



Newsletter

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THIS'N THAT

► Got a note from Ed Dumas. He and Jerel Zarestky recently got together;

“ Hi Jim, *Jerel Zarestsky and I were talking over dinner one evening after a club meeting and he mentioned that he had a vinyl cutter at home and could cut nearly any shape given a CAD file outline of the path for the knife blade to follow. I immediately thought of a task I was dreading which involved cutting a mask to paint N-numbers on the rudder for my Piper J-3 Cub project. The numbers are relatively small and intricate and I wasn't looking forward to the cutting the masks by hand at all...*

To test the idea I sent Jerel a CAD file of my N-numbers and he created a path for the knife to follow. .



Illustration 1: picture 1

Picture 1 shows me placing the masking material (1" wide 3M #218 fine line tape) over the vinyl substrate. It took a little practice, but we soon figured out the correct origin position for the cutter, and the correct force to cut through the 3M tape without destroying it. After a couple of hours, we had produced several cuttings that were usable as masks to paint the numbers on the rudder.

Picture 2 shows the final cut lines on the tape that produced the masks.

Next, the masks had to be separated from the backing and applied to the rudder.



Illustration 2: Picture 2

The technique worked very well, although there were quite a few lessons learned. First, use a quality tape to create the masks. I use 3M #218 fine line tape. It is available in several widths, from 1/16" to 1" and beyond. I used 1" tape (available from West Marine, online) for this purpose and it worked well. It doesn't bleed with the butyrate lacquer paint and is relatively easy to work with.



Illustration 3: Finished product...

My numbers ended up with a little bleed through, but it was due to using inferior blue tape masks that didn't adequately overlap the 3M 218 tape. The bleed through was easily fixed, but the better

solution is to not let it happen in the first place.

I shot slightly thinned butyrate dope, let it cure for about 15 minutes and then removed the masks. It took about 2 hours at Jerel's house to cut the masks, about 1.5 hours to apply the masks and setup the gun, about 1 minute to shoot the paint, followed by about 30 minutes to clean everything up. A lot of time, but I think the results are worth it.--Ed"

Excellent work, Ed. Members, this is the sort of effort a devoted builder will put forth in order to make his model as close to the real thing as possible.

One of the best scratch builders I ever knew was former KCRC member and ex-president, and ex-newsletter editor Joe Parrott. He could find a three view, scale it up and build an outstanding model in a very short time. Phil Cope flew one of his WWI models at the Joe Nall event a few years ago..

► **In my ongoing push** for members to give building a try, Kay Kasimer, who is a prolific builder in KCRC, offered this bit of good information;

“ **To me, the most essential** tool for building model airplanes (or boats) is the ‘X-Acto’ or ‘Excel’ knife with #11 blades. I started out with other types, including those snap-off utility knives. Looking back, I wish I had skipped that phase.

Once you have an X-Acto knife, preferably with a handle that doesn’t roll off the table to harpoon your foot, you might look for a scroll saw, circular table saw, mini lathe and computer-controlled mill. These can all be useful, but they pale in comparison to Blue Painter’s Tape.

You see, tape fundamentally comes in three varieties: One that doesn’t stick, one that never comes back off, and Blue Painter’s Tape. BPT will stick well enough, yet allow itself to be removed without trouble.

A small sampling of its many uses: Hold pieces of balsa together until the glue sets. Most glues do not stick to the sticky side of the tape. Use that to your advantage, creating nice glue joints that do not require any sanding. For example, when joining balsa sheets to create larger sheets, lay them side-by-side, tape the seam, turn over, ‘crack open’ at the seam to add glue, lay back down, cover that side with tape as well. Wait. Remove tape, done.

BPT has some flexibility, which allows its use for clamping. Apply glue to wood, put pieces together, then wrap with tape, ‘pulling’ the tape a little as you do this. The tape will now apply elastic force to the glue joins. You could use rubber bands, but since tape is wider than rubber bands you avoid adding dents to balsa wood.

BPT is great for marking things. If you write onto balsa wood with a pencil, you leave dents. Use a felt pen, and you’ll still read that through the covering. So instead, I put a piece of BPT on the part to mark, then write onto that with a felt tip pen. Things I write include ‘left side’, ‘up’, or I mark the location where I need to drill a hole.

I also use this a lot for reminders. When I return from the flying field and notice that for example a tail wheel is loose, but I don’t feel like fixing that right now, I put a piece of tape on it. When I’m done with building for the evening, I often put a piece of tape where I left off, maybe with comments like ‘drill with 1/8’. Next time I feel like working on models, this allows me to do that without first sitting there for a while and trying to remember what needed doing.

I wish I had done that on this one plane where I had slotted the wing and ailerons for hinges, then test fitted it all together. A week later I added the servos, linkage etc. Again later, I was at the flying field, only noticing at the last second that I had not glued the hinges. Just putting some pieces of BPT onto the test-fitted hinges would have reminded me to glue them!

You can combine holding and marking, which should be of interest to ARF buyers who don’t build but still need to attach the almost ready cowl to the almost ready fuse. Tape the cowl to the fuse, mark on the tape where you need to drill the mounting holes. The tape helps getting the drill started, preventing it from slipping on the cowl.

For all of this, I do prefer the original brand name 3M Scotch Blue Painter’s Tape. I’ve tried alternate brands, and also tried special use variants like ‘Baseboard & Trim’ or ‘Delicate Surfaces’. None of these offered any advantage. The only example where original BPT has let me down is several years later: I had used BPT as cable ties for rolls of cable. After a couple of years, the glue does turn icky.

You don’t need any additional tools to cut the tape, no special tape dispenser. You simply rip the tape off its roll, with one exception: If you use BPT for its original purpose as masking tape when painting, you might have to cut exact pieces of tape, with brings us back to the most important tool, that X-Acto knife with #11 blade.... Kay “ ■

Thanks, Kay. All good advice and it shows up on your models !!

► New KCRC secretary Roger Kroodsmma attended the annual KCRC banquet and sent this report.

KCRC Annual Banquet and Meeting January 10, 2017

The annual banquet was at the Golden Oak Grill Buffet in Oak Ridge on Tuesday January 10 at 6:30 p.m. with 45 to 50 people attending, including family of club members.

Out going president Ralph Colon introduced the new officers, while Joel Hebert is continuing his many-year service as Treasurer.

During the banquet, Rick Thompson, the new president, made some brief announcements, beginning with thanks to the outgoing officers for their service.

Donna Rogers, wife of former member Michael Rogers who passed away recently, has some RC equipment for sale. No info on what. Her phone number is (865) 387-5310.

On January 9 Rick received an email from Dan Carbone of Avion Unmanned Solutions of Huntsville, Alabama, who wants to discuss the possibility of using the KCRC field during the afternoons from Monday Jan 30 – Friday Feb 3. Avion received a request from Oak Ridge National Laboratory to train 10 personnel in the use of unmanned aircraft. Rick replied to the email but further discussion is pending.

Rick then gave club members thanks for their services, including John Basalone for maintaining grass and field, John Partridge for weed-eating, Bill Dodge for runway maintenance, Jeff Prosis for getting the club's website up and running, Jim Scarbrough for the consistent effort it takes to prepare the monthly newsletter, numerous other people who made various contributions including labor, furniture, and appliances, and RC flight instructors Phil Cope, Frank Allemand, and Brad Butzbach.

Finally, Rick prepared a questionnaire and distributed a copy to everyone to get opinions on whether the club should sponsor more activities or events, have summertime monthly club meetings at the field on Tuesday evenings as at present or on Saturday mornings, and have short how-to presentations at the end of each monthly meeting. Results and discussion later.

Jack Cooper brought some carbon fiber rod free for anyone who wanted some.

Rick announced the winners of the cash door prizes—3rd place to Phil Cope, 2nd to Paul Funk, and 1st to Gary Swigart.

Joel Hebert, Treasurer, was busy much of the evening receiving dues payments from members.

**Respectfully submitted, Roger Kroodsma,
KCRC Secretary..** ■

Pictures by Roger Kroodsma



► What do you do on these cold dreary winter days when it's too unpleasant to go out? KCRCer Gary Swigart sent me a note on what he does:

“Hi Jim, Gary Swigart here. This might be an article for the news letter, if you are really hard up, HA! (Ed; note;;; Always!!) It's not directly model aircraft but it is a hobby and model related.

Here it is. I have also attached two pictures. I am a fairly new member of KCRC. Wife and I moved to Knoxville from Prescott, AZ in late July. Beside model airplanes another hobby I have is model railroading.

I got (should say my dad got) my first Lionel train when I was 10 yrs old (1951). We got another one a year later. The attached pictures show my current layout which I constructed this past fall. I measures 8 x 14 ft. I can have three trains running at the same time.

One similarity to this hobby as related to model aircraft is you do construction and working with your hands. Most of the buildings I constructed from scratch with balsa wood and of course a lot of glue and paint. The landscaping was a real challenge. During the cold and windy weather this is an alternative to R/C..Gary Swigart.... gasf4e@gmail.com



Gee, what a great looking layout!

I've always been fascinated by railroads but never had the room to put one together. I understand that model trains are one of the most popular hobbies and that about a billion bucks a year are spent on it. About what my wife says I spend on RC...

► And now in closing, some disturbing news. A notice that Hobby People (Hobby Shack), who not long ago had 20 retail stores operating in southern California, is closing the last eight stores that are still in business.

Cliff Whitley, who operates Atlanta Hobby store, wrote a very good article on the demise of the small retail

stores and now that I think about it, it's very true. I remember in Lenoir City in the 40s, 50s and 60s and the downtown area would be full of people walking around shopping at the small family owned stores. Each retail store supported several families, the owners and those who worked there.

Then came Wallyworld and the big grocery chains and suddenly all the people were going there and away from downtown. The family owned stores dried up and closed. A few of the people got jobs at the big box stores but a lot of them didn't!

Now there's online shopping and some of the big box stores are hurting!

What's the answer? I have no idea! There's no doubt that online shopping is convenient and Amazon has yet to disappoint me when it comes to finding some obscure item. When I go to the only hobby store still operating in this area, I have trouble finding items I need to work on some building project because there's not any profit to the store to stock items they can't sell and there's not enough builders left..

Some one recently wrote about the hobby store in the small town he grew up in, that he used when he was young. The store had an area in back where young builders could come and work on their projects and leave them there till they came back. As I recall, Hobby Town tried that at their store in Knoxville at one time. Don't know if they still do, but kids can't walk to the store now and riding a bike on the city streets is dangerous. Not to mention the fact that costs are out the roof. Balsa has gone up in cost so that it's almost as expensive by weight as some precious metals. When I was a kid, I supported my model building by mowing lawns or other odd jobs. Now a youngster has to have to have a job or a BIG allowance to support it.

In spite of all that, the hobby is not dead. There are RC clubs all around that keep their membership up, but club dues and membership in AMA (which is required in most clubs) costs a pretty penny. Mostly the costs are necessary to cover the expenses needed to operate, but they pretty much eliminate young folks who are struggling to get by on their paychecks. When I joined an RC club in 1968, the dues were kept fairly low because the members did the work needed to keep the field up. Now we mostly hire somebody to do it. Thank goodness for John Baselone and the folks helping him. Don't know the shape of the treasury now but these members' efforts certainly help.

Well, I'll get off my soapbox now and say that, whatever the cost, it's been worth it.....Jim ■

As far as I know, we only have one hobby store left in this area. If there are others, please let me know and I'll pass the word along. I encourage every member to support those we have left before they too are gone.