



The AMA History Project Presents: Biography of WINFRED (WINDY) URTNOWSKI



Born August 16, 1948 AMA #72618

Written by JG (03/1997) and WU (c. 2002); Transcribed by NR (12/1999); Edited by SS (2002); Updated by JS (10/2008, 02/2022, 05/2022),
Reformatted by JS (01/2010)

Career:

- He has written about 100 articles
- Ran PAMPA for seven years
- A leader and innovator who believes in growth and change

Honors:

- 2003: Model Aviation Hall of Fame
-

The following biography was taken from a Model Aviation Hall of Fame application. John Gunn submitted the application on March 14, 1997.

Gentlemen:

The Control Line Stunt section of modeling has had a new breath of life given to it through the videos from Windy Urtnowski.

I was ready to give up on model planes until I discovered Windy and his videos. He has never been too busy to help me or any of my club members on the phone and sends videos on loan at times. This has helped many modelers step up to another level of modeling. I have used his videos to build my club and his advice to help raise a scholarship fund. This fund will be given out to the winners at our local contest in May of 1997. Without Windy's advice, this would not have happened. When you are at the Nationals (Nats), think about how many planes are finished in a professional manner, compare that with a few years ago when you had a few shiny planes. The gathering of knowledge, putting it in a form that can be transferred visually is a new concept. Now you see many others doing the same thing, the efforts to learn show, explain and bring in new members to the hobby is good. The Control Line stunt group has grown a great deal in the past few years, more than any other group.

The five bade prop, molding of wood, crutch development, securing a source for canopies, flying the pattern and what to look for and how to avoid mistakes is not new, but was limited knowledge for a few. I am one of those people, and there are many others like me that work better by a visual presentation. Windy was a leader in the field and still is. For the most part, he changed the hobby and made it better for all parties.

He has written about 100 articles over the years, ran PAMPA for seven years and many other things. The best things are the effort to bring new people into the hobby, research to build better planes and videotape the work and pattern information for new people. This created an accelerated growth for Control Line members from building to flying and competing with 14 others. What other person has done more? You have other suppliers that do not do anything but sell and promote their own products; some write articles occasionally.

Windy is a leader, innovator and believes in growth and change. To some people this is a danger to a secure little world. Louis Pasture, the first heart surgeon that did a heart transplant, and Robert Fulton were all innovators and made changes in the way we live and do things. All of these men were hung out to dry before we realized what had been accomplished and how it would benefit us as a society.

This same set of facts and events have taken place in the Control Line society. Once again, there are about 20 people who build and fly in the Texarkana, Texas area because of Windy's tapes. I could not have built this club without the ability to transfer the knowledge in a timely fashion to the new members of the hobby.

Gentlemen, I ask you to place the name of Windy Urtnowski in the [Model Aviation] Hall of Fame for the things he has accomplished for the Control Line sector and leadership he shows for all of us.

*John C. Gunn
Texarkana, Texas 75501*

Below are comments from Winfred Urtnowski, circa 2002, submitted to the AMA History Project to supplement John Gunn's Hall of Fame application information, and edited for inclusion in this pdf. In 2022, several paragraphs written by and about Hal deBolt were removed, previously incorrectly attributed to Mr. Urtnowski. We apologize for the confusion.

* "Spitfire" design was accepted for publication in *M.A.* this year. [*Editor's note: This was the "Spitfire Becomes Reality" article in the February 1998 issue of Model Aviation magazine.*]

* Among the original technology is canopy moulding, fiberglass cowls, carbon fiber 5-blade props, and many articles contributed to the PAMPA newsletter detailing these methods, several articles in *M.A.* on vacuum bench construction and building a workbench. Five years as flying model columnist contained many "leading-edge" articles that are now standard practice in F-2-B.

* "Videos by Windy" is [a] business started in 1987, since then has sold 14,000 tapes covering F2B, construction, finishing, composites, propellers, Nats coverage back to 1987, and contributed footage to John Worth for the A.M.A. "Gathering of Eagles" – many tapes donated as prizes or in other ways to promote the hobby.

Dear Sirs: Please attach this to form previously submitted by John Gunn; it contains supplemental information not on original form.

I have contributed back to model aviation in many ways, but these are the things I hope you will consider as part of my payback to our sport.

In 1987, I started the first video business dedicated to Control Line Stunt. In 11 years, we've gone through 14,000 tapes, many donated, many loaned, and have added that dimension to Control Line Stunt. That business was so successful I quit my full-time job and began

manufacturing model airplane products of my own design. I also have an interest in Joe K. Inc., which manufactures many unique parts for Control Line and was an innovator in parts like 4" bellcranks that are now standard equipment for competitors.

I've published six designs, many technical pieces, but my *Flying Models* and *Stunt News* finishing articles I believe to be among the best ever written. I have won 4 Concours awards, that's the most of anyone in the history of the event.

I had taken a defunct PAMPA in 1983 and put out the newsletter at my own cost for almost a year to save the organization. It now has over 1,700 members worldwide. Without my tenure, it's doubtful we'd have that organization today.

I've been in the Walker Flyoff top five 11 times and finished as high as 2nd overall. Also been our F2B alternate three times.

I am currently waiting for *M.A.* to publish my "Spitfire" construction article with many innovative features, a state-of-the-art canopy article, and am working on another piece making carbon fiber spinners.

I believe I've been the only one in the history of Control Line Stunt to fly with a scale 5-blade carbon prop in Nats competition.

I have also documented all our Nats on video back through '87 and the two most recent World Championships. This library of video is not available anywhere else.

My "Cardinal" kit is one of the most popular since 1992 and I was very proud to be on three different magazine covers: *American Aircraft Modeler Annual*, 1969; *Flying Models*, 1980; and *Model Aviation*, Oct. 1992.

I am currently the District II director for PAMPA and F2B.

Thank you for your consideration.



Windy's new Scale North American B-25 Mitchell project. Will Hubin took this photo.



Windy flying his semi-scale Supermarine Royal Navy fighter at the Nationals in 2001. This photo, taken by Will Hubin, and appeared on the cover of the March/April 2002 issue of Stunt News.

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