

Putting Guillows Models on a diet

As you probably know, this is the 100th birthday of Guillows Models. The FAC wants to have a Guillows contest at the Nats in Geneseo, I believe. I've built quite a few Guillows kits beginning back in 1963 with an 18" Bristol Bullet, the first stick and tissue model I ever finished!

The main problem with the kits is WEIGHT. As far as scale accuracy goes, they're pretty good, but they need a diet. Here's some things I've learned that you can do easily.

The bulkheads on most designs can be lightened. First, cut off 1/16 of the perimeter leaving no notches for stringers. Mark the positions and lay the stringers on top of the formers. The other benefit is you'll get a smoother covering job with no bulkhead bumps.

Most come with fairly wide trailing edges. Cut them WAY down to 1/8 or if your daring 3/32. If you do that you can add an additional 1:16 sq. spar to the wing but only if it needs it. On the other hand, if strong enough, leave out a spar.

If building a die-cut kit, replace the heavy wood for lighter or thinner wood, using templates on the plans.

Stab and rudder outlines can be way lightened by cutting the pieces to 1/2 the width or do laminated outlines (something I've never tried).

If possible, use smaller diameter wire in the landing gear. I've found using coffee stirrer sticks to replace the balsa gear struts can often eliminate the need for wire. Same goes for wing struts, they really add strength.

Use the vacuum formed bits if you want, I don't think balsa would be much lighter. Lastly, you can always leave out stringers as there always seem to be too many!!

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