

## / RACER PROFILE /

**Name:** Bapu Madhu  
**Age:** 36  
**Years flying:** 2 years  
**Years racing:** 1.5 years  
**Favorite racing quad:** MXP200B  
Bapu Edition (xhover.com)  
**Radio:** Spektrum DX9  
**FPV goggles:** Fat Shark Dominator  
V3 for analog; Carl Zeiss  
Cinemizers for Connex HD  
**Racing strategy:** Consistency,  
consistency, consistency



## RACE TO WIN: TIPS FROM INTERNATIONAL COMPETITOR

# BAPU MADHU

TEXT & PHOTOS BY JOHN REID

When you think of all the racers out there that are making their mark on the drone-racing circuit, one person that always seems to be in the thick of things is Bapu Madhu. He competes on both a national and international level with all of the top racers out there. He is known for his consistency and managing to place on the podium at a number of events. To top it off, he is, without a doubt, one of the nicest people you will ever meet on the racing circuit. We were fortunate enough to spend a Saturday morning out at Bapu's favorite flying park with him and his family as he practices for the upcoming Aloha Cup in Hawaii.

**RotorDrone:** How did you get interested in flying quads/racing?

**Bapu Madhu:** A close group of friends got into racing; we got bored of freestyle pointless flying. Racing quads was like playing a video game on steroids, and now we are totally addicted.

**What is the longest distance that you've traveled to attend a race?**

Dubai for the World Drone Prix in 2016.

**What was the best race you've attended?**

The World Drone Prix in Dubai was the best race I've attended. It is one of those locations that had always been on my bucket list; it is a great world destination. This was one of the most epic locations in the world for people to come and race. The budget for this race was phenomenal! From what we heard, the track alone cost over seven million dollars. The gates were engineered just for this track, so they moved into different formations. Best of all, if you qualified, all expenses—everything—for your whole team was paid for. To top it off, the track was unlike anything else we had ever seen in any race before.

**How many hours a week do you practice?**

Fifteen to 20 hours, almost always on the weekend, is when I practice. Most of the time, I am flying against someone; I hardly ever practice alone. Unless it is like this week, where I

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will get in a practice day before leaving for the Aloha Cup, I will most likely not have anyone to practice against. Most of the time, it is a bunch of friends getting together and racing.

**How many competitions have you competed in?**

I would say about 15 to 18, and I have placed on the podium nine times. But now, I am at a point where I only attend the big events. I pick and choose. I will generally go to events where I know a lot of pilots from around the country who will be competing. I almost use it like a mini vacation.

**Can you give our readers some tips?**

Start off small. Practice a lot with simulators before investing in gear for an actual drone. Drone racing is a very complicated sport, which demands lots of time for building, fixing, and practicing

**Any recommendations on preparing for a race?**

Stick to what you know, what you are comfortable with. Many times, I've made the mistake of trying something new right before a big race—never a good idea. I can remember one time where I tried a different lens on my racer for the first time at a race in Tempe, Arizona. I tried different props, which was a disaster. Many times at these events, you only get two or three practice runs—not enough time really to test these things out or get used to flying with them. It was one of my worst performances. That was a lesson learned. I would say

that whatever you are using on your quad a couple of days before the race, use that for the event—don't change.

**What's your most important flight advice?**

Always follow local rules and regulations, and always fly with a spotter, especially when trying risky stuff.

**How do you choose your goggles?**

Comfort is what I look for in goggles. Get together with a local FPV group, and try different brands and styles of goggles before deciding which one to buy.

**Tell us how you prepare, relax, and get ready for a heat at the race.**

I always have a minimum of three almost identical quads and a few spare parts that I take to every race. I try to get stick time the day before a big race. On race day, I do my best to stick to my game plan and try to stay calm and keep my nerves cool (I always listen to music in my headphones right before my heats). The key is to keep hydrated and eat to keep yourself active. I remember a few times when I forgot to drink throughout the day and didn't eat on time. This really affects your performance and ability to fly your best. The key is try to be as normal as possible, although your anxiety level will most definitely be up. Lastly, never forget to have fun. [Bapu beams a big smile.]

Follow Bapu at [Bapu FPV on YouTube](#), [Facebook](#), and [Instagram](#). 🚁

**EDITOR'S NOTE**

As we were going to press, we learned that Bapu won the Aloha Cup and qualified and will compete in the upcoming Drone Worlds. Stay tuned for our complete coverage of this event next month!



AD SPACE