



The AMA History Project Presents: History of the EXTREME FLIGHT RC



Written by JS (06/2010); Reformatted by JS (06/2010)

Jay Smith wrote the following, published in the About Us section of Model Aviation magazine, July 2010 issue.

About Us: Extreme Flight RC

Chris Hinson, who owns Extreme Flight RC, is just as comfortable with a transmitter in his hands as he is with a guitar. Chances are you will see him with both at any event he attends. Although Chris loves both hobbies, he has had an enthusiasm for airplanes for as long as he can remember; his father was a naval aviator.

Chris received a Cox Control Line model for his fifth birthday. He found that facet of flying challenging and enjoyable, but he set his sights on Radio Control.

Chris realized his goal in 1976, at age eight, when his grandfather bought him a Carl Goldberg Falcon 56 MkII. That summer, Chris's grandfather set into motion a growing interest in model aircraft that would later turn into a passion.

As do many of us who enter this hobby at an early age, Chris put Radio Control on the back burner for a while throughout his late teens and early 20s. During that time, he focused on playing guitar. He made a living picking away on the six strings and with a stint as a roadie (stage tech) for the band Blues Traveler.

In 1994, *Radio Control Modeler* magazine ran an ad for Morris Hobbies, and it featured Tony Ayers hovering a profile Hots into a box! Struck by how cool it was to see a model hover, Chris promptly ordered one; he re-immersed himself in Radio Control and worked hard at developing his skills.

Shortly thereafter, Chris attended the first World Masters Aerobatic Championship in Pat Hartness's front yard in Greenville, South Carolina. According to Chris, seeing pilots such as Chip Hyde, Frank Noll, and Jason Shulman fly 35% aircraft and push their flying toward 3-D left him "totally blown away and inspired!"

Chris and a close friend and flying buddy, Russell Reel, embarked on a mission to master the 3-D style of flying. According to Chris, they were die-hards who were willing to fly any day, every day, no matter what.

"It was freezing and snowing, and we would use a kerosene blast heater on the flight line and fly when no one else would," he said. "I was obsessed for six to eight years."

Chris's work in the hobby industry began with a job at National Hobby Supply in Smyrna, Georgia, after five years on the road with Blues Traveler. That soon led to his employment with Bubba Spivey at Lanier RC at roughly the time that the company took on Carl Goldberg Products.

In just more than a year with Lanier, Chris had learned a lot about the ARF market and had his own ideas of ways to lighten the models and make them fly better. Since he didn't have the control to make those changes, he put together a business plan to start his own company.

After getting funding in place, Chris spent Christmas in 2002 at a factory in China. His idea was to develop an airframe around the soon-to-be released Desert Aircraft DA-50 engine. That aircraft turned out to be the 85-inch-wingspan Extra 300L that launched Extreme Flight Radio Control.

Drawing from eight years of experience, Chris has built Extreme Flight RC, which is based in Cumming, Georgia, into a company whose name and models are known throughout our industry. Not only has its line of airplanes grown, but Chris has also added a popular line of Torque motors, Airboss speed controllers, and numerous accessories to aid pilots in achieving maximum enjoyment from the hobby.

Extreme Flight RC has also expanded its operations to include worldwide distribution. In addition, the company has acquired employees Curtis Cozier, Blair Rittenhouse, and Chris's wife, Melissa. They attribute their success to a simple principle that Chris shared with me.

"Our reputation is built on delivering a top-notch product and our willingness to stand behind it and take care of the customer first," he said. "Because of this, we have an overwhelming number of repeat customers."

Chris is willing to push the envelope in developing Radio Control aircraft, to include modifying existing full-scale types and designing models that are not based on full-scale offerings. He said:

"We are limited to what we can do with the full-scale aerobatic aircraft currently in existence. I have ideas for Radio Control aircraft not based on full-scale aircraft.

"We are in the process of developing some innovative designs; why not try and advance the science? We should be releasing some interesting aircraft in the next year or so."

Competition is also important to Extreme Flight RC, as is evidenced by its Competition Rewards Program. That allows pilots who fly the company's models to receive placing in the top three spots in IMAC (International Miniature Aerobatic Club) and Freestyle competitions.

Chris believes that competition fuels advances in technology. He also says that pilots who fly at that level of performance collect valuable information about his products that can be used to continue to refine them. As a competitor himself, Chris appreciates the sacrifice and dedication that are required to compete.

Getting to know Chris and the rest of the staff at Extreme Flight in the course of the past few years has been enjoyable. Chris has several stories about his experience in the music and Radio Control industries. The latter usually involves spending up to a month at a time in China, ensuring that his customers get the best models he can provide.

He is eager to talk with anyone who is excited about airplanes or music and tries to give back to the hobby through donations and support of events.

I ended our conversation by asking Chris what has been most rewarding for him. He replied:

“Seeing our airplanes doing so well in competitions all over the world is huge, as is stopping by an airfield and seeing people flying the aircraft I have worked so hard to develop, or getting an email from someone gushing that our aircraft is the best they have ever flown.

“I have an overwhelming passion for the hobby and for airplanes in general. I lay in bed at night thinking about them. I still get a rush each and every time I fly an RC airplane.”

This PDF is property of the Academy of Model Aeronautics. Permission must be granted by the AMA History Project for any reprint or duplication for public use.

AMA History Project
National Model Aviation Museum
5151 E. Memorial Dr.
Muncie IN 47302
(765) 287-1256, ext. 511
historyproject@modelaircraft.org

