



The AMA History Project Presents: Biography of DONALD (DON) SHULMAN



Written by JM (05/1974); Transcribed & Formatted by JS (06/2010)

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Profile of a Life Member Don Shulman

What's it like to be the son of a famous celebrated modeler? Ask Don Shulman. He's the son of Leon Shulman, one of the all time legendary free fliers to come sailing out of the Thirties, and a leader of modeling for almost 40 years.

“For one thing, you start early,” confides Don. “My father had me flying before I could walk. He held me in his arms so I would be a little taller and farther off the ground. He was a very experienced flyer and taught me all the basics.”

Those basics must have been correct. Don learned his lessons well. At age 2½, he waddled off the field of model combat with a Youngest Flyer award. Now 27, he has garnered more than 120 trophies, the end is nowhere in sight. At the recent Bristol, Connecticut M.U.M Classics, in addition to his usual hardware won in Combat and Balloon Bust, Don received probably the highest and most cherished honor to date- a plaque for Sportsman of the Year 1973.

Combat Director and Honorary Member of the Berkley Heights, New Jersey Blade Busters, Don also belongs to the Union, New Jersey Model Airplane Club. A graduate of the University of Oklahoma, he is today in partnership with his father. Together as Leon Shulman and Associates, they represent model, toy, and craft manufacturers in their respective fields.

Is modeling Don's number one hobby? Oh, come on now.. Do you see anything scrunched firmly in between Don, the Sportsman plaque, and the big plane? Look right in the middle. A girl maybe? See her? That beautiful thing is Don's wife. Married three years. She is his number one hobby. Model planes are number two. Betty is a Finnish –Swede, his mechanic and helper at contests, his advisor, and his #1 interest in life. Her lucky number is 13, coincidentally, and [she] wouldn't let Don subscribe to an AMA Life Membership unless they would issue him #13. The Shulman's were expecting their first Junior modeler in March 1974.

Will the third generation baby Shulman take any interest at all in model airplanes? I'll give you 13 to 1 he'll be flying them before he can walk...

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