



Somerset RC

A Chartered Club of the Academy of Model Aeronautics
est. 1972, AMA 1001

**Dedicated to the Enjoyment and Promotion of
Radio Control Model Airplane Flying**

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Do you have something for the next issue?

Send it along to the editor's email above!

Next issue this January





Happy Holidays to you and
your loved ones!

From your Somerset RC Family



From the President

This may look like an elf in a workshop, but it's me working on a kit. Fortunately for me, there is no Christmas deadline!

Last February, our club newsletter premiered with a construction article by Larry Gray. He chronicled his giant Top Flite P-47 build (you can read it along with the other archived newsletters by going to our club website). Coincidentally, this newsletter, the last for 2019, also features a construction article of a Top Flite P-47, but this time smaller (1/6 standoff scale) and in kit form from a kit that was produced by Top Flite in 1976.

I look back with gratitude and some satisfaction during my year as president of Somerset RC. We are a terrific club because of you our membership. You have come to events, inspired newcomers, instructed new pilots, and have shared our hobby. We were able to complete six of our seven scheduled events, as well as increase our membership. I salute our executive board—**Tony Rossi, Dave Rolino, Jim Vigani, Dave Szabo, and John Samtak** for all they have done behind and in front of the scenes for Somerset RC. I thank them and all of you for supporting our club and hobby.

2020 will begin with our annual **Freeze Fly** at North Branch on January 1st. You don't have to bring a plane. Just come out, share something warm to drink with everyone and toast our friendship. Following that, we'll warm up with something nice to eat at our **Holiday Banquet** on December 10 at Madeline's, 518 Vosseller Avenue in Bound Brook at 7:30PM (contact: Dave Szabo).

In this issue there is also a report from me meeting with an RC club while in Germany last summer, and we have the accomplished **Robbie DeVergillo** for our member profile. And just one more **Mystery Plane Challenge** for 2019 awaits you.

—**Domecq Smith**, President, Somerset RC

domecqsmith@msn.com



Feature Construction Article

Top Flite P-47 (1976) 1/6th Standoff Scale Kit—Part 1

by Domecq Smith



I began this kit last January. I had no prior intention or wish to build it—I simply took the next box from a stack of kits in my garage. My flying preference is largely pattern and sport designs, not warbirds. Yet, I began the build as a sort of discipline. A warbird-build having been unknown to me, this was a good opportunity to get out of my comfort zone and learn something new. And besides, standing on the sidelines during our club's warbird events was no fun. The build is also a tribute to the man who gave me the kit, Msgr. Joseph Granato, the retired pastor of St. Lucy's Church in Newark, and an avid modeler who never got around to building the kit. He was happy to pass it on. Now, on to the build.



A box shows its age

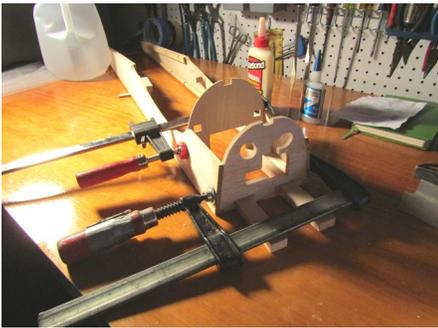
Engineered by Sid Axlerod, the construction is beefy compared to kit engineering today. It's 60" span was designed for a .60. This build, however, will put more power in the front (Saito 125) owing to the extra weight of Robart offset pneumatic retracts and the wish not to have to add additional weight in the front for balance unless it's already included in the engine.

Those who like to build kits find the initial opening of the box a sort of adventure. There is that waft of balsa wood smell, crisp plans, and neat things



to sift through. This kit already being over 40 years old, the balsa smell had left long ago and the folded plans were brittle and yellow. But the quality, feel, and heft of the balsa made an immediate impression. This was not the sponge cake variety of balsa found in kits and ARFs today but wood with integrity and character. My back seemed to straighten, aware that I was in the presence of an era of RC that had long past. Yes, this was going to be a trip into the glorious yesteryear of the hobby.

First was the motor mount carriage—an assembly consisting of two bulkheads and maple beam motor mounts. I chose to go with the original beam mounting as prescribed in the plans. This necessitated cutting the maple beams to accommodate the wider crankcase of the Saito. Then came the fuselage which consists of matched 1/4 inch sides (thick stuff!) with engine carriage assembly between them in the front followed by braces and bulkheads behind. Four preformed shells provided the final shape for the top and bottom of the fuse.



**Engine carriage glued
between fuse sides**



Cross braces



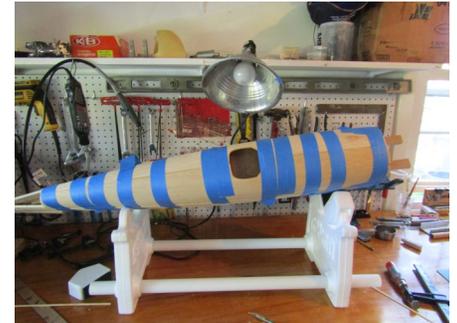
Bulkheads



**Cockpit floor and
instrument panel**



Bottom shells



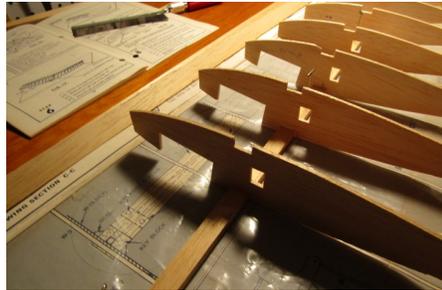
Top shells

As to adhesive, I am using Titebond for the build—I was in no hurry and find working with slower drying glue a more relaxing experience. No fumes or stuck fingers, also.

Next came the wings. The plans called for fixed gear, but I agree with club member Larry Gray that a warbird flying with gear down doesn't look quite right. There is a price, however, for installing retracts that has not as much to do with the cost as it does with time spent. The plans gave no provisions for installing retracts other than the suggestion to consult the manufacturer of the retract one chooses (nothing found). So, with pencil, ruler, and retracts in hand, measurements were taken, plans were modified, ribs were cut and reinforced, mounting beams installed, and the other myriad details that go into this step were taken. This all increased the build time of the wing by three times I think, but should turn out to be worth it.



Ribs ready for the spar



**Ribs on the bottom spar.
Note cutouts for retracts**



**Leading and trailing
edges, and top spar**



**Retract test-fitted into
mounting beams**



Wing halves together

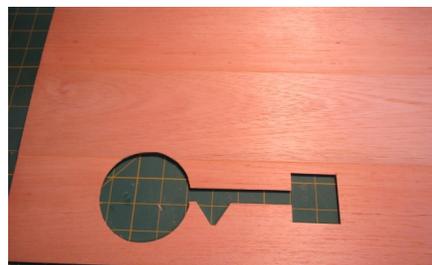


Spar joiner

Next came installing the top skins of the wing. That presented little problem. The bottom wing did present some questions, though—do I cut out retract and servo openings before or after the skins are attached? I opted for before. I was gratified that all openings were measured and cut correctly.



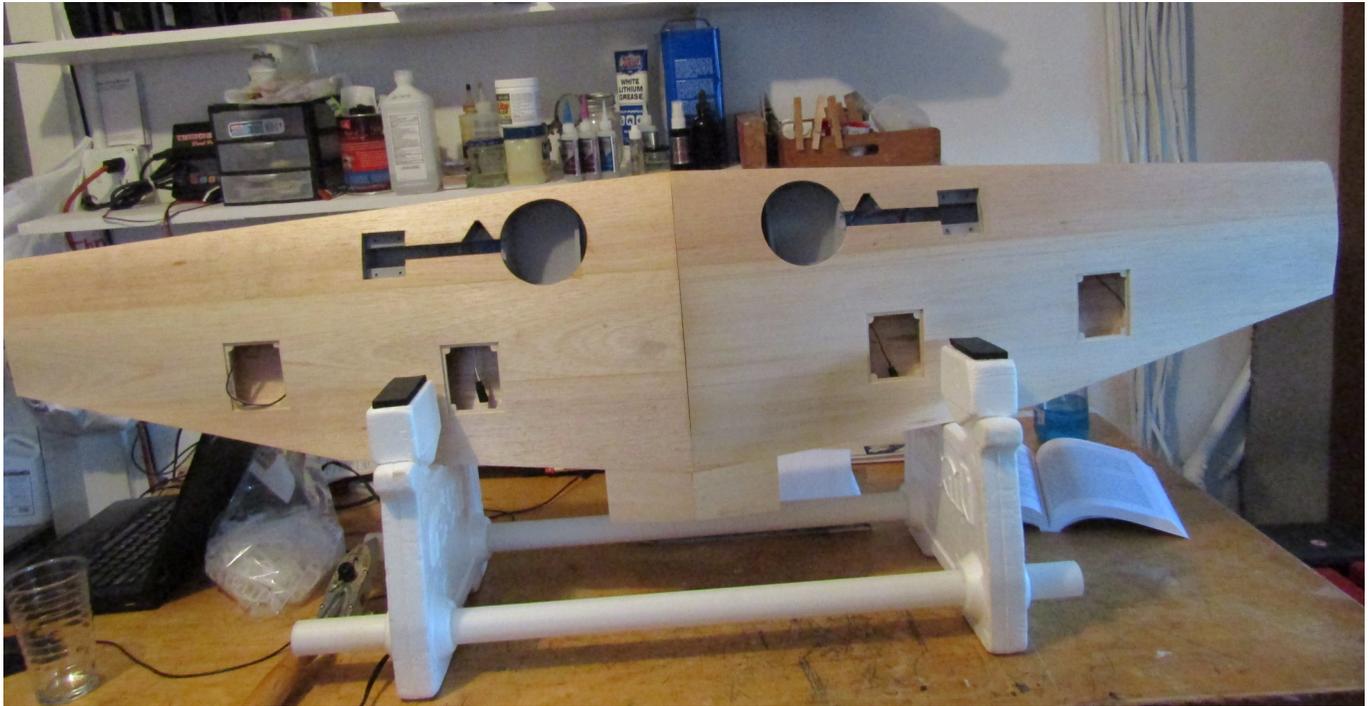
Top sheet drying



**Bottom sheet retract
cutout**



Bottom sheet installed



Top and bottom wing skins installed

Some of what remains to be done for the construction of the wing is to install and final shape the carved wingtips, final shape the leading edge, and fit the flaps and ailerons. The wing will be reinforced entirely with fiberglass cloth and painted. At least, that is the plan for now.

Thanks for your interest! I will resume reporting on this build (hopefully) in a future article.

—Domecq Smith



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A European Summit: President to President

by Domecq Smith

This past summer, I was on vacation in Germany with my wife's family. It's not long when I'm visiting a place that I start looking around and noticing open areas suitable for model airplane flying. This started to happen during my trip and I wondered also if I might even have the chance to meet other RC modelers in the region. Staying in the small town of Viersen not far from the Dutch border, my wife's online search did reveal a model airplane club nearby. I reached out to its president,



Attention: model airplanes in use

Holger Schmitz via email, and I was able to meet him where he flies with his club, called Modellflug-Clubs Tönisvorst. The club in its 40th year flies over leased property in the village of Tönisvorst. On the day I met Holger, the sky was gray and windy, streaked with bits of rain. But these conditions did not seem to keep Holger out of the air nor did it damp his enthusiasm. I found Holger affable, friendly, and he took time to speak with me and share some things about his club. His club is similar in size to our own with

80, members and they enjoy a wide variety of disciplines from power, sailplanes, jets, and drones.

RC flying in Germany is not unlike as it is here. In spite of what we see on YouTube depicting very sophisticated models at European events, the majority of RC enthusiasts in Germany fly RC similar to us in a wide range of disciplines. An exception is that electric power now makes up about 90 percent of the hobby. Noise complaints and the perceived environmental impact resulting from glow engines has limited their use in recent years. Similar to us, RC flyers in Germany must carry liability insurance. At present, there is a 300 meter height limit (984 ft.) for flying.



Meeting of the two club presidents



Members of the Tönisvorst Model Airplane Club

One notable feature in Germany is that the pit and spectator area is caged in on all sides. When pilots are flying, they stand at a designated area outside of the cage.



Caged pit area

61	62	63	64	65
66	67	68	69	70
frei	71	72	73	74
besetzt	76	77	78	79
182	183	184	185	186
187	188	189	190	191

Frequency Board

A challenge the club has recently faced at its field is a major installation of a natural gas pipeline that stretches from the north of Germany beginning in Zeelink to the south with its route going right down the middle of the club's flying field. During my visit, sections of pipe were seen lying along trenches effectively cutting the flying field in half.



The Zeelink Pipeline cutting across the field. The caged pit area is visible in upper right. A field boundary runs diagonally in lower left hand corner.

In spite of the excavations, the club continues to fly at the site. I witnessed Holger making a few attempts to get his landing approach just right so his plane would not hit one of the earthen walls of the trenches. One benefit to this obstacle perhaps is that it may be making even better pilots in the club!

Another pilot was present, Uwe Esser who was flying a 3D design. His landings were timed well to end up nearly to the edge of the excavation walls. Both Holger and Ewe were gracious in understanding my German.



A section of pipe awaiting installation



Holger Schmitz explaining the lay of the land



Meeting club member Uwe
Esser



Uwe readies his plane

What I took away from my visit was that regardless of nationality or locale, our hobby can create an almost instant understanding and rapport when meeting others who share an equal passion for our hobby. Though I was only there for a short visit, I felt I had known the gentlemen from the Tönisvorst Model Airplane Club for years.

I thank Holger Schmitz and Uwe Esser for their reception and friendship, and look very much forward to when we on this side of the Atlantic can welcome them and enjoy some flying with them here in New Jersey.

—*Domecq Smith*



Holger readies for a flight with
his trusty companion.

MYSTERY PLANE CHALLENGE

This one may be too easy, but why not? It was the first RC plane for many. It bridged early pulse and reed radios with modern proportional systems. Many of these kits were built and flown successfully and can still be seen online for sale. Send your answer to me at domecqsmith@msn.com. Answer will be in the January 2020 newsletter. **How many of these kits were gift wrapped and placed under Christmas trees of yore?*



Ah, yes. Our
was the
For those of
frequented
the 70s or
plane was



mystery plane
RCM Trainer.
you who
flying fields in
early 80s, this
no mystery.

Congratulations to **Ernie Evon** who once again correctly identified the Mystery Plane!
—Domecq Smith

Member Profile

Robbie DeVergillo



Believe it or not, I was a total train buff when I was younger. My dad, brother, and I went to model or real train events within 200 miles.

At six years old, my dad and I were invited to a military Airshow in PA. The Air Force Thunderbirds were the feature act and after that show I was hooked on aviation. My parents got me Realflight simulator that Christmas and I practiced RC flying for a year. The next Christmas when I was seven years old, I received my first RC plane, the Apprentice. I had to wait until February to try it out. My dad had contacted a member of the Atoms RC Club and he met us at their field. He did not have a buddy box so, he said he would take it up high and hand me the controls, and if I got in trouble he would take them back. Well, that day after about a few minutes in the air, I did a loop and a roll and landed without any assistance. The instructor turned to my dad and told him to hide his wallet. I then joined the Broken Props 4H Club of Somerset County.

At 12 years old, a pilot friend of ours who is a safety officer on a B-25 Mitchell Bomber surprised me with a chance to fly as a crew position. We flew from Georgetown Delaware to McGuire AFB on a Thursday before their airshow. This was a great experience. During the flight, I was able to move through the aircraft and sit at the forward and turret gunner position. At that time the B-25 was sponsored by the DAV. At the show, I assisted with tours of the aircraft.



At 13, I started glider lessons at Van Sant Airport

Just soloed!

in Bucks County, PA. After my first lesson, the instructor hired me to be a wing runner. Also that day, I was given a ride in a Christen Eagle aerobatic plane. After that ride I was really hooked on being a aerobatic pilot. I continued my lessons until the dreaded TFR and weather slowed my progress.

At 15, I started my Private pilot lessons. My dad and I had joined EAA to be able to get a discount on Air Venture tickets. We then joined the local EAA chapter 643 out of Sky Manor Airport. At that chapter, I met a lot of great pilots who saw I had a great interest in flying. My Dad and I assisted at local events such as the Young Eagle flights where young people get to go up with a pilot and experience flying.

In January of this year, our EAA chapter was 1 out of a 100 to be able to nominate a young adult for a scholarship provided by EAA and the Ray Foundation. The award would pay for one to obtain their Private pilot license. The chapter nominated me to apply for the award. In August, on my 16th birthday, I applied for the award and I was notified in September that I had received the Scholarship.



Scholarship.

On September 29th, I completed my first solo with Larry and Bill from Somerset RC at the airport to cheer me on. My next step is to start my solo cross country flights and by my 17th birthday complete my pilots test.

My dad and I still fit in time to fly RC. I am presently President and instructor of the 4H Broken Props club and have branched off into EDF jets. I hope to continue with RC and full scale flying and someday fly aerobatic air show performances. The people I have met in the hobby and full scale have been a lot of help in keeping my flying passion going.

—Robbie DeVergillo

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all newsletters archived at www.somersetrc.org

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Somerset RC Membership Application

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

Phone: Home: _____ Cell: _____

AMA Number: _____ Email: _____

To obtain an AMA Membership go to:
<http://www.modelaircraft.org/>
Membership is \$30.00 for adults \$4.00 for
students up to the age of 21

Mail all applications with check to :
Dave Szabo
12 Shoshoni Way
Branchburg NJ 08876
Make check out to "Somerset RC Club"

Paying by PayPal send to:
Somersetradiocontrol@gmail.com
Put your name in the notes and use the":
"send to a friend option.

Meetings are 8:00pm every last Tuesday of the month at:
American Legion Post 306
707 Legion Place
Middlesex, NJ 08846
732-356-9699

For full club information, please visit SomersetRC.org