

Aero Modelling Mania

Several major modelling events took place during the latter part of Summer. KiwiFlyer Correspondent Janice Angus provided the following details about three of them.

AS WITH full sized aviation buffs, aero modellers also relish the longer, fine, sunny days of summer to take the opportunity to get out and enjoy their sport whenever possible. Typically, on the weekends, model aero club sites all over the country are abuzz with flying and the camaraderie of members getting their aerial fix.

During these summer months many clubs have annual events that prove to be a Mecca for model flyers. These events also provide an

opportunity for the general public to get an insight into the sport and witness an enjoyable spectacle for the whole family.

Club events give flyers a chance to bring their treasured special models to the field, unveil the recent builds and to display their flying skills, often finely honed from many hours on the flight simulator.

The definition of aero modeller heaven is a pits area with a line up of dozens of models of various sizes, shapes and colours all keenly awaiting their time in the sky.

Waitangi Weekend Heli Rumble

(5, 6 & 7 February, 2009)

This event is held every 3 years and this year was staged at Drury in South Auckland. It is a showcase of model helicopter flying at the highest level with displays by invited overseas pilots. The event is the largest Heli Fun Fly staged in New Zealand and this year had participants from Australia also.

Special guests were World class 3D flyers, Bobby Watts (USA) and Duncan Osbourn (UK) who wowed the spectators with their displays of amazing skills

and extreme 3D manoeuvres. These are essentially manoeuvres where the pilot simultaneously inputs three or more controls constantly throughout the flying sequence. This type of flying defies physics, gravity and aerodynamics as well as being impossible in a full sized helicopter. If you take the analogy that flying model helicopters is like trying to balance a steel ball bearing on a plane of glass (an



Scenes from the Tokoroa Jet Meet. Tony Withey's Aermacchi above won both the Pilot's Choice and the Best Model Awards. Courtesy www.nzjma.com

extremely difficult thing to attempt) then 3D flying is taking the steel ball bearing and plane of glass and balancing it while doing somersaults! And these top class pilots make it seem so easy.

This event was described as two and a half days of pure fun and if you didn't make this year you missed a treat!

ANZAC Jet Meet

(14 February, 2009)

This is an annual meet hosted by the NZ Jet Modellers Association at Tokoroa as a Trans Tasman event. Australian pilots look forward to making the trip 'over the ditch' to participate and enjoy this great flying site with wide open spaces – a necessity for the jet fraternity.

The weather was ideal and there was a good turnout of jets this year. A lot of time and effort is taken by the jet owners in detailing the models to make them appear as realistic and authentic as possible to their life sized counterparts. The feel of authenticity goes right down to the sniff of jet fuel and the roar of the turbines spooling up. Kerosene heaven!

PMAC Warbirds Over Manukau

(21 & 22 March, 2009)

Masterton has 'Warbirds over Wairarapa' and Central Otago has 'Warbirds over Wanaka'. At Clevedon, South Auckland, the Papakura Manukau Aeromodellers Club hosts the annual aero modeller's equivalent – 'Warbirds over Manukau'.

This year the weather conditions were near to perfect with bright, clear and calm sunny days. During the two days over 20 warbird aircraft were on display.

A wide array from WWI vintage models to more modern era craft took to the sky including Spitfires, a Harvard, a Meteor, Trojans and of course no war bird rally would be complete without the irrepressible Tiger Moths. A highlight was a bomb drop

from Gwyn Avenell's Dauntless.

It was encouraging to see a good number of spectators taking advantage of the lovely weather and the opportunity to view the many aircraft and flying displays.

Now that the summer model flying season is drawing to a close, new building projects and repair jobs will fill in the spare time as modellers wait for a window in the weather to venture outside for a bit of winter flying. Gumboots and warm clothing are a prerequisite for the hardy and addicted. Roll on next summer.



60 model helicopters with pilots and crew at the Heli Rumble event on Waitangi Weekend at Drury.

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