



The AMA History Project Presents: Biography of GREG HAHN



Written by JS (05/2012); Transcribed by KE (05/2012); Formatted by JS (05/2012)

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Greg Hahn Industry Professional

JS: *How did you get involved in model aviation?*

GH: I've been an airplane nut since before I can remember. My dad took me in the car in about 1964 and we sat off the end of Runway 30 at Dobbins Air Force Base (now a reserve base) in Georgia, and watched the C-124 Globemasters do touch-and-gos. From that time on, all I wanted to do was fly airplanes, and I proceeded to do whatever it took to be around airplanes or airports.

My first real hands-on experience was the local flying field, which in my town happened to be the high school football field, so I was introduced to RC by hanging around after football practice and watching the locals fly.

In the early 1970s, it would have taken two or three summers' pay to buy a store-bought radio, so I took one summer's pay and bought a four-channel Heathkit radio and built my own. At 17, I started full-scale flying lessons, soloed at nine hours, went through college, and four years later I was a commercial pilot, certified flight instructor, multiengine instructor, and doing my first stint as a corporate pilot.

JS: *How has model aviation impacted your life and/or career?*

GH: Model aviation has been with me essentially my whole life. Since the early 1990s, it has been my entire career. I started participating in Scale competitions and was quickly successful. I was recruited into the hobby industry through major sponsorships and eventually moved into product- and brand-management positions within the industry.

In 2008, I stepped into my current position as the Technical Director at AMA. That was a move back home for me, because I'm originally from Muncie, Indiana.

JS: *In what disciplines of modeling do you currently participate?*

GH: I still do sport flying but have stopped competing in major Scale contests. I often participate in air shows and do quite a bit of test flying for big projects such as flying the *H-1* during AMA's 75th Anniversary celebration last year.

I am a fan of powerboat racing and have started racing model powerboats competitively in the Midwest. I'm lucky to live in an area that is considered to be the "hotbed" of model boat racing, so there are plenty of venues in which to enjoy that part of the hobby.

JS: *What are your other hobbies?*

GH: Not having kids of my own, I've sort of had to be my own kid so I have had many other hobbies from time to time. I have a 20- by 24-foot train room in my house, which contains an operating HO scale layout, complete with mountains and 400 feet of track.

I'm also a state and national champion in competitive target archery. I do quite a bit of hunting in the fall with good friends Don Anderson, of Great Planes, and Justin LaRoque.

I recently started a small taxidermy business, which is growing steadily. I'm hoping it will be my retirement business if I ever get to retire one day.

JS: *Who or what influenced you the most?*

GH: The most influential person for me in modeling has been Nick Zirolini, Sr. I've built practically every model he's designed multiple times and I've used his designs for all of my competition Scale projects during the past 18 years. We have flown together, worked together, and been friends for years. He's what I call the modeler's modeler!

JS: *How did you get started as a Scale competitor?*

GH: I majored in history in college and have always been extremely devoted to the aviation history of World War II. I have studied it intensely and have a large library devoted to it.

I always did everything possible to make my models look real with lots of detail and then tried to fly them as close as I could to scale. I attended an International Miniature Aircraft Association fly-in back in the early 1990s where I was introduced to one of the Scale Masters judges.

He asked me if I had ever considered competing because my models looked as though they could be competitive. That got me to thinking I might give it a go, so I grabbed a rule book and started my first competition project which was a 100-inch span B-25 from Zirolini plans. I completed that project and entered it in the static show at Toledo in 1994 where it won the military class. As they say, the rest is history.

-Jay Smith
MA Editor-in-Chief

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