

HCRC Flyer



AMA Charter #341

April 2024



April showers
brings...a muddy
runway!

The field's new runway under construction. Mark Wasielewski has been hard at work clearing the north end approach almost every Saturday. If you can, come by and offer a hand.



SPECIAL NOTICE: Please leave the gate OPEN. This will allow people to come and gather the firewood from all the trees that have been taken down – Thank you!

HCRC Meeting Notes for the Thursday, March 7th, 2024 Business Meeting



No Quorum Present – 12 Members including 3 Executive Members present: Mike Shaw, Gus Coelho, Bill Ewers, Mark Wasielewski, Ron Paul, Mike Booth, Bob Prosciak, Bill Jaciow, Rick Thibault, Dennis Walker, John Darrow and Lou Enselek

Reading of the minutes from the previous month was waived. Club finances for the month of February were reported and approved.

We will fly off a runway that is currently on the parcel that we own until the rental land has been put into shape for air operations. We will fly off the old field until it is ploughed.

We are working on fundraising to support the land purchase:

1. Go Fund Me – Now live! We ask everyone to alert their family and friends and ask them to donate! Mike sent out an email asking everyone to do this. Please feel free to copy and paste the email that he sent in your emails to you friends and family.
2. Selling Land Shares – We are now selling land shares. Please consider purchasing land shares to support this club initiative. Each share is a \$100 commitment and has a 5 year maturity period.

April 6th is the Spring Clean Up! Please come out and help prepare the field for our summer flying activities. We are attempting to get as much of the land cleared prior to brush starting to grow.

The burn season ends May 1st. We hope to burn as much of the brush from the recent tree and brush removal. We will burn at any chance to get the brush gone.

We are looking for mowing volunteers for this year. This will be a smaller commitment than previously due to the smaller field.

Dennis Pipczynski has offered the use of some land by the Hadley landfill. It is on the other side of the dike behind the graveyard on North Branch Road. It is 2.2 acres next to some other property that has not been developed. This could work if we have issues flying off our reduced field. The use would end when he sells the land.

Aaron Bauer offered the use of some farmland that he owns off Rt. 66 in Westhampton. This would be a lease deal only. This could work if we have issues flying off our reduced field. He is interested in flying and his son has started driving RC cars.

Andy Argenio intends to include our go fund me in one of his next monthly columns in the AMA club magazine.

John Darrow suggested that donors above a certain level could be made lifetime members of the club.

We are still looking for a Vice-President. The club needs a volunteer! Please consider taking a leadership role in our club.

Thanks to Chef Ron Paul for preparing the meal for tonight's meeting!

Flying News & Events

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **04/04** Business meeting at the VFW in Florence 7pm, come early for food by Chef Ron, beef stroganoff)
- **04/18** New England Aero Tow, hosted by RC Propbusters, Salem, CT
- **05/02** Business meeting at the flying field, 7pm. Come early for hot dogs
- **05/04** Tailgate swap meet hosted by NCRCC, Ellington, CT
- **05/05** RC swap meet hosted by East Coast Swamp Fliers
- **05/11** Flea market/tailgate swap meet hosted by FCRCC, Turner Falls, MA



ATTENTION ALL HCRC CLUB MEMBERS AND SUPPORTERS

GOFUNDME FUNDRAISER PROGRAM

Hello all,

Your club has a secondary fundraising program in place for anyone that may wish to donate to our cause. It is through *GofundMe.com*. The link to our fundraiser page is below. This program is very important to supplement our in-house Shares Program.

SHARING: This GFM program will only be successful by sharing the link below with everyone you know and some that you don't.

Please email this link to any and all people in your phone contact list: friends, family, coworkers, everyone. These are *your* people and will be the ones most interested in helping you/us. You can also text it to anyone you don't have an email address for. Also, share this link with any business and organization. You may have to do this a few times over a period of time to get people/organizations that meant to donate but may have let it "slip through the cracks" the first time. Friends and/or family members may come up to you and hand you cash to donate on their behalf. You can transfer these funds into the fundraiser as an "anonymous" donator as well. Another easy way to share this link is on your personal social media page, if you have one. After you post it, leave yourself a reminder to re-share it to yourself every 2-4 weeks and it will go back to the top of your timeline for all your peeps to see.

Donations have already started to come in but this program will only be truly successful and meet our goal with all of our help to promote it.

Thank You,

Management

<https://gofund.me/7b63150f>

Model Airplane Club Losing Flying Field



ATTENTION ALL CLUB MEMBERS

**VICE PRESIDENT
NEEDED**

We need someone to fill the vacated Vice President seat left by Dan Kapinos. Dan did a wonderful job for your club for several years but finally had to retire. We need someone to replace him. Club bylaws prevent any of the current sitting executive officers from holding more than one office at a time.

It is NOT that difficult of a position. Attend the monthly business meetings, organize the mowing crew and generally just be involved with your club.



WE NEED YOU!

FREE FIRE WOOD

There is fire wood on the club property free to anyone who wants it while supplies last. Take it away at your convenience.



Remote ID Redux

By Rick Rabe

Ah it's that season again when all your planes and rotorcraft can come out of the dark confines of your shop and take to the skies! Well, yes they can as long as you are flying at the field (or another FRIA approved field). March 16th, 2024 was also the start of the 'enforcement period' for RFID onboard all aircraft above 255 grams (basically 9 oz and above) according to the FAA. By the way that 'enforcement period' is FAA's phrase not mine. No one knows what level of enforcement will happen but let's just say that if you crash into someone or someone's property or someone calls their local police and complains, you should be prepared to prove you are registered with the FAA (see the September 2023 article and <https://faadronezone-access.faa.gov/#/>) and you have RFID on your aircraft.

OK, enough of that! Let's get real. If you plan to fly anywhere that's not a FRIA, then you should get an RFID module. I now have three different units and have flight tested all of them. I fly my DJI Phantom 4 and DJI Mavic Pro under Part 107 for commercial purposes and DJI doesn't offer RFID on these older models so I absolutely needed a unit for each of these (Part 107 cannot swap these around like recreational fliers).

The three I have tried are what follows. There seem to be more units showing up all the time now as well but these are the three I have. I used the Drone Scanner app on my phone to test each of these units. It is simple to operate and has no cost. You can use it to see if there are any RFID equipped models in your area. I suspect it will be used as part of enforcement too.



Here are the three RFID's. All 3 are certified by the FAA. Each has their own pluses and minuses. I'm going to go through all that. From left to right:

- **Dronetag BS** with battery
- **Holy Stone** with integrated battery
- **Spektrum Sky** with example cable (it came with a bunch of cables)

Dronetag BS (yes the BS is what you think it means!)

- Size < 1" square plus a battery
- Weight 5 grams with battery
- Runtime with that battery – estimated 3 hours
- Price \$129 with battery, \$89 without
- Order it from <https://shop.dronetag.cz/products/58-dronetag-bs-combo.html>

This was the first unit I was able to buy (check my article in the October 2023 issue of the club newsletter). It is the smallest and lightest of the three in fact is 1/3 the weight of the other two even with its battery. It operates pretty easily, plug in the battery and press the tiny button and you are on the air. Note that they have updated this unit's firmware more than once since I purchased it, the updates are free and they have greatly improved the reliability and specifically accuracy of the unit. They claim to have in development the ability to integrate this with Futaba or Spektrum Telemetry when connected with a JST plug.

Pluses

Tiny and lightest unit. Simple to operate. They have their own app which you need to use when you power on the unit to help speed up the positioning information. Once it does, you are good to go. Some simple velcro on the case and the battery is plenty to hold it in place and allows you to easily transfer it from plane to plane. You can wire it to run off an open servo port too, it has a broad voltage tolerance but you'll have to build the wiring. The tiny external battery means you can have a spare ready to go for a long day of flying or just plug it into the plane's system.

Minuses

You have to use their app to help it find the location before flying. You have to use an external battery or wire it to the airplane battery or to an open port on your receiver. If you buy the package (\$129 which includes wiring, a USB charger for the battery and the RFID) it's the most expensive of the three.

Holy Stone

- Size - 1.5" x 1.2" x 0.5" square including integrated battery
- Weight 14 grams with battery
- Runtime with that battery – estimated 5 hours, recharges in about 1.5 hours
- Price \$89 without
- Order it from - https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B0CGTTNJXL/ref=ox_sc_act_title_1?smid=A3QTILSGJZUURE&psc=1

I have to admit I was skeptical ordering a RFID unit from Amazon. It only took 2 days for it to arrive, included a well written manual and best of all, an integrated battery. There was no setup so I charged the battery up (USB-C connector) and tested it using the Drone Scanner. It worked just fine. Showed where the aircraft was and seemed to connect reliably to the GPS signals. There's a single button that you press and hold to turn it on/off and two LED's to indicate the status.

Pluses

Simple to use. Integrated battery. Good indicators that it is working. It's compact and has what appears to be a rugged case. It's the least expensive of the three and easy to order from Amazon.

Minuses

There's no plan to offer any telemetry integration and if the battery runs out you'll have to wait until it is re-charged to fly.

A9500 Spektrum Sky

- Size - 1.4" x 1.0" x 0.65" square including integrated battery
- Weight 15 grams with cable (without battery)
- Runtime with that battery – estimated 5 hours, recharges in about 1.5 hours
- Price \$99.99 without
- Order it from – Your favorite hobby shop or <https://www.spektrumrc.com/product/sky-remote-id-module/SPMA9500.html#>

This was a much anticipated RFID unit because of the Spektrum brand. I bought mine from Horizon Hobby. It is the heaviest of the three coming in at 15 grams with a power cable, no battery. It is designed to work with Spektrum equipment or from a battery. The list any power source is usable from 3.3v to 9v so you could wire it to a 1S battery or use it in an open receiver port or a bind port. It comes with five different cables and a small patch of velcro along with a clear manual. If you have a telemetry equipped Spektrum system you can plug it into the XBUS port and it can provide telemetry (on some higher end Spektrum transmitters). I haven't tried that because my DX6e died over the winter.

Pluses

Well known R/C brand with a good reputation. Simple to operate, no buttons, as soon as it gets power it is on. The single light indicates power on, no signal, GPS acquired and ready to fly, error. Simple to use and move from plane to plane, just run a servo wire from the receiver to near where you are going to attach it.

Minuses

This is the biggest of the three and the heaviest. You have to use an external battery or wire it to the airplane battery or to an open port on your receiver. If you have a really lightweight model you're going to need to make sure you don't mess up the CG.

Summary

All three of these are simple to use and don't add much weight. Even the heaviest is only about ½ ounce. Unless you are flying Part 107 you'll only need one of these to fly and at about \$100 they are inexpensive enough you could probably get two units so you can keep one in the aircraft you fly the most and just transfer them from plane to plane like we do batteries.



I ended up using the Holy Stone on my DJI Mavic Pro because there's no way for me to tap into the batteries nor did I want to deal with attaching an RFID and a battery. You can see from the picture I just added some velcro to each of my battery packs and placed it there. Yes, it does affect the CG a little bit but the drone automatically adjusts for that.

I like the Dronetag BS for my small models. It is so lightweight and small. I fly it with either the tiny battery or I have added a Y harness to draw power from the battery (typically a 2s or 3s for these small models).

I think Spektrum did an OK job on the technology but they should take a look at the size and weight. It's like adding a second standard-size receiver into the plane. Still, it's Spektrum and they include all those cables along with diagrams in the manual on where to plug it in each of their current receivers! I noticed Flitetest and a few others now have their own RFID units. All of them around the same specs and price-point. In any case, if you're going to fly an aircraft anywhere off the club field, get a unit and register.

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