

## The History of SAM 27

The formation of SAM 27 took place in 1976: John Pond, Ed Woods, Bill Hooks, and others from SAM 21 met and decided that a northern county chapter of SAM. should be formed to promote intra-club competition. A letter was sent to Woody Woodman at SAN national (see letter dated 08/31/76) by Ed Wood and we were designated SAM 27 charter otherwise known as "WOODS RAIDERS",

The Clubs first flying site was "Kimes Ranch" this was located off highway 12 towards Sabastapol. Ed Wood set up the flying there, we enjoyed club contests there, I remember we were to hold a contest at that site with 5.A.M.21 & S.A.M. 30, we mowed a circle in the grass so the planes could take off, the farmer said we had stolen his grass, got mad and threw us out on the day of the contest. Everyone showed up for the meet, I remember going from farm to farm and findings a good farmer who gave us permission to use his pasture and we held the contest. It took a while to settle our problem with "Kimes Ranch" never returned to it.

Ed Wood, Don Bekins, John Pond, and several other members of SAM organizations including myself had a meeting at the Holiday Inn in Fairfie1d to form a uniform set of rules for our local contests. The rules that were drafted later became known as the West Coast Rules, and became the basis of our current SAM rules. They were based largely on the set of rules used by Contest Director Tom Bristol at the 1977 SAM Champs held in Las Vegas.

As I recall our next main flying site was "Two Rock" Coast Guard base which was set up by Tulp and Bekins. Our Club held many contests at this location, half the club flew Lanzo Record Breakers during this period of SAM we also flew .020 replicas with rudder only "Ace" single channel pulse. Tulp and I both had our 15' Dallaires during this period, I lost a Pacific Ace at a contest OOS, and was contacted by a farmer weeks later that one of his cows had destroyed the model but I found it went seven miles. We abandoned this site due to radio interference with Santa Rosa modelers flying in the same area,

(Editor's note: At one point following the time our spark plug Bill Hooks died suddenly, the members were very demoralized. The club membership dropped to about 7 people. Then Ron Keil again took on the presidency and things got going again. It was his great parties during our contests that gained fame, and the contestants showed up in droves. Ed Solenberger created the "Ohlsson T Shirt" which we sold in great numbers along with Ohlsson decals. That promotion along with our popular and unusual raffles at contests put SAM 27 back in good financial health. We now have a perpetual trophy is given to the sweepstakes winner at our annual contest in memory of SAM 27 co-founder, Bill Hooks, whose great wit, sense of humor and love of old timer modeling was an inspiration to us all.

Our club flew from several other sites; Dr. Morrie Smith's ranch on Nicasio Road, Sears Point Parking area, Indian Valley College, Woodland, the McGuiness Park near Terra Linda by Smith Ranch Airport, a new vineyard in Napa owned by a friend of Bekins, and Loren Schmidt's Ranch in Elk Grove.

I remember at a contest that was held at the Napa site, John Pond and his sidekick Charlie Critch were flying Texaco, a large Dallaire was seen flying over the lake on the property landing on the other side. John & Charlie were still flying a small black object that was circling high in the clouds. When they finally found it wouldn't turn, they allowed the buzzard to fly its own way, and they finally believed the contestants that told them the plane landed on the other side of the lake.

Don Bekins then negotiated a flying site for us on Atherton Road across from the Olive Ridge Tennis Club, Novato. We enjoyed flying and work parties and contests from this site for several years -- we even had gourmet picnics and dinners at the Tennis Club. However, a complaint from a nearby homeowner to the County of Marin started the process that lost us our flying site. They wanted a Use Permit from the property owner and they required him to plant the field which had lain fallow for



years, for it was a flood plain and was underwater most winters. We tried to reason with the County to no avail. We lost the field. A familiar story, isn't it?

After our loss we went from Woodland to Loren Schmidt's Ranch for our annual "CRASH & BASH". Ed Hamler has now found the club its new flying site on Lakeville Highway in a nice open area behind the vineyard of Domaine Chandon, which looks to have as much as, if not more area than our old site on Atherton road, and is only a five minute drive away.

Some of my memories were of the good parties after our contests at "Kleist Heidelberg" in Santa Rosa. The several parties that Hilde & I hosted at our home in Bel Marin Keys. The largest was a group of 97 modelers & families for a barbecue, VCR, horseshoes, swimming, boating. Parties were also held at Don Bekins' home by the bay complete with Boston Whaler rides to see the sea lions, Speed Hughes catching crabs off the dock and Hilde fishing. I also remember when Hilde made 36 cakes for a contest and an afgan as a raffle prize at Woodland. The many dinners and B.B.Q's with good friends and fellow modelers were the best.

At one contest on Atherton Road I remember a large man in a large van in which he lived decided to park on part of our flying area at the start of one of our contests. When he was asked to move, he became angry. We finally got him to move, but I talked it over with him and made us a friend. He later donated a Dooling .61 and a Cox, .010 as prizes.

Tom Brennan and I started combining free flight, .020 and rubber events with our R/C assist at our contests Two Rock & Atherton Road sites. For several years we had both rubber free flight and R/C assist gas models at our contests. Now, we are starting to fly rubber again with our "Gollywock Gaggles".

I remember my good friend John Droboschhoff (the "Mad Russian") forgetting to turn on his receivers and loosing a few planes at contests, throwing his transmitter across the field and cursing. A good "John" story was when Tatum and I were helping him at the 1985 SAM Champs in Madera, California, the wind was strong, John faced his Lanzo Record Breaker into the wind and launched. As it started to rise, John started leaning back because his Lanzo was not penetrating the wind and drifting backward. John leaned further back, straining to see his plane. The higher it went the more John leaned. He screamed, "I can't see it, hold my shoulders!", which I did lowering him to about 30 degrees from the ground. I asked John, "Why don't you just turn around and fly it." He yelled as he was flying, " I can't fly it that way!"

Jack & I helped him get it back down. John was a good friend that I will never forget. We had man hours of flying fun together. I still fly his designs today and am proud to say he's finally made the SAM Hall of Fame.

#### CLUB PRESIDENTS:

1976	ED WOOD
1977	RON KEIL
1978	BILL HOOKS
1979	DON BEKINS
1980	DON BEKINS
1981	RON KEIL
1982	RON KEIL
1983	RON KEIL
1984	JACK TATUM
1985	JACK TATUM

1986	JOHN DROBSHCOFF
1987	ANDY ANDREW5
1988	ED SOLENBERGER
1989	ED HAMLER
1990	ED HAMLER
1991	BRIAN RAMSEY
1992	BRIAN RAMSEY

Club newsletter editors that I remember were:

Lloyd Gomez

Park Abbott

Don Bekins

Andy Andrews

Jack Tatum

Ned Nevels

Karl Righetti

Don Bekins (again)