
Biography of ROBERT WISCHER

Began modeling in 1930 Birth Date: October 10, 1915 AMA Number: L20244

Transcribed & Edited by SS (4/03)

Career:

- Flew in his first Nationals in 1958 and placed second in Radio Control (RC) and fifth in pattern rudder only
- Won many scale contests throughout the Midwest during the 1960s
- Designed one of the first mufflers for model airplanes in the early 1960s
- Is the only U.s. contestant to win the individual RC Scale World Championship, which he won in 1974
- Volunteered at the Nationals starting in the early 1970s and also volunteered at the Pattern World Championships and the Scale World Championships a few times
- Served as the U.S. scale representative to FAI rule making sessions from 1977 to 1993
- Writer and photographer for Model Aviation magazine from 1977 to 1993
- Was on six U.S. World Championship scale teams and was an alternate four other times
- Successfully competed at the Nationals including seven first places in precision scale, one first place in giant scale and three-time recipient of the EAA best custom built aircraft award
- Placed first at three Mint Julep contests
- Qualified for the Master's many times
- Designed the Cessna OE-2, Pober Pixie, Ariel Sport and Aeronca K

Honors:

- 1997 – AMA Hall of Fame

The following information on Bob Wischer was included with the Hall of Fame application that his wife, Margaret (better known as Dolly), submitted on his behalf in 1997. As a result, Bob was inducted into the AMA Hall of Fame in 1997. Dolly was inducted into the Hall of Fame in 1988.

I would like to nominate Bob Wischer, AMA L20244, to the AMA Hall of Fame. As with most early modelers, Lindbergh's flight started a lifelong love of airplanes for Bob. His first contact with other modelers was when the Milwaukee YMCA sponsored The Model Aircraft Engineers in 1930. Photos show wonderful rubber-powered scale models from that era. Many of these club members went on to be business owners, engineers, MIT instructors and one became a Lockheed test pilot. Many are still flying models.

By the mid-1930s Bob and a friend ran a hobby shop for a few years. I met him in 1936 at a six-day bicycle race. In 1941 we purchased a 12-inch to the foot scale 40-horsepower Aeronca K; followed by a Taylorcraft in 1942. Models were put aside for a commercial pilot's license and 800 hours in the T-craft. We sold the T-craft in 1947 as hanger rent was getting expensive. We intended to purchase a piece of land large enough for a house and landing strip. Both the K and T-craft still fly today in quarter scale. Photos that we took of our adventures back in the 1940s proved invaluable documentation when Bob was planning both models almost half a century later.

In 1950 we bought the 10-acre strip of land, after finishing the house, which we entirely constructed ourselves (another 12-inch – 1-foot model), inflation had put real airplane prices out

of sight. Still bitten by the bug, Bob resumed modeling in 1954; and in 1955 he built his first Radio Controlled (RC) plane and radio. Our son Bill soon followed and I started in 1960.

Bob's first Nationals (Nats) were in 1958, which resulted in a second place in RC scale and a fifth in pattern rudder only. Many Midwestern scale contests were entered and won in the 1960s. Bob always placed well in pattern rudder only as well.

In 1963 while we were flying at the Pabst farms with the Lakeland RC club, complaints from neighbors over a mile away started Bob working on mufflers to insure the use of the flying site the club had used for many years. In the early 1960s, there weren't any mufflers available from the engine manufacturers (a .35 engine was large in those days) or in the after market. Bob experimented and designed a muffler that was quiet and had little power loss. He made many more mufflers for the other club members and converted many die-hards to flying with mufflers. In 1964 I made a muffler display that we took to the Toledo show to make the technology available to all interested modelers. Bob still (in 1997) uses the same design muffler in his current aircraft.

From the mid-1960s Bob concentrated on RC scale. 1968 through 1970 brought first places at Rheinbeck World War I contests plus an all-over award. A second time at the 1971 Nats the Douglas Mailplane qualified him for the 1972 Scale World Championships in France. He entered a Piel Emeraude, finishing seventh individually and with a first place for the team.

Bob was fourth at the 1973 Nats, which placed him as an alternate team member for the 1974 World Championships. The Emeraude was the EAA Award best custom built in 1974; and just three weeks before the World Championships in Lakehurst, New Jersey, one of the team members totaled his plane. Bob was now on the team! With an excellent final flight at the Championships he won the individual RC Scale World Championship and headed the team to a first as well. So far (as of 1997) this is the only time a U.S. contestant has won the individual RC Scale World Championship. In addition Bob worked as a volunteer all week during the Championships. 1974 finished with a first at the Nats and EAA best custom built scale model.

From 1975 on there were eight more wins – two seconds, one third and one fourth place. In the World Championships Bob placed seventh in 1972, first in 1974, fourth in 1976, seventh in 1978 and sixth in 1980. He won another team first in 1980 and was an alternate on four World Championship teams and many times was a Master's qualifier.

Bob worked as a volunteer at most of the Nats from 1973 on, at the Pattern World Championships in 1971 and 1977, at the Scale World Championships in 1974 and at the AMA tent at EAA Oshkosh from 1985 to date.

Bob served as our scale representative to the FAI rule making sessions in Paris from 1977 to 1993. All these years he was also a writer and photographer for Model Aviation magazine. Bob wrote the monthly RC scale column for Model Aviation from 1977 to 1993. He also wrote the Nat scale reports for Model Aviation from the mid-1970s to the late 1980s and the World Championship reports from 1972 to 1986 and 1992.

Construction articles that were written for Model Aviation and the old American Aircraft Modeler magazine included the Cessna OE-2, Pober Pixie, Aeronca K and Ariel Sport (semi scale).

I could continue on and on. He seems to have gotten better with age – he won the RC Scale World Championships at age 59 and the Nats in his 60s and 70s. And his last Mint Julep win was at 80 in 1995. Bob was always the competitor, but I guess he likes to build even more.

List of Accomplishments

Competitor

First RC scale contest entered was the 1958 Nats where he placed second in scale and fifth in rudder only. In the World Championships Bob was on six U.S. scale teams and alternate for four others with the following results:

First place in 1971

Seventh place in 1972

Fourth place in 1976

Seventh place in 1978

Sixth place in 1980

Resulted in team firsts for the U.S. team in 1972, 1974 and 1980

Was an alternate in 1984, 1986, 1988 and 1992

Bob had the following results from competing in the AMA Nats:

First places in precision scale in 1974, 1977, 1979, 1980, 1981, 1984 and 1990

First in giant scale in 1984

Second places in 1958, 1971, 1982 and 1985

Third places in 1975 and 1987

Fourth place in 1988

EAA best custom built aircraft award in 1973, 1974 and 1975

Other contests Bob successfully competed in include the following:

1960 to 1965 – Midwest contests where he mainly placed first in pattern rudder only

1968 through 1977 – Rheinbeck World War I contest where he won several first places and was twice the high point winner

1970 to 1980 – RC scale wins at Dayton (Ohio), Chicago (Illinois), Minneapolis (Minnesota) and various Wisconsin contests

1988, 1994 and 1995 – Mint Julep contest where he placed first

1990 – Vintage RC Society, placed first

Master's qualifier many times

Designer

1962 – Cessna OE-2, published in American Aircraft Modeler magazine
1970 – Pober Pixie, published in American Aircraft Modeler magazine
1979 – Ariel Sport, published in Model Aviation magazine
1984 – Aeronca K, published in Model Aviation magazine

Experimenter

1963 – Mufflers, published in American Aircraft Modeler magazine
1981 – How to Make Windshields, published in Model Aviation magazine

Leader

1960 to 1970 – Lakeland RC secretary/treasurer (only elected club officer)
1977 to 1993 – FAI scale representative

Writer

1977 to 1989 – RC scale column published in Model Aviation magazine
1977 to 1989 – Nats scale reports published in Model Aviation magazine
1972 to 1992 – Scale World Championship reports published in Model Aviation magazine
1980s – EAA Fly In reports published in Model Aviation magazine
1977 – TOC scale and pattern reports published in Model Aviation magazine

*(signed) Dolly Wischer
March 20, 1997*

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