



The Waharoa Rumble - 2010

NEW ZEALAND'S premier IMAC aerobatics competition was held over the weekend of 28 – 31 January at the Matamata Piako Model Aero Club, Matamata. This annual event, organised by Frazer Briggs and Shaun Mitchell, is gaining in reputation and stature as being one of the best and most enjoyable flying contests of its type in the Southern Hemisphere.

This year was the biggest yet, with 52 pilots competing over 5 different classes – Basic (10 pilots), Sportsman (17 pilots), Intermediate (17 pilots), Advanced (4 pilots) and Unlimited (4 pilots). 2010 saw a large increase in competitors, up from 35 in 2009. The organisers are extremely happy at the increasing interest and the fact the competition is growing with each successive year.

The event is becoming truly international with a large contingent of Australian pilots (7) and an American pilot competing along with Kiwi flyers from Whangarei to Christchurch and many places in between.

On each of the 3 days, as with any IMAC aerobatics competition, the pilots are required to fly two different predetermined sequences of manoeuvres, the knowns and the unknowns. The knowns are a set of standard manoeuvres that are set by the international IMAC ruling body for competition every year. The unknowns are a sequence of manoeuvres that the pilots are given only the night before. Thus they do not have the opportunity to practise the unknowns and essentially they must fly this part of the competition "cold turkey".

As an aid to help them visualise the manoeuvres many pilots use a small plane on a stick to run through the sequence and aspect of the aircraft in flight. Competition of this nature is not just getting up there and roaring around showing off your flying skills. (Anybody can do that at the aero club on a weekend.) Aerobatics at this level requires intense concentration, control and precision. It is a real mental challenge and there is also the fickle weather, wind, humidity and visibility to contend with.

Due to the costs and difficulties of travelling with their expensive and fragile planes, overseas pilots at Waharoa usually fly with borrowed aircraft. This adds another dimension for them to contend with. Generally however, a few practice flights gets them familiar with the aircraft and this doesn't prove to be too much of a handicap.



In the pits at the Waharoa Rumble



Brett Cudby (New Plymouth) fine tuning his routine



Adam and John Butler carrying their aircraft back to the pits.



The Australian team: L to R, Chris Bisslin, Mark Hansen, Adam Talbot, Bill Bland, Steve Richardson, David Rooke and Aaron Garle.



John Heigl from Apache Junction Arizona

Contributed by Janice Angus

Adam Talbot, an Unlimited Class pilot from Adelaide, was competing in his second rumble and rates this competition as a fun event with great facilities. He expects to keep making the trip across the ditch to compete every year. Adam has not been flying in the Unlimited Class for very long but enjoys the challenge of being able to pit his skills against world class pilots like Frazer Briggs.

Hailing from Apache Junction, Arizona, John Heigl was also here for his second visit to the Waharoa Rumble competition. John has a long association with IMAC competitions in the United States and has hosted Frazer Briggs and the New Zealand team at the major Tucson international competition for the last six years.

John competes at the Advanced level and is also a regular judge at the Tucson Shootout meet. He rates the Rumble as a good competition, big in comparison to ones held in the US and says the weather and flying conditions are more enjoyable to the extremes of heat and wind they have to contend with back home.

Also flying at the Advanced level was a talented 16 year old flyer from Towomba, Queensland, Aaron Garle. Aaron has been flying model aircraft from a very early age, thanks to a dad who is also a passionate aero modeller.

Needless to say, a lot of the more mature competition flyers are relishing the challenge of these new kids on the block. This type of competition is fostering young flyers who are able to start at the basic level and work their way up the ranks.

The future for the Waharoa Rumble looks positive and if this year is any indication, the competition looks set to get stronger and stronger as word spreads and more and more flyers make this annual pilgrimage to the Waikato for a weekend of excitement, action and all round good fun.

Results were based on two day's of flying, after rain forced cancellation of airborne activity on the Sunday. Basic - Jeff Winter (1), Kerry Nichols (2), Vaughan Friedrich (3). Sportsman - Bill Bland (Aus)(1), Stephen Greig(2), Jon Berger (3). Intermediate - Steve Gene (1), Alex Hewson (2), Hamish Galloway (3). Advanced - Mark Hansen (Aus)(1), Aaron Garle (Aus)(2), John Heigl (USA)(3). Unlimited - Chris Brislin (Aus)(1), Frazer Briggs (2), Grant Finlay (3).

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