

## **Guidelines for a good spotter**

by Jim Malek, Don Zepp, editor

A good model aircraft spotter does not have to be a flier. They can be a spouse, boyfriend, girlfriend, or an interested friend. They should, however, have some training that goes along with their responsibility.

### **Good spotters:**

1. Begin their duties as they approach the pilot's aircraft. They observe the fueling ports for security backed out screws, hatch security, proper frequency pin etc. and alert the pilot to anything out of the ordinary. They also observe the type and number of aircraft flying in the pattern.
2. Spotters should get a good grasp on the aircraft, even if there is a mechanical restraint. Proper hearing protection may be required. They clear downwind of the propeller prop wash, and warn any people standing in the propeller arc to stand back. They observe the position of the throttle stick on the transmitter—always keep their eyes on the pilot's left thumb, and watch for a fast full throttle.
3. After the aircraft is started, they observe the functional check on the control surfaces for proper deflections. Is the antenna extended, etc.?
4. They check the runway, departure end, crosswind, downwind, and base legs for traffic prior to calling taxiing out and takeoff.
5. After take off the pilot will feed them information on their intentions, i.e., do a loop, roll, stall turn etc. The spotters will stay ahead of the aircraft feeding the pilot traffic information.
6. Before landing, they call out "landing," and make sure the runway is clear. After landing the spotters' job is not done. They check the final leg as the pilot taxis off or is on the field recovering his/her airplane, alerting other pilots of landing aircraft or aircraft taxiing out.
7. From the time the spotters are on the flightline until the engine is shut down and the aircraft is removed from the flight line, the spotters must have situational awareness to their surroundings.