

So, You Want To Build a Sparky!

by Lee Campbell as printed in the November/December issue of the "INFORMER" the newsletter of the Central Indiana Aeromodelers

The Sparky is the SAM Rubber Model of the Year for 2002!

As a result, there'll be a separate event for the Sparky at the SAM Champs (and possibly other meets). This special event will allow both folding and free-wheeling props, but the prop diameter is limited to 1/3 of the 32" wingspan, or 10.66". In addition, the model must be built using one of the four Comet kit plans (L.10, L.12, R9 and 3408). The My *Sparky* version with the single wheel gear and canted stab tips is not eligible. (The same goes for Pond plan L10A, which is also a single gear setup.)

Flying Surfaces:

These surfaces will remain nearly stock. Take care to keep the tips and stab/rudder setup light. I have added a couple of 1/16" X 1/8" braces to the top of the wing's 1st bay, in order to brace the wing hold-down bands. Since the stab/rudder assembly will need to be keyed, plan to have balsa around the areas to be keyed.

Fuselage:

The more recent plans do not show the sub-rudder. But it's needed in order to keep the model from Dutch rolling. The faster the model flies, the more pronounced the roll. The rudder plan is also shown in this article, as well as the pattern for the cabin side windows. Their addition won't help the flying one bit, but they sure do look spiffy! Fasten your window pattern to a sheet of 1/16" balsa. Cut to the outside dimension. Pin-prick the window outline, glue in place, then cut and sand the window shape. I have also added diagonal bracing to my models (1/16" X 1/8" is adequate). Use aluminum tubing for the rear peg. I've also been sheeting in the first bay of the fuselage nose area.

Fuselage parts #16 need to be made from firm "C" grain balsa. The covering in this area puts a lot of pressure on that part! The stab mount needs to be modified for dethermalizer use. (And I make a front mount from 1/32" ply...)

Covering:

I've been using silk for the fuselages on my rubber models. There is a little section at the rear of the cabin that has a diagonal grain indicated. Covering this section first will make the job easier. Dope with nitrate dope, with a top coat of butyrate to prevent puckering in humid weather. The flying surfaces can be covered with either Japanese tissue or Polyspan.

Prop/Rubber

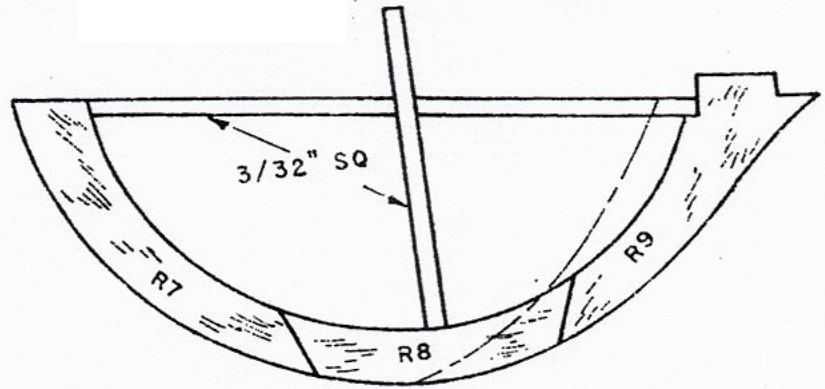
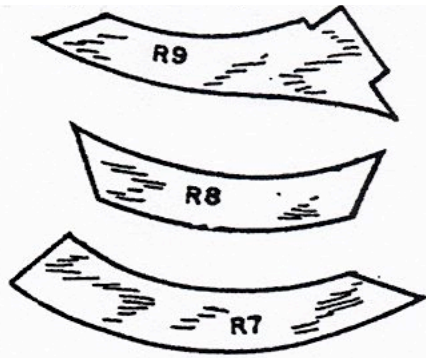
Your only real restriction is the 10.66" maximum diameter. There is a folder available from Superior Props in Louisiana. (I have some 11" machine-cut props in stock for \$3.00 each). My current model is equipped with a 9.5" plastic prop, but I plan to try a balsa free-wheeler this spring.

A light model will climb well with eight strands of 1/8" good rubber, when equipped with a plastic prop. A heavier model, or one with lesser rubber, will probably need ten strands. Make the motor no more than 24" long. And balsa props will require more rubber than the plastic props.

Flying:

Balance the model at the rear spar. Remove all warps. Install 3/32" each of down and right thrust, and add a slight amount of left rudder for left glide turn. Your goal is a model that climbs to the right and glides to the left.

Ed. note: Sparky (kit #BRX-100) is available from Lee for \$23.98 + \$5.00 for shipping. Order now! P.O.Box 3104, Muncie, IN 47307; (765) 289-7753, or Souper30@gte.net



The sub rudder parts are from 3/32" balsa

