

The Simpson Family Combat Heritage

by Neil Simpson

The photo below is from 1950 . . . fourteen year old Glenn Simpson on contest day processing what I believe is a Veco Brave.



Perhaps the story really starts with our dad, Wiley Simpson, who had a keen interest in aviation. He and a very close friend of his, a gentleman named Glenn Carter, learned to fly on Waco biplanes in the 1930s. When my parents first son was born, in 1936, they named him Glenn Carter Simpson after my Dad's close friend. When World War II broke out my Dad, already an accomplished pilot, was thirty eight years old, however, that didn't stop him from enlisting in the Army Air Force nor did his age prevent the Air Force from accepting him. My brother Glenn is ten years older than me. When World War II was over and my Dad returned home He and Glenn got involved in control line. It wasn't long before they were entering contests with Glenn flying speed (several classes) and stunt. When guys started tying streamers on their stunt airplanes, around 1950, Glenn started flying combat as well. In 1951 he began using an airplane called the "Little Stinker" to fly stunt and the same airplane, without landing gear, to fly combat. As is typical, the design evolved over time. Glenn tried several different wings, however the majority were built with the airfoil and some of the geometry from Red Reinhardt's "International Stunt Winner". As a Junior, Glenn won three trips to the Plymouth Internationals in Detroit (1949, 1951 and 1952). He went on a bit of a hiatus from control line flying after that, I believe girls and automobiles captured his attention, however, somewhere in the middle fifties his interest was rekindled and during this time frame he taught me to fly using one his "Little Stinkers". I must have showed a little promise as a day or two later he gave me a "Mini-Zilch" he had built. It was powered by a Torpedo .035. That summer I literally put hundreds of flights on that little airplane. It wasn't long after that we started going to contests together. Glenn would fly Stunt, Carrier, Combat and sometimes Scale. I would fly Junior Combat. I guess it goes without saying, we were very busy at those contests. Glenn is an all-around modeler capable of winning any of the events he enters, however, he was probably most proficient in Navy Carrier with many wins here in the Northeast. At the 1988 Nats he received the award for the outstanding Navy Carrier Pilot winning and placing high in several of the Carrier classes. Today at seventy nine years young he still flies his radio control ships several times a week during the warm weather months.



AREA BOYS COMPETING IN DETROIT

Model plane builders from the Worcester area who are competing in the Plymouth Motor Corp. fifth international model plane contest in Detroit. From left, William Cole, 12, of 12 Apollo road, Worcester; Warren

Nelson, 22, of 598 Main street, Worcester, mechanic for the group; Glenn Simpson, 15, of 41 Nelson place, Worcester, and Robert Bosma, 20, of 56 Fletcher avenue, Whitinsville. The contest lasts through today.

Newspaper article regarding the 1951 Plymouth Internats
 Plymouth Motor Company sponsored this event every year 1947 though 1953
 The local dealers sponsored the qualifying events
 As a Junior Glenn won trips to Detroit to represent the local Plymouth dealers in 1949, 1951 and 1952



One of Glenn's "Little Stinkersö" set-up for Combat (circa 1951)



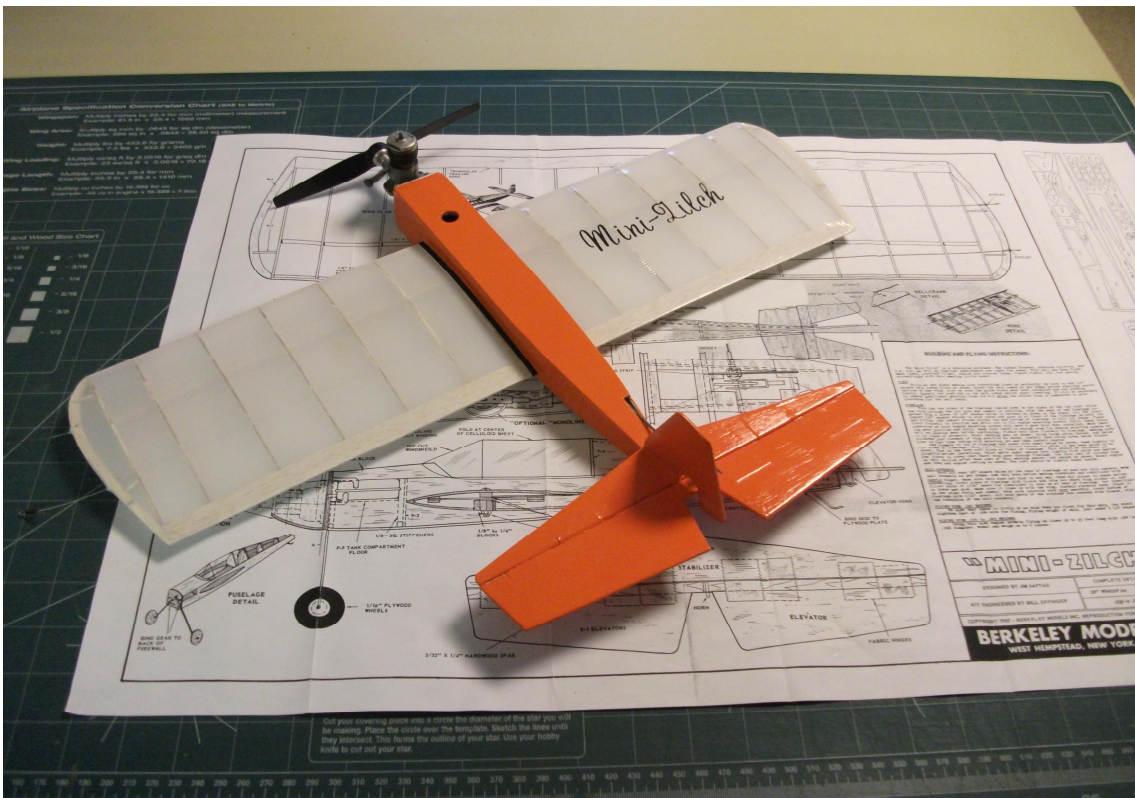
Circa 1951 . . . Fifteen year old Glenn Simpson with yet another "Little Stinker" this one set-up for stunt notice the butter-fly stab . . . the little guy in the foreground . . . five year old Neil Simpson



Glenn (early 1960s) with his Nobler stunter



I believe this is the summer of 1957 . . . This is the Mini Zilch my brother Glenn gave me
Loved that airplane . . . By the way, the t-shirt is from the Plymouth Internats, another gift from my big
brother.



When Sig Mfg was selling a re-pro kit of the Mini-Zilch at the 2012 Nats I had to have one
Set-up for Combat !!! No landing gear



Glenn . . . Dover, NH . . . August 1964 . . . High Point Award Winner
1st Navy Carrier 60 class . . . 2nd Combat . . . 2nd Scale



By the early sixties Glenn's "Little Stinker" (combat version) had evolved to a shoulder wing design, no split elevators, square tips but essentially the same trusted design.

As for me, in 1989, after a twenty year absence from control line, a time when my interest had switched to stock car racing, I became re-involved, first in control line teaching my youngest son Jeremy to fly and a month or two later flying Combat for the first time in over twenty years. Speed Limit Combat, in New England, was just coming into its' own. Contests were being run in Connecticut by Steve Saco and in Massachusetts by the Wingbuster's Model Airplane Club whose membership included Joe Fustolo, Paul Kubek and Marty Fugate. In Connecticut the regulars included Steve, Will Rogers, Gerry Pompeii and Len Minick. A contest or two later Glenn came along to help me and by season end he was flying as well. By the next year, 1990, my son Jeremy was ready to fly some combat. He was fifteen years old. 1990 was a very good year for the Simpsons. There were eight regular season Formula GX contests. I managed to win three times, Jeremy won twice and Glenn once. Not bad, as the competition was quite formidable. In 1992 I was lucky enough to win speed limit combat at the 1992 Nats in Chicopee, MA. I didn't get back to the Nats until a three year stretch 2003, 2004 and 2005. In 2005 I got lucky again winning both Speed Limit and F2D Fast. Business commitments kept me away until 2012 when I managed to win Speed Limit for a third time. I also, based more on flying in a lot of contests and being somewhat consistent, as opposed to actually being the best, managed to win the MACA #1 pilot award six times (2004, 2006, 2007, 2012, 2013 and 2014).



Jeremy with one of the original
Brat powered Coyote GX 1990

Fifteen year old Jeremy Simpson with a Brat 28 powered Coyote GX (1990)
Jeremy flew for only two seasons (1990-1991)
He flew in 16 regular season Formula GX meets winning three times flying against much
more experienced pilots several of whom were national level flyers.



My First Natø Win
1992 Nats - Chicopee, MA - 1st Place Speed Limit



Stock Car Racing Days
1981 Thompson Speedway Thompson, CT



Just a few years back I built this "Little Stinker".
My big brother taught me how to fly control line using this design.
I had to have one in my classic combat collection.



Glenn and I at a 2008 Formula GX contest - Franklin, NH