



The AMA History Project Presents: Biography of STEVE SAUGER



Written by CT (2019), reformatted by JS (2019)

The following was written by Cliff Tacie and submitted to the AMA History Project in 2019.

Over the past fourteen months, scale modeling has lost three members of the 1986 U.S. Scale Team. Mike Gretz, F4B Manager, passed in January 2016; Skip Mast, F4C Competitor, passed in August 2016, and now it saddens me to report that Steve Sauger, F4C Competitor and another good friend, has passed away on March 19, 2017 at the age of 86 after a relatively short bout with leukemia.

Steve was widely known to be an outstanding scale model builder. One web discussion group asked, "Who's the best scale modeler?" The answer given to that was that, "...some of the older scale planes from the 1980s seem to be more meticulous in details and finish than most today. Steve Sauger, Bob Underwood, Hal Parenti (Rose, Wischer, and Mick Reeves are some others), and others of that time had to put up with rulers measuring all the parts, not just looking at them. The planes were about half the size; engine size was regulated and there was a much lower weight restriction."

An accomplished full-scale pilot, flying instructor, and world-class RC scale model builder, Steve had a knack for picking out-of-the-ordinary subjects with particularly striking color schemes. One of his early scale masterpieces was a 1/6 scale Lockheed Orion "Early Bird" in the brilliant red with silver trim of the "Detroit News." This model resided for a time in the AMA's National Model Aviation Museum and is now owned by the Henry Ford Museum in Dearborn, Michigan. Other models included his yellow and white 90" wingspan Fairchild Ranger 24 featured in a March 1978 issue of *Model Aviation*, and an Aeronca Sedan, which he flew in the first Top Gun competition in 1989. The Ranger is currently in the AMA's National Model Aviation Museum.

Steve also built another Ranger in quarter scale with a 108" wingspan. One of his most impressive models was his Stinson Model A tri-motor. Steve flew this model as a member of the 1986 U.S. Scale Team, competing in Norway, Sweden.

Steve's models were all scratch-built from his own plans, all markings were hand-painted - no stick-on graphics like are used today. He competed regularly in AMA Nats, U.S. Scale Masters, and Top Gun events, and represented the United States as a member of several U.S. Scale Teams from 1976 through 1988.

Like Skip Mast, Steve moved from Michigan to the On Top of the World community in Ocala, Florida where he enjoyed his "golden years" with his loving wife, Joanne, and was a member of the OTOW RC Flyers. While he lived in Michigan, Steve was a long-standing member of the Radio Control Club of Detroit and the Skymasters.

We will all miss his smiling face and insightful conversations. Another goodbye to a wonderful friend.



The above photos were provided to the AMA History Project by Cliff Tacie.

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