

Discovered - Some Secrets of Vince Burton's Beautiful Color Trim

by George White

While attending a Cat Glider competition sponsored by the Cloud Climbers of SE Louisiana, (Jim Bethea, CD), I was struck by the finely crafted and beautifully finished stick and tissue models also being flown for fun by various members of that club. I was especially intrigued by some models built by Vince Burton, who by using creative trimming and color had turned what would have been rather ordinarily looking models into dazzlers. Since Vince hadn't taken any lessons from the former Louisiana governor Edwin Edwards he wouldn't take any of my bribe money to tell me how he did such beautiful work. Instead, he just out and out told me without taking any money. If that kind of behavior gets around it may take all the color out of Louisiana politics!!

Vince said he uses either regular Japanese tissue or silk, sprayed with a couple of coats of nitrate dope. Then he masks off areas where he wants a color different than the base tissue color. If you intend to do this yourself, don't even think about using your hardware store masking tape. Go to your nearest auto paint store and get a roll of Scotch brand 218 pale green plastic masking tape. The 1/2" wide works well for straight lines or very subtle curves, but won't hack it for real curves. To deal with curves, get a roll of Scotch brand 218 Fine Line Tape, which is blue in color. This stuff is only 1/8" wide and works well for the curves. On curves, I use the blue stuff and overlay it with the green tape which I trim to meet the curves.

Vince's secret formula paint is a spray can called "floral paint." The brand I've found in Pensacola at a store called "Michael's" (which I believe is a chain) is "Design Master," and comes in a fairly wide range of colors. The label on the can says it is "*formulated to provide the professional florist or decorator with a product delicate enough to color and preserve fresh flowers.*" It is high in acetone and low in solids, so it adds almost nothing to the weight of the model. The secret of applying it over Jap tissue is to avoid heavy coats. If you apply several mist coats, you can turn the tissue opaque, with an incredibly little weight build-up. If you try to get in a hurry and lay it on too thick or not wait a few minutes for each coat to dry, you'll find some subtle wrinkles when it dries - they aren't bad, but they are there. Guess how I know that!! On an Earl Stahl High Climber, I painted half the fuselage with this stuff to where the color was opaque, and it added .2 gram.

The floral paint gives a beautiful flat finish, which can be oversprayed with nitrate dope to give a gloss finish if you want to pay the weight penalty. Neither Vince nor I have any experience with using butyrate dope to make it fuel proof, so you are on your own if you fly glow engines. It works fine on Vince's Spearhead Sr. with an ignition engine.

The next secret Vince laid on me was the use of automotive trim tape. He buys 3M brand at an auto paint supply store, but sometimes they don't have it in stock. However, similar stuff can be

found in most auto parts stores. One brand is called "Prostripe." The only type I've found (and I haven't looked very hard) is the type which creates two parallel stripes, each $1/16$ " with $1/16$ " inch space between the stripes. This is really no sweat, because all you have to do is cut the two stripes apart before peeling each one off the carrier paper. Once attached, they appear to want to stay. There are various colors ranging from black to silver. When I added a single stripe to the High Climber trim, it added another .3 grams. Not something you might be able to tolerate on a dime scale, but I can live with a $1/2$ gram gain on a 30" High Climber.