



The AMA History Project Presents: Biography of ROBERT B. MEUSER

Born March 6, 1922 Started modeling in 1932
AMA #2736



Written & Submitted by FC (03/1987); Transcribed by NR (01/1996); Edited by SS (2002), Reformatted by JS (10/2009)

Career:

- He participated in the AMA rules-making process by submitting rules-change proposals, many of which have been adopted
- Organization, administration, and competition have been important facets of his model aviation activities
- Wrote a monthly column – three pages, on average – for American Aircraft Modeler magazine, then for AMA's Model Aviation magazine
- Served as editor of the National Free Flight Society (NFFS) Symposium Reports for 1968 and 1994, and as co-editor of the 1977 World Championships Technical Report, both published by the NFFS

Honors:

- 1978: Received one of the 10 Model of the Year Awards of the NFFS
- 1989: An Aero Honor Society for Newsletter Editors award
- 1990: AMA Distinguished Service Award
- 1990: NFFS Hall of Fame

This biography was not submitted as such, but instead was taken from his application for the AMA Hall of Fame. The application was submitted by Mr. Frank Crevier on March 27, 1989.

Résumé of Model Aviation Activities of Bob Meuser

Bob's activities in model aviation have included organization, administration, competition, and publication, almost all with respect to Free Flight activities. In the beginning, Free Flight was the only game in town.

He served as Associate Vice President of District 10 for a time. He has served in the various offices within his local club, off and on. He has been a Contest Director and scientific leader for many years.

In 1937, he organized the Oakland Cloud Dusters, a still-active body with over 50 active members. He is currently active in the club, and has served in the various offices of that organization many times; his present position is historian. In 1987, he organized the 50th Anniversary Banquet of the club, which drew about 100 guests. The membership includes many of the Old-Timers of the 1930s and 1940s and five world champions in both indoor and outdoor FAI Free Flight events.

He is the originator, sponsor, organizer, and director (with lots of help from others) of the Unlimited Mulvihill event, held annually at the U.S. Free Flight Championships starting in 1978.

This event is for Mulvihill Rubber-Power models (as defined by AMA rules with certain additional constraints), flown within a 20-minute time window shortly after dawn; unlimited flight duration, one flight. Designed to test the ultimate flight duration capability of outdoor rubber-powered models under as near to thermal-free conditions as it is possible to attain, this event has drawn many of the best rubber-power modelers in the country for more than 20 years.

He has participated in the AMA rules-making process in several ways: by submitting rules-change proposals, many of which have been adopted (“But if fewer than 50% are rejected, then I’m not working hard enough,” he says); by publicizing the proposals; by making his views on the proposals known to his contest board representatives and urging others to do so (the Contest Board Representatives, he discovered by corresponding with a lot of them, get precious little feedback from the troops); by helping others formulate proposals for changes in current rules and for the initiation of new events. Some of the rules-change proposals he authored or co-authored and which were accepted include:

- Adoption of Pennyplane (Indoor) event
- Adoption of Limited Pennyplane (Indoor) event
- Extensive modifications of the competition rules for the Indoor and Outdoor Ornithopter events, which were at least partly responsible for a resurgence of interest in the events, and outstanding technological advances in one of the traditional Free Flight arts. When an event has stayed dormant for decades, and suddenly scores that had stood for 40 years became tripled within a period of five years, that’s progress!
- Allowing electric-powered and expansion-engine-powered scale models to compete in the Free
- Flight Scale Gas events and renaming it the Free Flight Scale Power event

He won first place in the distance event in the First Great International Paper Airplane Contest of 1967, sponsored by Scientific American magazine, in which there were some 12,000 entries. He repeated that performance 18 years later in the Second Great International Paper Airplane Contest of 1985, sponsored by the National Air and Space Museum, in which there were some 6,000 entries.

He received one of 10 Model of the Year Awards of the NFFS in 1978 for his No Nonsense Indoor Pennyplane design. The record setting performances attained by this monoplane model stood for a long time, but biplanes ultimately exceeded them.

While organization, administration, and competition have been important facets of his model-aviation activities, his main activity has been in the area of communication of ideas through various publications.

As both a technically oriented person by profession and a Free Flight, competition-oriented modeler by choice and heritage, he has attempted in his writings to present technical material in such a way that persons without technical training could comprehend it and put it to use.

He wrote a monthly “column” – three pages, on average – for American Aircraft Modeler, and later upon its demise, for AMA's Model Aviation magazine, continuously for some 17 years. In addition, he wrote a number of topical articles for those publications and also for Aero Modeler of England. He has contributed many papers that have been published in various NFFS Symposium Reports.

He served as editor (or rédacteur-en-chef the classier title with which he prefers to identify himself, tongue in cheek) of Free Flight, the NFFS Digest off and on for about 13 years.

He served as editor of the NFFS Symposium Reports for 1968 and 1994 and as co-editor of the 1977 World Championships Technical Report, both published by the NFFS.

Model Aviation Articles by Bob Meuser

Does not include monthly 'column' in American Aircraft Modeler and Model Aviation magazines.

Code for names of publications:

AM	American Modeler
AAM	American Aircraft Modeler
AerM	Aero-Modeler (England)
FF	Free Flight, Digest of the National Free-Flight Society
INAV	Indoor News and Views (National Indoor Model Airplane Society)
MA	Model Aviation
MAN	Model Airplane News
Sympo	Annual Symposium of the National Free-Flight Society

Title	Publication	Date	Page
And Why Not Gears?	MAN	July 1965	16
Coast-to-Coast on a Paper Airplane	AM	Aug. 1967	20
Optimum Rubber Weight...	FF	March 1968	3
Try Catapult Gliders	AAM	Nov. 1968	12
Effect of Model Design and Flight Pattern on Wakefield Model Performance	Sympo	1969	75
Optimum Tune for Low-Ceiling Flight	INAV	March 1970	
Choosing the Best Wakefield Prop	Sympo	1970	31
The U.S. Nationals	AerM	Oct. 1970	564
The 1970 Nats: Free Flight	AAM	Dec. 1970	32
Free Flight Team Selection Trials in the U.S.	AerM	Dec. 1970	680
The Albuquerque Affair (Team Finals)	AAM	Feb. 1971	20
The 1971 Nats: Free Flight	AAM	Nov. 1971	22
The Best-Ever Free Flight Meet (1971 U.S. Free Flight Champs)	AAM	Nov. 1971	36
The 1971 U.S. Nationals	AerM	Oct. 1971	573
Elegant Models at the Cow Palace	AAM	March 1972	12

Where to Put the Ballast	Sympo	1972	12
The 1972 Nats: Free Flight	AAM	Nov. 1972	24
The 1972 U.S. Free Flight Champs (with Dick Mathis)	AAM	Dec. 1972	37
Free Flight at the U.S. Nationals	AerM	Nov. 1972	638
Indoor Towline Glider Meet at the Cow Palace	AAM	May 1973	
Can-Formed Prop Blades	Sympo	1973	28
Electric-Flight Motors	AAM	July 1973	22
The 1973 Nats: Free Flight	AAM	Nov. 1973	86
The 1973 U.S. Free Flight Championships	AAM	Oct. 1973	56
Asymmetrical Model Airplane Contest	AAM	April 1974	16
Painless Propeller Pitch Determination	Sympo	1974	11
A Method of Visualizing Airfoil Sections	Sympo	1974	43
The Ten Models of the Year (with Bill Bogart)	Sympo	1974	77
SuperSweep (Ron Whitman's record indoor H.L. glider)	AAM	Sept. 1974	33
Free Flight Team Selection Finals (for the 1975 World Championships)	AAM	Dec. 1974	87
The 1974 U.S. Free Flight Championships	AAM	Jan. 1975	36
The 1975 U.S. Free Flight Championships	MA	Sept. 1975	
Carving Props From Thin Boards	Sympo	1976	65
The Fourth National Paper Airplane Championships	MA	July 1976	51
The 1976 U.S. Free Flight Championships	MA	Sept. 1976	
Corrections to The 1976 U.S. Free Flight Championships article	MA	July 1977	94
The 1977 Nats: Free Flight	AAM	Nov. 1977	34
No Non-Cents (Model of the Year Award)	Sympo	1978	104
The Free Flight Team Selection Finals	MA	Jan. 1979	86
The U.S. Team Trials	AerM	1979	35
The 1979 U.S. Free Flight Championships	AerM	Sept. 1979	51
The Free Flight World Championships	MA	Jan. 1980	42
The 1981 U.S. Free Flight Championships	MA	Sept. 1981	50
The 1982 U.S. Free Flight Championships	MA	Sept. 1982	62
The 1983 U.S. Free Flight Championships	MA	Sept. 1983	58

AMA National Records Set by Bob Meuser

Senior Age Classification

Date	Classification	Category	Model
2/23/1941	Class C	Rise-off-Water (ROW) Gas	
11/24/1940		Outdoor	Autogiro

Open Age Classification

Date	Classification	Category	Model
4/26/1981	Outdoor	II	Ornithopter (Outdoor)
4/30/1978	Indoor	III	Novice – Pennyplane
4/30/1978	Indoor	III	Ornithopter
8/27/1977	Indoor	I	Novice – Pennyplane
8/28/1977	Indoor	I	Pennyplane
5/21/1978	Indoor	I	Ornithopter
5/21/1978	Indoor	I	Novice – Pennyplane
1/26/1976	Indoor	III	Pennyplane
5/14/1977	Indoor	III	Novice – Pennyplane
3/24/1968	Outdoor		Wakefield (F1B)
4/28/1968	Outdoor		Wakefield (F1B)
1/20/1980	Outdoor	III	Autogiro
5/20/1979	Indoor	I	Ornithopter
4/27/1980	Indoor	I	Ornithopter
10/29/1978	Outdoor	III	Helicopter
3/18/1979	Outdoor	III	Ornithopter
3/18/1979	Outdoor	III	Autogiro

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