

PMP Autumn Newsletter 2014

Welcome

What a wonderful summer, last year's was a big improvement on the previous three years but this year the weather excelled itself. Well at least it did in Devon as I am aware that much further north the weather was not quite so obliging. We have taken two weeks holiday this year normally we only take one but intersperse it with a few long weekends away. As a consequence of the weather our Mk2 revival program ground to a halt although in the last few weeks I have managed to complete the first batch of Seirra Mk2 kits and those kits that were low or out of stock. The Stage 2A was reviewed in the September issue of Radio Control Model World and as a result quite a few kits have been sold. What was encouraging was the number of kits sold on the back of the review was greater than previous reviews at the height of wood kit production in the eighties and early nineties, before EPP!

Graupner MC32 Screen Covers

Following on from our last newsletter, re the Graupner MC32 LCD screen covers, it has been suggested that the problem was the plastic used had not been UV stabilised causing it to go translucent when exposed to a hefty dose of sunlight. I have tried for several months to get replacements without success so having a router handy decided to make the replacements myself using UV stabilised clear acrylic. The originals were injection moulded but of simple design apart from the back of the small screen which was recessed. Any way it made no difference and we have one happy MC32 customer. So if anyone with difficulty to read MC32 screens and need to change them I made a few extra.

KST Servos

If you looking to fit out your mouldie with some better quality servos at a reasonable price then take a look at the KST range, particularly the KST135/145MG, same servo different lug fixings. Generally you only get what you pay for when goods pass through the normal retail supply chain i.e. manufacturer, export agent, importer / distributor and retailer. All take their cut. With KST, we buy direct from the manufacturer and as a result are able to sell them at a very competitive price and yet maintain a margin to support after sales service which fortunately to date has been almost non existent. All my mouldies (3) are fitted with KST servos, they transformed the Typhoon.

PS. When buying your servos do not forget to order our plywood mounts. They are so easy to use and half price when you buy 4 or more servos of the same type. The range accommodates more than 20 different servos.

Mouldie Screws

In a senior moment when dismantling my Graphite E after a flying session and nattering at the same time like you do I forgot to screw the wing bolts back into the fuz, as is my normal practice. Next flying session, no wing bolts, no flying that day. Fortunately someone had picked them up and they were subsequently returned to me. I am sure that I am not the only one that has the odd 'senior moment' so to not loose another glorious flying day and assist those who have similar senior moments and cannot find their 'screws' we have added a selection of set screws to our inventory for both wing and bolt on tailplanes under Mouldie Screws.

Typhoon Crash!

A few weeks ago I crashed my Typhoon. A case of mistaken identity. Most of us if we have been flying for a number of years, if we are honest, have had at least one,

particularly if you fly slopers or take part in multi launch model flying events. The circumstances on mine were two white models flying along the slope in close formation although flying independently. We both decided to turn at the same time. For split second one model obscured the view of the other. I chose the wrong one when they separated! Result, a very audible whoose followed by a louder thump and a broken Typhoon. Naturally I was a bit P.O. as it was only the third outing and I was really enjoying flying it, particularly after I had changed the H5a5076 servos (flutter problems) with KST135/145MGs which made it a dream to fly. Initial inspection of the damage suggested the tail crank arm was broken as the metal elevator clevis was disconnected. The carbon wing joiner was in two bits as was the fuselage, the nose cone split asunder but there was only minor damage to one wing. As I did not think it would be possible replace the tail crank without 'marmalising' the fin area of the fuselage I immediately ordered a new fuselage and wing joiner from Richard at T9Modelsport which duly arrived the next day. Well done Richard. In the meantime whilst pondering over the wreckage in the workshop and waiting for the new bits to arrive I inspected the damage more thoroughly. I discovered that the tail crank was not broken but that the metal clevis had jumped out of it on impact, something in 50 years of modelling I had never seen before. This set me thinking that. IF I could re-attach the elevator pushrod to the tail crank without doing further damage the fuselage could be repaired.

Refitting the Elevator Clevis.

After several failed attempts to re-attach the elevator pushrod I came up the idea of bending the tip of a very long screwdriver at right angles, inserting it in the clevis and rotating it 90 degrees to open the legs of the clevis so that they would slide over the tail crank. When the clevis was in position remove the 'tool'! Easy. Practice was not quite so simple as I first had to make the long screwdriver by flattening the end of a piece 8swg piano wire and bending the end over. To do this I had to use a blow torch to soften the carbon steel piano wire both to flatten the end and bend it to 90 deg without breaking. Visibility was a bit of a problem but fortunately I had one of those LED penlights you can buy in most markets for a £1.00. This I inserted into the broken end of fuz along with the elevator pushrod. I taped the tailcrank in place to stop it moving and then gingerly attempted to slide the metal clevis in position. On the second or third attempt I succeeded. Hooray. Now to repairing the fuselage.

The Fuselage Repair

Having reconnected the elevator pushrod to the tail crank my thoughts turned to how to repair the fuselage. I have never had to repair a moulded fuselage before but over the years have seen a number of moulded fuselage repairs and some have not looked very pretty, most were out of alignment! I was determined to make my repair as invisible as possible and of course be meticulous re alignment. After a bit of head scratching I decided I needed to create a 'custom' tube inside the front section of the fuselage onto which I could slide the rear section. There are a number methods of doing this but the method I chose is as follows. First, I rolled up some thin, but slightly stiff plastic sheet 150-200mm wide into a tube and half inserted it into the front section of the fuz. I then used some soft foam rubber to help force the plastic sheet into more intimate contact with the inside of the fuselage. I then cut a metre length of 1mm x 5mm carbon strip into 100mm lengths. These were then partially inserted around the inside of the fuselage and the rear section dry fitted to check alignment. Satisfied this would work the repair was dis-assembled and the inside of the front fuz repair section was coated with 30 minute epoxy. The rolled up plastic tube and foam rubber were reinserted inside the front fuz section as before along with epoxied covered carbon strips. Take care not to get epoxy on the exposed half

of the carbon strips as this could reduce contact with the rear section when joined. When the epoxy has set, remove the rolled up plastic tube and coat the inside of the rear fuselage section and carbon strip fingers with epoxy before attaching it to the front section. When in place carefully check the alignment and adjust as necessary before the epoxy sets! All that remains is to restore the surface around the break using epoxy filler and a rattle can of the appropriate colour. The *Hycote* Gloss White was a perfect match for my fuz and other than a break in the fuselage join line where the join was sprayed over you would not spot the repair.

The Nose Cone

This was a much simpler job. I just lined the inside of nose cone along the split line with this glass cloth and superglued it in position. Filler was used to fill the gaps before spraying.

Footnote: The whole repair took less than 2hrs start to finish and only cost a few pence plus the confidence to do it.

Graupner Telemetry

One of my flying companions was experiencing GPS / Vario lock-out on his Graupner RC. Elliot, the Graupner guru at LogicRC, advised that we check the firmware status of the items being used and upgrade to the latest firmware version. This we did and so far no further problems. Graupner have since advised us that all pieces of equipment in the system must have the latest firmware version to avoid any complications so we recommend checking every few months especially when mixing newly purchased items with items bought a while ago. The latest versions of all firmware are available to download on the LogicRC / Graupner website.

On-Line Shopping

One of our mainstream distributors recently carried out a price comparison exercise using Google and other search engines. It was quite revealing as there were a number of instances where Google's best price was much higher than those of other similar businesses highlighted by the other search engines. As an example our price for the Futaba 6J (£109.95) and 8J (£219.95) were significantly cheaper than Google's best! We were not listed by Google because we have not signed up to their services. We cannot justify / absorb the additional costs involved. Our advice is when looking for the best price use a variety of search engines preferably ones that are not charging directly for their services!

The OFT (Office of Fair Trading) are looking to investigate price comparison websites as it is alleged that they do not operate in the best interests of consumers. As an example of the impact they are having on businesses that do not sign up to their services the year Google Shopping was introduced to the UK the number of new customers we registered dropped from 900 the previous year to 500 and has been in decline ever since despite investing heavily in the business and adopting a more proactive approach.

New Items

We have added a number of new items to our inventory over the last few months. These include a range of epoxy board control horns, a new set of mouldie servo covers, a selection of electric flight accessories and as previously mentioned a selection of Mouldie sets screws and MC32 LCD screens so it is well worth spending a few minutes browsing our site. 99.9% of items listed are in stock. If when you place your order an item is out of stock we will do our best to contact you and explain the situation. Again as mentioned previously the Sierra Mk2 kits are on the shelf. If you buy one please note I am aware that one of the box label pictures is that

of a Stage 2A. It will be corrected on the next batch! Just in case, the link to our website is <http://www.phoenixmp.com/>

Signing Off

Once again we hope you enjoyed reading our latest newsletter. If I rambled on a bit too long re the Typhoon repair I do apologise but I would urge anyone who has incurred similar fuselage damage to investigate repair options before 'binning' it and /or buying a new fuz if it is available. The hardest part of the repair is having the confidence to do it!

Happy landings

Stan & Sheila

Clevis Tool



Graupner MC32 Screens



KST 135MG Servo



Sierra Mk2



Typhoon Repair

