



NEWSLETTER

"Dear Lynn and Ken,

As far as I am concerned, your newsletter is a resounding success! It's well put together, and has a nice mix of articles. I hope that everyone will keep those cards and letters coming, so you'll have something to draw upon for a long time to come.

I have plan #90, and have been working on the darned thing for more than six years now! And I was also one of those folks who look over the plans the day they arrive and think "H'm...about three years, I bet, if I keep at it." This statement is followed by about six months of frantic effort with great progress until one day the wife says "Hey! Will you come up out of there so I can introduce myself and the children to you?" And if there is one thing I can do, it is to take a hint!!!

It's not finished yet, but in a couple of weeks I plan to have the gang over and have an Osprey hatching party which will finally get it out of the cellar and into the garage where it can sprout wings. The hull and tail have been signed off for cover, and wing spars are done. (Does anybody else besides me feel regrets at covering over that beautiful varnished mahogany, never more to be seen again?) Most of the cabin controls are done, as is the nose gear. So the big building jobs left are the wings and main gear.

I am using fir purchased from the local lumber yard. They have been very good about letting me paw over their stock, and I have managed to find beautiful boards. The spars are from spruce, purchased at great expense from one of the big advertisers in Sport Aviation. The boards they sent me were not great, and I had to take great pains to laminate the poorer grained ones so to have acceptable grain above and below them. I would recommend that builders who are not sure of the grain cut a square piece off one side of the board in question, and bend it until it breaks. When they see what happens, they might plan to do something different with that piece of board!!! One of my spruce pieces ended up in the wood stove.

As a matter of interest, I could not bring myself to apply the pressures needed to get the bends in the top and bottom longerons for the forward half of the hull. So, I laminated them, making each one out of five strips. I made each hull side with these longerons half the required thickness which took three of the five strips. Then, I jugged the two halves together as called for in the plans and laminated on the other two strips which gave me the full thickness needed. It took a while, but it sure made final assembly easier not having to hold those pressures!

The plans are good, I think, but I have had some problem areas which I might share so that others might at least think about these areas before they plunge in. Some of these things I have solved with Yankee Ingenuity, and some others I haven't solved yet! Some are my own fault, and some I really think are inherent in the plans. The ones that are my fault are due to my style of building, which is to go page by page, following instructions and dimensions given, and assume that everything will fit later on. (Assume---you know what that means? It makes an ASS out of U and Me!) Well, they don't all the time. I urge everyone to LOOK AHEAD! Find out where the part goes and find out what other parts are associated with it. Then check all measurements to see if you still like what you are about to do. For example:

Elevator push-pull rod in rear half of hull: I carefully installed that, including the idler pulleys located at its mid-point. Then, almost two years later when I was fitting the rear spar for the 5 degree incidence, guess what was in the way? I had to cut a notch in the spar to clear the rod. If I had thought about the spar, I could have mounted the mid-hull bell-crank just a tad higher and cleared it easily. And be careful of the cables for the water rudder and trim tab, or you will be notching the underside of the spar in order for them to clear.

Speaking of trim: The trim bell-crank still looks to me like it is mounted on the left hand side of the rudder spar. And the cables are shown passing thru station 86 on the left side of center. Yet the trim control wheel is to be mounted on the right side of the center console. Has anyone thought how to get those cables from left to right among the gear retract mechanism and elevator control rods? Wouldn't it have been easier to bring the whole works down the right side all the way, along with the water rudder retract cable?

Mechanism in the center console: Beware!! There ain't much room in there for retract rods, push-pull rods, cables and controls. Not to mention the aluminum angle that forms the frame of the console. Think ahead and position things very carefully, or you will find that the bolt heads in the retract mechanism will be hitting the elevator push-pull rod on one side, while the bottom of the trim wheel rubs it on the other side. And I myself haven't gotten to the throttle quadrant yet, but it's in there with all that other stuff!! And besides, it looks to me that the throttle and mixture cables will run right thru the middle of the trim wheel unit. See what I mean?

Nose gear: I had all sorts of little annoyances here. I built it within 1/31" of the plans, so I know I built it right. But it wouldn't pull the wheel up far enough to clear the projected keel line. I had to cut away a lot of metal between the steering horns so that in the retracted position it would clear the neoprene shock biscuits and thus allow the strut to come up above the horizontal line. That seems to give me the needed clearance. I didn't like the lower gear mounts, either as given on the original plans or in the revision, because they both would require me to cut through the floor on the inside to fit the backing plates on. I ended up making my own, so that the plates fit under the floor. I am also wondering why a revision was sent out calling for the bottom of hole in station zero to be lowered by 1/2"? My gear clears that now by about 3/4". Should something else have been changed too? Lastly on the subject of nose gears - I built sides and bottom for the wet box and had long ago installed the rudder pedals and axles. Imagine my consternation when I discovered that the nose gear retract rod will not clear the bottom of the box, nor will it clear the left-hand steering horn which is mounted on the pedal axle.