

## SPA West Championships September 23-24, 2017



Warm weather and bright sunshine greeted the 15 pilots in the 2017 SPA West Championships. Pilots from as far away as Alabama and Houston enjoyed the weekend of fun. As usual, the wind was a factor and helped separate the good from the really good. Saturday had winds of 18 MPH and Sunday it laid to only 15 MPH.

There were three electric airplanes. Bob Redmon flew his beautiful electric Curare, Jamie Strong flew his electric Komet and Ellis Newkirk flew an electric Kaos.

Five pilots competed in Expert and five in Advanced and there was some excellent flying in both classes. And there was some close competition. How close, well in Advanced, Bernie Olson won the 6<sup>th</sup> round and Gary Alphin was a close second with a score of 99.91% of Bernie's score.

Jim Strong drove in from Alabama to compete on Novice and won all six rounds with his Curare. Points winner Frank Cox was second and first time SPA contestant Gary James flew his vintage Kwik Fly with his vintage (updated) Kraft radio to third. Gary is a long time pylon racing pilot and he said "Man, this pattern flying is hard!"

Tommy Scarmardo was the only contestant in Sportsman and won it and the points championship.

Michel Clements won the Advanced with Bernie Olson in second and Gary Alphin taking third. Michel won three of the rounds with Bernie taking two and Gary won one.

Expert had some really stiff competition and beautiful flying. Pat Ensign won five of the six rounds and won first place and the points championship. Jamie Strong won one round and took second. Grant Schroeder finished his Intruder just days before the contest and was a close third.

Ken Knotts was the only competitor in Senior Expert and also won the points championship.

Saturday evening, we had a gathering at a local pizzeria and enjoyed pizza, beer and some great fellowship and discussions about more contest and comments on what the future to this SPA will change with all the ARFs not available and engine manufacture's not producing glow engines. We all had a great visit and good discussion.

Success is sometimes bringing all the airplanes back in one piece and we did, not a single crash even with the high winds.

Pictures;



Frank Cox - Novice



Tommy Scarmardo - Sportsman



Michel Clements - Advanced



Pat Ensign – Expert



Ken Knotts – Senior Expert

We are already planning the contest for next year and it looks like we will add one in Wichita Falls, Texas.

Ken Knotts