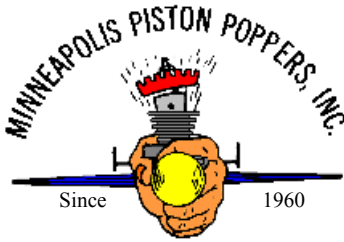


# Prop



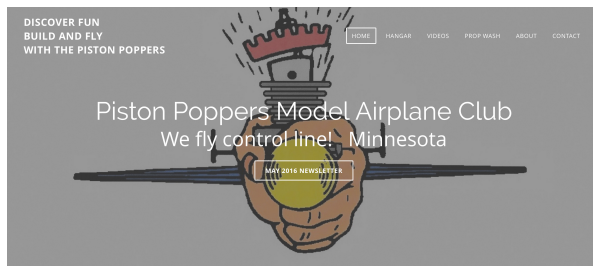
# Wash

**Prop Wash is a publication of the Piston Poppers Inc., an AMA U-control club**

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Any articles for the newsletter are greatly appreciated and will be published as soon as possible.

## November 2020



<http://www.pistonpoppers.com>

## October Meeting

Bob Cheney filled in for Tony who had other commitments.

**Old Business:** None

**New Business:** Building sessions: They are planned for the months of Jan, Feb, Mar and April on the first Saturday of the month at 9-10am until as long as anyone is there. Our next meeting is on December 3<sup>rd</sup>, the first Thursday in the month. Club Officer nominations; someone made the motion to nominate all the current club officers as is. Voting will be at the next meeting on Dec 3<sup>rd</sup>. Tom Sontag said that he

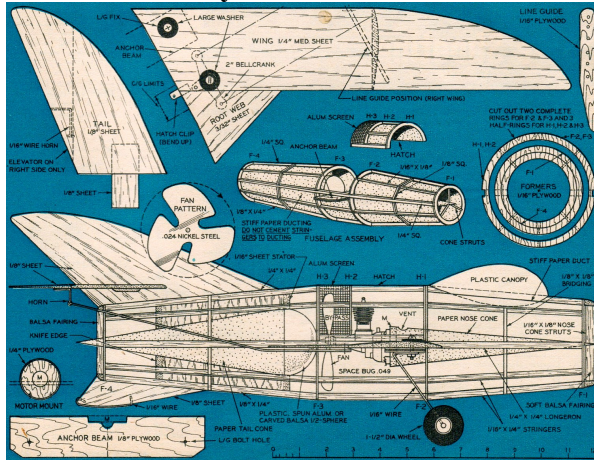
applied the last of the fertilizer to the airport field recently.

January 1st Frozen Fun fly, Tom said that he will check the weather shortly before the date and will send out a notice about whether he will host it or not. If it happens, it will be at the school site.

Bob also talked about Jeff Lange, he's in great spirits but doesn't have much energy. He also mentioned that Norman Anderson has a Caring Bridge site if anyone wants to keep track of his health.

**Show and Tell:** Tom Sontag talked about working to free up a piston in a Fox 35. He also brought a ringmaster with an Enya 35 on it for anyone to take home, I believe Dave Vandergrift took it home. There were some full size plans and some Warbird calendars, free for the taking. Dennis Leonhardi had some laser cut alignment squares and pre-cut gussets, all from Bob Holman. <http://www.bhplans.com/>  
Jim Gevay

## From Jim Gevay



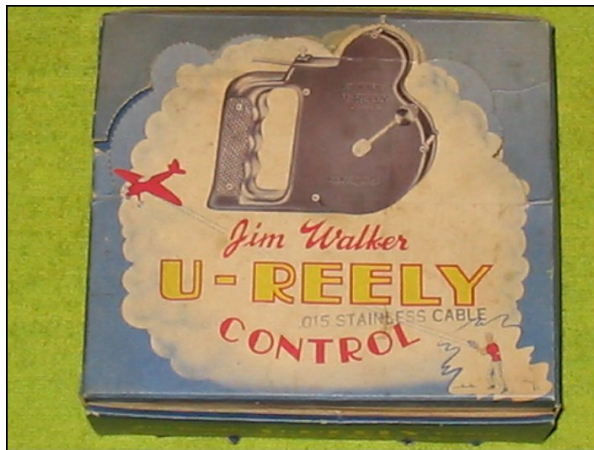
## Lucky 71

One little word links seconds of horror to moments of relief when we walk away with an airplane in one piece.

Lucky.

Let me back up a few moments in time.

My first flight with the revamped Vector 40 from Boise went well. Only once, in the hourglass maneuver, did I seriously approach trouble. John said it came in low at 24" from the turf. That makes the prop only 10 inches from the tips of the crab grass and doinking into the sand.



Back up a bit more.

The sun was a bright circle in the sky, down wind and at about 45 degrees elevation. John gave me a pair of Zurich glare free sun glasses, which allowed me to literally fly loops around the sun, which became a flaming pivot point, but still a bit blinding.

I've been trying to bring the flight path of the "71" closer to the terrifying 4-6 foot range, but am having trouble getting my vision and timing correct. I tend to get spooked and bobble out at 8-10 feet, and then lower it to eye level.

Many club members come out at 5 feet without a care, so I know it can be done.

The "71" is a Vector 40 from Boise now mounted with a Randy Smith modified OS 40FP and a 10-6 prop. She flew well and in nice trim, flying level without porpoising. She turns corners like a Formula One race car, and usually can be cranked flat coming out of dives.

In actuality, she can fly much better than her current pilot.

The Randy Smith motor ran perfectly, strongly and frugally. She drank 3.25 oz of Sig Champion 10% nitro, juiced with castor to a 22% blend, and ended with plenty of flat laps to practice dive to flat maneuvers.

I am amazed by the flight characteristics of this well-built, well-trimmed, and well powered airplane. The Randy Smith design is a beauty, whomever built it, and small enough to maneuver into the back of my vehicle.



The second flight didn't go nearly as well. Maybe I was recovering from a late night of reading Stephen King's Langoliers. Maybe the nearby takeoff of a full-sized biplane, with its roaring radial engine, affected my preflight concentration.

Then again, maybe I'd reached my limit for the day and didn't recognize it.

Who knows? I don't know, but I was **not** focused. This typically is a good moment to take pause and consider resting under a tree for a while, but I didn't.

Warning 1: John held the "71" while I started the motor, which started easily. I hopped up and grabbed my field box to move it out of the way, but failed to disconnect the glow plug connector. Not good.

Warning 2: I sheepishly disconnected the plug then went to check the needle. Fuel was flying all over the place because I had forgotten to plug the fill port.

Warning 3 and most confounding: I quickly plugged the port then ran to the center. My heart was thumping and I obviously was flustered.

Warning 4: After flying a few laps, I decided the wind was negligible so I rotated the pattern away from the sun and in the direction from which the wind previously blew. That's right, upwind, with a variable wind.

Warning 5: On the last inside loop, I lost focus and forgot to come out inverted, so I pulled it over and completed a few inverted laps.

Warning 6: She pulled up nicely into the first outside loop, but for whatever reason came out high, so I corrected on the second loop to bring it lower, and experienced a lot of chop. Perhaps the wind had returned in my face? I ignored it.

Press on chaps!

On the third outside loop, I kept it wide. About 3/5<sup>th</sup>'s of the way around, the lines that didn't seem quite as tight as they should be, and I realized "71" was in trouble. The nicely flying Vector 40 barreled toward the ground at a frightening pace. I pulled the lines tight and gave it some down (up) and she came out very low, mowing the grass for what seemed like an eternity, roughly 1 or 2 feet off the ground and parallel to mother earth.

Perhaps I froze and let gravity take over. Perhaps I panicked and tried to rotate out too quickly, tapping the tail on the rotation. Perhaps it was a lost cause. Regardless, the end came quickly with a dull thud and sudden silence as she pancaked upside down into the sand and grass.

She almost made it, but not. My heart nearly stopped. Had I wrecked my competition airplane just when it was flying so well?

Whoever built that airplane did me a big favor. They coated the fuselage in some unbelievably durable layer of something. When I turned it over, she had sand on its nose and wings, and a broken propeller sticking out of her wing. Other than that, "71" was intact and nearly without a scratch.

I got lucky. Very lucky. Lucky 71 to be exact.

Tom Sontag



Tom also sent this link about a Kentucky Control Line flier....<https://www.kentucky.com/news/local/counties/fayette-county/article44499915.html>



from Dennis Leonhardi



**MEETING NOTICE:- No Meeting that I know of due to Covid-19.**

The Piston Poppers Club meetings are held on the last Thursday of each month at the Anoka Co. Airport in Blaine, MN. Enter the airport road from the automatic gates on the West side, turn right and go south past the airport beacon to the 2

