



The AMA History Project Presents: Autobiography of JOSEPH (JOE) F. ZIOMEK, JR.



Born March 31, 1938

Started modeling in 1946

AMA #10772

Submitted by JZ (07/2004); Edited by JF (08/2004), update by JS (08/2007), Reformatted by JS (02/2010)

Career:

- 1954: Won first place in ½A at PAA-load event at age 16
- 1960: Started the Livonia Rib Crackers, a Free Flight and Control Line model club in Michigan
- Served as Vice President and Secretary of Rib Crackers
- 1965: Designed the *Foxy Special*, with plans in *Model Airplane News*
- 2002: Started Florida Keys Model Club

Joseph F. (Joe) Ziomek Jr., son of Joseph E. Ziomek Sr., began 58 years in modeling at the age of eight in Michigan. His interest in modeling came after his father and uncle built a *Buccaneer* Free Flight model with an O&R .23 engine. The airplane crashed, however, after only a few flights. As Joseph Sr. built more airplanes, his son became more interested.

Joe's first models were the kitted *Gollywok* rubber Free Flight model and a Guillows rise-off-ground (ROG) indoor rubber-powered stick model, similar to the AMA *Cub*. Joe was age nine at the time, so his father helped in the construction of the models. Joe would move onto models like the *Zeek* for ½A Free Flight and larger versions of the *Zeek* for A and B Classes. Joe also built *Banshees* of the Leon Shulman design for all the above classes.

Joe's first competition came in 1952 at the age of 14. This was the Michigan State Model Meet, sponsored by the Michigan State Exchange Club. Joe competed with a ½A *Zeek*, ½A *Fubar*, Class A *Zeek*, and a hand-launched glider. Joe received third place in ½A Free Flight Junior Class. As a national competitor, Joe is proud of his performance at the PAA-load event in 1954. There he placed first in ½A Junior/Senior Class with a time of 13 minutes and 25 seconds. The PAA-load event took place at Glenview Naval Air Station in Glenview, Illinois.

In 1960, Joe started the Livonia Rib Crackers of Livonia, Michigan. The club was for free-flighters and Control Line enthusiasts. Joe started the Rib Crackers Demonstration Team in 1963. With the club, Joe acted as Vice President and Secretary. Currently, Joe is a charter member of the Florida Keys Model Club.

Plans for the *Foxy Special*, powered by a Fox .59, can be purchased from Joseph F. Ziomek. Over 300 sets of plans were sold worldwide. Joe also provides information on building the 1/3-

scale *Pitts S2A* Radio Control biplane. That airplane flew at the Tournament of Champions (TOC) in 1977.

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