

State of the Hobby

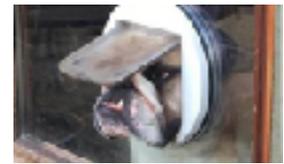
WHAT'S HAPPENING IN MY WORLD?



THE FGA BRAND RECOMMENDING PRODUCTS



THE REVERB A CLOSER LOOK AT INNOVATION



A CAREER IN FPV RACING, FREESTYLE OR COMMERCE

FGA PATREON NEWS



FPV Paradise Hawaii | Nowak FinalGlideAUS | Cliff Diving | Drone Racing

Life In The Slow Lane

When I returned home from Europe in late September 2017 I was determined to slow down and spend quality time on personal priorities. The last couple months of 2017 were a delight. I gave myself time to think and to work out what I wanted to do (and what I didn't). After more than 2 years of constant traveling and helping other people develop their business/brand I resolved to start looking after my own needs and wants. To start the new year off I committed to spend an extended time with a special friend in US. During my past worldwind trips I seldom got a opportunity to spend time enjoying living as a local. I had a great time, especially having a personal tour of DreamWorks with Charpu.

Home is where the heart is.

After 2 years of constant travel its very satisfying to get back to reality and family life.

The FGA Stamp of Approval

Over my time as a Rotor Riot co-presenter I applied my skills to help develop and promote a number of products in the Rotor Riot online store. The store became very popular mainly because I believe people trusted the quality of the products on offer and the after sales service provided. A large degree of the innovations and point of difference with competitors came directly from my technical input and recommendations. I tweaked components/packages to improve them further while Chad Kapper concentrated on marketing and keeping expenses down. Those were very heady days!! Life was good.

The only product that has ever have my name on it was the HQ Prop V1S 5x4.3x3 propellor. It was a prop that I spent over 5 months working on with a university professor. Zhong Zhong (CEO of HQ Prop) wanted to acknowledge my input so he put my name on it. The design (spawning the V1S range) has been well received by all quad pilots.

After many requests by fans for me to list my recommended products, my business manager suggested 3 levels of an FGA Stamp of Approval. My recommendations are now on my web site. Although I have had serious input into all the products listed on the site the fact is that I only make ongoing commission on the Reverb frame from ImpulseRC. The only other commissions I have received was for my technical input into the original Hypetrain series of motors and or my tuning and consultancy work with Teal Drones. My vested interest is that the FPV quad community get to experience the most efficient products available.

<http://www.finalglideaus.com/products.html>

Reverb

Since its recent release the Reverb continues to be one of the most popular frames available on the miniquad market. I have always had the utmost respect for Sean Blakemore and the boys at ImpulseRC. Unlike their competitors they never make negative comments about their competition and their record is second to none when it comes to business ethics. That's why I was delighted when Sean asked me to join them in a collaborative project to design a freestyle quad that I would be happy to fly myself. The Reverb is selling very well and remains not only a wonderful freestyle performer, but also is very cost effective. It's getting very good reviews.

My FPV journey with friends



Rotor Riot

Its been almost 2 years to the day that I helped set up the Rotor Riot brand. I quit my job in anticipation of starting a wonderful project as a way to help people get into and grow this hobby. For the first 12 months that dream looked like coming true. I earned very little income and lived off my own means (selling my assets) in the fond hope that I would be recompensed when the company matured and profits expanded. Unfortunately I no longer

agree with the direction that RR is taking and decided that I had to step aside. I will continue to show loyalty to the brand and have no intention of being negative about the opportunities RR opened up for me. At times, it was seriously great fun, and an experience I will never regret.



Future Directions?

I am very thankful to the many people who have helped me fulfill a number of dreams. I have learned heaps about myself and about working with other talented individuals. Two and a half years ago I was in a dead end job and never travelled outside my own country. The FPV hobby have been my release. As of today I have visited 27 countries in 2 years. I have also met an incredible number of very talented pilots and some truly amazing individuals. But it has taken its toll. I realise I need some stability in my life. I realise I also need to earn a decent living sooner rather than later. I thank all my Patreons for their ongoing financial and moral support. Its of great help as I build my future.



FPV quads are not expensive to build, fly or maintain (compared to similar sports such as gliders that I have also been part of). The work I did in a technical sense over the last 2.5 years in this sport was far more rewarding than being a drone racing pilot or a celebrity. Despite honing my reputation as a racer I found flying round and round as fast as possible over a fixed course to be rather boring. I was always out of pocket too. Its not pleasant having to fund your own way and I know that very few pilots have made a living directly through racing. A professional pilot usually supplements their income being a salesperson for sponsorship companies.

My aim was always to be hired and paid as an independent technical consultant. The only sponsorship money I have ever received was a minor amount of money from Pepsi (that's another story). My aviation and RC skills meant I could put my hand to any component product area and I did. Frames, motors, flight controllers, propellers and even flight bags. In almost every case I had to overcome manufacturer worries about conflict of interest and confidentiality. Some of the manufacturers approached me wanting me to work for them exclusively which I declined to do. Other organisations wanted me to put my name to products that I had no confidence in, just to get their sales figures up. I realise that my reputation is paramount so I refuse to water down the



faith people have in me. Unfortunately there is a fine line between notoriety and being totally honest in your appraisal of products. I have seen many instances of pilots putting their name on something but not actually having any confidence to continue using that product or worse still, quickly moving on to another product when something better comes along in order to gain better commission. It's a difficult commercial world to work in out there. Recreational FPV quads is a very small market and competition for sales is causing lots of issues.



Now that I am home I have agreed to undertake some work with an established drone training company in Brisbane. Hopefully I can get some of my bills paid but this is still only irregular work. My role will be to train pilots to pass CASA (equivalent to USA FAA) certification and to be able to teach others to do drone maintenance work to CASA standards. I see a demand out there for this. As for my passion for quadcopters I will certainly be flying for fun but I will also continue to assess what realistic opportunities are out there that I need to pursue.

I am happy for Patreons to contact me direct if they have questions or issues. My Shooting the Shit videocasts have been a disaster because of extremely poor local broadband speeds. I am still pondering how I can overcome this very real problem. More to come I assure you.

Use my finalglideaus.com web site or the Patron web site or message me via FB if you want to contact me.

