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# BAT 60

## A new generation of transmitters

### A DISCUSSION with Ralf Hartmann from Weatronic



The JetPower Fair is a great place for bumping into old acquaintances. Although over the years we have all got to know each other well, it can still be exciting to find out more about the background to a company and its new products. This year I had quite a long discussion with Ralf Hartmann about the new hand-held transmitter produced by Weatronic, and too the opportunity to ask him a number of questions about the system. At the same time I asked him to tell me a little about the origins and history of the Weatronic company.

#### Company history

Rolf Alexander "Axel" Westphal was born on 12 November 1951. After leaving school he started by studying construction engi-

neering, followed by town planning. His interest in motorcycle racing brought him to the Motor Presse publishing house in Stuttgart, where he initially worked as a journalist, but ended up as departmental manager for economic issues. He quite soon became bored with motor sport, but the same did not apply to aviation, which had always fascinated him. This was the route which brought him to model sport, and he became an enthusiastic pilot. His background knowledge and experience enabled him to seek out new ideas and possibilities in the modelling world, and the result was that Axel was the first person to dream up the ingenious idea of combining battery management, servo management, aerial diversity, frequency diversity and

flight data recording in a single device. In 2004 he founded the Weatronic company with the aim of making his ideas and innovations available to other model pilots. Since 2007 Weatronic has been a technology leader in the field 2.4 GHz equipment.

When Axel learned that he had contracted cancer, he look for a solvent successor who could carry on Weatronic in the direction he wanted. He found the individual he sought in the Count of Waldburg-Zeil, who took over the company, but was subsequently obliged to withdraw for family reasons after about eighteen months. The new company proprietor is also a keen model pilot, and continues to run the enterprise in the spirit of Axel.

Incidentally, the name Weatronic is a composite of "We" for Westphal, "A" for Alexan-

#### The interview

**Winfried Ohlgart:** According to the original plans, the new hand-held transmitter was to be introduced at the 2013 JetPower Fair. Since this deadline could not be met, I picked up a number of questions from the advertising for the BAT 60. Why did the company want to introduce another hand-held transmitter?

**Weatronic:** Very simple: because it allows us to exploit every possible avenue. To me our BAT 60 symbolises a new generation of transmitters - a transmitter developed by pilots for pilots. This transmitter can be fine-tuned to suit the individual pilot's requirements, from the assignment of the transmitter controls via data recording and on to three levels of speech output.

This unit enables us to exploit our powers of innovation to the full.

**W.O.:** The colours are unusual; I imagine they are not to everyone's liking.

**Weatronic:** Users are very pleased with the Weatronic colour scheme (laughs), but of course the transmitter will also be available in white, black and silver, as we want everyone to have the colour he prefers. Maybe we will also produce a few with the clear case, but that decision has not yet been made.

**W.O.:** I can't find any mention of the number of channels.

**Weatronic:** Our system will no longer feature channels in the conventional sense. The transmitter has 22 transmitter controls, all of them freely programma-

ble. They can be assigned in any way the pilot wishes, and also operate on multiple levels. The first generation of the software allows up to 64 servos to be addressed in this way.

**W.O.:** What does the term 'innovative throttle / brake lever concept' mean?

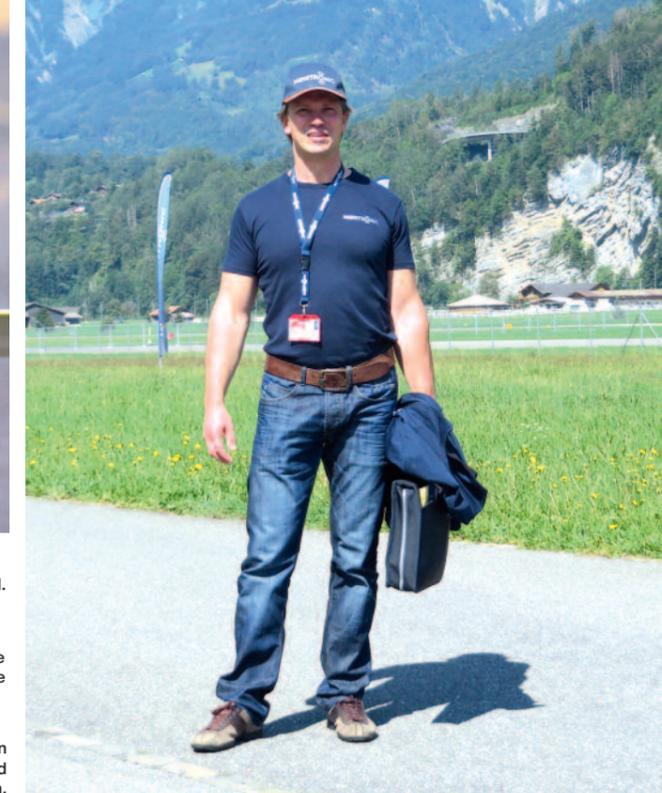
**Weatronic:** The sticks can incorporate several functions. For example, a throttle lever with ratchet can be combined with a wheel brake in the lower part of its travel, and the wheel brake works as in a car. All these features are user-variable. Almost every pilot who has already tried out the system at various Fairs has been delighted. Perfectly harmonised hardware and software, accurately matched to each other - that's what Weatronic stands for.



Company founder Rolf Alexander "Axel" Westphal.

The glass hand-held transmitter - it is possible that the BAT 60 will also be available in a clear case!

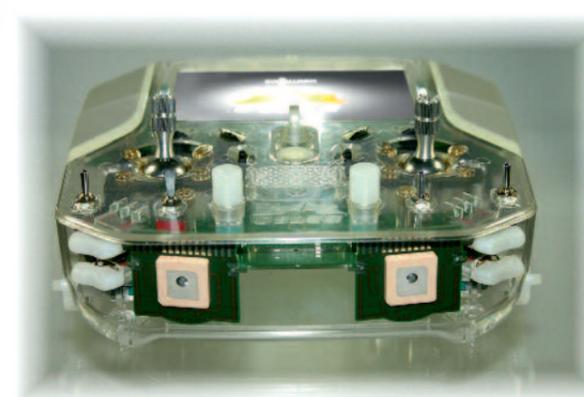
Interviewee Ralf Hartmann during the Jet World Masters in Meiringen.



managing director is Prof. Dr. Anselm Fabig. Since 2004 his company had worked with Axel to convert his ideas into products, and it is his team of specialists that continue Weatronic's development work. This existing connection was the reason why Dr. Fabig was asked if he would take over the managing directorship. In a log-

ical move, he only agreed if Weatronic would move its base to Wildau near Berlin - the centre for aviation and space travel - where his own company is also based.

The new BAT 60 transmitter will be available in various colour schemes.



der and "tronic" for electronics; the name has been retained in honour of Axel, to express deep solidarity with his ideas. The present



**W.O.:** I'm afraid that 'Look-and-find function with GPS' doesn't mean anything to me.

**Weatronic:** The internal GPS allows us to locate a lost aircraft. This is very important for slope soaring, and anyone who flies in a large field: models which land away from the strip are often very difficult to find. If the model has GPS on board, the search is greatly simplified.

**W.O.:** What is the advantage of the Web Interface?

**Weatronic:** The Web Interface gives us many options, of which data transfer is just one possibility. In the course of time we shall offer the facility to incorporate other features and functions at this interface, regardless of the operating systems run by the other devices.

**W.O.:** 22 freely programmable transmitter controls - what does that mean in practice?

**Weatronic:** As I mentioned, this means that the pilot has the freedom to assign all the functions exactly as they want: an individual system, versatile and looking to the future.

**W.O.:** USB-A and USB-B (Master and Slave) - for what?

**Weatronic:** These two sockets enable us to use the transmitter both as the originating device and the receiving medium for a very wide range of external devices. They open up the transmitter to a vast range of possible applications.

**W.O.:** What is the advantage of the ETSI standard, and what does it mean?

**Weatronic:** The ETSI standard requires that the system selects a channel, then checks whether it is actually vacant before transmitting data. That's why the system is also known as "Listen before Talk". This principle offers a significant enhancement in the security of data transfer - the Weatronic system carries out this process a hundred times per second, selecting from channels. After all, what pilots want is a completely safe method of controlling their models, so that they can concentrate on enjoying their flights.

**W.O.:** When will the transmitter be available?

**Weatronic:** The transmitter will be available in November 2013.

**W.O.:** Thanks for the conversation!