

Senior Pattern April 26, 2014 Thunderbird Field

The Thunderbird Senior Pattern contest blew in on the back of winds gusting and 23 brave pilots showing their skills. It was a great turnout and a lot of good flying despite the strong winds. We had visions of getting in 6 rounds, but Mother Nature talked us into having 4 good rounds. Winds were clocked at 20 mph with gust to 29. Sometimes it was hard to stand-up!

We had three first time SPA flyers and Scott Murry again made the trip from Kansas to join the fun in Ft. Worth. Scott also walked away with second place in B-Novice.



We had only one airplane lost and it wasn't because of the wind. Tim Reed's custom Dirty Birdy is one of the prettiest airplanes to ever grace our event. He got disoriented doing downwind inverted flight and it went in at full power.

It was really good to see the novice and b-novice flyers handle the wind and land safely on the concrete. We even saw a graceful helicopter landing by a Kaos right in the middle of the runway.



Tradition holds strong and once again we made a group picture of all the pilots.

First time SPA pilot Logan Rigby took first place in B-Novice ahead of 4 other pilots. It is really neat to see young pilots join in the fun and they are usually very good pilots.



Woody Lake won the Novice and he said he benefited from some of his fiercest competition moving up to a higher class. It will not be long before his competitors are telling him to move up also.

Jonathan Efinger beat out five other pilots to win the sportsman event. This was Jonathan's first time to compete in sportsman and it didn't bother him a bit as he flew very well against some seasoned competition.



Ken Knotts won the advanced division after beating long time nemesis and very good pilot Chuck Lee. And again the points were very close as Ken won by a margin of only 20 points.

First time SPA flyer Pat Ensia won the expert division beating Dave Dingman who is a very good expert pilot. The scores would have been closer if Dave could have made his Dirty Birdy do the inverted spin!



Despite the winds, there was good competition in all classes. While the wind blew hard all day, there was a lot of good maneuvers performed and a lot of good fellowship. Everyone worked to keep the contest running and the airplanes in the air most all the time.

Every good event has hard workers in the background and a special thanks to everyone who helped including field maintenance, registration, scoring, running score sheets, getting the pilots in queue and getting drinks, water and lunch and all others who helped including the Thunderbird members who loaned us the field for a great day of flying.

Ken Knotts