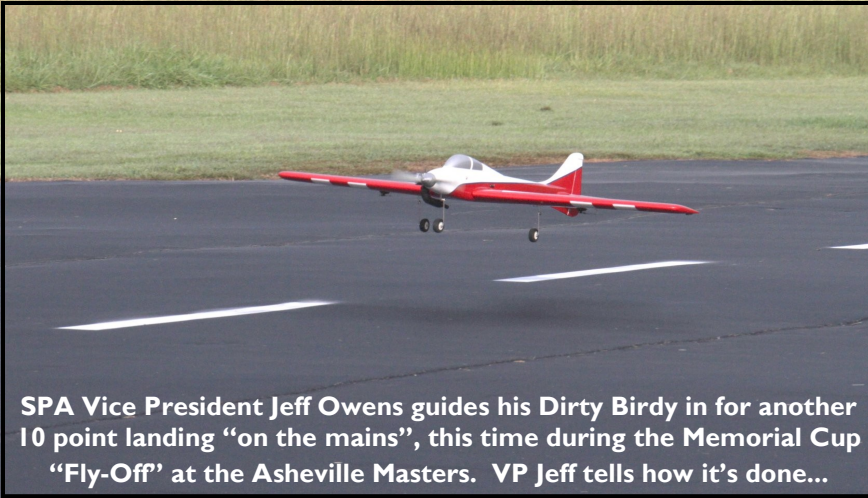
**Ken Knotts-ADVANCED**



**Dave Dingman-EXPERT**

**CONGRATULATIONS TO SPA-WEST POINT LEADERS...2013 !!!**

## **“Landing Perfection”** *A Different Perspective* *The View From the Cockpit ...by Jeff Owens*



SPA Vice President Jeff Owens guides his Dirty Birdy in for another 10 point landing “on the mains”, this time during the Memorial Cup “Fly-Off” at the Asheville Masters. VP Jeff tells how it’s done...

I recently noticed that Jeff Owens really knows how to “put her down on the mains”. I asked Jeff if he would share some of his landing secrets with us in the selfish hope I might be able to learn how to land more like he does—planes last longer!!

**The model aircraft slowed** and entered the downwind leg of the approach, smoothly turned base, and proceeded to line up on final. As if on rails, it descended, slightly nose high, and then touched down precisely on the centerline in front of the judges. It continued to roll on the mains before the nose gear gently settled to the runway. The assembled spectators applauded and cheered wildly while the judges jumped out of their chairs and cried TEN! And then I woke up. Well, for a

moment I knew that wonderful elation that comes from a beautiful landing – even if it was only in my imagination. Of course, pilots of both models and fullscale aircraft know that their best landings are done in solitude. Witnesses are only present when the landing bears a strong resemblance to a train wreck – a sudden arrival accompanied by all sorts of strange gyrations. But what, then, is the secret to a good landing? It can best be summarized as starting from a stabilized approach—**including airspeed control.**

Perhaps this is best illustrated by an example using my Cessna 182, since many things become clearer when you are seated in the cockpit. For a typical approach and landing I would enter the downwind leg at traffic pattern altitude at an indicated airspeed of about 100 mph (my 1971 airspeed indicator is calibrated in mph instead of knots.) I would drop 10 degrees of flaps and decrease power to counter the slight climbing tendency high wing planes show when the flaps are deployed. Turning base, I would add another 10 degrees of flaps, decrease the power slightly, and descend through about 800 feet above ground level. Turning final I would decrease the power some more and adjust the elevator trim to achieve an indicated airspeed of 80 mph. I would then be on a stabilized approach. Next, I would pick a spot on the runway – usually the runway numbers – where I wanted to touch down and I would find a spot on the windshield to line up with this point. If the touchdown point appears to rise relative to the spot on the windshield, then I will be short and I’ll add power to decrease my decent rate. Conversely, if the touchdown point appears to fall relative to the spot on the windshield I will be long and I’ll pull back on the power to increase the rate of descent. Notice that once I have a stabilized approach I adjust the rate of descent using the throttle. Approaching the touchdown point I will pull the throttle to idle and flare at the appropriate altitude so as to touch down with the stall warner blaring. This insures the plane touches down on the mains, and the nose wheel is still in the air (one can damage the firewall on a 182 by landing nose wheel first.)

So, how does all this apply to making a precise landing with one of our models? It is actually the same sequence of events, although most of our models won’t use flaps. Otherwise, the procedure is the same. Enter the downwind leg at the appropriate altitude and at a reduced airspeed – no need for full throttle here! Set up a gentle descent as you turn base and adjust airspeed and altitude using the throttle and elevator. Here is one difference – the models generally wouldn’t be flown using the elevator trim while in my 182 the approach is flown almost exclusively using the elevator trim control. Otherwise at reduced airspeed the 182’s elevator control becomes very heavy and the flare requires some serious muscle. Nevertheless, the goal for the model is a smooth stabilized descent on the base leg – no wild gallops or large changes in airspeed. Concentrate on making small corrections on the elevator as needed – the emphasis is on small. Turning final, one should reduce power as needed to achieve the desired touchdown point – I usually aim for a touchdown some distance prior to where I want to land. This allows for a flare once the model gets below about 6 feet. At this point the power is at idle and the model is slightly nose high as the flare proceeds to the touchdown. It is in these last few steps that problems often occur. If the plane becomes too slow it is necessary to add power and lower the nose. If you don’t lower the nose, then the plane will often zoom up, thereby ruining the stabilized approach. Also, waiting too long to add power can result in a nasty low altitude stall – not a recommended part of the procedure. It takes practice to coordinate the use of throttle and elevator in order to achieve the correct combination of airspeed, altitude, and aircraft attitude. I find that my best landings come when I resist the urge to make significant elevator changes on the base and final legs. I concentrate on holding a fixed elevator setting with minor changes, if any, using the throttle to adjust my decent rate. For those of you with tail draggers there is also the concern about whether to do a three-point landing where all the wheels touch down simultaneously or to do a wheel landing where the mains touch down first, followed by the tail wheel a second or so later. The latter is pretty, but if you misjudge the flare the plane may touch down too hard on the mains and the tail will strike the runway while the plane still has sufficient airspeed to fly. The sudden increase in the angle of attack will cause a bounce that may then require a go around. Three point landings avoid this.

The common thread through both of my examples is hitting the appropriate airspeed marks at each stage of the approach while continuing a smooth descent. That will enable you to reach the desired goal of a stabilized approach. It is said that the best landings start with a well-executed entry to the landing pattern. Think ahead and keep the desired approach configuration in your mind for each stage right up to and through the touchdown. Maybe then the crowd will cheer and the judges will cry TEN!

# SENIOR PATTERN ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

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