



"MYSTERY MAN"

OLD TIMER Model of the Month
 Designed by: Elbert J. Weathers
 Redrawn by: Phil Bernhardt
 Text by: Bill Northrop

● "If you can't beat 'em, throw the book at 'em!"
 Of Californian Elbert J. Weathers' many famous gas models, the "Mystery Man" will undoubtedly go down in history as the most remembered. A beautiful and well thought-out design, it had two outstanding features that immediately identified it.

First, there was the graceful gull wing with curved up tips. The gull center section was built as part of the fuselage, and the outer panels plugged in

with tubes and dowels, much like our modern R/C sailplanes.
 The most outstanding feature was the takeoff dolly. To eliminate drag, and yet permit unassisted takeoffs, Weathers designed a dolly from which the plane lifted as it gained flying speed. At first, it was considered quite a novel and interesting feature . . . but it soon became a problem . . . Elbert was placing in too many contests! Before long, the "If you can't beat 'em" motto was applied, and the ship was declared illegal . . . unless the heavy takeoff dolly was locked in place. The contention was that the "Mystery Man" was "Dropping parts in flight", which of course, has always been illegal in competition flying.

In our estimation, the "Mystery Man" takeoff dolly is no less legal than the dolly now used by control line speed ships, and it should be declared "Not Guilty" and given a full pardon! However, in case you should run up against some narrow-minded CD who thinks lifting off of a dolly is the same as dropping parts, you better keep a set of locking pins in your field box . . . or hand launch!