

ANDY MORA

A bright engineer, Andy left his homeland in Central Europe to establish his family in Montreal. He helped to put together a group of enthusiastic flyers of model gliders who, in 1975 founded the “Montreal Area Thermal Soarers” (MATS) Club.

The club chose Andy to be its main instructor due to his knowledge of aerodynamics and use of selected materials, his experience in designing and building his own models and most important of all, his patience in teaching new members the art of model glider flying.

His principle was simple and logical, fly safely, don't break your model and enjoy your hobby and club. He often mentioned that nothing replaces experience and that the student must follow the teacher's instructions. He didn't like the idea of expending beautiful flying days on the bench repairing a broken model instead of being on the field enjoying the good air and pleasant company.



Andy Mora at Coteau Station, circa 1979
(photo courtesy Stanley Sarskas archives)

He located himself behind the student, his instructions were mostly silent, trying not to break his concentration he and would just tap on the student's right or left shoulder when a correction should be necessary.

His attitude, even when he had to exercise authority, was to respect everybody, to help them with cordiality and understanding, in a way that his humble performance earned him the respect and friendship of all club comrades, event visitors or contest participants.

He was the first to arrive at the field on week-ends and contests, to set up the equipment which everybody could use. Those who knew him, remember his khaki shorts, the deeply tanned skin of his naked upper body, wide easy smile and permanent readiness to help.

In the early eighties, he had an opportunity to go to work in California. He kept a written contact with his club and closest friends, to describe the marvels of the good weather in that part of the world and the latest news regarding materials and techniques.

Suddenly, the contact stopped and as we learned later, he had made his last flight to keep company to his ancestors.

In memoriam of a noble spirit, outstanding friend, skilled performant and patient teacher, the club decided to present a trophy which bears his name to the winner of first place in the Sportsman category competed for at the MATS Two Day Contest each year, the winning of this trophy opens the gate to the Expert level.

This year, the honor was taken by Dave Wright, member of MATS, and his name has been engraved forever on the trophy, as have all Sportsman winners since 1988.

Andy, this is your students' and friends' way to keep your memory alive.

Rafael Ramirez
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