

WHETHER you are an old-time die-hard model builder or a newcomer, you have probably seen this club in action—either flying for fun or hauling home the hardware.

The club started back in 1935, when Carl Goldberg decided that know-how was needed among Chicago model builders. After several preliminary meetings a name was decided upon and a constitution drawn up. The purpose of the club, as stated in the constitution, is to "advance the science of model aeronautics through distribution of knowledge gained through experimentation." That purpose has been steadfastly held through ten years of uninterrupted regular club activities and meetings.

The Aeronuts have a rather unique club organization which has worked remarkably well. The Qualified Membership Requirement has been instrumental in higher achievements in building and flying among fledgling and more experienced builders alike.

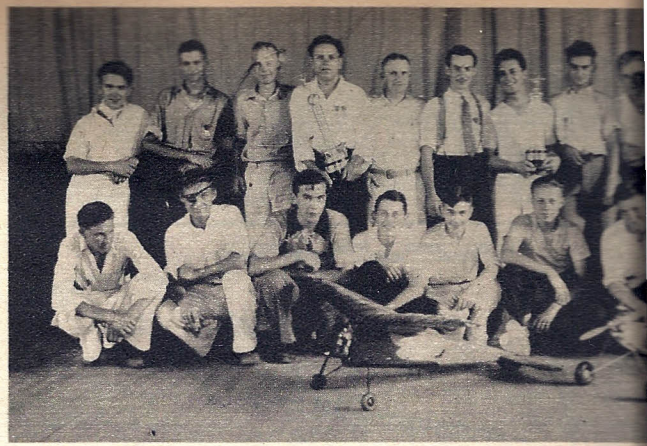
Attendance at meetings is open to everyone, and at times has reached a figure of 45-50 modelers, although qualified membership has never reached 35. A qualified active member's privileges are no more than a prospective member's, except that he can vote at meetings and pays fifty cents every six months for that privilege. A chart is included at the end of this article, listing flight requirements for qualifying and requalifying.

The present officers of the club are: pres., Roland G. Schmitt; vice-pres., J. "Pappy" Matulis; treas., Bill Schwensen; secy., Ed Lidgard. The membership roster includes other well-known personalities, such as Carl Goldberg, Frank Nekimken, Wally Simmers, Milton Hugelot, Jimmy Tangney, Jimmy Broderick, Joe Konefes, Raoul Hoffman, "Teen" Beckstead, Sidney Axlerod, Dennis Turner, Ed Swort, and many others who are either retired balsa butchers or working for Uncle Sam.

The success of the club became evident in a few short years when every record in five indoor categories was held within the club. In 1937, honor was paid the club when Frank Zaic devoted twenty pages of his yearbook to the work of the club.

At the 1938 National contest, Milton Hugelot, a 16-year-old Junior and a member of the Chicago Aeronuts, was chosen as the Grand National Champion. This is the first time the award was made. He won a 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 5th in different events, indoor and outdoor, against stiff competition. His performance was marked by calm assurance and excellent workmanship. Milton, or "Butch," as the fellows termed him, still holds several records and is quite active right now. Recently, he unofficially broke two World's Records with indoor gliders: :56.4 with Class "A," and :62.4 with Class "B."

In 1939, the Aeronut list of records totaled 29, with only 26 qualified members. This in itself is a record, for never before has such a small club shown such performance. No other state can claim as many records as does this club.

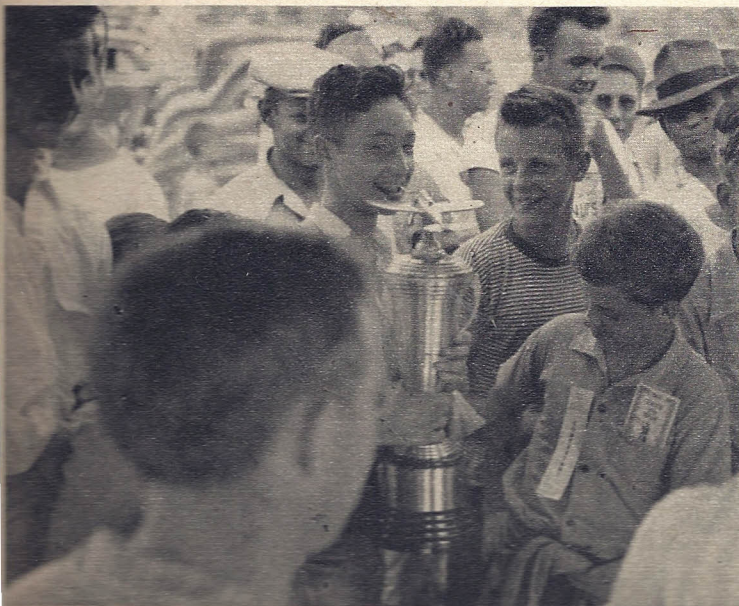


The 1941 Nationals was a memorable affair. The Contest Director of that meet was Aeronut Frank Nekimken, who did an excellent job and showed the rest of the country a sample of the bang-things he has been doing for modeling in Chicago for years.

Indoor model fans all over the country probably know Carl Goldberg's Class "C" indoor tractor well—the one dubbed "Old Di Tail." The microfilm on the tail is so old you can hardly see through it for the dust. Ten years ago it made the longest recorded indoor flight at a National meet. Well, the last time I visited C. G. at home I spotted it in the same place (under his bed), in the same box, same dust, same champion!

In 1941, at the National meet, during the Moffet finals, the club was busy flying proxy for the New Zealanders. Walter Fromm was flying an excellent entry made by Harold Righton. One official flight of this model will go down in history. Fromm, in a serious mood for a change, packed every last wind into the motor, then deftly and quickly set the model down to take off, released it, and stepped back. A second later the flight was under way. At an altitude of about 15' the model leveled out and started to glide. Ever since one thought something had gone wrong until it was noticed that the rubber tensioner had caught so that the propeller had never turned over. Some launching, eh what?

Back in 1939, gas models were gaining in popularity and some of the wheels decided that to make room for other events the outdoor stick event would be discontinued. The word got around in advance. A few old die-hards, headed by Wally Simmers, got their heads together and letters flooded the country. Came the Nationals and the boys held their own stick event. It had many entries, good times were made, and everyone had fun. The idea of dropping rubber model events has never come up since.



Bill Schwensen, Chicago Champion

CHICAGO

Another National activity has been the proxy flying of the Moffet entries from foreign countries. This began in 1937 and has become an official function of the club.

As the years roll by, some members have walked into successful business ventures, such as Gerald Ritzenthaler, of the famous line of "Ritz" props for gas models; Dick Obarski, partner in the Hely-Arc organization that produces solid rubber wheels; Carl Goldberg (with his line of famous gas models, put out by Comet), with American Hobby Miss, and Wally Simmers, the "Gollywock" man