



August 2015



Official Newsletter
Billings Flying Mustangs
Volume 41 Issue 3

Ryan Zahn Extraordinaire



Ryan Zahn flying his Align Trex 600 pro.

by Larry Todd & Dave Brown

We were astounded the first time we met Ryan Zahn. He flies RC aircraft with his feet and toes!

You see, Ryan was born in 1989 with no left arm and his right arm ends well above the elbow with two fingers that are somewhat functional. He says, "there is no known cause or official name" for his condition. However, he never let it slow him down and has learned to do with his feet and toes everything a normal person does with their hands and fingers. He is simply amazing.

Ryan lives independently and self-sufficient. He drives, flies, and rides dirt bikes. He was born in Salt Lake City and relocated to Billings in 1994 with his family. Around 2004, in middle school and through high school, he raced carpet cars through the local club at the Shrine Auditorium. He got hooked with radio controlled vehicles.

In 2006, Ryan said he had some "down time". He was driving a street licensed four wheeler when a truck ran a stop sign and broadsided him. Fractures occurred in both femurs of his



Flying with skill.

legs. His hip was also fractured and his only arm was fractured too. He spent a month in the hospital and an additional 90 days in a wheel chair.

The day he was released from the hospital, he went to the local helicopter shop. His Father rolled him into the store and he bought a Blade CP collective pitch helicopter. It was Blade's first collective pitch bird.

While wheelchair bound, he learned to hover the helicopter in his kitchen/living room, which is about a 10x10 foot space. Ryan says he went through two sets of blades learning to hover, but he mastered that sufficiently while in the wheelchair. That began his flying

experience.

When he first started walking and out of the wheelchair, he went back to the helicopter shop and purchased an electric Align Trex 600 pro flybar kit.

He and his Father assembled the 600 pro in one day and took it back to the store to get it checked out and set up. Bars and blades were adjusted and aligned. It was hovered at the store to assure it was working properly.

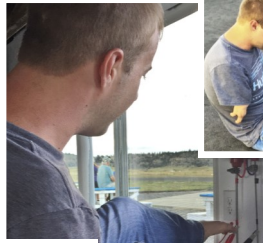
Ryan says that "The maiden flight was hovering it in my living room that same day". He flew the 600 pro for a couple of years, then worked and started college. After his first year of college he bought a park zone P-51 Mustang at Abell Hobby a local store. He joined the Billings Flying Mustangs in 2012.

Currently, his "hanger" includes his Trex 600 pro, E-Flite Mini Ultra Stick, E-Flite Apprentice s (for training), Mugi Coroplast

Delta Wing, Stevens Aero Adrenaline Rush Mini Pylon, QAV 250 FPV Quadcopter and ElectriFly Evader EDF EP Sport Jet. Recently, with the EDF the battery became unsecured and caused a crash. He says the helicopter is the most challenging to fly and the most adrenaline rush is the EDF. However, for pure fun, he flies the Ultra Stick.



Batteries are no problem for Ryan.



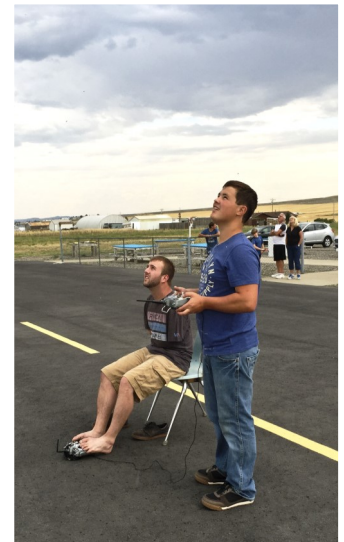
calm them down and get their confidence, he takes the plane up first and demonstrates his flying skills. Once they see his abilities, even though it is with his feet and toes, they are ready to train.

Asked what gives him satisfaction in training Ryan says "Seeing people enjoy the hobby and them realizing that it is not easy and takes

time to learn."

This coming year he will finish his degree at Montana State University in Mechanical Engineering. His

dream is to work in the motor sport industry, namely Formula One racers. I would not be surprised to see him there one day.



Training.

Board Highlights

The next meeting is changed to **Tuesday, September 8, 2015**. The August meeting addressed 2 topics of importance.

Safety. A safety committee was appointed to consider club safety procedures that are necessary without overburdening members.

Everyone wants to assure this hobby remains fun. The fun ceases when accidents happen and people are harmed. Fun also gets stifled when too many rules are required.

Finding that balance is important to preserve the Club's credibility. Implementing that

balance requires Member commitment.

The Committee will work with Carl Thuesen, Club Safety Officer. The members are: Dave Brown (lead), Don Jones, Scott Smith and Steve Amen. They will consider such things as the AMA Safety Code, Safety Seminar, Procedures at the field, Solo flight, Newsletter, and other materials. The Committee will submit a proposal for the Board's consideration at the **September 8th** meeting.

It is important that Members (beginners and advanced) give their ideas, concerns and comments to the safety committee. You send them to: bfmustangs@outlook.com.

Car Track. The second item is the car track. The problem is the low interest and high maintenance. It has taken many hours of volunteer labor as well as costs to maintain it at its current level. Still it gets overrun with weeds and has become unusable.

No one wants to unnecessarily remove the track, but it is concerning.

Over the next 2 months the Directors will draw on the Membership to gauge the interest

in the track and its maintenance. If enough interest is apparent & maintenance can be realized, then determine the maintenance level and cost to keep the track. If interest and maintenance cannot be sustained, then they will determine removal and restoration measures.

A decision to keep or remove the car track will be made at the **October 6th** meeting.

Members, if you have interest and or comments, please send them to:

bfmustangs@outlook.com.

Other Topics.

Membership. The club now stands at 70 members.

PayPal. The online dues payment through PayPal is now functional on the web site under "Membership". No membership to PayPal is required. This functions just as any online purchase does. However, we will continue to take cash or checks.

WEB comments: The comment section of the web site will be discontinued. To contact the Club, use bfmustangs@outlook.com.

Float-Fly

By Scott Smith

Saturday, July 25th saw the Billings Flying Mustangs hold their third of four scheduled float fly events for the 2015 flying season. This time out on the water we saw ten registered

pilots take part in activities. Randy B., Dave B., Scott C., Shane E., Steve G., George G., Dick and Dwight H., and Scott S. were all in attendance on this beautiful day. Flying conditions

couldn't have been better, sunny but not too hot and the lightest of breezes off the water. We also had a couple boats in attendance, Rick K and Zane brought their new swamp/air boats out for a run and Dick Holmes had his gorgeous cabin cruiser out. This model was originally built from the old Sterling kit fifty years ago now! It has been re-fitted with different power systems a couple times now, it isn't fast by any means but it looks very real on the water. This time out we didn't have a

"plan" in place for the boats, next time we'll make sure that any boats in attendance know to stay clear of the take-off/landing area of the pond while flight operations are in progress.

Thanks all for participating!! Our next (and last scheduled!) event will be Saturday, August 29th. Join for breakfast at 7 am at the McDonalds in Laurel, We begin at 8 am at South Pond/Lions Park for flying!! Be there or be rectilinear!!

Altitude Limited Electric Soaring

by Scott Smith
Columbus Montana
August 9, 2015

The BFM ALES (Altitude Limited Electric Soaring) August event was postponed a day from its usual second Saturday of the month slot in hopes of a better weather forecast. As it turns out, the weather was beautiful. Early morning fog and a dewy field, remnants of the previous days rain showers, greeted soarers but the sun broke through and the field dried before we really got started with the event.

Eleven glider-guiders were in attendance including five pilots from Helena. The state capitol contingent included the newly crowned National Champion, young John Garber. As it turned out the three medals for first through third places made the trip to Helena. It's not too

surprising that this happened when you figure not only did their ranks include a National Champion but also the two folks who have trained that champion! Great flying guys!!



If you haven't attended one of these events you owe it to yourself to explore this facet of our RC hobby. It can be comparatively simple

and inexpensive to participate, and like many areas of RC one can develop acceptable competence easily enough but true mastery takes a LOT of practice!

Our next event is scheduled for Saturday, September 12th. The site is easy to find...just take the Columbus exit from I-90 and drive south until the road makes a "T" with the old highway. Turn right and proceed slowly through town before you pick up speed and drive 3-ish miles from town. You will rise

tracks, through a couple gates and around to our flying area. We usually have a flag and



some EZ-Up shelters erected on the field by 8 or 8:30 am so we aren't hard to find. We also usually meet at 7 am for breakfast at either the McDonalds just off the interstate or at the Apple Valley Café on the other side of the road a couple hundred yards south of the Mickey D's.

See you there!

somewhat sharply and the highway bends abruptly to the right at the top (overlooking the Yellowstone River) before descending about as quickly. When you get to the bottom you'll take a hard left (nearly 180 degrees) off the freeway and follow the unpaved drive as it makes its way across the railroad



Paradise Valley Fly-In

By Scott Smith

August 7-9, 2015

The folks flying at Paradise Valley have been hosting a fly-in once or twice a year for a while now. This event and location have

singing the praises of this event after each one to the point where now it seems like there's a solid core of eight or so BFM members who

consider events there "must go" happenings.

I found that I had a "free" day on Friday, August 7 and with these thoughts in mind I decided to go have a look for myself. The site is almost exactly two traveling hours from Billings, located about 15 miles south of Livingston. I brought an airplane and a glider but really only

become the most poorly-kept secret in northwest RC for a while now and attendance at this event has

planned to watch and get a feel for how things progress. Firstly, this was the most laid back

continued to increase over time. This growth is pretty much strictly word-of-mouth from excited flyers who have experienced this one-of-a-kind flying venue. For me, over the last couple years, it seemed like there were two more people in our club



event I've ever experienced. It was more like a bunch of like-minded RC enthusiasts showed up for flying. There was a sign-in, to be sure, and there were snacks and beverages available

for very modest prices. A pot luck was held Friday evening that seemed VERY well-received.

And the facility...WOW!! The flying field is carefully cut grass so you're flying off a "soft" surface. I'd never flown off grass before, but it looked pretty straightforward. And I'm quite certain the surrounding scenery is



second to none anywhere in the known world. How pilots keep their attention focused on their planes when the backdrop is so jaw-droppingly beautiful is a mystery to me.

BFM was strongly represented by a solid contingent of flyers. Randy B., Dave B., Steve G., Lee G., Don J., Chris L., Pat K., and Larry T. were all flying and flying and flying while I watched.

Anyhow, when you hear the guys talking about "Paradise" don't just dismiss their ravings as "hype" ...pay attention, learn the dates, and plan on making the trip. You can bet I will!

