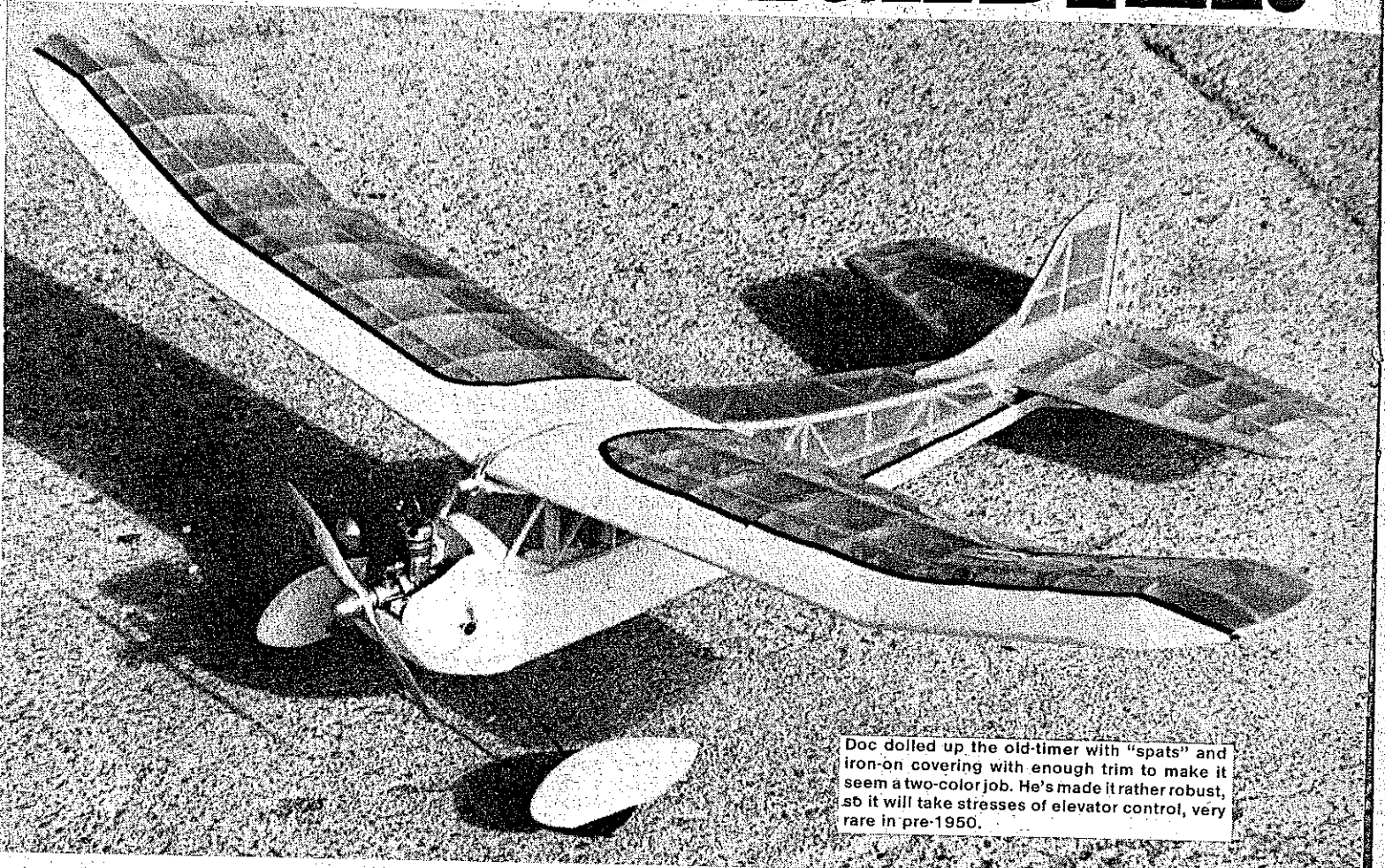


# SUPER BRIGADIER



Doc dolled up the old-timer with "spats" and iron-on covering with enough trim to make it seem a two-color job. He's made it rather robust, so it will take stresses of elevator control, very rare in pre-1950.

Berkeley's Super Brig was the first powered RC kit. Marking the turning point from a handful of experimenters to the excited masses, it has a singular historic significance. ■ Dee B. Mathews 309

THIS is a modernized Berkeley Brigadier, featuring a simplified, stronger structure, modified aerodynamics and for three channels rather than the original rudder-only. This development of the pioneering design requires a 3.0 to 4.0 cc power plant with a throttling device. Prospective builders are *strongly* discouraged from any attempt at flying the model as a rudder-only craft (the design's original form), as numerous aerodynamic modifications have been made to increase the model's airworthiness; elevator and throttle are absolutely essential for safe flight.

First advertised in August, 1949, the Super Brigadier was the first American kit of a *powered* radio control model. The Super Brigadier predates deBolt's Live Wire and Guillow's Trixter Beam by nearly three years, as they both were introduced in the spring of 1952. The plans for the Super Brigadier illustrate the escapement placed at the rear of the fuselage, with the elastics being wound through the cabin. Also shown on the original kit plans is a PAA-load dummy. The radio equipment illustrated was the Aerotrol, also produced by Bill Effinger's Brooklyn firm.

Originally developed in 1940, for use in the

A.Y.A. program (see *MAN* 11-77 for details) the initial Brigadier had been designed by Bill Effinger and Henry Struck. These two men took the original planform and dimensions, added polyhedral and strengthened the structure to develop what became known as the "Super Brigadier," the daddy of them all.

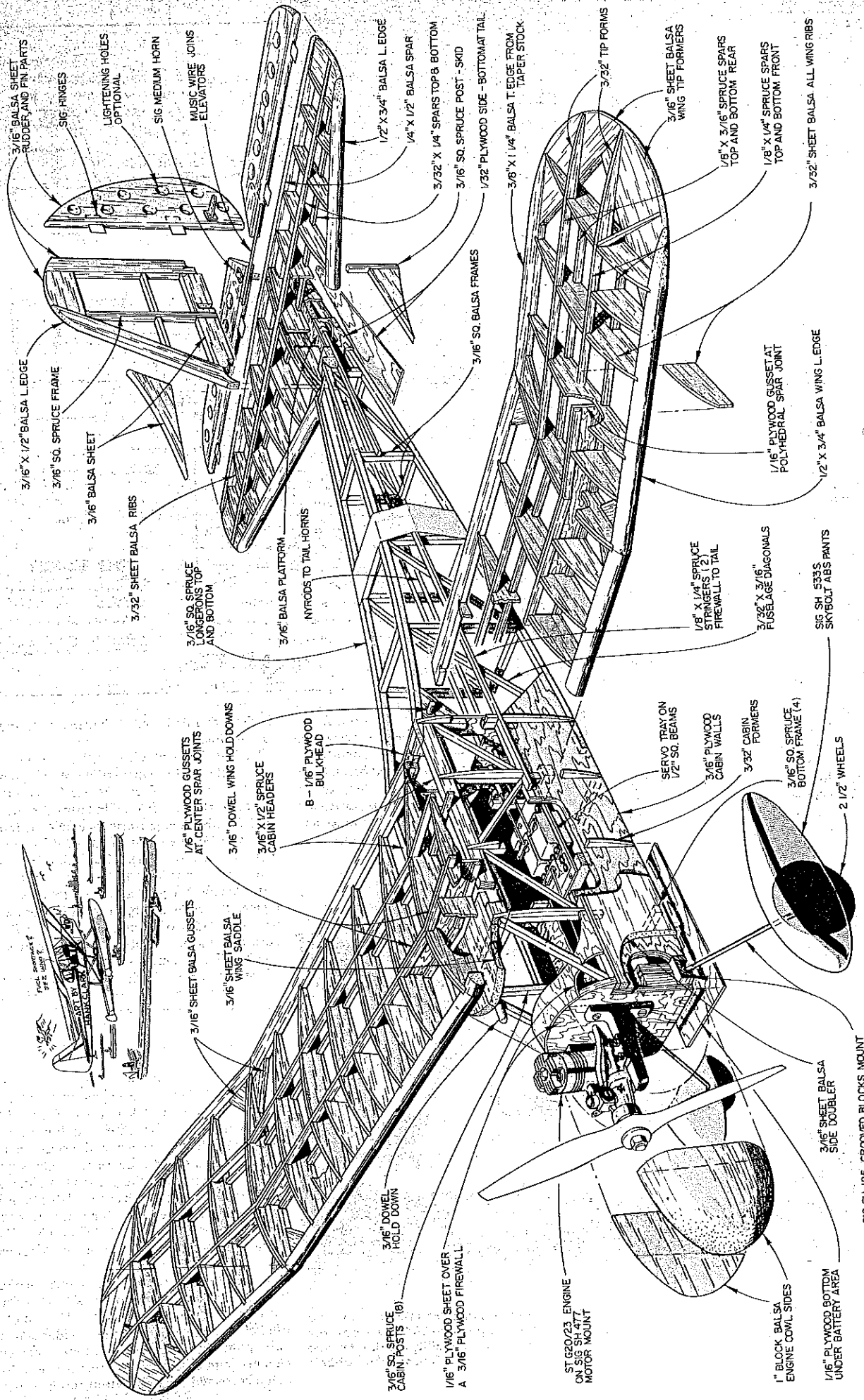
The year 1949 was the most significant in the history of RC models in the U.S. It was in late 1949 that the first commercially manufactured exam-free RC equipment was introduced. From the mid-1930s, models had been flown with homebuilt radio units on the ham bands by such pioneers as Sigfreid, Lanzo, DeSoto, and the Good Brothers. Although these articles were of immense interest when published, the radio expertise required was well beyond the great majority.

The possibility of exam-free frequencies had long been a dream of the AMA. In 1949, the FCC announced that through the efforts of the AMA several exam-free (but licensed) channels would become available for model use. This opening up of radio technology to the nonelectronics background modeler prompted several

manufacturers to enter the market. The earliest license-free units were the Citizenship units from McNabb on 465 and later 27; the Beacon units which were commercialized from the Good Brothers' designs; units from Radio Control Headquarters who had been supplying components to the experimenters since prior to WWII; and the Berkeley Aerotrol which had been designed by Ed Lorenz.

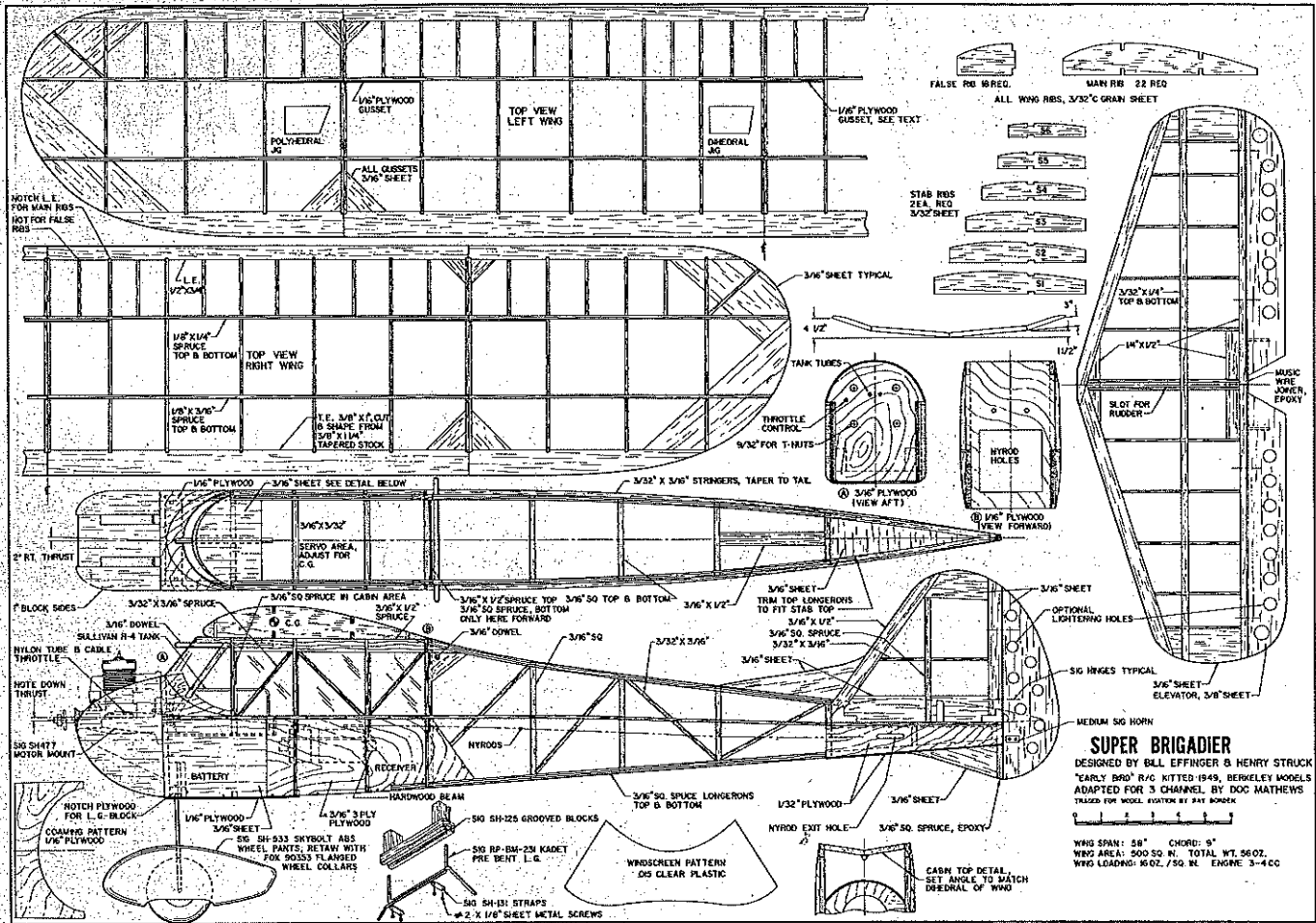
Those who might be interested in these primitive gas-tubed, super-regenerative, elastic-band-driven escapement units are referred to an excellent article in *MAN* March, 1949. The term "primitive" may seem unfair. However, gas tubes were notoriously unstable, the circuitry almost invariably was designed to minimize weight by eliminating components, and the batteries were all dry cells of immense relative weight. Suffice to say that a typical "flying" session involved constant tuning to compensate for discharging batteries, and then when a satisfactory tune was attained we often experienced a harmonic vibratory runaway of the escapement as the motor was tuned.

In retrospect one fact becomes glaringly apparent to me—aircraft were infinitely more reliable



3/16" Balsa Sheet Rudder, and Fin Parts  
 SIG Hinges  
 LIGHTENING HOLES OPTIONAL  
 SIG MEDIUM HORN  
 MUSIC WIRE JOINS ELEVATORS  
 3/16" X 1/2" Balsa L. Edge  
 3/16" SQ. Spruce Frame  
 3/16" Balsa Sheet  
 3/16" Sheet Balsa Ribs  
 3/32" SQ. Spruce Longons Top and Bottom  
 3/16" Balsa Platform  
 NYRODS TO TAIL HORNS  
 1/2" X 3/4" Balsa L. Edge  
 1/4" X 1/2" Balsa Spar  
 3/32" X 1/4" Spars Top & Bottom  
 3/16" SQ. Spruce Post - SKID  
 1/32" Plywood Side - BOTTOM AT TAL.  
 3/16" SQ. Balsa Frames  
 3/8" X 1 1/4" Balsa T. Edge From Taper Stock  
 3/32" TIP FORMS  
 3/16" Sheet Balsa Wing Tip Formers  
 1/8" X 3/16" Spruce Spars Top and Bottom - Rear  
 1/8" X 1/4" Spruce Spars Top and Bottom - Front  
 3/32" Sheet Balsa All Wing Ribs  
 1/16" Plywood Gusset at Polyhedral Spar Joint  
 1/2" X 3/4" Balsa Wing L. Edge  
 1/8" X 1/4" Spruce Strangers (2) Firewall to Tail  
 3/32" X 3/16" Fuselage Diagonals  
 SIG SH 533S SKYBOLT ABS PRINTS  
 3/16" Plywood Bulkhead  
 B-1/16" Plywood Bulkhead  
 1/16" Plywood Gussets at Center Spar Joints  
 3/16" Dowel Wing Hold Downs  
 3/16" X 1/2" Spruce Cabin Headers  
 3/16" Sheet Balsa Wing Saddle  
 3/16" Sheet Balsa Gussets  
 3/16" Sheet Balsa Gussets  
 3/16" Dowel Hold Down  
 1/16" Plywood Sheet Over A 3/16" Plywood Firewall  
 3/16" SQ. Spruce Cabin Posts (8)  
 SERVO TRAY ON 1/2" SQ. BEAMS  
 3/16" Plywood Cabin Walls  
 3/32" Cabin Formers  
 3/16" SQ. Spruce Bottom Frame (4)  
 2 1/2" WHEELS  
 1" Block Balsa Engine Cowling Sides  
 3/16" Sheet Balsa Side Doubler  
 1/16" Plywood Bottom Under Battery Area  
 SIG SH 125 GROOVED BLOCKS MOUNT ON SIG SH 477 MOTOR MOUNT  
 SIG RP 8M 231 PRE-BENT L. GEAR WIRE





than our radios. Several well engineered and aerodynamically sound designs were being published, among these were the Good Brothers' Rudderbug in *MAN* May, 1949, Fran McElwee's Radart in the April, 1949, *Air Trails*, and the Citizen by Bill Winter in *MAN*, February, 1950, and the RC Special by Bill Winter and Walt

Schroder in a 1948 *Mechanics Illustrated*. The Super Brigadier becomes a design of extremely high historic interest and importance as it represents the first commercial break from the "suitable for radio control" free flight kits of the era. The Super Brigadier was relatively simple to construct, much smaller than other RC

designs, and flew well. It became a "standard" for the time.

The development of this article was prompted by remarks in "For Openers" in *MA*, September, 1978. To quote, "These vintage RCs do not fly like converted free flights. In terms of power and wing loading their performance index is roughly half way between that of the Old-Timers and modern sport low wings. These old RC designs could be the next Klondike—gold rush, that is."

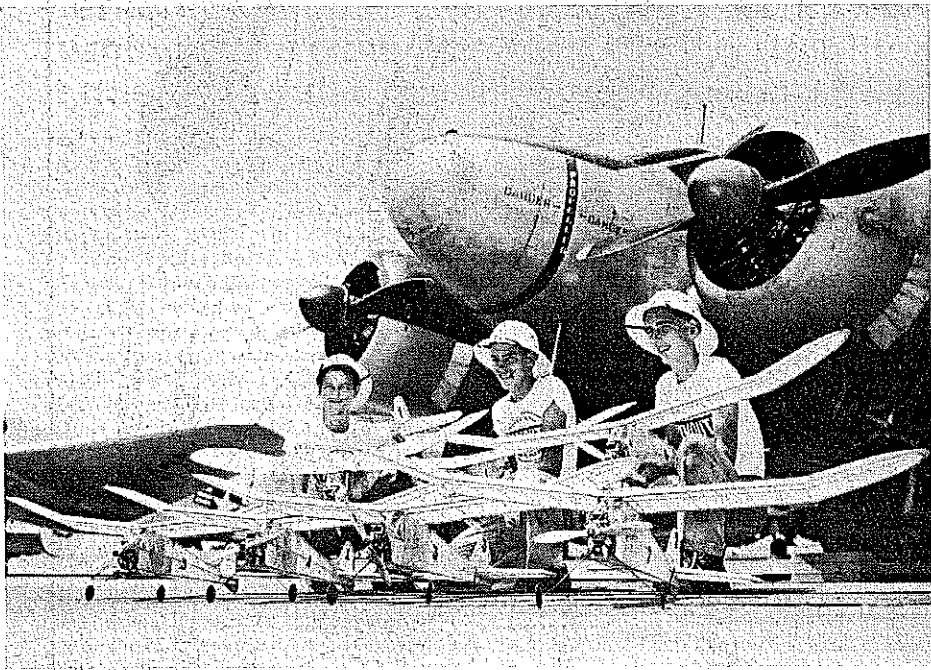
It quickly became apparent that the most logical choice as a subject for a modernization was the "daddy of them all," the Super Brig. It possessed the best combination of esthetics, size and building techniques.

The resultant model has proven itself an excellent sport job. Admittedly, several major force and moment changes were needed to correct some rather alarming spiral instability problems, but the plans reflect these changes.

**General:** Unless otherwise noted, all adhesive joints are of Aliphatic resin glue such as Sig and Tite-bond. The term C.A. refers to cyanoacrylate adhesives, such as Hot Stuff and Super Jet. All wood sizes are standard and should not be altered. All hardware is out of my dealer's stock, with the exception of the pre-bent landing gear and the wheel pants which are available from Sig.

Drill required holes at the time the part is being cut to avoid the "forgotten hole" problem. Trial fit parts before gluing for a snug but nonbinding fit.

A steerable tail wheel is not shown since the tail will not stay down on grass when enough power is used to move the model. The prototype used elastic bands to retain the rudder and stab unit, primarily to allow for needed incidence changes (numerous changes were needed). Now that a corrected decalage setting has been deter-



What went on here? Young fellows wearing Plymouth T-shirts were snapped at a Dallas Nationals with seven Brigs involved in "some kind of a record attempt." Models appear to be Brigs—look free flightish—the Super B being the RC development about that time. One possibility may be the clue that the Brig, developed by Bill Effinger and Hank Struck, also was a PAA Load model. Thin wheels suggest something. Any ideas?

mined, I recommend epoxying the unit permanently onto the fuselage.

The servo tray is screwed onto wood strips and slid fore or aft to obtain an optimum CG, then epoxyed onto the fuselage sides. I used Nyrods. However,  $\frac{1}{4}$ " sq. balsa pushrods and clevis are satisfactory.

A superior method for pattern making is to copy the part from the plan with a Thermofax-type copier, cut the print to a rough outline, spray it with 3M Sprayment, stick it onto the appropriate sized wood and cut out on the jigsaw. Peel off the paper and an accurate, simple piece has been produced. If a copier is not available, tracing (typing) paper and a pencil may be substituted.

**Wing:** Make a master rib of  $\frac{1}{8}$ " or 3/32 ply, using the above mentioned technique. Cut a stack of 3/32 balsa rib blanks, pin together, and cut out the ribs on a jigsaw. The wing is built flat, requiring no shims. The tips are laid out flat, with the bottom spar ends notched into them. The steps:

1) Notch preshaped T.E. stock and pin over plan; 2) cut tips to rough outline and pin onto plan; 3) locate position of lower spars using several ribs as guides.

4) Glue ribs into T.E. notches and over spars; 5) notch L.E. stock and glue onto ribs; 6) tilt ribs that will butt onto the center section using the angle jig; 7) add top spars and tip section fillers of scrap balsa.

8) Allow at least 24 hours for glue to cure, then remove panel from drawing; 9) block up wing tip to correct outboard dihedral, using table edge and block to sand in the angle; 10) epoxy with tip blocked up. Use dashed outline for right panel construction.

11) Repeat above steps to create a mirror-image wing panel—center section is built integrally with one of the two panels; 12) assemble panels to center section with epoxy while tip is blocked up at outboard joint.

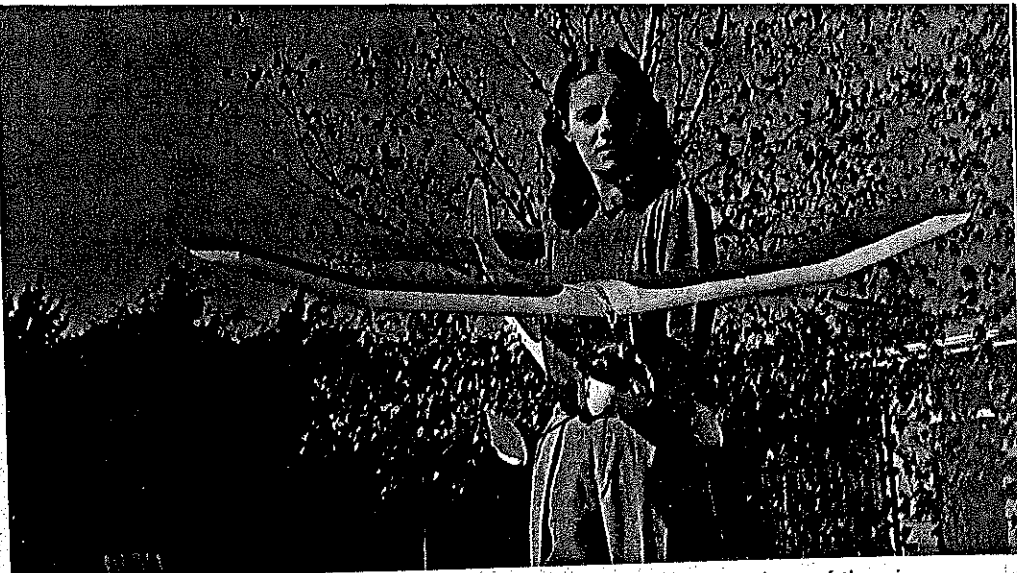
13) Use two hacksaw blades taped together to cut slots through ribs flush with the spars; 14) place ply sheet into slot, mark shape with a pencil run along the spars, remove and cut out pattern; 15) epoxy gussets liberally, holding them against the spar faces with clothespins as clamps.

This method produces plywood gussets custom-made for the wing, vastly superior to pre-cut ones that seem to never fit well. Complete the wing by carving the L.E. to shape and sanding the tips into a blending taper.

**Stabilizer and Rudder:** Use the copier-Sprayment technique to produce the ribs, or merely cut blanks that can be fitted onto the spars, then block sand to airfoil after assembly. Pin L.E., T.E. strips and tips flat over the plans, position bottom spar, then glue ribs into place. Add fillers, gussets and top spar. Carve and sand to shape, then add elevator. Hinge and epoxy the wire joiner before cutting slot into elevator. The lightning holes were fabricated by placing an X-Acto punch into a drill press and "drilling" while punching. Backing up the balsa with a piece of pine greatly reduces tearing of the wood when the "drill" penetrates.

The rudder is so simple that no explanation is needed. Just remember the filler runs to the bottom of the stab slot. Both members are covered prior to final assembly. I use toothpicks secured with C.A. to anchor the hinges. This is a simple but extremely strong technique with minimal opportunity to slop glue into the hinge.

**Fuselage:** Cover plan with Saran Wrap. Place previously cut 3/16 panel ply side over the plan, using pins through holes. Assemble one side and allow glue to set at least 4 to 6 hours. Remove pins that will obstruct second side, cover joints



There are many reasons daughter Sheeley will never forget her dentist pop, and one of them is that she always gets to display his favorite projects that get published in this magazine. From our own work with RC old-timers as sport jobs, we suspect Super Brig has lively power performance.

with masking tape to ease separation, then build second identical side over first. Allow overnight curing before removing sides from plan. Separate halves using a table (casing) knife and gently pop the sides apart. Remove masking tape.

Trial fit bulkheads A and B, then epoxy into appropriate slots in the sides. Invert assembly with wing rails over top view, pin and align for right angle relationship in both planes. Check alignment with triangles and carpenter's square. Keep the fuselage square in both dimensions by adjusting the clothespins and masking tape used to hold everything in place. Complete all cross braces and landing gear block-ply bottom.

Allow 24 hours for glue cure, then pull tailpost ends together to meet exactly over the center section of the top view. Note the tail skid member is epoxyed to the outside of the tail post. Check squareness as the cross members are added. Add tailskid and subrudder, using epoxy.

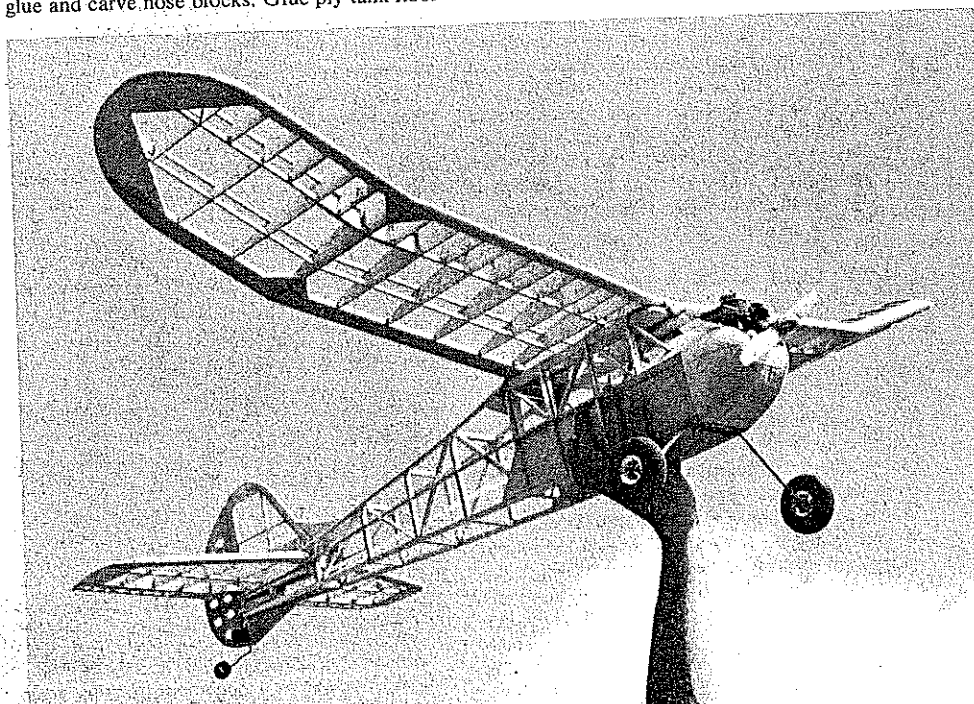
Remove from board, add side stringers, tack glue and carve nose blocks. Glue ply tank floor

and 3/16 tail fill-in, place window filler strips, etc. Drill gussets for dowel, but do not install until fuselage has been covered. Epoxy cabin roof in place then epoxy dowel to it (this is an excellent situation for Thix-tropic epoxy). Sand and shape fuselage to final form, add ply coaming and permanently epoxy nose blocks. See cross-section for clarification.

Trial fit engine, tank, undercarriage and wheels, tail, etc., then locate position for servo tray and battery pack. Epoxy tray rail to ply side, then cut and adjust Nyrods or pushrods to fit. Try to balance. It should be slightly nose heavy at this time as the covering will move the CG rearward about  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$ ".

**Covering and Finish:** My model is covered in transparent orange MonoKote with white polyurethane paint used for trim and fuel proofing. The polyurethane paints will stick quite well on MonoKote, requiring no special preparation.

*Continued on page 125*



While Doc says elevator and engine are absolutely vital to safe flying, we didn't know that 30 years ago. We cracked up virtually everything so it seemed OK to the pioneers. Take that landing gear for instance. The torsion gear was still unknown, and we still did not have throttles.

## FF Indoor/Tenney

*continued from page 55*

specially poured for patches—at least 8 in. wide and up to 24 or 36 in. long—and cut pieces of typewriter paper that just fit between the edges of the hoop. I then brush a thin line of rubber cement all around the edges of each of the papers and let it dry. The individual pieces of paper are then laid carefully on the film and pushed down until it adheres all around the paper. I fill the hoop with pieces of paper, turn it over so the paper is on the table, and cut the patches loose. These are then stored in a thin flat box with pieces of paper separating the patches. Then, I'm ready for field repairs whenever they are needed—if I remember to take the box to the meet!

Bud Tenney, P.O. Box 545, Richardson, TX 75080.

## Super Brig/Mathews

*continued from page 61*

Masking is accomplished rather easily with vinyl electrician's tape which should be removed within minutes of the application of the paints.

**Preflight:** At this point all equipment, hardware, etc., is permanently installed and tested. Trial run motor and obtain a consistent carburetor setting, check operation of radio equipment with the engine running, also range check. All functions and operations should be checked and adjusted at home to avoid the mental errors that often result from the frustrations generated at the flying site by malfunctions. You will be tense enough without being forced to try to scrounge an Allen wrench to tighten a wheel collar, etc. Do it at home!

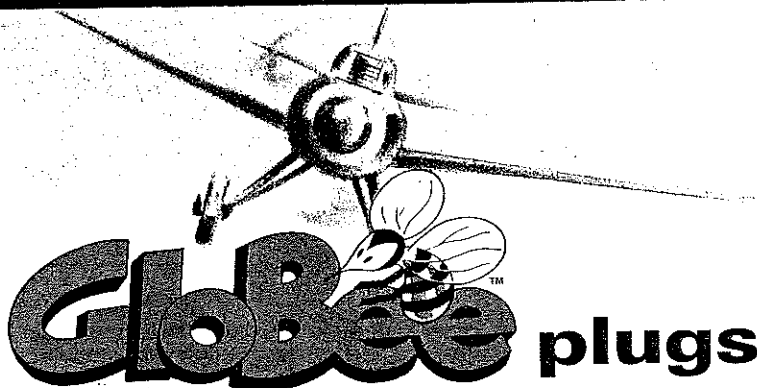
Check for and eliminate any warps, misalignments or deviations in CG position.

**Flight:** With the forces and moments set up as drawn, the Super Brigadier is a relatively docile sport-trainer. Takeoffs are essentially a throttle-rudder function requiring little application of elevator. As the throttle is advanced, feed in enough right rudder to steer the model straight ahead. Once rotation speed is reached the fin becomes effective requiring decreasing amounts of rudder. Turns are more typical of a trainer than an Old-Timer, as Bill Winter predicted. That is, little if any self correction is evident; the turn must be terminated with opposite rudder and slight up elevator. The model will groove well, but must be flown at all times, unlike an Old-Timer with its built-in stability.

Conversely, the Super Brigadier is remarkably forgiving of over corrections and "ham handedness" fitting into the flight performance spectrum between an A-Ray or Kadet and a true Old-Timer free-flight conversion. Stalls are "mushy" with little tendency to drop a wing or snap. With power, the Brigadier will spin after about 270 degrees of tight turn, coming off a power-on stall. These characteristics give excellent slow speed flight, producing a model that is an excellent transition between Old-Timer and basic trainer.

The Super Brigadier also surprised me by teaching some lessons in aerodynamics long since forgotten. The resultant model certainly is not only possessed of a novel appearance, but fills a gap in the performance range for the emerging radio flier. I would hope those who choose to construct a Super Brigadier will receive as much joy and fun as mine has given me.

Addendum: Once this article was completed and the "Brig" had filled her enjoyment quo-



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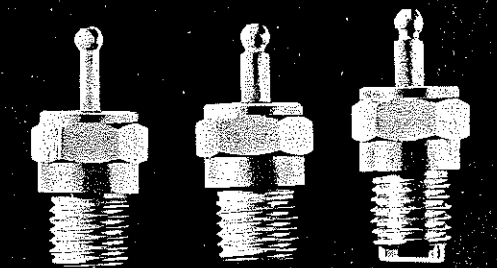
Why the racing plug? Because racing makes the toughest demands on plug performance, so Fusite has concentrated on this model, and all other plug models have benefitted from that attention.

Of special interest to all flyers is the fact that GloBee plugs have an absolute leak-proof seal—a hermetic\* bond between the glass, metal pin, and plug body. Other

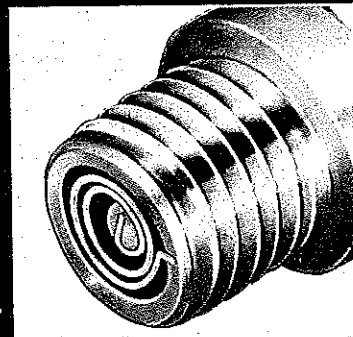
glow plug manufacturers employ organic fiber gaskets which depend on mechanical pressure for sealing, tend to oxidize during engine operation, and subsequently leak. Not so with GloBee's permanent glass-to-metal bond that affords positive protection against plug seal blowouts, lost compression, and resultant burned-up engines. Why make the best even better? Because nothing is "too good" when a championship is on the line. And why do the winners fly with GloBees? Because "GloBee plugs put more sting in your engine!"

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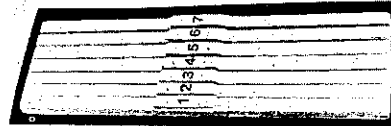
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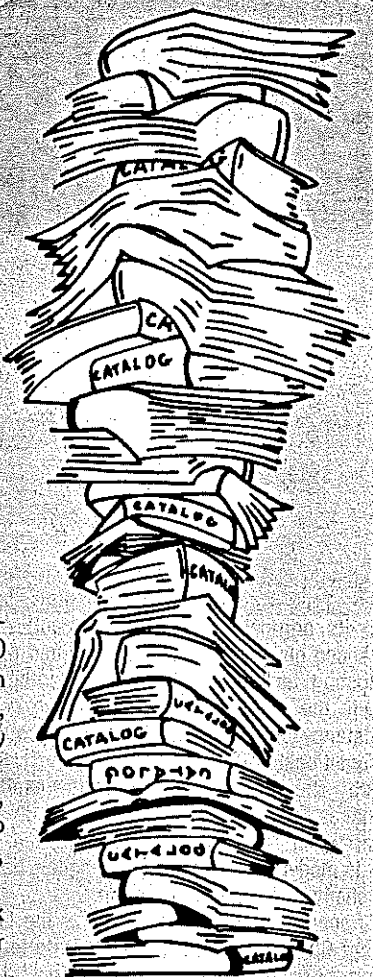
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tient for me, she was sold to Bill Moore of Anthony, Kansas. His experiences so graphically illustrate the versatility of this design that Bill Winter has asked me to relate them to you.

With no instructor of any kind available to them in their small village, Bill and three friends used the "Super Brig" as a vehicle on which to learn to fly RC. Although none of them had ever flown a RC model, they bravely got together one Sunday afternoon and proceeded to "self instruct" themselves. Unable to successfully take off the dirt road they were flying from (at least initially), they opted to hand launch the model after several ground loops. (Note: I recommend flying from short grass, not hand launching.)

*Incredible as it may seem, before sunset they all were successfully taking off, flying, and landing the "Super Brig!"* To be sure the model exhibited some dinged wing tips, a scratched up nose, several elastic bands were popped off, and the wheel pants were long gone, but the model was nonetheless still flyable. It had survived this extraordinary flying session by smoothing out the inevitable overcontrols of these beginners, correcting its attitude while they were getting re-oriented, and forgiving them their errors. Had I not flown this model before them, I would find this story as unbelievable as you must. *It is absolutely true!*

In a single day this highly stable, extremely rugged, and relatively viceless model had introduced four total strangers to the joys of this hobby-sport we love so much. I know of no higher recommendation to the prospective builder.

### Timer/Lidberg

*continued from page 62*

help clean and lubricate the timer.

Ignition and electric models may have their own peculiar characteristics, but they provide their own kinds of satisfactions, too. Try them—you might like 'em.

Note: The K Mart timers normally sell for \$4.96, which is a bargain, but every now and then they are marked down to about \$4. Other materials cited are K&S aluminum sheet and brass strip, from the hobby shop.

### Letters to the Editor

*continued from page 12*

before us, and happily punch away on the multiple functions of our little button transmitter. When you visit this area, please join us for a day of flying activities.

Vince Pacifico  
Plainview, NY

*This letter is on the personal side, but Vince expressed some interesting thoughts; hence, its presence here. Besides, we often hit that infamous oak tree! And, Vince, we remember all those great guys (names deleted)—and many others there. Say hello to them.*

### Ships That Pass in the Night

I was just answering a "letters to ed" inquiry in May MA (about a 1940 mystery biplane) and thought I should take a minute to write you a thank-you note.

Your fine work in those days (and a few 'others') started me on the hobby that has been a source of great satisfaction for all the intervening years. (How could it be 40 years?)

The most beautiful model I ever saw was built by Dean Barry, the designer of the biplane mentioned above. It was a red, white, and green rubber pwd Caproni biplane, and it made such an impression that I can still picture it 40 years later. Awhile back I tracked down the plans for

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By



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that ship and was pleasantly surprised to see W.W. as the designer.

Knowing the economic situation in those days, you probably thought of plans like those as an easy (?) buck, rather than inspiration for American youth. But quality work rates a sincere "thank you," even if it is 40 years late.

Can you remember what a plans/article paid in those days?

Paul N. McIlrath  
Cedar Rapids, IA

*Fellows, we don't want to even seem to brag, but a letter from McIlrath is a rare honor—he is known and respected by all old-time rubber fliers for little things and scale jobs. Besides, several Maxcutters have asked us about that Caproni and how it flies. We thought it is. We didn't remember. To you guys who have built many of our rubber jobs, mostly out of MAN, we apparently can recommend that Caproni. Also a Grumman biplane, the Boeing F4B-4, and a Curtiss SOC-1. There were others, but these made the greatest impression upon their designer. Although some of our designs, like Dailey's Fiat, now win big things, we rate ourselves below Earl Stahl, the master of simple, light, high performance stuff. But you know that. (P.S. We were paid from \$40 to \$55, inked plans included.)*

#### Think This Over

The first part of this letter is devoted to my opinion of a television show recently aired on one of the major networks. The show I am referring to is *Hawaii Five-O*. The show centered around the use of radio controlled model aircraft to pull off an extraordinary (to say the least) jewel heist. I believe ridiculous is more the word. The two worst parts were: 1) Showing radio controlled model aircraft being used as flying bombs; 2) Having Steve McGarret (Jack Lord) on national television referring to these models as "adult toys."

I will spare the rest of the details because they were, so far as model aviation is concerned, ridiculous! Model aviation enthusiasts needed that show like Custer needed more Indians!

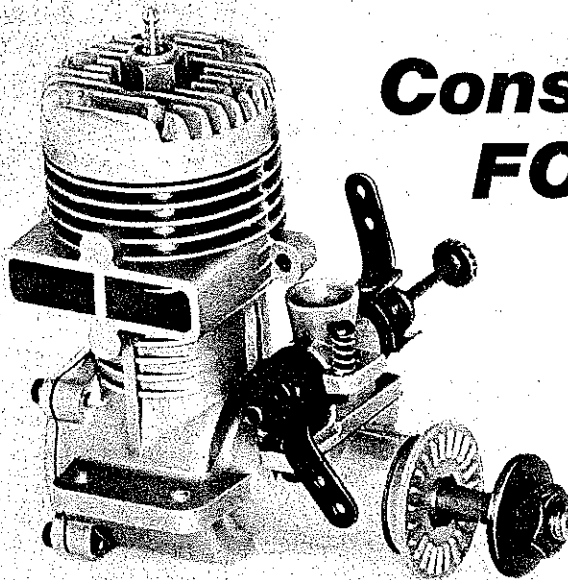
The second part of this relates to an ad which appeared in the April issue of *MA* (inside back cover). It seems that Brand A is referring to Brand B's product as an "underpowered toy." (Underpowered by whose standards?)

The reason this upsets me is that I got started in radio controlled aircraft in May 78, and my first plane was one of those "underpowered toys." Maybe for the pattern flier it would have lacked something, but for me, the beginner, it had more power than I knew what to do with. But it did fly, and very well at that. I was one of those who had to teach myself. Probably one of the best things to learn, and least taught, is making dead-stick landings. When I finally advanced to a Senior Falcon, I had all that under my belt. You just have to be right on the approach when the fan ain't turning. Now, whenever I have to make a dead-stick landing, I am thankful for the experience that the "underpowered toy" gave me.

The point of all this is that I do not like to see these or any model aircraft referred to as toys, whether it be an .049 ARF or a Nosen Cub, be it Steve McGarret or one manufacturer knocking another's product. And the last place it should be done, or allowed, is in the fine magazine of *Model Aviation!*

R. B. Ryman  
Harrisonburg, VA

*Hear, hear! We fully agree. No model is a toy. If it were, kids would need "shrinks." The editor has no control over ads. AMA and industry should have a "conscience board." We don't see how that can be done.*



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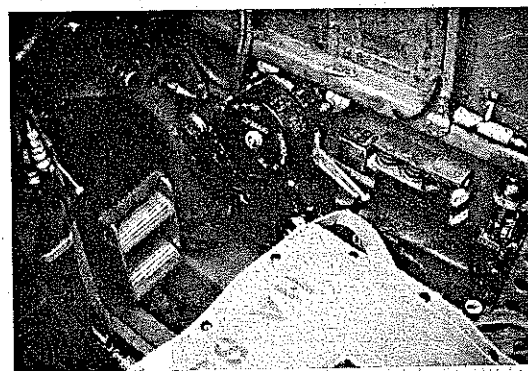
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Tiger Moth - yellow  
Tiger Moth - camouflage  
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August 1980 127