



Top Novice

Autaugaville, AL

April 1, 2017

CD: Jamie Strong

The weather could not have been better for the April 1, 2017 Top Novice event at the Fountain City Flyers (FCF) facility just outside of Prattville, AL in the community of Autaugaville. Temperatures started off in the low 50's and warmed up to the low 80's by late afternoon. The sky was blue with unlimited visibility all day. The wind was calm to light out of the south for the first part of the day and then shifted to out of the north for most of the afternoon. The field was in perfect condition thanks to local club members Jack Haynes and Ray Kunert.

The day began with the ten registered participants sitting through a 30-minute ground school covering the 2017 Novice sequence. CD Jamie Strong demonstrated the maneuvers with a stick plane, described exactly how the maneuver was supposed to look and discussed the downgrades. Then, the fun began with participants each getting 2 flights before the lunch break.

After the lunch break, Jamie paused the flying to conduct a flight demonstration of the Novice sequence maneuvers. Participants watched from the flight line judge's canopy as Jamie demonstrated the way the maneuver was supposed to look and some of the common mistakes he had seen up to that point. The flying then resumed with the participants completing 4 rounds by the end of the flying day.

Since this wasn't a contest, place trophies were not presented. Instead, each participant received a certificate of participation and his picture in a nice frame ready for the desk or fireplace mantle.

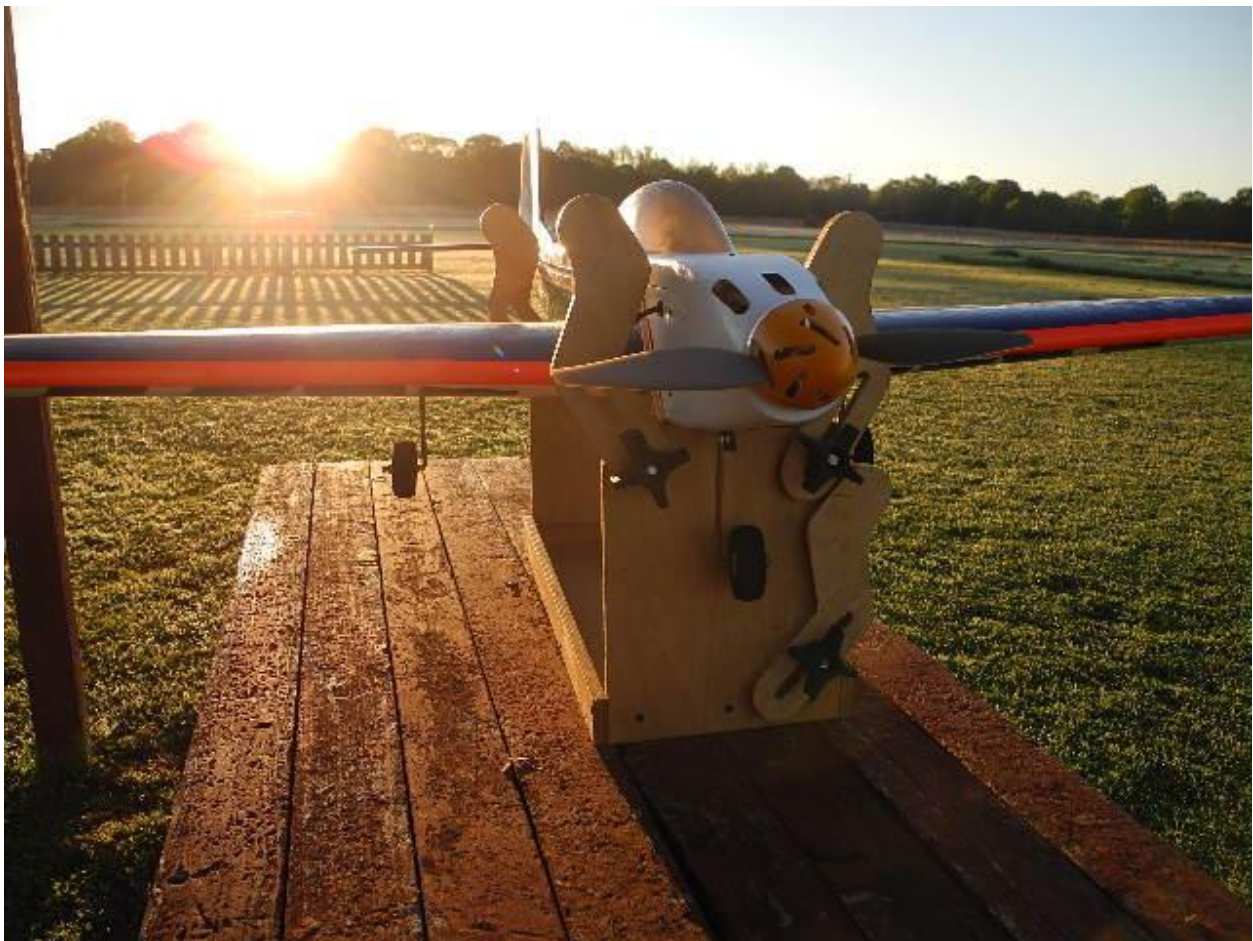
Flights were judged and scored using official SPA score sheets. Points were tabulated for each flight and posted on a scoreboard. Even though he didn't take home a first-place trophy, local FCF member David Patrick left the field with the highest point score and bragging rights (though he isn't the type to do any bragging). David flew a Tower Hobby Kaos 40 ARF put together by FCF club member Jim Oliver.

While there were lots of excellent coaching and teaching and lots of good flying, the event was thankfully dull from a drama standpoint. There were no mishaps or crashes. Everyone flew safely and took their airplanes home in one piece (or two/three pieces if you count the wings).

Here are some event stats.

- 4 of the 10 participants were current SPA members and veteran SPA contest participants with experience flying the Novice sequence.
- 4 of the 10 participants had some previous pattern contest experience from either SPA, IMAC or NSRCA, but none were current SPA members and none had experience flying the Novice sequence.
- 2 of the 10 participants were new to pattern flying and this was their first time to participant in a contest-like pattern event. One of these was a current SPA member and the other was not. One of these participants (the non-SPA member) flew the Novice sequence for the first time 2 days before the event.
- 8 of the 10 participants were members of the local FCF club while 2 were from out-of-town clubs.

Here are some images taken throughout the day.



A Tower Hobby Kaos 60 sits ready for the Top Novice event as the sun rises over the Fountain City Flyers field in Autaugaville, AL.



The local sponsoring club, Fountain City Flyers, had the field in great shape and did an outstanding job supporting the event.



Top Novice CD Jamie Strong uses his stick plane to demonstrate the Novice sequence maneuvers to the participants prior to the day's first flights.



David Johnson, from Knoxville, TN, getting his electric World Models Intruder ready for a test flight.



Dr. Fred Robertson from the Alabaster, AL club has his Kaos 60 ready for the Top Novice event.



L to R. Garry Singleton, Fountain City Flyers member, webmaster and Top Novice judge and Scott Hunter, FCF member and Top Novice participant relaxing before things got started.



Local FCF member David Patrick making final adjustments to his Tower Hobby Kaos 40 to get it ready for the Top Novice event.



Even though Joe Nall week is 6 weeks away, Roy Aultman, FCF member and Top Novice participant from Forest, Mississippi, is already thinking about this year's trip to Triple Tree Aerodrome so he can get bring home lots of good memories and another Joe Nall tee shirt.



Jim Strong flying with a sun dot (aka 5 gallon bucket) to block the early morning sun.



L to R. Top Novice judges Jim Oliver and Rick Helmke stain to see the airplane in the morning sun.



L to R. Jamie Strong, Top Novice CD, keeps his new replacement knee elevated as he calls for Dr. Fred Robertson.



L to R. Local club member David Patrick flying his Kaos 40 through the Novice sequence as caller and event CD Jamie Strong watches.



David Johnson flying his Kaos 60 through the Novice sequence.



Local FCF member and Top Novice participant Jim Strong enjoying a break between flights.