



**Model factory and Hobbyshop trip 2003**

By Jo Grini, Photos/graphics and Espen Torp, text.

This trip was scheduled to last exactly one week and approx. 4000km. That means just about 60 hours in the car. Most stops were pre planned and some stops were decided under way. We used e-mail and telephone to organize stops and visits and here are some of the planned stops: Rotordiscen, (DK) Jiri Tuma, (CZ) Lomcovak, (CZ) Samba, (CZ) Sramek, (CZ) Let Model, (CZ) Janek, (SK) Maslo, (SK) Mrva, (SK) Jaro Muller, (SK) Carbon-Vertrieb, (D) Höllein, (D) RC-Funflyer (D). The story will tell if we managed all this or not. Read on and discover a small world of RC manufactures, hobbyshops and interesting people!

Friday: As both of lives in Norway and in separate places, our mutual journey began in Kristiansand (N). The boat trip (4,5 hours) to Hirtshals (DK) is quite boring but we have no choice since we are virtually living on an Island. Our first planned stop was Benthe and Kai Nielsen at Rotordiscen (DK). They have a shop in a beautiful countryside house where they both work and live now. Kai, is a retired army helicopter pilot, which now is totally dedicated to develop his own helicopter. In 2004 this very nice and special chopper called, the Scorpion will be put into production. Benthe is

responsible for the shop "Rotordiscen" and runs this nearly as a full time job. Her market is mainly the Nordic countries and is concentrated on helicopters, parts and radio equipment.

Thanks to their very nice hospitality and interesting discussions we were suddenly 4 hours behind our schedule!

JoJo has a diary on the internet and many people reads about what he is doing and



*Benthe with Kai's Scorpion.*

just prior to this trip Victor Drzeniek from Kiel (D) wanted to meet us on the Autobahn outside Kiel to show us some F5B models made by friends of him in Poland. As a dealer I am always looking for new products and Viktor could tell us about other interesting products besides the F5B model. One of these products caught my attention since it was a F3F model. The model not known by any

name yet was a 310cm, RG15 wing made especially for F3F and slope flying. It could turn out to be an interesting choice by F3F pilots. By the time we were finished we decided to find a hotel south of Hamburg (D), since we were now 5-6 hours behind schedule the clock told us that it was time to go to sleep (01.00)

Saturday: Next day we headed towards Dresden (D) and the Czech Republic. First stop was JiTom (Jiri Tuma, CZ) the producer of X21 and Xantipa. Jiri showed us the new X-tail for the X21 and I must admit it looked very nice. He also told us that he wanted to start making a new F3J model since the Xantipa was now getting a bit outdated compared with some of the newer models currently used in F3J.

Already 18.30 we had to move towards Prague and our planned meeting with Mr. Lomcovak, Roman Vojtech. Though Roman has not been around the F3B and F3F scene for more than 3 years he seems to have made quite a bit of an impact to this community. Mostly thanks to his excellent web page [www.lomcovak.cz](http://www.lomcovak.cz) and more recently development and sales of the LoLo/Alti2 altitude measurement devices. Roman showed us new products like a 10A charger/discharger and a speed sensor, both very interesting indeed. He and his friends were also working on a new variometer. The evening was spent in an Italian restaurant where JoJo and Roman was discussing rather strongly



**Enduser - the latest gadget's**

stuff that did not really interest me. (aerodynamics)

Sunday: Sunday morning after breakfast we headed directly to Samba (CZ) 2,5 hours southeast of Prague. The Samba Company is run by two brothers their sister and also their father. Together they form a very good team to meet the demands of the market. They are also quite lucky to have a stable workforce. JoJo is as many know a happy Samba customer/dealer and the day was spent discussing new solutions and different F3J techniques. It must also be mentioned that Samba is a firm that really listen to their customers, a habit that I think is very important in this business.

Jo has recently made tests with an electro version of Pike Superior and Samba has followed up this with preparing a new electro fuselage that will fit their bigger models (Superior and Brio). This will be



Over: Norwegians like food and Samba model (producer of Pike models) knows were to get it.

Left: Roman has some hope of the new Viking. Interesting model.



ready early 2004. In the evening Samba invited us out for dinner and the F3J discussion did not end until late that night.

For readers that are not aware of the situation in the former Czechoslovakia there are many maybe hundreds of small producers of different model items. They make all kinds of stuff from electric motors, speed controllers, radio gear and planes just to mention a few. There are also some bigger companies but most of them are small from 2-3 to 10 people. In

# Viking Profile

## AH-copy



the end of the eighties there were just a handful of them. After the fall of communism all the former knowledge and craftsmanship came back into the open again and more and more companies are being formed. There is no doubt in my mind that these people are very skilful and that they will adapt to European economy fast.

Monday: Monday morning we packed the car and hit the road towards the next

producer. Halfway to Kostelec nad Orlicy we stopped for a quick visit at VV-Model in a small town called Sloupnice. They are probably more know for making the Sting, New Sting and Big Sting. Vaclav, who runs the business also showed us the molds of the new Viking F3F model. Vaclav proudly told us that they have more than 40 orders of this super interesting model. Our main visit of the day was at Pavel Sramek in Kostelec. Pavel is the proud maker of the Opus that currently holds the World record in DS speed with 373 km/h! Well this time I had some molds with me of a F3F model called Taifun Super Sport.

The plan was to ask Pavel to produce a couple of the TSS for testing. If testing goes well we will put the model into production with one F3F version and one DS version with a smaller wingspan.



# Production - a touch of perfecti

Also we got to see Pavel's new workshop, which

was his parents old house built into a small model factory.

Our plan was to go and visit Let Model but for the first time we had to cancel a visit due to lack of time. I called Let

Model and told that we could not make it and at the same time promised to visit them next year.

At the Czech/Slovak border the Slovak

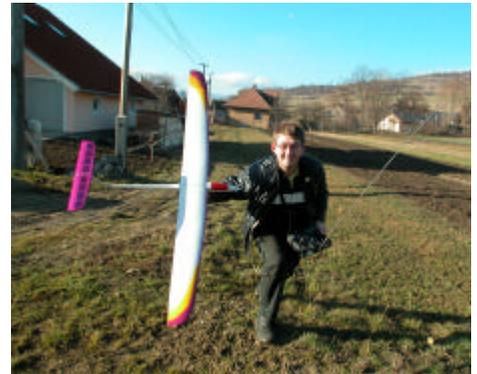


*The new RaceM positive mould. Jo feels the trailing edge.*

Customs stopped us and we had to open the boot and they were pretty curious about our models and so but when I told them that we were on a trip around Europe they understood and let us go right away. Finally entering Slovakia we drove to Ruzomberok to meet Marian Maslo (Majo Models). It seems like

wherever we go we are met with generous hospitality and coming to Slovakia was no exception! Marian is a hard working model builder and designer mostly known for his Acacia range of F3F planes. Next year he will present two new designs. Acacia 2, 3meter will come with a new brand new fuselage for V-tail. From before the Acacia 2, 3meter comes

*Majko flown by Karol Mrva and Jo Grini*



with a very nice X-tail. Also in preparation a 2,2meter electro model which I believe has no name yet. Very interesting indeed and knowing Marian there is no need to worry about the quality. I have also a project with Marian to produce RaceM wings from moulds my partner and me bought from the Swedes. This plane are now put into production and is a joint venture with Marian /Milan Janek and myself. Milan Janek will produce the fuselage and V-tail. Next year a bigger version (315cm) of this for F3B/J will be ready for the market. Later Marian took us to Karol Mrva who is a small producer (Majko electro model).



ion **Development** - a new model

He and his wife also run a small apartment facility. This was very nice for us and also pretty cheap, but with high standard. Karol informed us that he has a model flying school where students can live in the apartment and learn RC flying in the daytime. Tuesday: Next morning I got out my heliphoto equipment and took some shots of Karol's house so he had some photos to use on his website. Jojo finally got to fly my Majko and we were all a happy gang! Later we went to a scheduled meeting with Milan Janek (Wizard Compact, SVK). I have done business with Milan for some years now and we had to discuss further developments. The first new thing is a X-

tail for Wizard Compact. Next up is a standard Vtail for RaceM. Then there will be some changes in the choice of colours. We were pretty busy this day because we had to leave to meet Jaro Muller in Piestany (SVK). I guess Jaro needs no special introduction apart from mentioning the Ellipse family and later Escape, Esperit and Elita. Jaro informed us about the new Elita BJ (BJ stands for F3B and F3J), this model will be ready for next year and also probably flown in the 2004 World Championship F3J in Canada.

Often when I have been visiting Jaro in Piestany, dinner at the Tosca restaurant is included and this time was no exception. JoJo and Jaro were getting along quite well and F3J discussion started again.

Wednesday

Again I brought out my helicopter and took some airshots of Jaro's house without his knowing since he had left early this day. It was pretty windy but all went well and Jaro now has a nice shot of his house as wallpaper on his computer.

Back in the car we drove to Bratislava and stopped for lunch and were joined by fellow F3F pilots Brano Legersky and Rudolf Masny (Viking Race F3F organizers from 2002). When we found out from our friends that they could get us in touch with the maker of the Factor helicopter blades. Our schedule suddenly changed again and we headed the opposite direction to get hold of some of these very special blades. They are made in fully carbon and have wave technology, the benefits are many and they might be a must for 3D helicopter pilots in the future.

After yet another lunch (!) we drove towards Germany via Austria. No time to stop and meet friends in Austria this time. Our visit to Carbon Vertrieb also seemed to be a problem because we had to choose between C-V and Hollein and since JoJo had some business with Hollein. We managed to drive to Regensburg and had a good startpoint for the next day.

Thursday morning started with getting some updates from the Internet and e-mail, being away from Internet is getting to be a problem these days. We phoned Hollein and asked them if we could come for a visit and thankfully they said it was

OK. Normally they are closed until 15.30 on a Thursday. And we did not even tell them that we planned to make this report for FMT. Stefan Hollein greeted us and all the staff helped us with whatever we asked them. I managed to lure them all out to be in my airphoto. I think they liked what they saw and I gave them the pictures. Hollein has grown to be a very nice shop/store and their showroom is pretty impressive, one of the better I have seen in fact. Of course they are situated more or less in the countryside near Coburg and their business is based on post order. But that showroom/shop is absolutely worth while a visit. Next stop was a meeting with a customer who wanted a Wizard Compact. He lived in Fulda and promised to fly it at the famous Wasserkuppe. As you can see of the

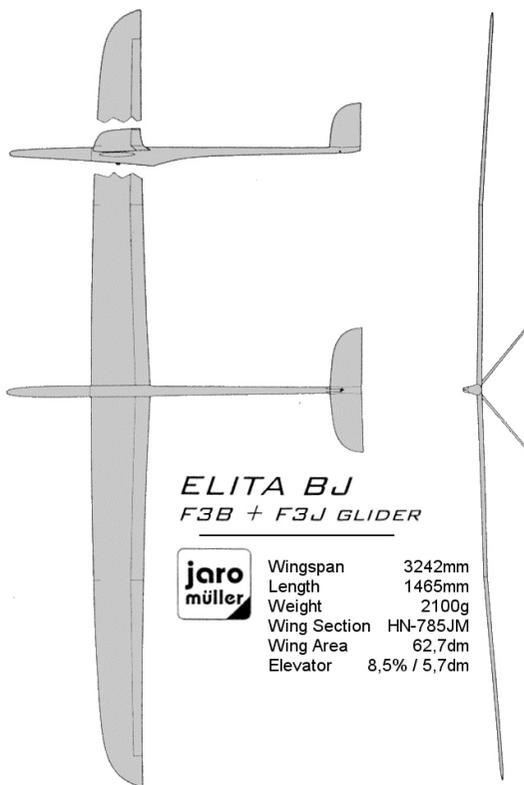


some of the pictures I do helicopter airphotos and the chopper I used is made in Kassel by Minicopter. So of course when I had the chance we had to make a stop to get some parts. Gerd Guzicki is the owner of the Minicopter Company and they have just released the new glow helicopter based on the electric Joker.

Now running extra late for our meeting with friends in Hildesheim we rushed out the door and drove to Hildesheim and met up with Detlef and Artur. Artur also wanted a WC and had waited a long time to get it and I must say it was a pleasure to give it to him, as he clearly was very happy. He wanted the Compact for DS purposes. I wish him good luck!

Next morning Detlef Hilgendorf took us out to the new storage of Ebalta Kunststoff GmbH in Hildesheim. Since Detlef is a true model builder/pilot he promised us

**Fact box:**  
Jaro Muller started to build moulded models back in 1986. He was one of the first in doing so in the former Czechoslovakia. Jaro got some help from Ralf Decker (D) to make his first model, which was the Avant Butterfly. This model was based on Ralf's No Name. Later he made the Ellipse 1 and together with Euromodel (D) they created a big success in this market and they have sold thousands of models.



that he would like to offer the Ebalta range of products to all modellers. Our journey towards Denmark began and the



weather was still fine. We drove all the way up to Odder (DK) to meet John Rasmussen. John used to be a F3B pilot but has after this season decided to move towards big gliders. I am sure he will like the laid back style of the big glider community; I might pick it up myself when I get older. Then there were only one leg left before getting on the boat to Norway, but first another meeting with Benthe and Kai from Rotordisc'en. We had to return some parts we brought with us to show producers for future production. Then finally we got to Hirsthals and of course there was a storm in Skagerak.... Well we made it to Kristiansand (N) fine but very little sleep because the stormy weather.

JoJo took his car and went of to fly some DS near Oslo and I took my car and went for a Heliphoto mission, who included another 1500 km drive, Norway is a long country! Being alone in the car I had



plenty of time to think about our trip and also the reason for doing it. No doubt that this had been one of the better trips for a long time thanks to JoJo and the meeting of many friends and interesting people, which in the future also will become friends. I am proud of my relations with the Czech and Slovak producers and I

hope that my many trips to visit their facilities contribute to have good relations with them in the future. The craftsmanship and their pride in their work are of a very high standard. I hope they will succeed when they in 2004 becomes members of the European Community.

**Fact box:**  
 Rotordiscen, (DK) - [www.rotordisc.dk](http://www.rotordisc.dk)  
 Roman Vojtech (CZ) - [www.lomcovak.cz](http://www.lomcovak.cz)  
 Samba model (CZ) - [www.F3J.com](http://www.F3J.com) or [www.modely.cz/samba](http://www.modely.cz/samba)  
 Espen Torp models (N) - [www.ET-AIR.com](http://www.ET-AIR.com)  
 Espen Torp heliphoto (N) - [www.birdy.no](http://www.birdy.no)  
 Jojo's diary (N) - <http://jgrini.home.online.no>  
 Karol Mrva, Majko / appartment (SK) - [www.kmrva.szm.sk](http://www.kmrva.szm.sk)  
 Jaro Muller, Ellipse/Elita (SK) - [www.profi.sk/jaro\\_muller](http://www.profi.sk/jaro_muller)  
 Carbon-Vertrieb, Carbon/Kevlar (D) - [www.carbon-vertrieb.de](http://www.carbon-vertrieb.de)  
 Hollein, Retailer (D) - [www.hoellein.com](http://www.hoellein.com)  
 Ebalta, Epoxy (D) - [www.ebalta.de](http://www.ebalta.de)  
 Detlef Hilgendorf (D) - [www.rc-funfly.de](http://www.rc-funfly.de)  
 Minicopter, Joker / Acrobat (D) - [www.minicopter.de](http://www.minicopter.de)



*The house of Karol Mrva that produces the Majko*



*Hollein in Germany - Impressive hobby shop*