



2005 NRHSA CONVENTION

Part 2 *HM Staff*

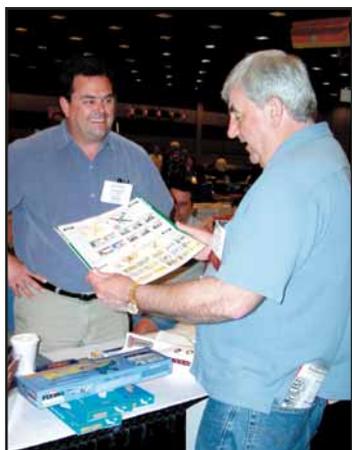
Always a smash hit, the NRHSA Show continues to attract hobby dealers and exhibitors to its invigorating Las Vegas setting. The four-day show, produced by *Hobby Merchandiser* and held in late April, ran very smoothly in its new home at the Las Vegas Hilton. The tabletop trade show, the educational dealer seminars and the off-site demonstration events all drew solid dealer attendance. This is the show where everyone seems to be in good cheer from beginning to end, and the fun shows no signs of ever letting up. *Hobby Merchandiser's* coverage of the 2005 NRHSA Show will conclude in August. **HM**



The Blade electric RC helicopter from Horizon's exclusive E-Flite line performed impressive demonstrations of traditional and aerobatic flight. *Hobby Merchandiser's* Blade review is soon to come.



Rick Mattie of Airtronics, with the latest computer surface system.



Tom Barker shows the new Guillow's laser-cut WWI lineup to New Hampshire hobby dealer Bill Rickard.



Estes Industries execs showed their diverse product line, and Dave Redden had many of the new models from Cox Hobbies on display.

Bill Shive (*Shive Specialties*) and Patty St. Pierre (*Hobbytyme Distributors*) enjoy a beautiful afternoon at Sunset Lake for the RC boat and seaplane demonstrations.

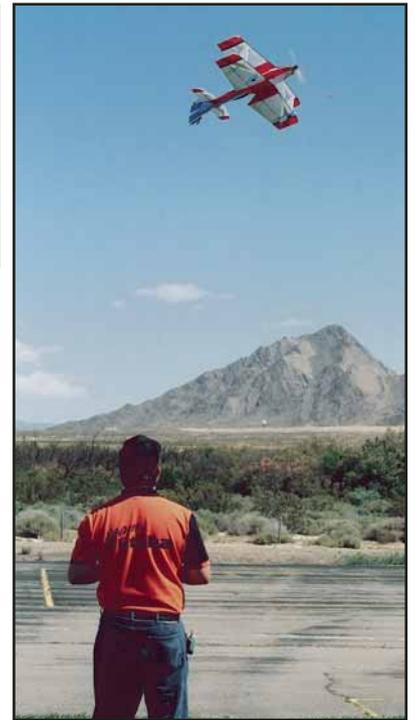




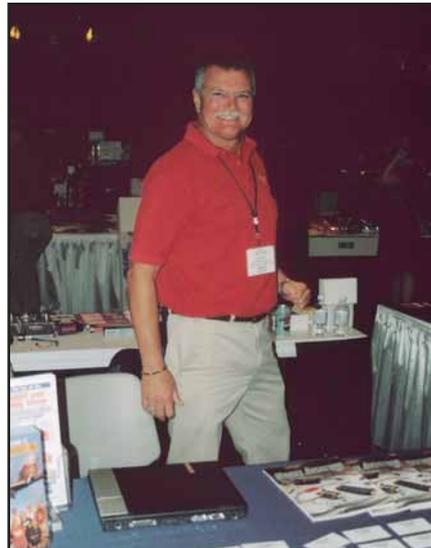
No crashed models and no sunken boats, but one of the complimentary shuttle buses ran aground when the driver stuck it in a deep dip. No, the wood block trick didn't do it. Tow time!



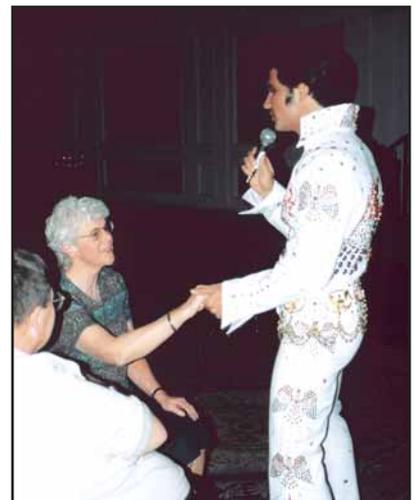
Great Planes demonstrated their new Frequency Checker miniature scanning device, and flew a number of their newest traditional and flat foam RC models. With the assistance and cooperation of the Las Vegas RC Club, the NRHSA Convention's flying events were staged at William G. Bennett Field, former home of Bill Bennett's original and prestigious Tournament of Champions.



Great Planes' Don Anderson and Rod Clark awarded generous grand prizes at the NRHSA Annual Banquet.



Jay Mealy proudly represents the Academy of Model Aeronautics.



Jan Throne gets the crooning from "Elvis" — Jason Heinrich.



Years of dedication earned Betty Thomson the "Order of the Peanut."



Manufacturers show the speed and power of their latest vehicle at the "Hilton Raceway," sponsored by Dansey's R/C.



AirBorne Models' Fai Chan with the company's new 1/10-scale RC sedan kit and the new P-51D electric ARF. AirBorne has quality aircraft ARF kits in every category, including the Rambler EP reviewed in this issue by Gary Colby.



RC marine action ran nonstop during the boat races and product demonstrations at Sunset Lake in Las Vegas' Sunset Park. Megatech's Peter and Mindy Winston keep the crowd entertained.



Hobby Merchandiser's Donna Dean with John Truong of JTT & Partners.



MRC's Bob Lewen shows the new F-16 from Academy Models.



International traffic increased dramatically, thanks to Joel Davis and International Hobbycraft.



Billing Boats traveled from Europe to show American dealers the latest releases and enjoy the NRHSA Show.



Frank Ritota debuts the new MRC Performance-Bred lineup.



Peter Winston and Mega-techie John Many with killer fast deep vee, available in Caribbean Cruiser electric or Wicked Angel nitro version.



Mike and Ann Pachasa of Ohio's Cleveland Hobby Supply Company.



Scalextric showed a broad selection of slot cars and track.



Great Planes is equipped to handle any dealer question at the NRHSA Convention.



Bill Rickard presented a heartwarming tribute to Al Fucshen.

Meetings and Seminars

Jan Throne

The newly organized Hobby Manufacturers Association (HMA) met at the NRHSA Convention in Las Vegas with all officers and most board members present. The HMA is the result of efforts to unify the hobby industry, spearheaded by MRC president Frank Ritota, who chaired the Unification Task Force. Pat Koziol is the new HMA's executive director, and the association's first president is Bob Staat of McHenry Couplers.

Seminars ran daily at the NRHSA Convention, and their subjects ranged from theoretical to practical. Presentations began on Tuesday with Iwata's Tom Grossman's *The Basics of Airbrushing*. Tom explained many types of airbrushes, like single and double action, gravity, side and bottom feed, and performed the ever helpful flow test.

Later, Bob Jacobsen from Galaxy Hobbies spoke to eager dealers about *Coping with A Changing Industry*. Bob, widely respected for his impressive presentations, did not disappoint. He emphasized that store owners must keep a close eye on changing trends in the industry. The cycle of product life is ever shortening, and our new products are not changing the industry — customers are changing the product.

Following Bob's discussion, Zana Ireland and George Reily of Digitrax, Inc. presented *Successful Model Railroad Sales*. While the point was made that a model railroading customer might be a longer term customer, the program was applicable to all stores. High points from Zana included producing a tag line for your store, and packaging products for projects shown in the magazines. George had many good points, although his most practical may have been "never try to make a sale on a full bladder or an empty stomach."

Wednesday opened with the *Two Cycle Engine Workshop*. The panel consisted of Chris Siggins (Traxxas) and Tim Sandor (MRC), and as with most of the show's panel discussions, Don Hendrick of Pat's Hobbies was the moderator. From a sequence for trouble shooting to the pinch test, many good points were made. All agree that it is essential to read the manufacturer's instructions with any new engine. The popular Dealer-to-Dealer Forum was next, moderated by former NRHSA president Walt Throne of Walt's Hobby.

Don Hendrick hosted the *Li-Po Battery Workshop* with panelists Neal Cloud (Great Planes) and Jason Merkel (Horizon Hobby). Li-Po batteries have changed the RC aircraft industry, and they are not to be treated in the same casual manner as NiCd nor NiMH batteries. These are very sensitive cells, and require chargers that have been specifically made to service them. One has to believe that advances with Li-Po batteries will make them more user friendly as time goes on. Things are already getting easier, and Neal and Jason presented points of information that contributed to better understanding from dealers.

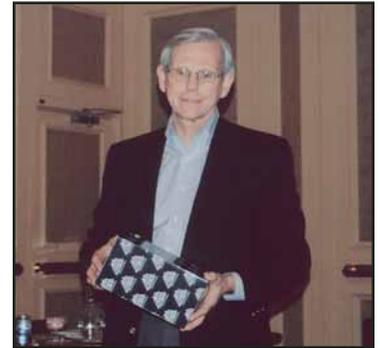
Walt's Hobby — Walt and I — presented *Thirty Years of Promotions: the Best and the Worst*. While two previous programs dealt with promotions, all presented positive suggestions. Our program took a few shots and focused on actual industry promotions, some that succeeded and others that bombed horrendously, from the ill-fated and embarrassing Mother's Day Race to the annually profitable Secret Santa Sale.

Dave Sherman of Athens Hobby Center later entertained and informed dealers with *Moving Your Store to a Mall*. Having moved from a strip mall to an enclosed mall, Dave had all sorts of good points. For example, in an enclosed mall, the main floor is a better location than the second. It is best to be close to the center, and nearer to entrances second best — and be prepared to broaden your product mix.

Don Hendrick was on deck once again on Friday for the closing seminar, *Business math for Retailers*. **HM**



HMA executive director, Pat Koziol, at the HMA meeting.



HMA's first president, Bob Staat (McHenry Couplers).



Janet Ottmers (Horizon Hobby) at the HMA meeting.



NRHSA president Don Hendrick mediated several NRHSA seminars, including this Li-Poly discussion with Neal Cloud and Jason Merkel.



Bob Jacobsen's "Coping with a Changing Industry" was an informative seminar.