



The AMA History Project Presents: Autobiography of TED KRAVER



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Fill Bill Boss' shoes

Hi! Here I am trying to fill the shoes of former "CL Scale" columnist, Bill Boss. Bill decided that after exactly 30 years of writing the column, it was time to get back to the shop. At first I was reluctant, but Jay Smith, MA's editor-in-chief, is amazingly persistent.

I had just wrapped up a pair of three-year stints as both the CL Scale *NatsNews* reporter for AMA and *Replica* newsletter editor/publisher for the National Association of Scale Aeromodelers (NASA). I figured that if I could pull off these assignments without ever having built or flown an RC aircraft, I might do an okay job on the "CL Scale" column.

I reviewed dozens of Bill's columns, from his first in December of 1982 to the present. I telephoned Bill and he shared with me a few of his tips that made him successful. Bill has a strong interest in aviation history, including a well-stocked library. When discussing a particular model, he suggested including the background on the aircraft.

He has tried to address three issues in each column, except when a master modeler, such as Frank Beatty, presents a new aircraft. His email brought photos and ideas for new and fresh subjects. Bill suggested that I should never have a problem with material because of the strong support that you readers provide.

My interest in Scale started in third grade with Comet kits. As a 12-year-old, I modified my circa-1950 Monogram models for CL, using my Wasp .049. My Mustang and Goodyear racer each got a couple of laps.

After two degrees in aerospace engineering at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, I took a job developing turboprops at Garrett-AiResearch in Phoenix, in 1961. I've lived in Phoenix since then.

My small turboprop background led to my favorite Fun Scale model: a 52-inch OV-10A Bronco with twin O.S. 25s. I will let you know whether my switch from three-line to 2.4 GHz worked for this year's Nats.

I have always been active in Navy Carrier, with all of my Scale efforts integrated between the two events. My four-engine Profile C-130 Hercules and GAL-38 Fleet Shadower both had a shot at flying from carriers – both model and real. I campaigned my Ely Flyer version of the 1911

Curtiss D-III pusher using a Webra 40 for several decades and several versions. The pusher with tricycle gear was a hoot to fly off of grass, parking lots, or ball diamonds. By changing the pilot, I could go from Profile Scale to Sport Scale.

My favorite airplane has been the F7F-3 Tigercat, with the SBD-3 Dauntless a close second. But after designing and building several different versions of each, I decided my current 1/2A Scale F7F-3 is the last one. It's time that I worked toward Designer (524)/FAI (510) Scale.

Having some experience flying my circa-1970s Convair XFY-1 Pogo and the Beachey Little Looper is intriguing. I took a raft of pictures of the Pogo stored in the Smithsonian and Little Looper replica in the San Diego museum. The Curtiss NC-1 caught my eye when I took the Naval Air Museum in Pensacola off my bucket list in June of 2011.

Let me know what's on your want-to-build list and we can all dream together.

From the bizarre flying required for the Navy Carrier events, I have developed a taste for unique flight options. The Pogo has hover and vertical takeoff and landing. The Little Looper did a Z starting at the top left. CL Scale is not all about building, and I am interested in addressing flight options and flight in general in this column.

After attending the Nats and local contests for many years, the subject of keeping CL Scale alive and healthy has been part of the ongoing conversation. This issue must be framed from the CL perspective.

I am a CL flier who puts a throttled engine in nearly every aircraft I build. We are one of six major CL categories: Speed, Combat, Racing, Navy Carrier, Stunt and Scale. I pushed for several years to have CL Scale at the Nats linked to CL week. I prevailed and now the six events are separated by only a Monday, saving a ton of travel from Arizona.

FF dominated aeromodeling activities until after World War II when CL came on strong. In the 1960s, RC gathered strength until the AMA membership percentage of CLers dropped into the single digits.

With more than 140,000 AMA members, there are still many CL builders and fliers. We need to work together to maintain flying circles and bring new people into Scale from Stunt, Carrier, and other events.

Our action is at the CL club level, but we need to maintain a national presence and support regional contests and the Nats. Each of the other CL categories has a national association with its own newsletter or magazine except CL Scale. The Precision Aerobatics Model Pilots Association (PAMPA) and *Stunt News*, but a couple of the others are having challenges.

Internationally, FAI CL Scale participation is dropping. Without a strong US leadership and advocacy, for the first time the World Championship for Scale Model Aircraft (August 2012, in Aragon, Spain) did not have a CL Scale competition.

I *do* remember Scale competitions in the California and Arizona area in the 1970s where dozens of Scale aircraft were flown. We still compete in Scale, but there are only a few (except for Mike Keville's innovative ½A Multi-Engine Profile event in Tucson) with more than a dozen competitors.

I expect that you would like to see CL Scale flourish through the next couple of decades. A wave of new technology and resources such as ARFs, 2.4 GHz, park flyers, electric motors, and ½A multiengine contests could be molded into more participation.

Send me an email and let me know ideas you have, on any and all aspects of CL Scale – photos, contests results, building ideas, new designs, and whatever else. It's not yet time to land, taxi and shut down the engine.

Let's do a touch-and-go and then open the throttle. Cheers!

Sources:

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NASA

www.nasascale.org

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