



The AMA History Project Presents: Biography of KOLBY HOOVER



Written by AMA staff (01/2001) and KH (05/2009); Transcribed by JS (03/08), Reformatted by JS (09/09)

The following was published in the January 2004 issue of Model Aviation magazine. Kolby was a 2003 AMA Scholarship winner.

Kolby Hoover, a graduate of North Kitsap High School in Poulsbo, Washington, is the recipient of a \$7,000 award from the Charles Hampson Grant scholarship fund and a \$4,000 award from the Toledo Weak Signals. Kolby is enrolled at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York.

Kolby was named class valedictorian as well as Outstanding Senior. He was presented the Joe Shandera award, his school's most prestigious athletic award.

Ranked first in a class of 485, Kolby attended Evergreen Boys State and was chosen Student of the Year in 1999 – 2000. He is a Washington State Scholar and was awarded the Daughters of the American Revolution Good Citizenship Award.

Kolby's athletic accomplishments include being named Athlete of the Season by the North Kitsap Herald. He participated in cross-country and diving, and was nationally ranked in the 300 intermediate hurdles (1H) in track and field. Kolby participated in track and field for six years and holds a school record in 300 IH, and placed second and third in 300 IH in various Washington State track competitions.

A volunteer coach for the Poulsbo Junior High track team in 2002-03, Kolby assisted with the sprint team and high jump.

A musician, Kolby has played French horn for eight years. He was a member of the top symphonic band at North Kitsap High School, and was section leader in the Kitsap Youth Symphony. He was drum major in the marching band for two years, and plays both acoustic and electric bass in a jazz combo that performs at social functions and contests. The combo won recognition at the Columbia Basin Jazz Festival for its rhythm section.

Kolby played in the state solo and ensemble as part of a brass quintet two years and one year as part of a horn trio. He has studied piano for six years, taking part in three recitals per year.

Since 1993, he has been a part of a Norwegian dance group that regularly performs for retirement home residents, senior centers, and elementary schools in Washington State and British Columbia. Kolby is part of a church worship team that meets twice a week and a member of the orchestra playing for school plays.

Kolby's first Radio Control (RC) experience came when he was nine. He, his father, and brother built a 1/2A Bellanca *Cruiser* that was "underpowered and we ended up with a broken plane and about one second of flying time."

Undeterred, the three built a *Katydid* for Kolby's brother and had better luck. They pulled one of his father's old airplanes, the *Miss Grandin*, or the *Flying Boat* as the family called it, out from storage, fixed it up, and the aircraft flew beautifully. The three joined AMA and the local club, the Olympic Radio Control Association (ORCA)

Kolby abandoned the hobby for a while following the crash of the *Flying Boat*. "This was the most traumatizing experience in my RC career. For months afterward, I couldn't stand near a flying airplane or even next to the pilot." It took a long time to get back into flying, but with his father's encouragement, Kolby soloed the summer after seventh grade. His first model was a Sig *Four-Star 40*, which he built with help from his father. Next was his own *Flying Boat*, modified to look and operate like a smaller version of his dad's.

A member of ORCA designed a *GutterSnipe*, made from PVC and foam insulation. These aircraft are what Kolby has spent much of his time flying. The club holds *GutterSnipe* Pylon and Combat races and he placed fourth overall last season.

Kolby has flown aerobatic aircraft and he, his dad, and brother are learning to fly helicopters. Two projects include building a Marutaka *P-38 Lightning* and scratch building an Aeronca *Champion*.

Building has given Kolby the thought of studying engineering or even aerospace engineering at Cornell. "It has been a great way to become closer to my dad and my brother." He feels aeromodeling will be a lifelong hobby and will always be something he enjoys and hopes to have room in his luggage to pack his *Chipmunk* and *Thunder Tiger*.

Congratulations and good luck, Kolby.

The following update was submitted in May of 2009.

"Kolby graduated from Cornell University in 2007 with a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering. He decided to stay for one more year, earning a Master of Engineering degree in Systems Engineering in 2008.

"During college, Kolby's most memorable Radio Control moments came from piloting for a research team building an aircraft that could perch-land like a bird (see photo below). The plane flew beautifully, and Kolby thought a fixed-wing version would make a great Saturday flyer.

"After graduation, Kolby moved back to the Northwest and is currently working at Microsoft as a Program Manager. He is still building and flying Radio Control. He recently converted the old Bellanca *Cruiser* to an electric, and his next project is a scale, scratch-built Aeronca *Champ*.

"Kolby has always been grateful to the AMA and the Toledo Weak Signals club for their wonderful scholarship."



Kolby Hoover

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