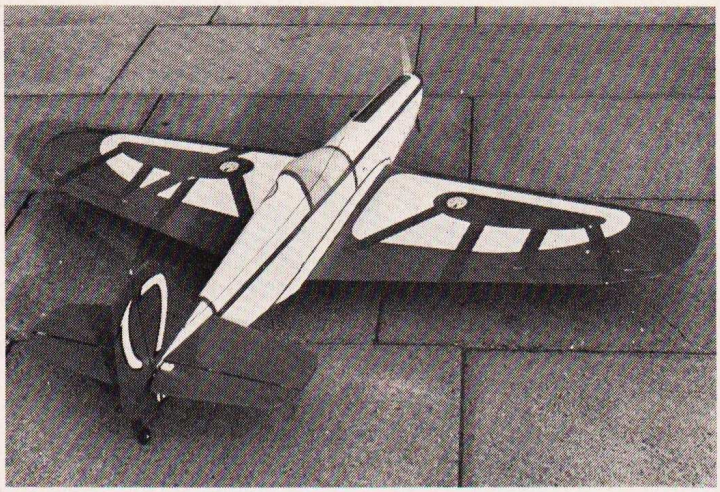
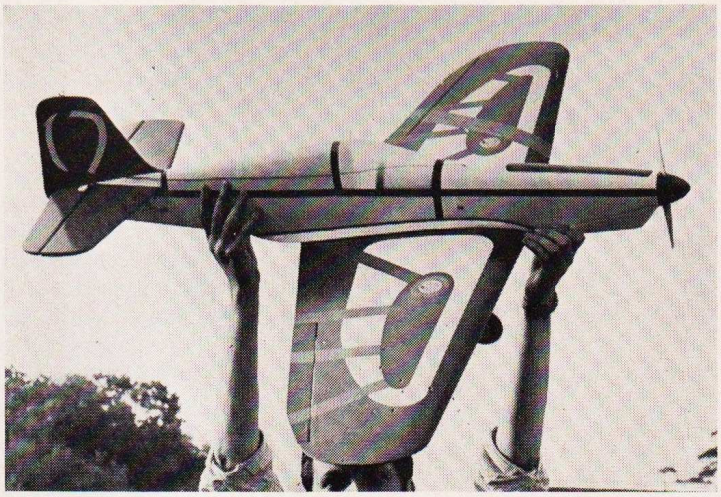


R.C.M.& E. Kit Review

TRUE-LINE/SUPER MODELS PHAETON

F.A.I. pylon racer



Two views of Alistair Fraser's completed review model. Alistair made quite sure he would see this one at the No. 1 pylon.

BY any standards, 1971 has, for F.A.I. pylon racing, been the year of the *Phaeton*. A look inside the processing tent at the Nationals earlier this year confirmed that this would be so . . . there were Phaetons spaced out along the processing tables almost to infinity!

The almost universal acceptance of this design for F.A.I. pylon racing is hardly surprising. Ever since designer Frank Van den Bergh scorched away to an easy victory at the 1970 Nationals the design has been in demand, and Frank went on to emphasise the superiority of his creation during the rest of that season by winning the B.M.P.R.A.'s F.A.I. Class Season Championship.

Recognising a good thing when they see it, pylon racing fans took to the Phaeton like a K&B 40 to a 9 x 7 prop, and a number of top race enthusiasts have used the Phaeton to very good effect. Two who come readily to mind are Keith Pascoe for instance, who used the Phaeton throughout the past season to finish up winner in the B.M.P.R.A. Season Championship this year, and Phil Greeno of North London R/C M.F.C. who has had a very successful first season with a Phaeton that turns in times as good as the Phaeton designer. This certainly proves that the Phaeton is no 'one man design'.

True-Line are to be congratulated on producing the first British kit for an F.A.I. Pylon Racer and in choosing the Van den Bergh design they could hardly fail to come up with a winner. This kit was a long time coming and, we know, eagerly awaited by many who planned to make their race debut with this design. The True Line kit was certainly well worth waiting for.

Main feature of this kitting effort, upon opening the box, is a set of foam wing panels which are light, and contribute well to maintaining total weight down to the F.A.I. minimum limit, thanks to lightweight veneer covering.

Fuselage components are sawn to shape. The main fuselage sides are each supplied in two pieces and are joined with ply doublers, also cut ready to use. Assembly is in no way difficult and is certainly speedy, aided by the foam-and-veneer turtle deck pieces which go forward and aft of the cockpit area. These pieces are doubly helpful, saving building time and also saving weight.

The original Phaeton, as published in *R.C.M.&E.*, September 1970 edition, used a $\frac{1}{2}$ in. sheet solid tailplane. True-Line's kit version employs a built-up unit with $\frac{1}{16}$ in. skins top and bottom. The weight saving here is very useful in maintaining the correct balance of the model.

No kit these days is complete without its complement of hardware, and the Phaeton kit certainly excells here with formed wire main undercarriage, robust strip aileron horns, centre-line elevator horn, fuel tank, nylon tailwheel bracket and nylon spinner. Also supplied are cockpit canopy, nylon rudder horn, wing retainer bolt set and glass fibre tape for wing joining.

Spread of components here emphasises simplicity of this kit. Note the foam and veneer top deck components, top left.

The Phaeton has found international acceptance as Kevin McGrath and John Running of Toronto R/C Club, at right, show. Centre: top Phaeton operator of 1971, Keith Pascoe, B.M.P.R.A. season champ. Bottom: close-up of review model nose section.

Our review kit, assembled by Alistair Fraser, went together very rapidly to prove the point that the True-Line kit offers pylon race enthusiasts what they need most, a practical rugged model that can be replaced very quickly should the necessity arise (a polite way of saying that if you write off a model during a race session during the racing season, you're in for a crash building programme before the next race meeting, which might only be a week away).

Phlying the Phast Phaeton

Flying the Phaeton demands rigid observance of a few basic rules. Flout them and you'll be in trouble, particularly if this is your first pylon racer.

We've heard a lot of adverse reports about Phaetons being oversensitive to control surface movements and of difficulty due to tail heaviness. So we took all this up with designer 'Fast Frank', who insists that the balance point shown on the plan is quite correct. What he did emphasise is that the point shown is definitely the *maximum aft* balance point and that to balance the model any further aft is just asking for trouble. In fact, the Phaeton can be balanced anything up to a full inch further forward than indicated, and this will help to tone down the flying characteristics to a more acceptable level for the novice. Control surface movements should also be kept very small. About $\frac{3}{16}$ in.–$\frac{1}{4}$ in. either side of neutral is all that should be required on the elevator, and the ailerons are about the same. It is on these two particular points, balance and control surface throw that one has to be particularly careful. The near-enough merchants who lift up a model, support it on a couple of fingers and decide that the balance is 'about right' are just asking for trouble. So be precise in the entire preparation of your Phaeton, and this will certainly pay real dividends.

The Phaeton is a particularly easy model to build, made even easier by True-Line's kit. It is this very simplicity that tends to induce a sense of sloppiness into the approach to a very precise form of R/C flying. Avoid that temptation and the Phaeton will be a really first class introduction to pylon racing. It can also be a very competitive introduction.

Manufacturer

True-Line Manufacturing, 41 Nottingham Road, Keyworth, Notts.

Distributor

Super Models, 3 Chapel Street, Spondon, Derby.

Price: £21.34.