

Jim Richmond Open

West Baden, IN

April 1-3, 2023

The 4th annual JRO is in the books. You'll find the results posted elsewhere and some of the highlights here. This contest was well attended with 27 entries and many spectators as it was spring break in the area. There were several people entered that hadn't been to this event before.

Dave Lindley greeted me on arrival, Friday night, with the news that we almost didn't have any helium for the steering balloons. After frantically contacting suppliers around the area he finally located 2 tanks in Bloomington, Indiana. With the help of Leo Pilachowski (Bloomington local) they were able to grab them as Dave drove through town on his way to West Baden.

We had our traditional social gathering at the German Café on Saturday night. It was well attended with over 40 people (contestants, their spouses, and several representatives from the AMA who joined us). It's one of the highlights of this event for me and allows for all of us to get to know each other a little better. It also happened to be Bill Gowen's 83rd birthday which we celebrated with a song and a piece of cake.

This was the first year we went to a 3 day format. It worked out in our favor as the conditions in the atrium were fantastic on both Sunday and Monday. The first day, Saturday, saw the air conditions peak early and deteriorate in the afternoon which is the opposite of the usual way the day goes. The abundant sunshine on the final 2 days made for some great flying and a couple of records.

Hamish Christie flew in from the west coast and set a new A-6 record (10:12) with a plane of his own design. Ray Harlan came in from the opposite coast and crushed the FF Electric record with a 33:19. The F1D event had really good scores with many flyers over 40 minutes and 2 breaking the 50 mark. Kang Lee ended up on top with a fine 51:46. The LPP event was hotly contested, as usual, with less than a minute separating the top 3 contestants. Tom Sova finished on top with a 11:44.

In the end, it was a fantastic weekend. It's made possible by the continued support of the contestants, the fantastic planning and organizing of Dave Lindley and the usual hospitality of the West Baden Springs Hotel and the German Café.

Rey Mazzocco, CD