



The AMA History Project Presents: Biography of VIC HUSAK 1924-2007



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In Memory of Vic Husak (1924-2007): The Story of His King Altair

Many who are interested in vintage Pattern are familiar with Ed Kazmirski and his legendary Taurus, but fellow RC Pattern pioneer Vic Husak of the Chicago, Illinois area, made his own mark in RC history.

He is best known for designing larger-than-average Pattern models such as the King Altair, which was featured in the April 1967 *RCM*, and the Mr. Slick from the February 1972 *RCM*. Many believe both designs were decades ahead of their time because they closely resemble first-generation 2-meter Pattern aircraft from the 1990s.

While looking through the *RCM* plans catalog, I was immediately drawn to the King. With an 80-inch wingspan it stood out from all other Pattern designs of the period.

I eventually got the opportunity to buy one ready to fly. From the moment it left the ground I was delighted with its slower than average speed of approximately 80 mph (which to me is still plenty fast) and its elegance in doing precision maneuvers. The King has the ability to make a pilot look better.

Through some detective work I was able to locate and contact Vic. It was a thrill for me to tell him in person how much I appreciate his King and its grace and beauty in the air.

Vic was gracious enough to respond, complete with pictures of two of his vintage Altairs from the 1960s. In the past year we had been corresponding by E-mail and telephone. He provided me with firsthand details of the design process.

Vic was on the cover of the October/November 1962 *Flying Models* magazine with his original Altair-S design. The name "Altair" was a suggestion from Ed Kazmirski, who made a practice of naming his models after stars or constellations.

Vic and Ed belonged to the RC3 club in the Chicago area. As do typical flying buddies, they spent time in each other's basements "kicking around" ideas for airplanes. In 1964 or 1965, as engine technology produced more powerful 60-size engines, during one of those sessions they decided to try designing a large-scale Pattern airplane.

Ed's was named the Simla and appeared on the back cover of the August 1965 *RCM*. With a 102-inch wingspan, it was gigantic by the standard of the day. (The Taurus spans 70 inches.) The Simla and its plans have been lost to us, but Vic's King Altair - the "king" of the Altair series - lives on as *RCM* plans and is gaining popularity in vintage Pattern circles.

What's the history of your favorite vintage model?

-Bob Noll

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