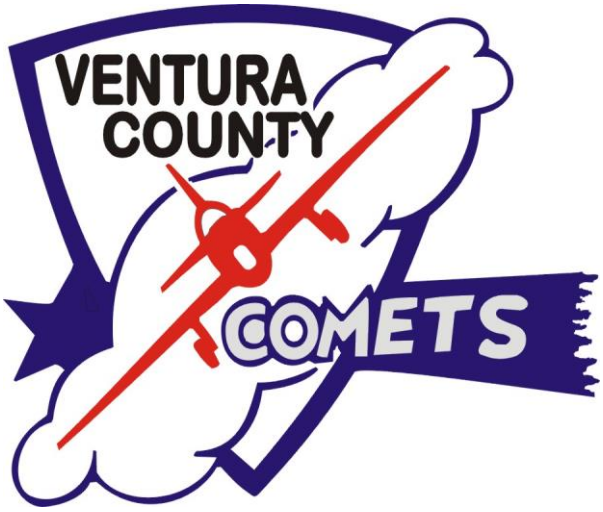
The Comet's Tale



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The Comet's Tale is the official newsletter and record of the Ventura Country Comets AMA Charter Club #173 and is published every other month at the Comet's Tale Lab in Camarillo, CA. Editorial contributions are always welcome.

November 2026

Next Meeting:

Saturday, November 21, 2026

11:00 meeting, 12:00 lunch

At the Comets' field

Prez Sez:

This will be my last Prez Sez as president of the VC Comets, as I have announced my plan to step down and volunteer for the position of club Treasurer. John Green is also stepping down as Treasurer and is volunteering for the position of club President. I encourage all of you to come to our last outdoor meeting of the year this coming Saturday, November 21st, at the beautiful TJ Moran Memorial Field. I have asked Mike and Steve to cook us a tri-tip meal with all the delicious sides.

We need your attendance because, at this meeting we will hear nominations for the both the President and Treasurer positions and then vote with a simple majority rule. I encourage anyone in the club that would like to be nominated to be at the meeting and speak up when nominations are proposed.

I have enjoyed working with all of our club members as president for the last three years and hope that we continue to grow and encourage junior flyers to join our club.

Your Prez,
Jeff

Meeting Minutes:

The meeting was held at the Comet's field. It started at 11:01, there were 35 members and 3 guests.

The club added 9 new members between July and August.

The Meeting Minutes were approved

An action item is to reroof the canopy over the pilot tables.

Treasurer's report: Club membership is 113 members. **Dues are due**. You are able to pay dues online starting Oct. 1 or give checks to President Jeff so he can update the membership status on the website.

Safety: The fliers are doing well with the callouts (landing and taking off). Good use of model restraints. We need to schedule a day to mow the field. There was a concern of the yellow jackets (wasps) and are considering buying more hanging traps.

Park Liaison: George B. made an appeal to the water board about using water-soluble tags on the planes, the Board said this is too difficult to enforce and too time consuming to manage (the proposal was denied).

Old business
Thanks to Dave D for taking over the last meeting. Thanks went out to Matt S. for donating T-shirts and organizing the vendors to donate parts and equipment for the Huckfest.

New business
We have a new windsock and windsock pole, and new kayak seat

The canopy roof project: Jeff will create a scope and drawing and estimate

Club Officers: We will vote for new officers. The election committee is Greg N, Bob R and Ron G.

Jeff has contacted the Ventura County Park Department to secure the meeting room at the Oak view Community Center for 2027 meeting dates.

Thanks to Jeff for organizing Junior Day at the flying field

Meeting adjourned at 11:28

A BBQ lunch followed the meeting.

Tucson Aerobatic Shootout 2026
- Text and Photos by Matt Stringer

In October, Luke and I were invited to compete in the Tucson Aerobatic Shootout down at the TIMPA RC club. The Tucson Aerobatic Shootout is effectively our IMAC World Championship for giant scale precision aerobatics where the best pilots from around the world get invited to compete at this event every 2yrs. The 6 classes flown are Sportsman, Intermediate, Advanced, Unlimited, Freestyle, and Invitational. There is over $100,000 of prizes and cash up for grabs at this event that Desert Aircraft sponsors; it is the current pinnacle of the hobby. This year we had over 60 pilots, with each class having a 50/50 split of international pilots and pilots from the USA.

The “Invitational” class is the champion of champions class. This is the modern day equivalent to the former (Las Vegas) TOC Tournament of Champions when Bill Bennet, the owner of Circus Circus Enterprises and Sahara Hotel and Casino, sponsored the event. The Invitational class is the top 15 IMAC pilots in the world pitted against each other with the opportunity to win $12,500 USD for 1st place and bragging rights to be the best in the world. Our sequences are uniquely the most difficult out of any of the classes flown. To qualify for an “Invitational” Pilot you have to either be 1) an international pilot of multiple Unlimited Class National Championships, 2) an accomplished FAI pilot, or 3) a previous winner of the Tucson Aerobatic Shootout Unlimited Class. Our group of pilots is the best of the best in the world for the class.

The contest is 5 days long and there are 4 “known” sequences and 5 “unknown” sequences flown over these 5 days. Weather conditions are always the most difficult at this contest as it is known for extremely high winds. This year the flights were cancelled on Friday due to blowing dust. Saturday was not any better and we resumed the contest in 42mph sustained winds with 58mph gusts.

It was a very long week and a lot of preparation/practice went into going to this event, yet it was an amazing time.

I earned a 4th place in the Invitational Class winning $3,500 and the title of 4th best in the world. This was a personal best finish for me in the Invitational Class.

Luke earned a 4th place in the Intermediate IMAC class. This was his 3rd “Shootout”. Luke’s class had a very tight points battle down to the wire.

Next year will be an off year for this event, but come 2028 we’ll be back at it again striving for that podium/win!








1ST PLACE
INVITATIONAL
$15,000
2ND PLACE
INVITATIONAL
$10,000
3RD PLACE
INVITATIONAL
4TH PLACE
INVITATIONAL
$3,500
5TH PLACE
INVITATIONAL
$2,500
TUCSON
AEROBATIC
SHOOTOUT


JR PROPO
PROFESSIONAL RADIO CONTROL SYSTEMS



Tips on Buying Used Stuff at RC Swapmeets

- Text and photos by Ron Scott

You can find some great deals and some total junk and anything in-between, when going to a swap meet/garage sale/or flee market. One of the questions I always ask myself when at the swap meet is "why is this person trying to sell certain items??" Also, is this stuff stolen or is this person really in need of $$$$. Whatever the case, you need to be careful or you may get stung. The following are some tips that I use in wheeling and dealing.

1) Don't pick up or handle anything unless you ask the price first. If you do pick up an item, the seller will probably up the price depending on how interested or excited you appear. It's a psychology game and you need to be a good negotiator. If the price seems reasonable, then, pick it up and inspect it.

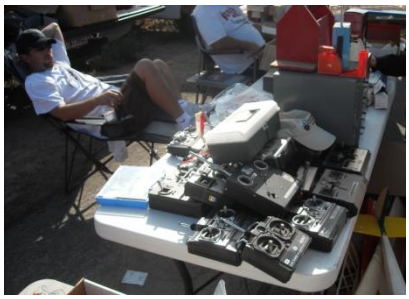
2) Inspection:
   - Carefully inspect the item looking for good and bad points.
   - **Anything electrical, smell it** – it may be burned internally and not obvious by looking at it.
   - Look for repaired areas – and how well the repairs were done. Example: If the alignment of the repaired sections was slightly off, the item may never function as it originally did.
   - Kits – check to see that all the parts are there – Cowl, wheels, elevator, rudder, manual, etc.
   - Engines or Motors:
     A) Is it free to rotate and are there any rough spots as it rotates – this may indicate rusted or broken bearings.
     B) Is the crankshaft bent - as it rotates does it wobble or appear straight.
     C) Does it have good compression – as it rotates, it should be hard to turn as it approaches "TDC".
     D) Are there any obvious broken, bent or missing parts that may need replacing?

3) Haggling over the price. This is a real art. If you're a millionaire, it won't matter that much but if you are like me (and I am a real cheapskate) cost matters a lot. My rule of thumb, depending on the items condition is "do not pay more than 50 – 60% of the original cost of the item. Try to get the seller to give you a price first. If it is way too high, just walk away – you can always come back but there is a risk of the item being sold. If the asking price is reasonable, then look more closely at it – pick it up and give it a real good look – "Inspection" as noted above. If you think the price is a little more than you can afford, make a counter offer – he may say "OK" or "NO" and you can negotiate further or ????? Hopefully you both feel good about the deal if you buy it.

4) If you are spending a lot of money or if you are not sure about the items operation, ask if you can try it out. Obviously he isn't going to let you fly a plane, helicopter or quadcopter but in the case of a battery, battery charger, transmitter, receiver or whatever, he would probably allow you to check it out. If the item does not work, ask him if you can get your money back. Get a phone number in case you may have questions later.

5) Do not spend too much $$$, sometimes you can trade stuff.





Good luck and happy wheeling and dealing

Upcoming Events

Comets Christmas party @ 5pm at the Oak View Community Center

www.VCComets.com
Comet's Facebook Page: Comets RC Club and Airfield at Lake Casitas