

LEFT: 140-years-plus as Aeronuts . . . each has over 20 years service with the Chicago club (l. to r.): Otto Curth, Carl Goldberg, Gerry Ritz, Elic Nekimken, Howie Negri, Milton Hugelst and Bob DeBatty.



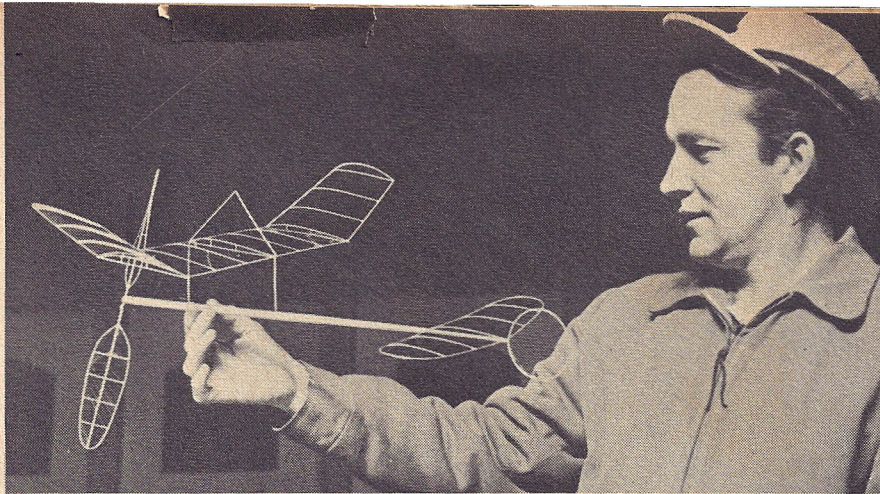
Jack Land (above) huffs and puffs in typical "indoor" fashion. Jack was 1st in paper-covered stick indoor models at last year's championships in his age bracket.

come as far as Detroit, Cleveland and Milwaukee. Activity such as this has helped keep modeling alive in the Chicago area.

Our secretary is Pete Sotich; he was contest director for the 1958 Nationals. Pete spends more time promoting modeling and contests than anyone I have ever met. He conducts this promotion work quietly from an office in the basement of his home. At his fingertips is a complete list of every model builder who has flown in one of our contests. Prior to the meets, Pete assembles entry blanks and brochures of the coming events. The results are fairly large entries and well organized affairs. Pete's brother Charlie has "assembled" one of the largest collections of trophies in the country. Charlie was National Junior Champ some years back and now is a top-notch competitor in the open class.

Club members have been very active both on and off the flying field. On the flying field they have done quite well when one looks at the list of Wakefield team members. Ed Lidgard served as a team member in 1949, 1950 and 1952 waiving his 1950 berth to another club member, Roland Schmidt. Fudo Takagi, a former club member, also made the team in 1950 as a representative from the West Coast. Jim Tangney had the honor in 1952, when a Lt. J. G. in the U. S. Navy. Bob De Batty was a member of the U. S. Wakefield team in 1954 which was victorious at World Championships held at Suffolk County Air Force base, Long Island, New York. Bob was also runner-up at 1955 semi-finals held at Selfridge Air Force Base, Michigan, when another club member, Gene Schaap, beat him out for team membership in a fly-off after both men had turned in 5 three minute flights with their Wakefield models. Gene made the trip to Germany with other team members to participate at 1955 World Championships only to finish in 20th place after making four consecutive 3 minute flights. Bob De Batty was again runner-up at 1958 semi-finals held at Grand

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Aeronuts' president and author Art Christensen with Class "B" microfilm indoor endurance flyer. Art is a designer with an electronics firm. Paper-covered copy did 13 min., 57.5 sec. under 75' ceiling . . . excellent time for a comparative new-comer to the event.

Mound, Iowa, in September 1957 when George Reich won team membership on Wakefield team. That's a pretty remarkable record in getting 5 team berths in 9 years.

Off the flying field club members have served as Vice President, contest board members and contest coordinators for A. M. A. district VI (Illinois, Indiana, Missouri and Kentucky). Those members serving as Vice-President were Pete Vacco—1952 and 1953, Frank Purdy—1954 and Peter Sotich—1955 and 1956. Contest board members have been Ed Lidgard—1949, Pete Vacco—1951 and Gene Schaap—1956. AMA contest coordinators have been Peter Sotich—1954 and Gene Schaap—1955.

The International Competition Committee has had a Chicago Aeronut as a committee member since 1950 to present date. Ed Lidgard served as Chairman in 1950 and 1951 and as a member in 1952. Pete Vacco served in 1953, Frank Purdy in 1954, Pete Sotich in 1955 and chairman in 1956, 1957 and 1958 and Gerry Ritz in 1959.

When it comes to organizing and running the National Model Airplane Championships, several members have done an outstanding job here also. Pete Vacco and Frank Purdy were very instrumental in organizing the 1954 Nationals which eventually saw Pete serving as Free Flight Director and Frank as Chief Tabulator. Elic Nekimken served as Indoor Director, Art Christensen served as Free Flight Flying Scale Event Director and Pete Sotich served as Assistant Free Flight Gas Director.

Four years later the 1958 Nationals were again held at the Glenview Naval Air Station and Pete Sotich was the unanimous choice of the A. M. A. and the Nationals' Executive Committee for Contest Manager. He was responsible for the selection of contest personnel to make the 1958 Nationals the best run ever (to quote "Air Trails Model Annual '59" Page 94). Frank Purdy again served as Chief Tabulator while Charles Sotich served as Assistant Tabulator. Elic Nekimken again repeated as Indoor Director while Don Thompson served as class "B-C" Free Flight Gas Event Director and Norman and Jane Deitchman served as class "1/2A" Free Flight Gas Directors.

The fund-raising "1952 Wakefield Book" was the brainchild of Bill Fletcher (chairman), Ed Lidgard and Dick Everett with Pete Vacco being the responsible party for its eventual publica-

tion. Many of the Chicago Aeronuts contributed plans or articles or helped in actual preparation of material prior to printing.

Pete Sotich served as Chief Timer at the 1954 World Championships while his brother, Charles, acted as captain of the team representing Guatemala. Charles had originally intended to serve as a Wakefield proxy-flier, but due to the fact that not enough proxy models showed up he served faithfully as a team captain.

Pete had the privilege of making the trip to Germany in 1955 with U. S. team members through the courtesy of the United States Air Force and had the honor of serving as "Clerk of the Course" (contest director) at the World Championships. He came in contact with every contestant, and despite language barriers turned in a most praiseworthy job. He was recently appointed to serve as a member of the Nationals Executive Committee that is responsible for many operations concerned with the Nats.

Members of the Chicago Aeronuts did quite well at the 1958 Nationals by winning 4 first places, 1 second place, 5 third places and 3 fourth places. These include 1st and 2nd in open Wakefield, 1st in indoor stick, 1st in outdoor hand launched glider and 1st in senior Wakefield.

Raoul J. Hoffman who helped design Roscoe Turner's racers, was technical adviser to the club until his death in 1956. The Chicago Aeronuts have perpetuated his name by sponsoring a trophy bearing his name that is annually awarded to the modeler, regardless of age, whose model accumulates the highest three flight total in class "A" Free Flight Gas event at the National Model Airplane Championships.

Present Club officers are: President, Art Christensen; Vice-President, Bud Wolfe; Treasurer, Frank Purdy; and Secretary, Pete Sotich.

We are interested in recruiting new members, both experienced and inexperienced in the Jr. and Sr. age groups. Anyone in the Chicago and suburban areas may obtain more information by contacting Pete Sotich at RE 5-1353.

We must credit Jem, Supplies, 2979 Dudley, Lincoln, Nebraska, for help in renewal of indoor activity. If we can continue at the present rate, indoor flying in the midwest will be as popular as it was in the pre-war days.

It is also our ambition to restore outdoor activity to a high level.