

MAKING BALSA DOWELS

By Ted Allebone

An article published in the November 2007 issue of the Cloudbusters Newsletter, Dave Bubolz, Editor

In searching for balsa dowel for his latest project Ted found the only commercial source to be in merry old England which seemed a bit far to send for sticks. Pondering a solution he found that regular metal hex nuts became dies to transform square stock into round stock. Simply thread square stock into a suitable nut for a 1/2" or so and then pull it out. Repeat to get the length of dowel needed. When questioned about the intricacies of the process, like coarse or fine thread, Ted's reply (he's really an Englishman at heart) was "any old bloody nuts."

ED: And while we're on the subject of balsa dowels, here's another way:

HOLE CENTERING IN A BALSA DOWEL

By Paul McIlrath

From an old August 1993 issue of Scale Staffel, Tom Arnold, Editor

To make a small hole down the center of a balsa stick or dowel: in this example, a 1/32 bore in a 1/8 dowel.

1. Take two convenient lengths of 1/16 x 1/8 balsa and scribe a groove down the center of one face of each using a hard pencil or metal scribe.
2. Make scribe marks deep enough to accept a piece of 1/32 music wire as shown. Grease or wax the wire very lightly, then glue and clamp the two strips face to face with the wire in place. As the glue dries, twist the wire occasionally to be sure it doesn't lock in place.
3. When glue is dry, sand the strip round and cut off lengths to suit your application.

