

SEA FURY

By STEVE GARDENER . . . One of the last of the prop-driven military fighter aircraft, and certainly one of the prettiest. Build with the "gear up" for improved performance . . . and looks . . . in the air.

• I saw my first Sea Fury at the EAA fly-in at Wittman Field, Oshkosh, in 1975 . . . It was very big, very solid, and very beautiful. I had seen pictures of it in different books and had always said that it was a very good looking plane. But now I wonder if all the other planes that I see in different books and say, "that is a good looking plane", will impress me like the Sea Fury did when I saw it for real.

I walked up to it from the front and started to feast on the prop first. It is huge! Five blades with very coarse pitch and a blade cord that isn't to be believed . . . and when it turns, it turns to the left! The cowl is an example of the perfect way to hide a radial engine of this size. Right behind the cowl is the wing leading edge with its radiator intakes (oil cooler) yawning at you and its fake cannon barrels looking very well. With a shallow dihedral break half way out on the wing, and the elliptical outer panels, it makes a pretty shape with lots of area. The canopy is perched on top of the crest formed by the slope of the tail meeting the slope of the nose, and is just

the right shape. The fuselage tapers down to the well proportioned empennage in a long sweep that is just the right length to balance the wing and tail areas. Over all, it is a very handsome airplane, and with its large wing, it is a good choice for a Peanut.

You should always pick your Peanut materials very carefully to get a light model, but when you plan to add some weight with an opaque finish you should be doubly careful about the weight of all the other items. The model in the photos is very heavy for a Peanut, and it must struggle to make 20 seconds, although a lighter model could easily do twice that. The next one I build will be covered with one coat of thinned clear dope on C-paper or Japanese tissue. If you fly indoors, you might try smaller wood sizes than are called out in the plans, or leave the landing gear off to save weight.

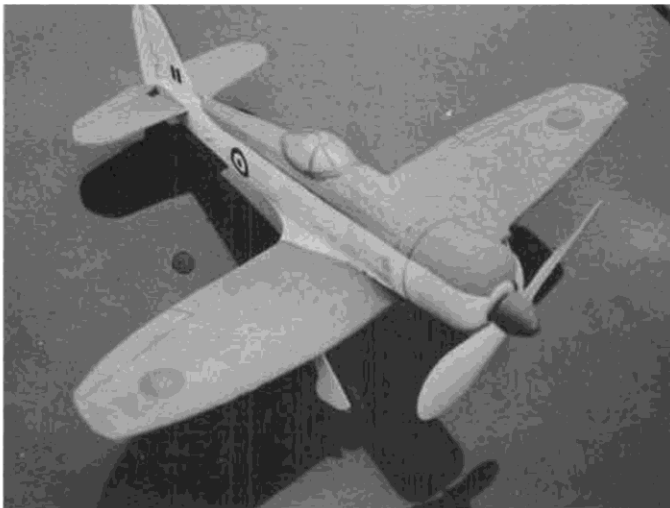
Start the model by building the tail surface. This model has a long tail, so sand everything a lot before you cover it, to keep the tail light. You might build the rudder and elevators separately if you are very careful about weight. It

helps to trim the model without having to try to keep some warps in and some warps out.

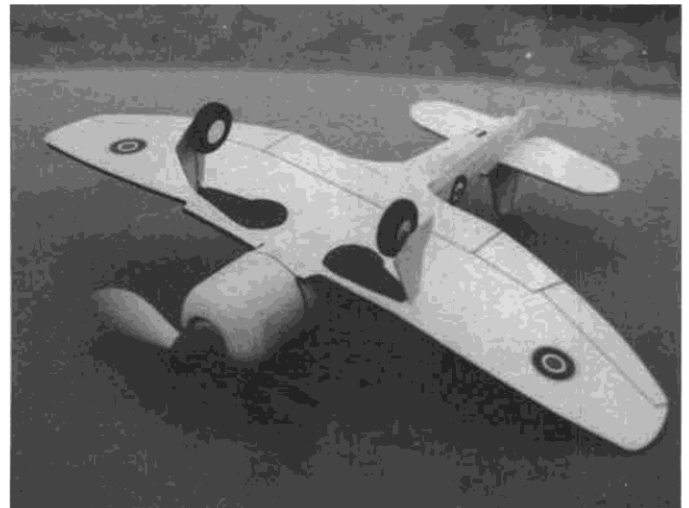
The wing is the prettiest part of the plane when it is in the air, floating around on all those square inches. The airplane has a bunch of area for a WW-II fighter, but still, if you can see your way to it, you might leave off the landing gear to save weight. If you do leave the gear off, you can use lighter balsa for the dihedral rib. Pick hard balsa for the leading edge and medium or light for the rest of the wing. The outer bays of the wing, out past the dihedral break, were covered with the tissue wet. You must pin the surface down when you are done covering, before it has dried, to prevent warps.

Start the fuselage by cutting out all the formers of light balsa. Use fairly hard balsa for the keel, as it takes all the handling loads and some of the rubber tension loads, too. All other stringers are made of 1/20 square balsa, or if you can make them of 1/32 square balsa, you could save some weight.

Continued on page 80



Steve went a little overboard on the finish for this one, but it's worth it and he can still get 20-second flights indoors.



By building extra light and using retracted gear configuration, all that wing area should produce a real flier.

After you have the fuselage framed up, you can tack glue the wing to it to make the wing fairings. A trial-and-error fit of the fairings is the best way to get them perfect. After you get them made you can cover them with the same color tissue that you used for the wing.

The cowling is a source of trouble for some airplanes, but this one is easy to build. Go ahead and use hard balsa for the cowling because you will need the nose weight, and this is the first thing to hit the ground anyway. Build some down and right thrust into the nose plug so you will have to worry less later about thrust shims.

Make the canopy by carving a plug of the proper shape and stretching hot butyrate plastic over it. Trim it to a nice fit and paint the frame lines on it with the correct color paint for plastics.

Assemble the model in your favorite order. Be sure you get the cowling on in the right position, so that the down and right thrust is pointing down and right. I toyed with the idea of a five-bladed, left-handed scale flying propeller, but decided to install a five-inch Peck-Polymers plastic one instead.

The model flies on one loop of 1/8 grey rubber about 10 to 12 inches long. Balance it at the spar or just in front of it, and use up-trim to get a good flat glide. Make sure everything is straight except for 1/16 washout in both wingtips and 1/32 rudder deflection to the left. If the model spirals to the left, remove the washout from the left wing. Try for about a 30-foot diameter circle indoors, and a 50-foot diameter outdoors.

I hope you like your Sea Fury and I hope that if you get a chance to see one for real at Oshkosh (or Chino, Calif.) you will take it. You will see other things of interest to you, too. ●