



The AMA History Project Presents: Biography of DAN KANE, JR.

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Dan Kane Jr.

by Aaron "AJ" Seaholm aseaholm@gmail.com

Dan "DK" Kane Jr. will step down this year as National Miniature Pylon Racing Association (NMPRA) president after six years in office. There is likely no one who loves RC Pylon Racing more than Dan. He has devoted countless hours to the advancement of this sport. This month's column is dedicated to recognizing all that Dan has done for RC Pylon.

I often speak about the Pylon Racing family, and few people exemplify this more than DK. He has always been wise beyond his years, willing to help, and is a tremendous friend. Thank you, Dan!

Racer

Dan Kane Jr. met his wife, Cathy, while racing Pylon. Cathy was an assistant starter at the Nats for many years and called for Dan from 1991- 2000 in Formula 1, Q-40, and Quarter Midget (QM) .15.

If you ever race against Dan, get ready for a battle from the start. He is one of the best pilots in the world, and one of the fiercest competitors. He is also an exceptional caller, as demonstrated by Travis Flynn's first Q-40 National Championship this year.

Dan has been a member of Team USA F5D five times, and team manager for Team USA F3D twice. He has won countless races and placed near the top of several more.

He joined Team Horizon Hobby and Team JR in 1993 and remains one of the companies' longest-tenured members.

Designer

Dan has designed numerous models and innovations throughout the years, including:

- Electric Formula 1 (EF1) (with Jerry Small): Toni, TomCat, Polecat, Ole Tiger, Shoestring, Scarlet Screamer, Outrageous, Miss San Bernardino, Miss Dara, Miss Cosmic Wind, Rivets, Proud Bird, AR-6, Estrellita, Shark, and GR-7
- Q-40: Miss Foxy Lady, Rivets, Proud Bird, Miss Ashley, Polecat, Loki, and Miss Dara
- Q-500: Three versions of the Hurrikane, including conventional and V-tail; developed two versions of glass fuselages and wooden fuselages, along with the Havok
- QM-15: Déjà vu
- Equipment: Flight stands, flightline boxes, and center of gravity tools

- Innovations: Helped with a two-piece wing for Too Sweet, September Fate, Jerry Small Shark, and Jerry Small Spitfire

Builder

Dan is a craftsman of the highest caliber. Whether it is paint or covering, balsa or composite, his building skills are exemplary. His EF1 Toni received Best of Show recognition this year at the Nats.

For many years, Dan built models to finance his racing habit. He built and painted foam wing Q-40s in the early years, along with Q-500s and QM-15s.

His later-molded Q-40s were built and painted with impeccable quality.

Leader

- NMPRA president, 2011-2016
- AMA Contest Board member since 1993
- Restarted NMPRA Hall of Fame in 2013
- Introduced Q-500 AMA Event 424, Club 40, and Warbirds at the Nats
- One of the EF1 rule architects

Organizer

During the past five years, Dan has organized and led a great team at the Nats. This year there were 129 registered pilots - the number one and number two most-attended events of all Nats categories, and the largest in more than 15 years. The planning process consumes an entire calendar year, and is outlined in the following:

- Scheduling: Dan Kane works closely with Yolanda Jones to work out an acceptable timetable. This involves coordinating with other categories, such as Scale and RC Aerobatics, to ensure smooth transitions between events.
- Contest director (CD) and starter: Mike Condon and Pete Bergstrom are former Pylon pilots and invaluable volunteers. Mike coordinates everything on-site. Pete is in charge of race operations and is the head official on the course. This year, 435 heats were flown, not including the Club 40 or warbirds events.
- Trophies: The AMA handles trophies for the official events. For unofficial events such as EF1, Club 40, and warbirds, Tom Scott does the manufacturing using Dan's designs.
- Equipment: The pylons are maintained by the AMA maintenance crew. All other race operations equipment is handled by racers. Two sets of equipment are maintained by Tom Scott. Competitors must set up and tear down each day.
- Matrix/scoring: This year, Chuck Andracka took over matrix and scoring duties from Randy Smith. Like Tom Scott, Chuck is a competitor and volunteers time at the detriment of his own race preparation.
- Fuel: Ritch's Brew is the official Nats RC Pylon Racing fuel sponsor. Randy transports the fuel to Muncie, Indiana, from Texas and then competes all week.
- Tent: The NMPRA, with help from Dub Jett and Mike Langlois, rents a 40-foot x 140-foot tent for the competitors to use.

- Processing: This year, more than 350 airplanes were processed for the AMA events alone. Mike Helsel, Duane Hulen, Terry Frazer, and Steve Baker took on this responsibility.
- Banquet: Dennis Cranfill worked with Dickie Ritch to prepare the food in Texas and then deliver it. During the banquet, we honored our newest NMPRA Hall of Fame member, Linda Brogdon. Linda has been the NMPRA newsletter editor for many years.
- NatsNews: Dan and Santiago Panzardi took pictures and provided content for the Pylon Racing section in the daily Nats newsletter.
- Other duties: Prerace promotion, communication with the pilots, and coordination of race materials (pens, paper, printer ink, tape, clipboards, lane markers, etc.). Writing checks to pay the workers.

Thank you to Dan and those who make the RC Pylon Racing Nats possible. I encourage you to relive the 2016 Nats with the exceptional NatsNews coverage available on AMA's website and in the AMA Nats Flickr albums.

Our Words

"With Danny's hard work and dedication, Pylon is where it is today. I don't know of any other president [who has] made as much progress."

-Randy Ritch

"Husband, dad, son, Pylon racer, friend, designer, organizer, and decider. All [of these] describe the man we know as 'OK.' The guy has a giant heart made of gold."

-Tom Scott

"I have known Danny for almost 25 years now, both as a friend and a close competitor. Danny will be missed as NMPRA president and his shoes will be very difficult to fill. Thanks, Danny, for all you have done."

-Marcus Blanchard

"One of the most passionate and generous guys I've known, who is happier to see the guy [who] he helps win, than [to] win himself. I'm proud to call him one my best friends."

-Travis Flynn

"One thing that stands out is his positive attitude. Dan has a knack for approaching and resolving problems with a positive attitude; that's what has allowed the NMPRA to grow."

-Robert Holik

"He's done more for what we do today in Pylon than any other person currently racing, besides the engine manufacturers."

-Mark Parker

"With due respect and gratitude to all who have served as president and done so very well, someone has to be the best and that's Danny."

-Dub Jett

If you have some words to recognize Dan, please send them to me for inclusion in a future article.

SOURCES: NMPRA
www.nmpira.net

NatsNews
nats.modelaircraft.org

Nats on Flickr
www.flickr.com/photos/modelaircraft/albums

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