

**SPA West Championships
Thunderbird Field, Ft. Worth, TX
October 15-16, 2016**



The sky was partly cloudy, temperature about 72 and a forecast for clear skies by afternoon. Perfect weather for RC flying, right? Oh, I forgot to mention the wind. It was a maximum of 23 MPH with gust to 35. Challenging? Yes!

While we had a few no-shows, but 16 pilots tested the wind and themselves. We welcomed Jim Johns from Alabama who joined us for the contest and he flew very well taking third place in Advanced. Gene Roy was the only participant in the last ever Introductory class.



Gene Roy

Three airplanes were lost over the 2 day event. Greg Fierst got disoriented looking into the morning sun on his first flight and lost his Intruder but used his backup airplane and won first place. Gene Roy lost radio contact and his Kaos 60 went straight in destroying his airplane. Gary Alphin's engine died at low altitude going into the wind and stalled while trying to get it back to the runway and the Dirty Birdy went in breaking in several pieces.



Greg Fierst

Novice Class saw Greg Fierst take first place with Frank Cox in second and Brian Way in third.

In Sportsman class, Bernie Olson won all four rounds Saturday and decided not to fly on Sunday even though the winds had subsided to 22 MPH with gust to only 29. Tommy Scarmardo took second and Gerry Stanford placed third.



Bernie Olson



Grant Schroeder

Advanced class had 6 participants and saw 16 year old Grant Schroeder tally another score of 4000 and take first place. He will move-up to Expert next year be some real competition! Chris Berardi flew well and took second with

Jim Johns only 30 points behind for third.

Expert class was once again dominated by Pat Ensign who won every round. He was followed by Robert Redmon with Ken Knotts in third place.



Pat Ensign

The points champions for 2016 were also awarded;

- Novice Greg Fierst
- Sportsman Bernie Olson
- Advanced Grant Schroeder
- Expert Pat Ensign
- Senior Expert Robert Redmon

We always want to thank the volunteers who help make the contest workable. Past SPA participant Dave Dingman helped as Air Boss and kept airplanes in the air. Brian Alphin led the score entry with Leslie Ensign pitching in to help. The Thunderbird grounds crew had the field looking great. Jeannie Alphin helped with registration, raffle and food serving. Joyce Knotts cooked homemade chicken and dumplings for lunch on Saturday and Tab Bowland cooked hotdogs for the Sunday lunch. We thank all of them and all the volunteers for their help. Volunteers are wonderful!

Looking forward to a new year of flying and new maneuvers.

Ken Knotts