

Phoenix Model Products

Introduction

Welcome to our Easter newsletter which we hope you find an interesting read. Writing a newsletter is a bit like trying to make a magazine an interesting read each issue hence this one is a bit of a mixed bag! The good news is the days are getting longer and hopefully we can look forward to the weather getting warmer, the rain easing off and there will be light winds at last!

Old Superglue

A few months ago due a stock rotation issue at our Superglue suppliers we received a batch of thin Cyno that had gone off. Needless to say as soon as the problem was identified we acquired fresh stocks. Problem solved. We were however left with nearly 100 bottles of thin superglue that takes a few minutes to go off. We manufacture pre-production moulds for our thermo forming machine out of balsa wood. Balsa wood is an ideal material as it is cheap and easy to work with albeit a little dusty! To harden the surface and overcome grain indentations etc due to the machine vacuum the mould is liberally coat with thin superglue after final sanding with fine Wet and Dry. The superglue is applied using a tissue. The mould is sanded between coats again with fine wet & Dry. Three coats is normally sufficient to achieve a smooth, hard, finish. Using 'fresh' superglue is messier, does not penetrate the surface so deeply and requires more sanding to obtain a smooth finish. Stale superglue will take a couple of minutes to go off as opposed to a few second with fresh superglue and is easier to work with. We have also used stale superglue to harden 'planked surfaces' to eliminate raised glue lines

E-Flite / Horizon Mystique

In the last few months we have assembled and flown the E-Flite Mystique. I liked the look of it and needed a full house thermal model so I bought one. I am afraid I have not been impressed best summed up as over-priced, over-weight, structurally weak (one wing folded and controls fluttered at modest speed). Poor value for money. Sorry horizon!

Pension / Retirement

For those of us of a certain age that are making retirement plans attached is a bit of food for thought when considering buying an annuity. It is a simple spreadsheet that calculates how much can be drawn each month for a given capital sum. All you have to do is enter how long you expect live, the amount to be put aside, a monthly drawing rate, plus enter an expected interest rate, percentage tax to be paid on the interest and any index linking (percentage rise each year). *All the boxes in RED*. The monthly amount is adjusted until the capital sum runs out at the end of your time period. Published Insurance company annuity rates are just over half for a single person and less than half for a two person annuity to that of one self managed!

Epoxy Rejuvenation

Occasionally customers complain when buying a pack of epoxy that theirs has gone off, i.e. crystallised or gone solid. I hasten to add that the epoxy is invariably quite old. Unfortunately when I explain how the epoxy can be rejuvenated and ask them if they still have it they have thrown it away! Epoxy can be rejuvenated by heating it in

a microwave oven for a few seconds. **NOT** minutes. I also microwave my epoxy when I use it to make it easier to mix. Another tip passed on by one of my customers is to use a baby bottle warmer. Used ones are often available in charity shops for a nominal amount.

A Eureka Moment!!

I have been modelling for a large number of years and up to now I have never had a problem trimming the film when covering a model until recently. The DSSC (www.dartmoorsoarers.co.uk) have organised a Tomboy Fly-In middle of June this year. To support the event we have converted the Tomboy 36 to electric and produced a number of short laser cut kits with a modified plan for local modellers. I have built one of the prototypes which I have covered in Easycoat. This is where I encountered a film trimming problem on the concave curves of the fuselage. To overcome the problem I inserted the 10A scalpel blade into a short length of 5mm balsa strip. The balsa strip acts as a gauge resulting in a straight parallel cut for overlapping the film.

PS. If you live with-in driving distance of Little Haldon please come along to the June meeting. It is a relaxed open event and all are welcome all you need is BMFA insurance and £3.00 which goes towards the maintenance of the site if you fly.

Thermo-Forming Moulds

As mentioned previously we regularly manufacture moulds for thermo-forming. This we do using balsa wood and MDF. Occasionally we are asked to make canopies for customers. This we do providing they provide the mould. A couple of tips if you are going to make a mould to be used on a thermo-forming machine. Tip 1. Always put a skirt of at least 10mm around the cutting line of the mould. Tip 2. To enable the finished item to be safely removed from the mould the side must be sloping with no under-cutting. If the canopy is cut off at the front / back then extend the mould design to include sloping ends. For small moulds such as servo covers we make these from MDF liberally coated in thin Cyno. To encourage the plastic to conform to the mould in the corners we lift the mould off the base board with strategically placed 1mm packing pieces and drill air holes in the base board underneath the mould between them. The old practice was to drill small holes around the side of the mould to draw the plastic in but this produced inconsistent results. If using a baseboard bevel the edges to make the work easier to remove from the mould.

The Mk2 Kits

We have now re-worked six of the models we kitted in the eighties and nineties with plans for a few more this year. There has been quite a bit of interest but sales have not been as brisk as anticipated. The latest being remodelled is a 48in (1220mm) span version of the WingBAT. 99% of the work is done, just photographs and box label to do. Flying weight is only 1lb 8ozs or 680g if you prefer. Looks good. The next one will be the Rudder Elevator only Stage 2.

Sales Pitch

There are some good radio bargains around currently. Horizon have reduced the price of the Spektrum Dx6i and DX7S and Multiplex have taken a chain saw to the price of the Royal Evo 16. Good news for customers but not such good news for

shops that have stock purchased at the old price! Argh! We are pleased to say covering Film Irons are back in stock at last after a long period of absence.

On-Line Shop

Some on-line shop customers have recently experienced difficulties when using the On-Line shop. They get an error message advising them that that the site is un-safe or has been compromised and recommend that they proceed no further. There is nothing wrong with the site. It has been in operation for six years. Is scanned on behalf of the card company for PCI compliance each month and transactions are routed via a secure server hence the padlock emblem. We have been in contact with our secure server hosts. The problem seems to centre around the browser customers are using with Firefox being regularly mentioned. We have been advised there was a problem with some browsers not having correctly listed all compliance certificates. These issues have since been addressed so if you still have a problem please check your browser is up to date or use a different browser but do let us know if the problem persists as the only indication we get that is no on-line shop orders!.

Happy Landings

Stan & Sheila

PS. Do not forget to visit our website <http://www.phoenixmp.com>. We are very competitive on price and have recently carried out a price comparison check with other leading retailers which resulted some prices being adjusted. In addition there are over twenty articles on various modelling topics to help you get more enjoyment from the our sport.



Cariba Mk2



Inverted Low pass Stage 2A Mk2



Toledo Mk2



WingBAT 48



Pzazz Mk2