



The AMA History Project Presents: Biography of ROBERT (BOB) C. NOLL

May 27, 1937 – January 17, 2024 Started modeling in 1953
AMA #12325



Written & Submitted by BN (03/2005); Edited by JS (2005), Reformatted by JS (11/2009); Update by JS (01/2024)

*The following represents the autobiography of Bob Noll, submitted in May of 2005.
Bob was inducted into the AMA Model Aviation Hall of Fame in 2007.*

Biography of Bob Noll Leader Member, AMA 12325

The Beginning

I became interested in Radio Control aircraft while in high school in 1953. Two men who worked at the local hobby shop in Allentown, PA fueled my interest. A few trips to the flying site in Fogelsville, PA and I was hooked. I had built many solid models from wood kits for several years but the sight of seeing a plane fly with nothing attached was almost more than I could handle.

It was then that I built my first plane, a *Royal Rudderbug* from a Berkeley kit and equipped it with a Webra .15 diesel and an Esco-Lorenze transmitter and receiver using a Babcock compound escapement. I first competed in pattern in 1954 with a deBolt *LiveWire Champion* using the same radio equipment and placed third at my first pattern contest with the Champ. At this point, I was hooked on Radio Control flying and building for life.

Competition

My first contest in 1954 was in Easton, PA and I left with a trophy in Radio Control Rudder Only. This was just the beginning of years of contest flying in many categories in local, regional, and national contests.

I have been competitive in pattern, scale, and pylon racing and have many Nationals trophies in each of these categories. I have flown in hundreds of contests and approximately twenty AMA Nationals.

- Successfully competed and trophied at the AMA Nationals in Formula I Pylon, Quickee 500 Pylon, Designer Scale and Precision Aerobatics.
- NMPRA Season Champion in Formula II in 1968.
- NMPRA Season Second Place in Formula II in 1969.
- Place fourth at AMA Nats in Designer Scale in 1974.
- Member of the USA Pylon Team in 1974 flying a scratch built racer *Bobcat* designed by Bob Violet.
- Received many trophies for Pattern and Scale at Vintage RC Society Reunions.

- Still competing in Quickee 500 Pylon Racing and F3A Precision Aerobatics.

Experiments

- Experimented with foam wing cutting during early sixties with my friend, Ed Izzo, who is accredited with the development of this building technique. During these early days, Ed and I used several different techniques and tools for this process.
- Experimented with smoke systems which I used on the Steen *Skybolt* I designed and flew to a fourth place at the 1976 Dayton Nats. I was told at the time that my *Skybolt* was the first to use smoke in Radio Control Scale at a Nats.
- I have done an extensive amount of propeller experimentation for my club to address the problem of high sound levels and was responsible for my club's implementation of a sound limit and monitoring system at our field.
- Designed a "Flight Control Center" for my club. This project provided for an improved method of frequency control at our field. An article about the Flight Control Center was published in RC Modeler.
- Designed a set of tools for use when aligning wings, tail surfaces, and fuselage on a precision aerobatics airplane. I market these tools as "Bob's Alignment Gadget" and "Bob's Height Gauges." Both are featured in a video that I had made by Robin's View Productions (RVP). I have a series of four widely acclaimed videos released through RVP about building precision pattern models.

Designer and Master Craftsman

- Published an article (MAN 4/69) for, and built, a deBolt design, *The Continental 600*, for Formula II Pylon Racing. This plane won the 1968 NMPRA National Championship for Formula II.
- Built a scale *Nieuport 27* WWI biplane for the original Rhinebeck WWI competition. This plane won first place twice in Scale at Rhinebeck.
- Designer of the *Yankee*, a pattern airplane that was published in Model Airplane News.
- Designer of the Steen *Skybolt* scale airplane that was published in Model Airplane News.
- Ten years of building custom F3A Precision Aerobatics planes for top competitors around the world.
- Guest presenter of building techniques at several radio control forums in the U.S. and Canada.
- Wrote many articles on building techniques for Model Aviation and Flying Models magazines. I am continuing to write articles on building for these magazines.

Leadership

I have been a member of one of the oldest Radio Control clubs in the U.S., namely the Aeroguidance Society Inc., since 1959. During this time, I have been the club's President, Vice-President, Secretary, Newsletter Editor, and a Board Member many times. This club will be holding their 50th annual Pattern Contest in 2005. I have been a Contest Director for these since 1965.

- Member of the Radio Control Aerobatics Contest Board for six years in the 1960s.
- Eastern Vice President of the United Scale and Pattern Judges Association for four years.
- Became an AMA Leader Member in 1980.
- President of the Vintage RC Society since 2002, an AMA Special Interest Group.
- Honored with a Lifetime Membership in the National Society of Radio Control Aerobatics (NSRCA) for being the AMA Nats event director for three years and making significant improvements to these events.

Contest Leadership

- Obtained my Contest Director's license in 1960 and have been the Contest Director of over 50 sanctioned events for the Aeroguidance Society and the Vintage RC Society.
- Event Director for Radio Control Precision Aerobatics for three AMA Nationals in 1998, 1999, and 2000.
- Conducted many judging seminars for the National Society of Radio Control Aerobatics.
- Judged at four Tournament of Champions in Las Vegas.
- Judged at four F3A Team Selection Contests.
- Site Director for the 1999 F3A World Championships.
- Contest Director for the U.S. F3A Team Selection Contest in 2000.

Publishing Experience

Author of many model magazine articles, including:

- *Paint For Performance*, a feature article published by Model Airplane News
- An AMA Nationals Precision Aerobatics report for Model Aviation.
- A Flight Control Center article in RC Modeler.
- Many "How To" articles on building techniques for Model Airplane News, Model Aviation and Flying Models.
- A Tournament of Champions article for Flying Models and Model Aviation.
- A U.S. Nats report on Precision Aerobatics for Model Aviation.
- Several Vintage RC Society reunion articles in both Flying Models and Model Aviation.

Hobby Industry Involvement

- Produced foam wing cores for sale during the early days of foam wing cutting in the 1960's.
- Currently produce a set of building tools used to build very accurate precision aerobatics planes.
- Video Principle for a set of four "Absolute Accuracy" videos produced by Robin's View Productions.
- Custom builder of F3A planes for top competitors around the world from 1993 to 2004.

Education Involvement

- Made many presentations to local service clubs on the hobby/sport of radio control plane building and flying.

- Assisted in several AMA Delta Dart programs with Boy Scouts in the Binghamton, NY area.

Awards

- Won many trophies for my scale and aerobatic models at the WRAM's show, Toledo show and several other model shows and forums.
- Received the Spirit of Selinsgrove Award presented by the Vintage RC Society.
- Received the Vintage RC Society's "Concours" Award for a replica of my first Radio Control plane, the Berkeley *Royal Rudderbug*.
- Received the Vintage RC Society's "Concours" Award for my scratch built Jim Kirkland *Beachcomber*.
- Received the Outstanding Service Award from the Aero Radio Club of Syracuse for conducting precision aerobatics training sessions at their contest for 6 years.

RCN 3/04/05



1956: Bob Noll with his Triple Threat model



1961: Bob with his Astro Bipe model



1975: Bob Noll with his Skybolt model



Unknown date: Bob Noll with his Double Vision model



Unknown date: Bob Noll with his Top Dawg model



Unknown date: Bob Noll with his Live Wire Champion model



Unknown date: Bob Noll with his Royal Rudderbug model

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