



Warbird Aero Modelling - Events in March

WARBIRDS MAKE very popular aero models, with many keen builders and flyers participating in this category. The variety of models is extensive, ranging from the dawn of flight era with WW1 wood and canvas bi-planes to the ultra modern carbon fibre replica jet aircraft, complete with jet turbine engines.

Warbirds Over Awatoto

During the weekend of 5th March, Warbirds Over Awatoto was hosted by the Hawkes Bay Radio Flyers. This is a very well attended event, probably the biggest for Warbird models in New Zealand. Flyers from as far away as the Springhill Club in Warkworth and the wild west, (Brett Cudby, from New Plymouth) made the journey to Awatoto, near Napier, for the weekend of flying.

Unfortunately, the weather forecast for the event this year was not good and the threat of strong wind and heavy rain obviously was a

deterrent to many potential participants. However the conditions on Saturday morning were not as bad as expected and quite a lot of flying activity was achieved.

Around 30 participants registered and took their models to the sky, with many more models on static display. Those spectators who braved the weather found plenty to see and enjoy.

The workmanship and attention to detail resulting from hundreds of hours of work is evident on many of the models. A fine example is Trevor White's Fairey Swordfish which he built from scratch based on plans of the full sized aircraft. Not an easy feat as it required a lot of research and scouring through a large amount of documents and photographs before the actual building began. With a wingspan of more than 45ft, the full sized Swordfish is a very large biplane. Trevor's example has an 85"

wingspan which makes it a scale of 1:6.4.

The Awatoto Warbirds event winners were: WW I: Alan Rowson, Fokker; WW II: Trevor White, Fairey Swordfish; Between the Wars: Jeff Clarkson, PBY Catalina; Modern Military: Harvey Stiver, F15; NZ Military: Peter Brown, Vampire.



Clockwise from top left: 1: Gwenn Avenell's Pilatus PC-9 in the colours of the RAAF Roulettes. 2: Spitfire at Awatoto. 3: A pair of threatening looking MD500's. 4: Menacing Messerschmitt Me 262. 5: Frazer Brigg's P-82 Twin Mustang had some thinking they were seeing double. 6: On the flight line at Awatoto. Images 2,3,4 & 6 by Sean Dick - www.evokesstudio.co.nz Other images by Terry Dillon.

Warbirds Over Manukau

The following weekend on March 12 and 13, the Papakura, Manukau Aeromodellers' Club held their annual Warbirds Over Manukau Rally. Sunday had lovely flying conditions which resulted in a flurry of flying enjoyment.

Bryan Borland flew his aptly named Bullfrog jet and had a very close encounter with the poplars at the edge of the strip. Fortunately he successfully landed his plane, complete with some additional camouflage greenery stuck in the wing! Less fortunate was David Chang who literally experienced a meltdown with his electric, EPO (a robust type of polystyrene) Mustang. His speed controller appears to have short circuited which caused a fire and resulted in the model crashing and even though a fire extinguisher was quickly on the scene, the aircraft was unfortunately an

Contributed by Janice Angus

unrecoverable write-off.

One of the more unusual models flown was Frazer Briggs' P-82 Twin Mustang. Spectators watching this plane in the air for the first time could be mistaken for

thinking they are seeing double. This is a 70.5" World Models kit based on the last American piston-engine fighter ordered into production by the United States Air Force. The Twin Mustang was essentially two P-51 Mustangs joined together which resulted in a versatile long range fighter, escort, reconnaissance, attack bomber or interceptor aircraft. Although the real planes did not see active service during WWII, they were successfully deployed in the Korean War and were flown by the US Air Force until 1953.

The day also included a fine display of a classic dogfight between a Zero and Spitfire which was

flown by Ming Lim and Chris Verral. An example of a large electric war bird was Stuart Irvine's Me 262 Messerschmitt. This model is powered by ducted fans and has a wingspan of over 2 metres. This very fast and slick model looked lovely in the air. Representing our neighbours over the ditch, Gwen Avenell flew his Pilatus PC-9 and provided a lively aerobatic display. This is the plane flown by the Royal Australian Air Force's elite Roulettes aerobatic team.

If you have a passion for warbirds make sure you look out for these events next year. The variety and number of aircraft always makes for a good day of flying and spectating, also providing a great opportunity for grown-ups to indulge in childhood fantasies of re-living epic air battles that legends have been made of.