

SPA Contest
April 23, 2016
Thunderbird Field



Wow, what a beautiful day for our SPA contest. Winds were light, sun was bright and 16 modelers showed up to show their skills at pattern flying. The future looks bright when you have two pilots under 18 flying and winning their class. Joshua Tamez, 13, flew in his first SPA contest in the Intro class and performed very well. He is building a Kaos 40 to compete in future SPA contest. Grant Schroeder moved up to Advanced this year and ran away with the gold.



Here is something we seldom see. No wind at all during setup and pilots meeting. That soon changed and we had a pleasant breeze of about 10 MPH the rest of the day. Contest Director Gary Alphin decided we could utilize 2 flight lines and there was at least one airplane in the air most of the day. Pilots got 5 rounds in and there was no crashes at all. The Advanced class had 3 consecutive dead stick landings and some were wondering what happened to our air!

Our two Novice pilots had a real shoot-out with Greg Fierst and Frank Cox taking turns winning rounds. Greg finally prevailed in a very close race.



Joshua Tamez



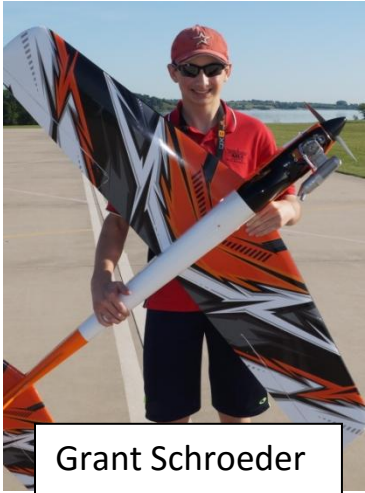
Greg Fierst



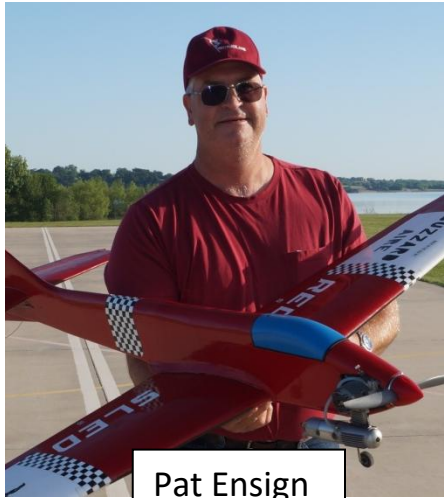
Bernie Olson

Sportsman class had 6 pilots with 3 winning at least one round. Bernie Olson won this class flying his beautiful Tiger Tail. Tommy Scarmardo took second place with an engine that refused run well the entire flight. It seemed to lean out and surge but Tommy stayed with it and put in some good rounds. Bernie and third place winner Gary Nelson actually tied for top spot in the third round. Paul Mayhan won the last round and came in fourth followed by Steve Ehlers and Gerry Stanford.

Grant Schroeder took first place in Advanced with a new Intruder and a terrific color scheme. He only won 4 of the 5 rounds because his engine died on the first maneuver in round 3. Tony Stelly took second with some solid flying. Gary Alphin took third with a dead stick on 2 of his rounds. Chris Berardi took fourth because he also had serious engine problems all day. Chris came in second in the last round when he finally got a good motor performance.



Grant Schroeder



Pat Ensign

Perennial Expert winner Pat Ensign again took the top spot flying Curare over second place winner Bill Vogeley with Ken Knotts taking third. Pat won every round with Bill and Ken barely getting into the 89% category.

It was a great day for flying with some very good pilots. There not a single crash all day! We are looking forward to the next contest at Golden Triangle put on by Frank Cox on May 21.



Gary Alphin flying
Chris Berardi calling



Greg Fierst
smooth takeoff

Ken Knotts