

IN THE HANGAR WITH...

...Jerry Flick

When did you become interested in RCModeling (RCM)?

Started with control line with my son, Mike, thirty years ago. We'd fly 'em, crash 'em, then go home and repair 'em. When my daughter wanted to try, I told her she better fly them before Mike crashed 'em. Turned out she was a natural and quick learner.

I ran a .60 size plane once that was so fast and had such a powerful prop wash that the elevator had no effect. Just went straight around until it ran out of fuel. Sure glad the lines didn't break! Would've killed somebody.

Were you self-taught or mentored?

I was helped in Pedro, FL by the best pilot in the club, but boy was he an arrogant SOB. Remember once he hand launched a plane and it went straight as an arrow. I said, "You got that trimmed out good." And then it continued straight away and out of sight. He forgot to turn on the Tx. Never found it.

Do you remember your first model? And what is your favorite airplane?

My first was a 3-channel Goldberg Eaglet. Probably my favorite is the Playmate.

What disciplines of modeling do you participate in?

Mostly sport. I have a glider! It's got a motor. I just like motors. Got a couple electrics and one gas, although I'm seriously thinking about switching over to gas.

What line of work were you in?

Tool & Die maker! Started a specialty shop with a guy in St. Pete in the '60s! Got in on the ground floor making electrical discharge machines and got really good at it! The kind of business everyone else was kind of afraid to go into. Also was a maintenance supervisor for General Mills in Ocala.

Until recently you were an entrepreneur. Tell us about that?

My wife, Bonny, and I manufactured custom landing gears for 17 years! All hand cut and polished. It was a great little garage business. Used to make up a bunch and



Mike and I would take them to events. Sold them to Great Planes. Hobby Lobby International used them in their Telemaster kits. Eventually we got into Tower Hobby and business tripled overnight. Later, they were bought out by the employees who wanted to streamline the company! Expected the little guys like us to provide UPC coding of a very expensive process that would have eaten up all our profit. You'd be surprised just how many suppliers in this hobby are garage businesses.

Has RCM influenced your life in anyway?

When I became ill, it gave me something to enjoy.

How important is membership in an RCM club to you?

Very! For insurance and a nice place to fly. I belonged to Tri-County for awhile and helped start the Cloud Climbers and Ocala Flying Model Club back in '75-'76.

You were one of the original founders of the club. How has it changed over the years?

The facilities have greatly improved. It started out as a glider club. Lots of guys have come and gone! Some passing on. Would love to see a hard surface runway some day.

What can you tell us about your current model?

Which one? I have ten! Two haven't been flown yet: a Cherokee Twin and Cessna Skymaster pusher/puller.



Did you ever fly full-scale?

Yep! But never had a license. Flew a Cessna 182, Centurion Twin Turbo and several helicopters (Hughes 300 & 500) that belonged to my brother-in-law, Charlie, who owns HLS in Tampa (Helicopter Leasing & Services! a structure repair company). Well, Charlie wanted me to teach his son to fly r/c so they would come up here on weekends in a helicopter and land in my dad's pasture next door. When dad sold the land, Charlie's test pilot, EJ, who also happened to be a sergeant in the Tampa PD, would fly them up in a Jet Ranger on Saturday, drop them off in the pasture at the corner of 40 and 180th Ave, then pick them back up on Sunday at 3pm. Well, that started to attract a crowd of spectators and one afternoon four deputies were waiting for them! Probably thinking they were smugglers or something. But they all laughed about it once they found out what was going on.

Charlie was good enough to take the Jet Ranger over to the Ocala field once and give the club members a ride.

Would you have done anything different over the years?

Yes! Wouldn't have spent so much money racing cars! Raced for 30 years.

