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## BUILDING SEASON IS HERE!

I fully realize that many of you no longer build in the off-season, but for those who do... and for those newer members who may not as yet have tried it (because of the proliferation of ARFs available), I've reproduced below an article on covering I found in the November issue of the AMA Insider. I hope you find it as interesting as I did.

*From the newsletter of the St. Paul Model Radio Controllers, Inc., Coon Rapids, Minnesota*

### Covering Material

By Ellie Pflager

I was asked to research airplane covering materials and their weight ratio. I have learned a great deal in doing this article. I guess you could say that I have had several "ah-ha" moments and now a lot of things that were discussed during show-and-tells make a lot more sense to me. For my research I looked at both manufacturers' Web sites as well as many forum group sites and tried to find multiple "agreeable opinions." Bob LaBrash was a great help when it came to the product weights; he gave me a great head start. Hope you find this information helpful.

### Tissue

**[Tech. Editor's Note:** There is some misinformation here. There are several types of "tissue," but the lightest and best is known as Japanese tissue. The "grain" has to be determined, usually by tearing, it is not that noticeable. The grain is then laid down span-wise on a wing, and this instruction is very important. Good tissing is an art.]

This is not Kleenex, but more like gift-wrap tissue. It really is pa-

*(COVERING Continued on page 2)*

## CLUB BIO OF THE MONTH



This month we will be talking to one of our newer members, Mike Pilon.



**Mike enjoying some "stick time" on November 7th at the Cuba gym.**

Mike made his living as a contractor and exhibit manager for truck shows for Ford. He would travel all over the country doing the different shows. He has been married

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**MODEL AIRPLANE PRINCIPLES 101:** For model airplanes, the probability of survival at landing is inversely proportional to the angle of arrival. Large angle of arrival, small probability of survival and vice versa.

(COVERING Continued from page 1)

per that comes in different weights. Tissue works best on the lightest models; usually balsa models designed for Free Flight (not RC). It has a noticeable grain to it, and this grain should be applied in the direction needing most strength.

It is traditionally applied to the wood frame with dope, although thinned glue works fine. Once the tissue is applied to the structure, it is shrunk tight with a light mist of water, then sealed with dope or Krylon spray enamel.

### Silk

This covering is actually woven silk fabric that is applied with dope. From what I could tell this covering is not used very often these days. I couldn't find any other information on this type.

### Silkspan

This is like tissue but contains other fibers, and is generally stronger but heavier. It can be applied in the same manner as tissue. It is a good covering for foam. The weight per square yard of this material is 6.17 ounces.

### Fabric

Fabric covering can produce a very realistic finish and can be painted or purchased painted. Some are manufactured from real woven cloth and feature a simulated, hand-rubbed lacquer finish like full-size airplane finishes. It goes on like a film; roll out and apply, then iron on at low heat to properly activate the adhesive. Because of the low-heat iron it can be used on sheeted foam. The weight per square yard of this material ranges from 2.9 to 3.3 ounces based on brand.

(BIO Continued from page 1)

forty years to his wife, Chris. Mike shared some information about his children. His oldest, Michelle, works in the dietitian office at Cole Memorial in Coudersport, PA. His middle daughter, Angela, teaches 2nd grade in Raleigh, NC. Finally, his youngest, Mathew, is an engineer at Dresser.

Although Mike has no membership in other clubs/associations, he used to have interests in hunting, fishing, and a plethora of other hobbies. He used to do them all. "But now I work on planes every day," he says. "I'm currently working on a Dumas 35 inch bi-wing...have both wings covered, but need to do a little more on the fuse before covering that. Then there are about five others also in the works."

I asked Mike what or who got you interested in flying? "Ebay," he exclaims. "I sit and watch things on ebay. When I was a kid I remember radio control, so then I did some research about clubs in this area and found the STARS."

Mike says his favorite plane to fly is an ARF Maxford Curtiss Jenny 50" military bi-wing. I'm still learning. It was the first military trainer biplane of

WWI. "It's a cool little plane," he says. "I have a four stroke on it."

"To me a good day is when I go to the field, and when I get home I don't have to fix something," Mike says of his best flying experience. On the other side of the coin, however, he bought a used high wing trainer this past summer, and didn't have so much luck. "When we tried to fly it with the buddy box", he remarked, "There was an apparent equipment



***If you don't believe a great covering job can make a difference in a model's "WOW Factor", check out Bob Bush's scratch built Yellow Jacket above and Astro-Hog twin electric below.***



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## Fiberglass

This woven material is great on solid structures, but not good over open areas. It can be used to seal balsa wood or foam and comes in a great variety of weights, the lightest (.5 ounces per square yard) being very light but flexible. This is a great substitute for silkspan when covering foam. It may be applied with epoxy (wood) or water-based polycrylic (foam). It adds great surface strength for very little weight. It can be applied in (or over) a form to produce a "shell" for a nose cone or heli body.

## Plastic Coverings

Plastic Coverings are also known as polyester films, or heat-shrink coverings. These are all applied to the wood frame with heat that activates an adhesive layer on the underside of the film. Once the film is attached to the finished airplane kit frame, it is then shrunk tight with heat. Film types of covering produce the lightest model. The weight per square yard of this material ranges from 1.685 ounces to 2.700 ounces based on brand and color. Below are some brand comparisons that I did based on forum opinions:

1. Ultracote by Hangar 9: polyester type with a lower-gloss finish.
2. MonoKote by Top Flite: supposedly preferred due to a high-gloss, smooth finish and is long lasting and durable.
3. 21st Century Film by Coverite: handles extreme temperature and humidity changes.

4. Litespan by Solarfilm Company: much lighter than MonoKote or Ultracote and has no adhesive on the underside, said not to shrink quite as drum tight as the other films. A 20 x 36-inch sheet weighs 31.8 grams.
5. Solite (Litefilm) by Nelson: super-light film but has adhesive on the underside, some of the "opaque" colors are somewhat translucent.

## Painting

Painting is another option for finishing an airplane. Wood or foam structures must be sealed before painting to help produce a smooth paint surface. Surfaces that are sealed should not need as much paint and that will help keep the weight down. A primer coat is often applied after sealing. Its function is to create a surface that will bond well (chemically) with the paint layer.

I found there are several types of paint, each with their own benefits. Some examples are: dope, enamel, acrylic, and latex. Dope is a cellulose lacquer. Enamel gives a great finish but is tricky to clean up and dries slowly. Water-based acrylic dries quickly, easy to cleanup, and supposedly does not attack foam or wood. Acrylics tend to dry flat, so glass finishes need a separate clear coat. If your model plane kit (or heli) will use glow or gasoline fuel, the paint finish will need to be fuel proof. Many common paints are not fuel proof so make sure your topcoat is fuel proof, possibly a clear.

(BIO Continued from page 2)

failure and it did a nose dive. It was totaled".

I then asked Mike about glow vs. electric flying. "Most of my planes are glow....I just like the sound of them," he says. "But, electric is so much easier, cleaner."

His opinion on 3D? "I just bought a 3D plane for the gym this year," he tells me. "It's a Mini Piaget made by Tech One." So now I think he's leaning toward 3D a little.

Any areas of expertise, Mike? "I've been a mechanic, machinist, electrician so I have a lot of skills on which to draw."

Advice for the rookie/newbie pilot: Fly indoors with a little foamy. You will get a lot of experience this way.

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## STARS

### Minutes of the General Meeting of: 10/13/10

#### Attendance:

Brad Davis, Gary Baker, Jamie Bowen, Clark Follett, Ramona Follett, Dave Pratt, Tom Orcutt, Kip Karn, Ed Flicker, Randy Bittinger, Jim Goodemote, Derek Clement, Bob Bush, Bill Messer, Dick Say, Jim Keough, Ed Flicker, Mike Karnuth, Chris Powers, Gary Fitch, Bill Messer, Ryan Farwell

#### Errors and omissions:

Derek C. Derek C. reported a person would need to join

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"ROAR" at an annual fee of \$25 per year in addition to STARS membership.

Motion to accept October meeting minutes by Gary B. seconded by Gary F. All were in favor.

#### **Treasurers Report:**

Motion to accept the treasure report by Gary F. and seconded by Jim K. All were in favor.

#### **Membership:**

Ed F. reported three applications. Ryan Farwell, Derek Clement, Andrew Clement. Motion to accept Ryan, Derek and Andrew as STARS members by Gary B. seconded by Jim K. All are in favor. Welcome Ryan and Derek and Andrew.

#### **Website:**

Bob B. reported not much activity but did update the club project with new photos. Gary F. reported Bill Pricett AMA educational director would like district II to see if AMA could host club website. Ramona F. said facebook may not be good to host our site.

#### **Rally:**

Rally scheduled for July 16 and 17th. Jim G. reported a letter was sent to Olean mayor but no response. Dick S. will investigate. Dave P. for radio impound, Ed F. for generator, gas and oil. Clark F. for donation letters. Dick S. suggested we contact Olean greater commerce to see if they would help promote. Ed F. volunteered to investigate and report back his findings.

#### **Flight Instructors:**

Dave P. reported Derek C., Paul G. and Mike K. have completed flight instruction. Gary F. reported AMA will have a requirement to have formal flight instruction around 2012 with more to come in June. AMA is working on establishing the standards now.

#### **Club Project:**

Russian Yak-6 twin electric Dick S. presented several new pages have been added to the instruction manual.

#### **Planning Committee:**

Dave P. reported there will be three open positions on the planning committee because Ramona F, Don W. and Kip K. term is up. Motion to have

the same committee members by Bob B. and seconded by Dick S.

#### **Presidents Corner:**

Please use the provided butt cans when finished with your smoke. Same applies for pop tabs. According to the constitution honorary members must be voted in on an annual basis by STARS members. Ed F. has the list of honorary and life time members.

#### **Old business:**

#### **RC Race Track:**

Derek C. read the minutes from the track committee meeting. Chris P. suggested we need to address flight line and track for when who does what and when. Revised by-laws will be sent to members for review. Dave P. sent an e-mail to 42 members to vote on having the ground level before the end of the year. 13 members responded yes and 2 responded no. Once the ground is level and track formed PVC tubing for guard rails would be next. Donations expected to possibly cover the track costs. First two years would be for local racing only. Motion to

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**HAVE YOU EVER... "made an impression" with your fellow club members by having your model aircraft "make an impression" in the terra firma?**

(MINUTES Continued from page 4)

spend maximum \$125 for fuel to have the track leveled by Jim K. and seconded by Kip K. Because a vote was already conducted by e-mail earlier Jim K. retracted his motion. Randy B. suggested water drainage also be accounted for when making the track. Gary F. contacted Paul Bretson about the AMA insurance policy. RAOR provides insurance coverage for one million for driver accident with his RC car and for sanction events or practice. There is no liability insurance if spectoor gets hurt. AMA has 2.5 million insurance coverage. Concern is if non AMA

member get hurt then AMA club can incur additional cost. Muncie has a race track but didn't work out well. Several discussions took place. Gary F. volunteered to get with AMA.

#### **Runway:**

Gary F. would like the planning committee to review the possibility of having some of the runway paved for smaller aircraft. Kip K. suggest a clay runway. Plastic mats have also been used. Chris P. said this may have more appeal to get new members

#### **Winter Party:**

Bill Messer provided Ramona F. with gifts to provide the

ladies at the winter party.

#### **Show and Tell:**

Gary B. presented his RTR 1/8 4wd hyper 7 nitro 28 glow with 2.4ghz radio. Gary upgraded the battery. Jim G. presented his scale pilot including a scale 45 caliber pistol.

#### **Meetings:**

Next Regular STARS general meeting will be at JCC, Dec 8th starting @ 7:00PM.

Next planning meeting will be at Kip K.'s house, Nov 29th @ 7:00PM.

Motion to adjourn was made by Dick S., seconded by Jim K. All were in favor.

## **FROM THE NEWSLETTER EDITOR'S DESK...**

I got a good indication last Sunday of how many people "don't bother" to read the newsletter. In last month's newsletter (on the front page) we listed the "Cuba Gym Dates" for the winter season. Even though November 28th was not among the "flying dates", lots of guys showed up anyway. Oh well...



Please remember to get your checks into either Tom O. or Ramona F. for the Winter Party. Last date to call or see Ramona with choice of entree is December 8th (meeting night). It will be held at Moonwinks in Cuba on January 22nd (cocktails at 5, sit-down-dinner at 6). Entree choices are Prime Rib, Shrimp Scampi and Roast Turkey with Stuffing. The dinner also includes rolls and butter, salad, potato, vegetable, dessert and coffee.

Come to think about it,... it would also be a good time to get your dues paid (January 1st will be here before you know it!)

Thanks again Jamie and Jim... I couldn't do this without you two! *Tad*



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Next Regular Meeting @ JCC  
*Wednesday, December 8th*

Next Planning Meeting: *Monday,*  
*January 31st @ Dave P.'s*

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