



The AMA History Project Presents: Autobiography of JOE ZINGALI

Born May 4, 1935 Started modeling in 1944
AMA #L76



Written & Submitted by JZ (10/2002); Transcribed & Edited by SS (10/2002), updated by JS (08/2008), Reformatted by JS (02/2010)

Career:

- 1944-1959: Flew U-Control when he saw his first Radio Control model
 - 1960: Joined the Beginners in Radio Drone (B.I.R.D.) chartered club; taught new club members how to fly
 - Started flying competition and achieve expert class in a little over a year; flew in places such as Hawaii and Mexico
 - 1967-1971: Served as Vice President of B.I.R.D. for two years, then served as President for the following two years
 - Created a flying field at Carson, California
 - Demonstrated flying and helped with flying projects at local schools
 - 1974: Started making propellers with the encouragement of Irwin Ohlsson
 - First propeller was called the *Zinger*; led to the development of the company J&Z Products, Inc.
 - c. 2002: J&Z Products, Inc. had a 10,000-square-foot building in Harbor City, California, making various spinners, glow plugs, canopy glue, and producing approximately 3,000 propellers a day. The company covers 90% of the world market's propellers.
 - J&Z has sponsored AMA show teams for many years.
-

I was born in Rutland, Vermont, on May 4, 1935. I guess you could say that I started making model airplanes in 1944. I was very moved by the airplanes that were in the movies at that time. One particular airplane was a German *Stuka*. It had wings like a bird. The cost at that time was about 15 cents. I was able to purchase one with the help of my parents. It was a small rubber band model consisting of small balsa sticks, silk span covering, and a tube of glue. I was never able to fly it because I ruined the covering, so I played with it as it was and finally hung it up in my room.

We moved to Massachusetts in 1945. The first thing I did in the new house was clear a little area in the cellar to build my models. In the preceding years, I made many U-Control models with Arden, Brown Jr., Ohlsson & Rice, and McCoy engines. In the early years, my AMA number was 267. Later, my lifetime membership number became L76.

I flew U-Control up until 1959. One day I was driving, noticed an airplane in the air, and traced it to a vacant lot. The man was flying an airplane with a remote control. I was so fascinated that I went to the hobby shop he recommended and purchased a 10-channel Orbit radio. It had tubes and two batteries with Bonner servos.

In 1960, I joined a chartered club name the B.I.R.D. (Beginners in Radio Drone.) The club had a lot of active members and some good flyers. By then, I had become a fairly good pilot and was elected to instruct new members on how to fly. I started to fly competition and found that I was good at Pattern and Scale flying. In a little over a year, I reached expert class. I was flying competition all over, including Hawaii and Acapulco, Mexico.

In 1967, I was elected Vice President of the B.I.R.D's club and served for two years. After my term was up, I was elected President and served a little over two years. The activity increased so much that we had flyers from cities all around come to join. We were the largest AMA club with a total of 352 AMA members. I spent lots of my time working with the city of Carson, California, putting in a flying field. I spent time with local schools putting on demonstrations and helping with flying projects.

During my contest years, I was involved with reshaping propellers for maximum performance for my Pattern airplane. A well-known friend of mine (Irwin Ohlsson, AMA #4, designer and manufacture of the Ohlsson & Rice engine) said I should make propellers and sell them to the flyers. Therefore, in 1974, I asked a friend of mine if he would be interested in helping me with designing a machine for small propellers. He said yes.

The first machine was all hand-operated and was capable of making about 100 propellers a day with a lot of handwork. I took the propellers to a local contest and gave them to the flyers; it was an instance success. I named the propeller *Zinger*. The name of the company is J&Z Products, Inc., and we have a 10,000 square-foot building in Harbor City, California. On an average day, we produce approximate 3,000 propellers. We cover approximately 90% of the world market in propellers. We have been we sponsoring the AMA show team for many years.

Over the years, we increased our products line to making the following:

- Laminated propellers for the race fan
- Custom aluminum spinners from 3-inches to 7-inches
- Three- and four-bladed propellers
- Glow plugs
- Canopy glue (Z R/Z 56)
- Our latest is a Semi tar-tip propeller (to help with the noise problem)

In 1957, I acquired my private pilot license. I later received my commercial rating, and then twin-engine instrument rating. The company has its own aircraft, a *Bonanza* (B36 turbo charge,) that is used to go to many of the contests in the area.

(signed) Joe Zingali
October 2002

This PDF is property of the Academy of Model Aeronautics. Permission must be granted by the AMA History Project for any reprint or duplication for public use.

AMA History Project
National Model Aviation Museum
5151 E. Memorial Dr.
Muncie IN 47302
(765) 287-1256, ext. 511
historyproject@modelaircraft.org

