

World Distance Record to Australian Modellers

BY JOHN MCGRANE

Melbourne modeller, Peter Garoni, accompanied with a support team of four modellers journeyed to Balladonia in Western Australia on the 14th of May to start an attempt on the World distance record of 455 kilometres. This distance having been set by American modeller Maynard Hill in September 1983.

The rules for a World record in distance state that the landing point must be specified before taking off and it was decided to land at the Border Village car park, some 100 metres past the South Australian border, a straight line distance of 493 kilometres.

The fully loaded model was first weighed to ensure it was within the maximum weight limit of 5KG, (it weighed in at 4.995KG). At 11.13am the model under the control of pilot Peter Garoni, took off from the Eyre highway and circled while the team boarded the two support vehicles. With the team settled into position the model headed in an easterly direction across the Nullabor Plain and some six hours later landed at the Border Village car park. After checking the fuel tank it was discovered that enough fuel was left to possibly add another 100 kilometres to the record. One interesting aspect of the flight was the number of Wedge Tailed Eagles encountered. Some swooped in very close for a look while others flew alongside at level flight speeds of 100KPH, something we wouldn't have believed without seeing it.

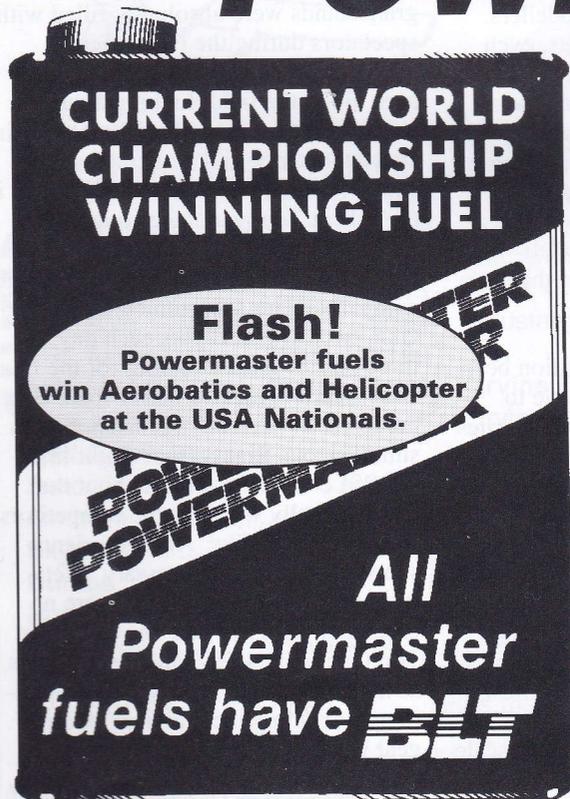
The all balsa and ply aircraft covered in plastic film spanned 2146mm. with a length of 1470mm. The engine was a OS40 converted to diesel operation and the radio a Hitec.



The team and model. From left, Geoff Tuck, John McGrane, model builder and pilot, Peter Garoni, John Bentley and kneeling is Michael Bird. Peter and Geoff resided in bucket seats in the back of a Ford F100 ute for the six hour trip.

Both performed faultlessly throughout the long flight, a credit to the reliability of modern RC equipment. An Australian distance record has been confirmed and the attempt is now awaiting ratification by the FAI for a World Distance Record. Congratulations to Peter Garoni and his team for a tremendous effort ●

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