

F2D News - November 2008

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Waa waa waaaa. Game Over. The temperature has dropped down into the 20s and the wind is gusting to 35 mph. So much for the testing I was hoping to do this weekend. This is probably a sign that the flying season is officially over here. If we're lucky, from here on out we may get some occasional mild days and opportunities to put up a few flights, but otherwise it's time to baton down the hatches and start looking forward to next March/April when mother Nature will let us back into the circle.

Overall, this was a great year for F2D in New England. Average attendance at the contests was higher than ever, we set a new best for number of pilots in one contest (11), and finally had the chance to run a full two-airplane no-holds-barred F2D contest. Along with the increased numbers, the quality of flying was also higher than ever. If we had an award for strongest showing of the season, I would give it to Jeff "The Exterminator" Vader. Jeff has long been a serious contender in Formula GX combat, and has been flying F2D with us from the beginning. He's always been right there in F2D, but this year, especially towards the end of the season, he kicked it in one more notch and really brought himself to the foreground. I personally had some very hard-fought matches with him, and look forward to many more in 2009.

Speaking of 2009, did you know that we have a few F2D rules changes coming into effect? The internet has been buzzing with discussion about shutoffs for months (discussion is great, what about action?), and like it or not, 1 January 2009 is the day that shutoffs will be required for F2D. Let's not let that be the day that the music died. We've got a lot of smart and creative people in our community, so I'm still confident that we can come up with a simple and effective solution to this problem.

Aside from shutoffs, it also turns out that there is a new interpretation of the rule requiring the engine safety retaining wire. In many of our models, the safety wire is simply looped around the bellcrank axle. Apparently, in a midair collision that destroys the center rib, this loop can slip off the end of the axle and allow the engine to fly off. As unlikely as it sounds, I was told that this happened 2 or 3 times within a single contest in Germany this year. Anyway, there are two simple solutions. First, you can push out the bellcrank axle from your models, and replace it with a bolt and washer/nut big enough so that the safety wire has no way to slip off. Alternatively, you can press out the current solid aluminum axle and replace it with a hollow brass tube (getting rid of the old safety wire). You can then use a safety wire that runs through the center of axle-tube, and is terminated with a line-clip or any other means that prevents it from slipping back through the tube (see figure).

That's all I have for now. Stay warm!

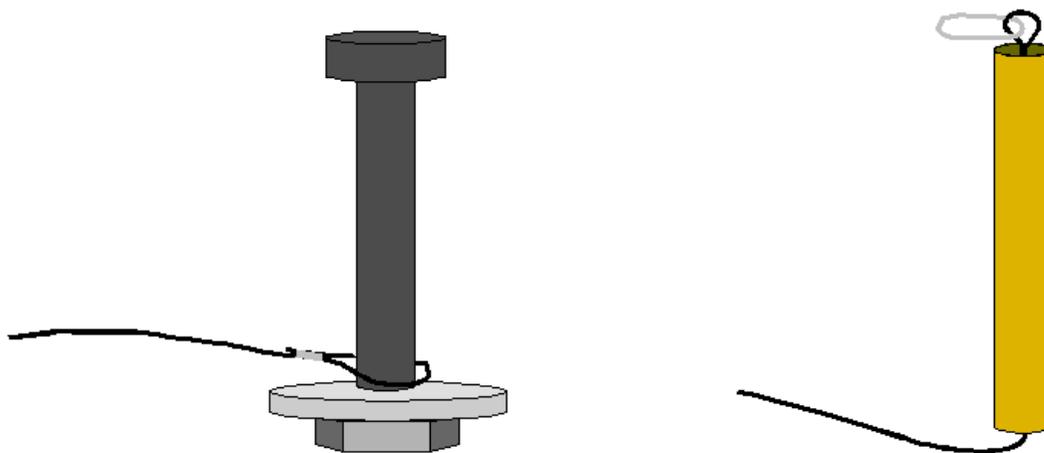


FIG. 1 Legal safety wire setups.