



## **Southern Navion Air Group**

Newsletter

JULY 2012

### **SNAG WINS ANS PARTICIPATION TROPHY FOR THE 8TH CONSECUTIVE YEAR!!**

Every year at ANS Convention a trophy is awarded to the regional chapter that accumulates the most points by flying in the three contests. One point is awarded for each participant, 3 points for finishing first, 2 points for finishing second, and 1 point for finishing third. Each morning at the pilot's briefing the pilot specifies which chapter they will be flying for and thus will get the points awarded.

SNAG members arrived at Bardstown, Kentucky ready for competition. Many SNAG members won or placed in each contest. On Tuesday we lined up and took off from Bardstown to Glasgow, Kentucky for the "All Out Speed" contest. Strategy varied from flying above the turbulence near 3000 feet to staying down low. The pilots who went high picked up a tailwind advantage on the outbound leg but suffered on the return trip in the Handicap event where the winners of each class compete for an overall winner. Speeds are somewhat different in the handicap event due to wind direction and due to strategy being different between pilots. Each competitor's handicap is determined by subtracting their outbound speed from the highest speed in the outbound leg.

<b>Class</b>	<b>1<sup>ST</sup> Place-speed</b>	<b>2<sup>ND</sup> Place-speed</b>	<b>3<sup>RD</sup> Place-speed</b>
300HP	Rusty Herrington: 210mph	Cliff McSpadden: 204mph	Ron Natalie: 193mph
285HP	John Yohey: 216mph	Tajh Kraus: 207mph	Jeff Davis: 204mph
260HP	Mitch Midyett: 204mph	Dick McSpadden: 202mph	Blake Flemming: 190mph
225HP	Robert Gaines: 182mph	Jim Waldron: 180mph	
205HP	Beth Pontiff: 174mph	Larry Woodfin: 173mph	

Results of the Handicap event are as follows: Rusty Herrington Overall Winner

<b>Pilot</b>	<b>Average Speed</b>	<b>Handicap speed</b>
Rusty Herrington	190mph	196mph
John Yohey	181mph	181mph
Mitch Midyett	173mph	185mph
Robert Gaines	152mph	186mph
Beth Pontiff	146mph	188mph

Thursday morning we flew the "Efficiency" contest. In this event each pilot flies the same prescribed course while being timed. Upon landing the fuel tank is refilled and amount is recorded. Using time and fuel consumed an efficiency score is derived. Flying too fast wastes fuel and flying too slowly wastes time so flying at best economy or best speed will lose this event. 16 Navions flew in this event but only the first 3 places are awarded. First place went to Rich Stigall with John Yohey second and Cliff McSpadden third. The big engine Navion definitely has an advantage in this event.

Friday morning we flew the "Proficiency" contest. In this event each pilot is given the route to be flown and predicts the time to fly the course and fuel burn. Points are added for each tenth of a gallon of fuel error and each second of time error. A perfect score is zero. There is no penalty for using a lot of fuel or time as long as the prediction is correct. 16 Navions flew in this event as well. John Yohey finished first in this event with Jeff Davis second and Rusty Herrington third.

The week was also filled with excursions like Monday's tour of Bardstown including Heaven Hill Distillery and Wednesday's trip to Churchill Downs where we enjoyed a nice breakfast while watching the thoroughbred horses exercise followed by a visit to a breeding farm for saddle bred horses and lunch at Claudia Sanders (Mrs. Colonel Sanders) restaurant. Some of our group played golf on several of the days we were there and others visited the local distilleries. Every evening we gathered at the SNAG Hospitality Suite for more fellowship with our Navion friends. This year we held the hospitality suite in the large banquet facility at the hotel which allowed more Navioneers to participate.

Thursday night we rode and dined on the Old Kentucky Dinner Train. The meal was very good, and the company was better.

Friday evening we held our awards banquet where the results of the flying events were officially announced.

-- Rusty Herrington

## **SNAG PILOT EXTRAORDINAIRE SHARES HIS STORY**

Recognizing my extraordinary skill as a Navion pilot and teller of tall tales (those two skills go together, don't you think?), Susan asked me to put together something for the newsletter about the competition events at the ANS National Convention. While the memory of the 2012 Convention is still fresh in my head, I will do just that. And since the plank of wood with my name on it that I was presented at the awards dinner gives bragging rights, I will brag:

### *HOW TO OUT RUN DICK McSPADDEN IN THE CONTINENTAL 260hp SPEED EVENT*

It was not easy, let me assure you. Dick has been winning the event ever since... well I don't even know. He used to win when they still called the event a race. He had racked up many wins before I ever went to my first Convention at St Simons Island, Georgia in 2001. It was at this convention that I saw painted on the cowl of N5318K, "The World's Fastest 260hp Navion". I thought that here was a man who had just painted a big bull's eye on his backside. My Rangemaster, N1EW had a 260hp Continental, and in my naïve little mind, I thought, "well, we will just see..."

The next year I entered N1EW in the event at Spearfish, South Dakota and Dick handily beat me, by about seven miles per hour. Since then I have won the event four times and Dick has beaten me four more times. He also won the class twice when I did not enter the competition. Three of my wins were in the Rangemaster, and one was in my current ride, N8747H. I really didn't understand that Rangemasters were supposed to be slow. To sum up, Dick leads the series each year I have entered the event by five wins to my four.

How I managed to win three times in the Rangemaster, I still don't know. I believe that better luck catching the wins aloft account for two of those wins.

After I succumbed to lust for a sliding canopy Navion and sold N1EW to J T McMahon, competing in N8747H was a struggle. Dick won in Dayton, Ohio; Cedar City, Utah; Sevierville, Tennessee; and Cody, Wyoming...four in a row! I made a lot of mistakes flying in those years and N8747H was just plain slow as well. This year, in Bardstown, Kentucky, my luck finally turned and I won. The official results have not yet been published, but my unofficial time says by something less than ten seconds.

So how do you win? How do you make your Navion faster the next one? How about more power? The first thing that comes to mind is to hang a big honking engine on the airframe. I didn't do that...it costs a whole lot of money and would, of course, move me out of the 260 hp Continental class. People like Dick with the Druett engine mounts have a definite edge here. The Druett STC provides for an air filter with a lot of area. Those of us with the Rangemaster-

style basket mount use the small Brackett filter specified in the type certificate. The difference is close to an inch of manifold pressure. More manifold pressure equals more power. Just ask the guys that hang superchargers on their hot rods! Go figure...And don't leave any of your horsepower on the table. I just heard of a 300 hp Continental whose prop governor would only allow a maximum RPM of 2500. The 300 hp rating is for 2700 RPM.

The next thing you can do is to keep the airframe as light as possible. Don't carry around a lot of weight that requires more lift from the wing and the added induced drag that comes with the lift. And, I am told that you don't want the center of gravity near the front of the envelope. A little bit aft CG helps. My three blade propeller is no help here... More weight for the third blade and the extra blade is way out in front of the CG. The empty weight CG on N8747H was just barely inside the front edge of the envelope following the installation to the IO-470 and the three-blade BlackMac prop. I have spent a lot of effort keeping the airframe as light (and simple) as I could and making sure that anything bolted to the airplane was as far back as reasonable.

An aerodynamically clean Navion is going to be faster than one with a lot of junk hanging out in the airstream. I don't think there will be much argument with that statement. The only discussion is how far to go. For example, N8747H has the old-fashioned front step and is still pretty fast. I tried the rear step mod offered by ANS and found I did not like it. How much drag penalty is the front step anyway? Not much by itself, I would think. I am skeptical of any claim about increased speed from any single aerodynamic improvement. The Navion is a big old airplane and has to punch a big hole in the air it goes through...simple as that!

And while we are on the subject of drag, let's talk about cooling drag and airframe leakage. Every bit of air that enters the cooling inlets on the cowl or flows through the airframe comes at a price of added drag. But, of course, proper cooling is essential. What you want to do is seek out and seal all those places where your engine baffling is allowing air to pass through the cowl without doing its job of cooling the engine. There is lots of info out there on the internet about how other people with other airplanes have done this. Also the lightening holes behind the flaps and in the wheel wells allow a path for air leakage and can be sealed.

OK... now that you have cleaned up your Navion and sealed all the leaks you can find, how do you win? I think the winds aloft are often the deciding factor, so make a plan that that uses the winds to your advantage, then fly the plan. If you don't, you surely will not win! Fly straight... remember the old thing about a straight line and two points. Hold your altitude, changes can be costly on the timer's stopwatch. What altitude to fly? Well, lower is normally faster at a flat-out power setting, and you are not using up the time required to climb. But remember to use the altitude where the wind can be used to your advantage. A difference of a couple of hundred feet in altitude can move you through a wind shear plane into a different wind speed/direction.

Now that you have done all this, what does it really take to win the speed event? Sometimes the difference in first and second place is as little as a second or two! You have to be lucky! You have to have the good luck to fly a better flight profile than the other guy, who has as much, or more skill, than you do, and is trying win just as much as you are. It can come down to whose turn it is to win on any given day! Happy flying, and to quote Gary Rankin... "May you always fly with tailwinds."

-- Mitch Midyett

## WHERE DOES THE MONEY GO...

Several folks have inquired about how much money we have in our account and where the money goes. Contrary to some of my good pals, we do not have "tons" of money. Below is an accounting of where we spend our money.

### Membership

Annual dues based on 130 members	\$ 2,600.00
Newsletter costs (about 100 printed copies/mo)	\$ 1,400.00
ANS Convention – Sunday night	\$ 200.00
ANS People's Choice Trophy	\$ 125.00
SNAG Hospitality at ANS	\$ 800.00
	<u>\$ 2,525.00</u>
Difference	\$ 75.00

**Fly-In Costs**

Fly-In costs are calculated based on the host's expenses – rental vehicles including fuel, sodas, water, beer, ice, snack items, paper products and airplane game supplies. This amount is then divided by all the adults in attendance, even if that individual comes and goes since everyone eats and drinks. Typically, this runs about \$ 17-\$ 19 so we round the amount to \$ 20.00. Over a three day event, costs rise due to the extra day. The most expensive part of this is the rental of vehicles. Typically, this raises the cost to the mid-twenties.

Overages in fly-in payments is used to cover costs to hosts when a fly in has poor attendance due to weather, such as the Shade Tree fly-in in March.

**LABOR DAY FLY-IN  
AUG 31-SEPT 3, 2012  
STATESBORO, GA**

The next SNAG Fly In is Labor Day weekend at Statesboro, GA **KTBR**. This one will be hosted the Herringtons. The hotel is the Baymont Inn and Suites located at 425 South Main Street Statesboro, GA 30458. The number is 912-489-7368 & contact person is Brian Mueller. Ask for the SNAG group rate. Room rates are Double Queen Friday/Saturday 89.00 Sun 59.00, King Premium Friday/Saturday 99.00 Sun 59.00 & King Suite Friday/Saturday 109.00 Sun 59.00. More information in the August newsletter.

**There is a Georgia Southern University football game on Saturday evening so the hotel will sell out for the weekend. Make your reservations ASAP!!**

**NOVEMBER FLY-IN  
NOV. 9<sup>TH</sup>-11<sup>TH</sup>  
EUFAULA, AL**

The final fly-in of the season will be Nov 9-11, 2012 in Eufaula Alabama. It will be hosted by the McSpaddens & Hutchinsons. The field is **KEUF** Weedon Field.

We have blocked 25 rooms at the Eufaula Lake Point Resort. The number to the hotel is (800) 544-5253. You must use group code 1858 when making reservation. Our block will be held until October 9<sup>th</sup>. Since November is off season, we have discounted rates. For 2 people with 2 queen beds, the cost is \$64.40. For 2 people in a king, the cost is \$79.05. If you are bunking more than 2 to a room, there is a \$10.00 per person charge. They also have 1 and 2 bedroom cabins about a 15 min walk from the Lodge that are \$99.75 per night. The Lodge has restaurant, bar, and we will rent a very nice hospitality room. More information will be forthcoming.

**ANS NAVIONEER OF THE YEAR: RUSTY HERRINGTON  
ANS FLAGSHIP: WOODY WOODFIN  
CONGRATUATIONS TO YOU BOTH!**

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