



The AMA History Project Presents: Biography of HALE WALLACE

December 31, 1936 - July 6, 2000
Began modeling in the early 1940s
AMA #3681



Information submitted by SW (02/2006); Written & Edited by JS (02/2006), Reformatted by JS (02/2010)

Scott Wallace, son of Hale Wallace, wrote the following biography.

The Beginning

Hale Wallace was born in Forty Fort, Pennsylvania. Early on, he showed interested in all things aviation-related. He started modeling very early in the 1940s, initially involved in Free Flight and Control Line flying. He began competing as a young teen and won many local and regional trophies in Control Line Speed. Hale flew with such modelers as Bob Edelstein and Hal deBolt.

Competition

Hale won numerous contests in Free Flight and Control Line in the 1950s. He began flying Radio Control in the late 1950s with rudder-only and began winning rudder-only events in the early 1960s. He progressed to reeds, and then to the earliest digital proportional radios. I do not have any specifics on these early competitions. Major competitions were as follows:

- 1965 AMA Nats: Hale won fifth place in the Scale event with a Cessna *Skymaster*. This was an original design published by *Model Airplane News*. It was one of the earliest twin engine models entered in the Scale competition. The Royal kit of this airplane is a direct copy of Hale's design.
- 1969 AMA Nats: Hale placed second in Scale with a Bell *P-63*. This qualified Hale for the United States Scale team. He also placed sixth in Formula-One Pylon Racing with a deBolt *Denight Special/K&B 40*.
- 1970 FAI Scale World Championships: Hale won fourth place with an original design model *Chipmunk* [see photo at end of article]. The U.S. team placed second.
- He won numerous trophies at the Rhinebeck World War I meets from 1967 to 1970, all with an original design Bristol *Bullet* scale biplane. *Model Airplane News* published this model and for years was one of their best selling plans. The model was later kitted by a small manufacturer, name unknown.
- 1971 AMA Nats: Hale's World Championship entry, the *Chipmunk*, had the highest scale points but was unfortunately "totaled" on the first flight due to radio interference. He also flew in F-1 Pylon that year with a Midget *Mustang*.
- Throughout the 1960s, Hale competed and either won or placed in dozens of Scale contests throughout the east coast.
- In the late 1980s, until his passing, Hale competed in all of the annual Society of Antique Modelers (SAM) Championships, enjoying flying models with original ignition engines from the 1930s and 1940s.

Experiments

Hale had several designs published:

- A Competition rudder-only model in the early 1960s (name unknown)
- A Scale Cessna *Skymaster*, published by *Model Airplane News*.
- A Scale Bristol *Bullet*, published by *Model Airplane News*.

Leadership/Contest Leadership

- Was the U.S. Scale Team manager in 1974 (held in the U.S.A.) and 1976 (held in Sweden)
- Hale was the scale contest manager for the first Tournament of Champions in either 1976 or 1977. That first year, the Tournament of Champions included a scale competition with entrants invited from around the world.
- Hale was going to be the Radio Control Contest Director for the 2000 SAM Championships, but passed away 3 months before the event. (Note: I, Scott Wallace, filled in as Contest Director, but my dad completed much of the groundwork for a successful event.)

Publishing Experience

- None that I was aware.

Hobby Industry Involvement

Not Hobby related, but worthwhile I feel:

In the early 1970s, Hale completed a full-scale homebuilt biplane, the *Skybolt*, designed by Lamar Steen. He built the aircraft in the family garage, learning to fly it while he built it. He completed it in 1974. Hale built a second *Skybolt* in the late 1970s and in 1979 won a major award at the Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) event in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. Upon retiring from IBM in 1990, he purchased the *Skybolt* business, Steen Aero Lab, from his friend and fellow modeler Lamar Steen. He ran the business until his death in July 2000. During his last years, he completed a beautiful *Skybolt* (his seventh built!) and a *Knight Twister*. He entered the *Knight Twister* in the 1999 EAA Convention in Oshkosh and received the silver medal in the homebuilt aircraft category.

Numerous magazine articles were written about my dad's full-scale aircraft involvement. *Model Aviation* contributor, Budd Davisson, wrote many of these articles for the EAA and may be a source of photos if interested.

Although full-scale aviation was my father's career after IBM, he never lost his love for model aviation. In fact, in early 2000 he became aware of a model meet in Florida hosted by the Vintage Radio Control Society (VRCS) honoring his old friend Hal deBolt. Although quite ill,

my dad built a beautiful replica of deBolt's 1950s *Live Wire Senior* design and was thrilled to have it honored by his peers as "best in show." He left the Radio Control hobby as he began it some 40 years before, flying a single-channel deBolt design.



Charlotte Wallace, wife of Hale, holding the Chipmunk model flown in the 1970 Scale World Championships.

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