District III—Ohio, Pennsylvania, West Virginia

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I awoke this morning to snow on the ground and the possibility of yet another nor'easter later in the week—just in time for the Toledo Show: R/C Model Expo. Welcome to spring in District III!

When you read this, outdoor flying should be going strong with plenty of events to attend. However, I will finish out winter 2018 with some indoor action in the district.

On March 23-24, I attended the fifth annual Northeast Ohio Electric Festival, aka NEF. The facility, the Akron University field house, is huge. It houses a football field and a running track. The ceiling is high and well-lit, making it an ideal place to fly during the winter months.

I have attended every one of these events and this year, attendance was off. The contest director (CD), Tony Husak, indicated that in 2017, the event had nearly 200 pilots. In 2018, the pilot count was about 120. The weather was cold and conducive to indoor flying, and this event is the only major indoor flying event in District III.

Many people, me included, look forward to NEF because we do not have a local facility to fly indoors. However, I have observed that many clubs have found smaller nearby facilities that will accommodate indoor RC.

Those in attendance had a great time flying in this first-class facility.

The NEF event is organized by the Ohio Indoor RC Flyers. CD Tony Husak, Marc Stermer, and Gary Oldenburgh conducted a pilots' meeting before the indoor flying began.

The NEF organizers provided AMA a spacious booth that AMA Executive Director Dave Mathewson and I staffed.

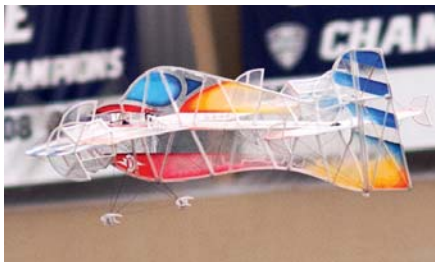
Marc Stermer flew his giant indoor B-17 complete with realistic engine sound to the delight of the crowd.

The event organizers have competitive events including musical airplanes, micro carrier landing, full contact combat, and more, creating a fun atmosphere.

Another highlight was the return of indoor Aerobatics or Pattern flying, known as F3P. If you have never seen this type of flying, you are really missing something. These aircraft are extremely lightweight and perform challenging pattern maneuvers that are typically flown with larger, 2-meter outdoor Pattern models.

The aircraft have become extremely sophisticated with contra-rotating propellers and more. Flying them

Watch video from NEF at bit.ly/NEF_18.



One of the delicate, lightweight F3P indoor Pattern aircraft in the unusual attitude of straight and level flight.

requires a high ceiling along with a quality heating/air conditioning system so the indoor air is stable all times. This is something the Akron facility has.

I hope that this year's disappointing pilot attendance was an anomaly, because I believe it is important to keep indoor RC flying going forward. One can look at various manufacturers' advertising and see that these types of aircraft are popular, with new designs being regularly manufactured and sold.

I sincerely hope that the NEF organizers keep this event going into the future, but that can only be accomplished with a commitment from you, the AMA members of District III and the surrounding areas. With that said I will confidently conclude with, "see you next year at the NEF."

Until next month, fly safely—fly AMA.

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