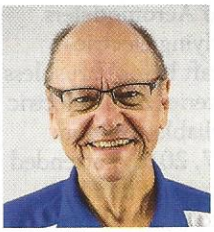
District III—Ohio, Pennsylvania, West Virginia



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As I began writing this column about the recent events I've attended, I suddenly realized I have been flying a lot of RC at full-scale airports! Most modelers agree that a general aviation airport is usually a great place to fly, not only because of the vast runways that are available, but also for all the aviation activity going on surrounding our model flying.

On July 9, 2016, I attended a fly-in at Finleyville Airpark in Pennsylvania. The event was the RC Neighborhood Fun-Fly. Jeff Sumey, a respected modeler in the area, was the event's contest director (CD). Jeff indicated that for many years an RC event was held at this airport, but the event ceased to exist because of management changes. The good news is that the current airport management asked the modelers to return!

I talked with the airport manager, Bob Usnick, who was excited to see model aircraft activity at the airport. Bob indicated that the more activity he has at the airport, the more the local city and county see the value of the facility. Then, when additional funding is needed for improvements to the airport, these community leaders help him obtain the necessary funds.

Finleyville Airpark was an excellent place to fly RC, with a beautiful paved 2,500-foot runway. The airport remained open, with club members monitoring the common air traffic control frequency should a full-scale aircraft wish to land, although little traffic was observed.

Attendance was good with many beautiful aircraft flying all day. The airport manager asked the modelers to return next year, so it was a win-win for everyone. Maybe next year I will exercise my private pilot's license and fly into this nice airport to fly RC. I can't wait!

CD Jeff Sumey conducts a pilot briefing before model flying. This is absolutely required when flying from a full-scale airport.

Flying RC at an airport allows modelers to see some great full-scale aircraft. Here, an Aeronca Champ takes off from the Finleyville airport.

Just one of the beautiful models flown at the RC Neighborhood Fun-Fly.

On July 24, 2016, I attended the Central Ohio Radio Control Society (CORKS) Fun-Fly in Centerville, Ohio. Upon arrival, I was pleasantly surprised by the beautiful flying site. CD Mike See pointed out that we were actually flying on part of a full-scale airport.

The airport is Chapman Memorial Field, and the model club has flown there for many years. At one time, the model runway was actually the full-scale runway; however, the owner of the property decided to make a new, longer runway for the full-scale activity and let the modelers have exclusive use of the runway they now use. Wow! What a great flying field owner!

Attendance was excellent, with aircraft from foamies to large turbines flying off of the beautiful grass runway. At noon, several demos were performed and also a little contest with a loop, roll, and touch-and-go competition. This looked easy, but proved to be challenging.

After attending these events, I encourage any club that might be looking for a flying field to consider contacting a small, private airport nearby. They are great places to fly.

Until next month, fly safely—fly AMA.

A view down the flightline of the beautiful CORKS flying field.

This is a great way for a club to promote its benefits to the public.

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