

Pine Barren Modelers R/C Club

January 2026



Club Meeting Highlights

(Remember, these are NOT the minutes, so they don't contain sensitive information. The complete minutes will be sent out before the next meeting).

7 January 2026

Four officers and 19 other members were present.

New Members: Alex Aulov

Field Reports:

→ **Coyle:**

- The camera is still down.
- Rich Petrosino painted the battery storage box. If the weather improves, the camera will be installed next week.

→ **Temporary Field (Johnson's Pit):**

- The new diesel heater has been installed in the front trailer. Check with a club officer for details on how to operate it. *(It made the trailer delightfully warm on Penguin Day! Ed Bill).*
- The Township cleaned the end of the runway. Unfortunately, they also took away the log barrier. We need to replace the barrier, so drivers won't drive directly towards the runway.

Safety Report:

- Plastic gets brittle in cold weather; the colder, the more brittle it gets. Be careful when tossing models around and don't be surprised if your wintertime ARF crashes are more...spectacular..than your summertime ones. :-)
- Lipos generate power by chemical actions, which slow down when it's cold, so they can't produce the power or duration they do when warm. Small batteries (such as UMx) are especially vulnerable and my die quickly in the cold.
- Remember to keep hydrated. Cold, dry air sucks the moisture out of you. But, don't depend on coffee or tea to replace the lost water, as both contain caffeine (a diuretic).

Instructors' Report:

- Dennis will post instructor contacts in the trailer.

Treasurer:

- Ralph ordered business cards and is still trying to get ski caps (with brims). Problem is, the vendor hasn't been responsive.
- Ralph ordered embroidered Chef and Assistant Chef jackets for Gary & Gary.

Club Officers

President—Dennis Spatcher
Vice Pres.—Mark Tilton
Treasurer—Ralph Ferrara
Secretary—Micki Bowne
Safety Officer—Pat Lovenstein

Contact Us:

For website, classified ads, or any other club information, visit our web site at:

<https://pbm1727.org>

or our Facebook group:

PBM on Facebook

Links to club officer and other e-mails are via the website.

You can also mail us at:

Pine Barren Modelers RC Club
P.O. Box 38
Bayville, NJ 08721

Next Meeting
4 Feb 2026
Bayville VFW

Web:

- President and webmaster Dennis tells us our website hits were 1554 in December and our Facebook group is up to 670 members.
- Dennis says we're still having problems with club e-mails being derailed as SPAM. Until we get an upgraded website, he'll have to use G-Mail.

Old Business

- Our Christmas party went great! The raffle income paid for the raffle items, tax, and gratuities (with a little left over). Dennis and Ralph will reserve a date for next year (which requires a \$200 deposit), again at Kristy's. *(It was so nice to be able to HEAR the other people at the table Ed Bill).*
- Indoor flying this Friday, through March, 7 to 9:30 p.m.
- Dues are due! Remember, there's a \$10 late fee after 10 January!
- WX station still not working on-line, but it displays okay in the trailer.
- Dennis says we've submitted the paperwork for the PBM's High School scholarship.
- We discussed the March InfoAge museum display. Insurance is still a question. We need to know the cost before making a decision. Dennis will e-mail folks to see if anyone is interested in volunteering.
- Rich Bombardier presented the first reading of the By-Laws Committee's proposed changes to the By-Laws. A copy will be e-mailed to all club members. *(Having worked on By-Laws for several clubs over the years, I appreciate the effort the Committee has made. Good Work, Guys!)*

New Business

- Upcoming Club Events:
 - Swap Meet 11 April, at the VFW. We may have another one in the Fall. See Ralph for tables.
 - Pit Cleanup 'Party' 18 April, preparing for our big club Open House
 - Open House, 2 May (rain date 3 May)
 - Float Flies, 6 June and 12 September
 - July 4th Night Fly
 - Club Picnic, 20 September, at The Pit
 - Eagles Day, date is up to Ron Jasper
 - No Warbirds event is scheduled. We're leaving it as an unsanctioned club event, so we can hold one whenever we want to.
- It'll be another month before we can apply for an AMA Field Improvement grant. We'll apply, once we have a price list.
- Other upcoming (non-club) events:
 - 7 Feb, Hillsborough Swap Meet
 - 14 March, Lebanon Swap Meet

Model of the Month: None *(Although VP Mark had a neat drag racing car on the front table).*

Pro Boat PT-109

By

Gary Santaniello

Pro BOAT PT-109: A Brief History of an RC Classic

Few scale RC boats carry the instant recognition and nostalgic punch of the Pro Boat PT-109. Inspired by one of the most famous Patrol Torpedo boats of World War II—commanded by a young John F. Kennedy—the RC version has long been a favorite among hobbyists who enjoy warship history mixed with high-performance fun.

Origins: Bringing a Naval Icon to the RC World

The real PT-109 served in the Solomon Islands in 1943 and became legendary after its dramatic collision with a Japanese destroyer. Its story—bravery, survival, and leadership—cemented the boat's status as a symbol of naval heritage.

Pro Boat, known for producing detailed, ready-to-run scale models, saw an opportunity to bring this history to the water in miniature. Their PT-109 release quickly became one of the most recognized military-style RC boats available.

The Pro Boat PT-109 Release

Introduced in the mid-2000s, the Pro Boat PT-109 was designed to be both a respectful scale representation and a capable RC performer. Hobbyists appreciated its attention to detail, while beginners loved its stability and forgiving handling.

Key Features of the Original Model

- ⚓ **Length:** ~39 inches (approx.)
- ⚓ **Construction:** Lightweight, durable ABS hull
- ⚓ **Scale Details:**
 - Torpedo tubes
 - Deck guns
 - Radar mast
 - Crew details on some versions
- ⚓ **Drive System:**
 - Twin electric motors
 - Dual-prop setup for excellent maneuverability
- ⚓ **Electronics:**
 - Included 27/75 MHz radio systems in early runs
 - Later versions supported hobby-grade 2.4 GHz radios

The boat's size gave it a substantial presence on the water, yet its design made it easy to pilot even for newcomers.

Community Popularity & Modding Culture

- ⚓ The RC community embraced the PT-109 as both a collector's piece and a modder's dream. Common upgrades included:
 - Brushless motor conversions
 - Dual-ESC setups
 - LED navigation lights
 - Enhanced scale detailing
 - Weathering and repainting based on historical references
 - This boat became a staple at warship meets, club regattas, and scale exhibitions.

Discontinuation & Legacy

While Pro Boat has since retired the PT-109 from its active catalog, the model remains highly sought-after. Used boats in good condition still command strong prices online, and restoration projects are common.

The PT-109's legacy continues as:

- A benchmark for military-style RC scale boats
- A beloved model for collectors
- A way for enthusiasts to experience a piece of WW2 history on the water

Why the PT-109 Still Matters

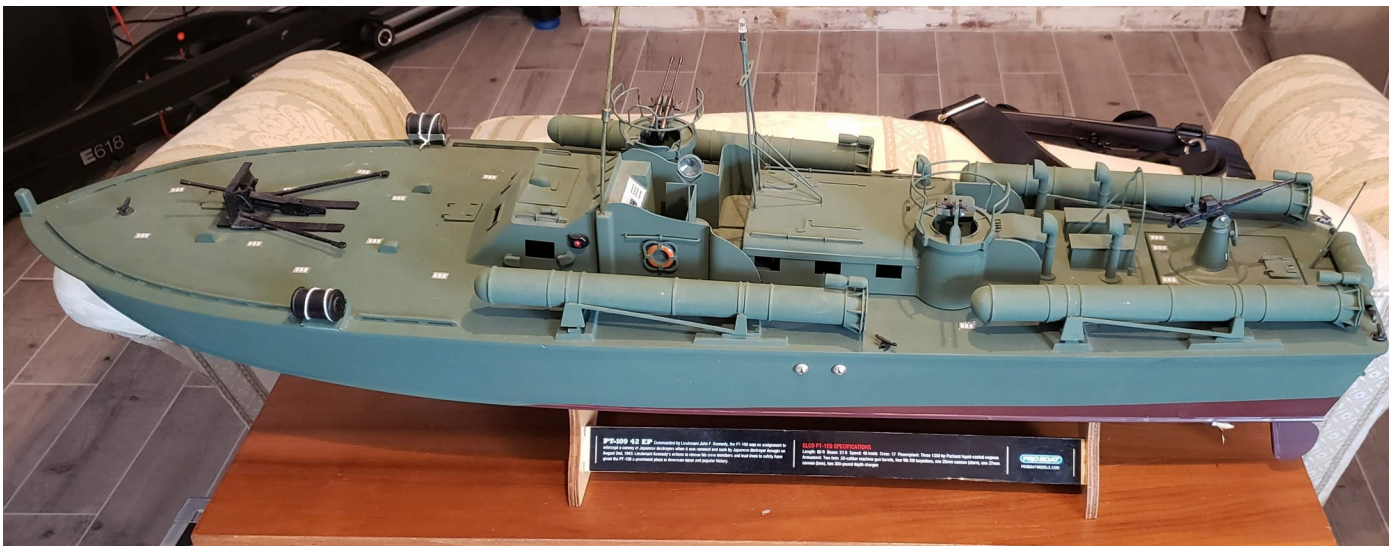
The Pro Boat PT-109 wasn't just another RTR model—it combined craftsmanship, performance, and storytelling. It captured the imagination of both seasoned RC captains and history buffs, offering a hands-on connection to one of the most compelling naval stories of the 20th century.

Even years after its production ended, the PT-109 remains a cornerstone of scale military RC boating, a reminder of both Pro Boat's design excellence and the enduring legacy of a heroic patrol boat and its crew.

My PT-109

My 42" boat came to me by way of a member of a former RC club, a retired cop who had many RC vehicles. The boat's propellers were damaged by his partner early on and he had two brass propeller custom made for the craft "costing nearly as much as the boat itself" he said.

The boat held a special place for me as my dad served upon one in WWII. It came without a radio system so I installed a Flysky receiver and have run it several time since relocating to South Jersey, but it has never run as was shown in the promotional videos I found on YouTube. After a bit of research, I found that the original ESCs were not great, so I recently replaced them with ones that support Lipo batteries as the NiMHs take forever to charge and do not give me the run time I am looking for.



My model is a stand-very-far-off scale representation of the Morane Saulnier (MS) Model "H". First flown before the War to End All Wars (wishful thinking, there), the MS-H was a single-seat version of MS's slightly larger Model G. With a 50 to 80 hp. rotary engine, both models were used to break several records for distance flying. Roland Garros, a daredevil pilot (weren't all pilots daredevils, in those days?) flew one from southern France to Tunisia in 1913, marking the first time anyone had crossed the Mediterranean by air. No radio, no parachutes, behind an unreliable engine, over an awful lot of water...

After the war started, Garros volunteered to fly for his country. Then, airplanes were primarily used as scouts, replacing horse cavalry in trying to find out the enemy's dispositions.

For those of us raised when satellites can see everything, it's hard to imagine those early days. An entire enemy army, ready to attack, could be just over the next ridge – but you wouldn't know it until his men came streaming against your flank. So, you sent out scouts. At least, in WWI, they'd be able to race back to your headquarters with warnings faster than a man could on horseback (weather permitting, of course).

Problem was, your planes could fly over the enemy and see his movements, and he could do likewise. What was needed was a way to stop him from seeing your movements whilst you saw his.

Some pilots carried pistols, carbines, or shotguns aloft, hoping to stop the other side's pilots. A few resorted to throwing bricks or towing anchors, hoping to wreck enemy planes. The best solution, though, would be to carry a machine gun (assuming your plane was powerful enough – remember those thundering 80 hp engines!) to carry you, a gun, ammo, and fuel. The biggest issue, though, was that you couldn't shoot through your propeller's disc. You could shoot sideways, or carry a gunner who could shoot up, down, or sideways, but you couldn't shoot forwards – the way your plane flew. If you tried to mount a gun on your plane and shoot forwards, you'd shoot off your prop.

Garros wasn't going to let a little thing like a perforated propeller stop him. He mounted metal plates to his prop, in front of a Hotchkiss machine gun he managed to acquire. When a bullet hit the prop, the plate would deflect it and save the prop. Most of the bullets, though, would go where he aimed them – into German planes and their crews. Damn the *boche*!

There's argument about which MS versions Garros mounted his gun and prop plates on. Some say it was a Model H, some a Model G, some a parasol Model L. Whichever it was, it was a great success. German pilots became afraid of any Morane that pointed its nose at them, willingly fleeing the field and leaving French troop movements unobserved.

Garros' ingenuity let him shoot down several German observation aircraft, before engine failure forced him down behind German lines (One thought is that shocks from bullets hitting the prop loosened a fuel line). The Germans took his invention to Anthony Fokker's factory, demanding the Dutchman duplicate it. Fokker was no idiot. His company, plus the Pfalz company, were already building copies of the Morane (Think the Morane looks like an Eindecker? That's because the Eindecker IS a copy – Fokker just changed the internal structure and rudder shape.)

Fokker did his research and found several interrupter/synchronizer setups were patented before the war. He adopted one, put it on an Eindecker, mated it with a better gun, and begat the Fokker Scourge of 1915/16. Now it was Allied pilots' turn to be terrorized.

Garros, though, went to a POW camp. He finally escaped in early 1918 and went back into the cockpit. He scored two more victories, then was killed a month before the Armistice was signed.

In his honor, a tennis center in Paris was named for him. It's where the French Open is held, and is the site of one of the Grand Slam quartet of tennis matches.

Funny, in 1914, Roland Garros was known for volleys of machine gun fire. Now, in a stadium named for him, his name evokes volleys of tennis balls. Maybe that's a better way to remember a horrible war and a valiant hero.