

# Helicopters 'n Toledo 97

Dave Bone



*journeyed to the Toledo Expo this year, and sent W3MH this report...*

The ground floor of The SeaGate Centre, in down town Toledo, housed 372 booths filled with manufacturers and vendors representing every segment of remote control. The second floor meeting rooms and hallways were lined with swap shop vendors. If you can't find the item or information you're looking for in Toledo, it probably doesn't exist!



*Century Helicopter Products had a real nice display, to include their line of Funky Fuselages. I'm a full-fuselage fan, having just completed the Erucrel as355F1 from the Funky line.*

*JR was really pushing their Ergo line at the Expo, using Curtis Youngblood and their other pilots to greet the fair goers. I have to wonder how long JR's plan to enter the helicopter market was in place before word got out. Seems they developed a good market strategy, and product line, as they hit the deck at a full run.*





Another manufacturer that has become a household word in America is Bergen Machine. Hmm, that used to read Bergen Machine and Tool back when they were simply making upgrades and accessories for other machines. Their Intrepid has become quite popular, due in large part to Gary Wright's amazing night flying abilities, I suspect.

I must say, the Expo has changed a bit over the past few years. You have never been able to make a purchase at the Futaba, JR, or Tower Hobbies booth, but they could usually direct you to a dealer on the floor that had what you were looking for. I find this is rarely the case today. Still, it offers one the opportunity to consult the factory reps, and pilots, returning home to place your order by phone. Factory pilots? Oh yes, they all come to Toledo!

Ted Schoonard himself manned the Miniature Aircraft booth, which I think pleased a lot of X-Cell fans. What can I say about X-Cell's, time tested and proven as one of the most popular 60 size machines ever.





*Yellow Aircraft's booth found chopper fuselages in short supply. Other than a few pre-finished Jet Rangers there wasn't much to see. The last time I finished one of their products (an MD500E) I spent a lot of time repairing and filling pin holes. I have not made a purchase from them since.*



*Great Plains always has one of the largest displays at Toledo and this year was no exception. They were proudly displaying the "next generation" Nexus line with their four stroke version and the 40 size conversion that is now available.*

*MRC / Hirobo never disappoints the fairgoer. Their helicopter display is one of the most extensive year after year. The Shuttle is a legend but at the Expo they were spotlighting the new GPH 46.*



*Rave's R/C Designs, Inc. of Orlando Florida has become one of the leading canopy suppliers in America. They do great work but don't be surprised if your order takes a couple of weeks. (Ed: Takes time for the paint to dry?)*



*Jerry Hicks (and son, shown here) of Scale House Helicopters & Aviation Effects has gained notoriety and success with his very scale Bell 212 and 412. They also offer a complete line of 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 bladed rotor heads that are said to fly well.*

*SHHAE hosted a scale flying event for the first time in 1996. If you are into scale choppers and want to see some of the best America has to offer, northern Indiana is the place to be this summer.*



Helicopters are never in short supply at Toledo. That's one of the things that attracts me year after year. The International Remote Control Helicopter Association (IRCHA) has a strong foot hold at this Expo. Their booth is located right in the middle of things and on Saturday night they conduct a "Hovering Event" for members and friends.

*Becky Robb, wife of IRCHA vice president Jeff Robb, greets visitors at the International Remote Control Helicopter Association's booth.*



*On the left is Don Chapman, founder of IRCHA and designer of the DC60 helicopter engine. Now, I flew choppers for several months before mastering the art of tuning glow engines, and I now owe Don for passing his wisdom on to me. This guy knows engines!*

*On the right is full scale pilot, R/C pilot, and publisher of the very popular MHT (Model Helicopter Technique). Ray Hostetler is one of those people you would like to connect with wires and run a file transfer program.*

The highlight of my weekend was a symposium conducted by Curtis Youngblood. Among other things, he discussed orientation at length which I suppose we all have a problem with to some degree. My "degree" is three digits! Curtis explained how he orients one part of the helicopter to another. For example, right stick back . . . nose goes towards the blades, and so on. I think his input will pay off for me this summer.



The helicopter static display at Toledo was impressive in variety but disappointing in numbers. There was the very cool entry from Dan Horan of Sterling Heights, Michigan. Smokin' Joe is a Concept 60 in an Inceptor fuselage.

The scale machines were all very nice, including a Hughes 500E from Kraem Mills of Orlando Florida, Bell 222 from Eldon Williams also of Orlando, Vario Jet Ranger III displayed by James Robertson Jr. of Sevierville Tennessee, and a Bell Long Ranger belonging to a pilot whose name I have misplaced. My apologies to this gentleman.

Absent from the Expo, to my disappointment, was Vario Helicopter America. Rodrigo Belmonte of Spain has been busy establishing Plus Ultra LLC in Atlanta, Georgia and recruiting TSR's (Technical Sales Representatives). Off to a slow start I suspect, due in part to contracts that offer a TSR pretty much nothing but expense. I have one stuck around here somewhere that I could not accept, however at this point in time Plus Ultra LLC does have 15 TSR's located in 9 different states. I wish these pilots the very best of luck, and must say they are flying the finest production scale helicopters on the market.





*David Hayes Bone is past president of The Morgan Aeronautical Remote Kontrol Society (MARKS), a small club in rural southeastern Ohio. David is currently a member of The Ohio Radio Kontrol Society (TORKS) and writes the Rotor Wash column for their monthly news letter. Having recently accepted the position of Event Publicity Director for The R/C Aviation Country Club he will be doing news releases and event summaries for upcoming events. Oh yes, Dave also works for Honda of America Manufacturing in his spare time.*

The 43rd Toledo Expo concluded with award presentations and raffle at 3:00 PM on Sunday, April 6, 1997. This is the show of shows in mid-west America, and as always the Weak Signals R/C Club didn't disappoint exhibitors or visitors.

Many thanks to

Dave Bone

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