



SMOKE SIGNALS

DELTA DART BUILD

The Meroke RC Clubs annual picnic will be held at Cedar Creek Park on Sunday September 8, 2013.

This year there will be a DELTA DART competition with the winner and runner up receiving Hobby store gift cards. With the competition just weeks away club members began building their Rubber Powered Flying Models at the clubs meeting on August 15th. As you can see in the pictures, thanks to Nelson Ramos' cell phone camera there will be a spirited competition with a good showing from club members. Bring the family on September 19th and enjoy the fun with your brothers in flight.



Calendar

SEPTEMBER 5, 2013

Club Meeting - **CANCELLED**
FOR JEWISH HOLIDAY

SEPTEMBER 8, 2013

Annual Meroke Club Picnic
Cedar Creek Park - 11AM

SEPTEMBER 19, 2013

Club Meeting

*** For more information on upcoming events go to www.liama.org and click on the events calendar.

BIRTHDAYS

- Sept 2 Sal Spallino
- Sept 4 Charlie Restivo
- Sept 4 Ernie Schack
- Sept 6 Frank Saverese
- Sept 8 Al Weiner
- Sept 9 Robert Adelman
- Sept 23 Greg Gatto
- Sept 26 Michael Hagens
- Sept 27 Paul Fornuto
- Sept 28 Frank Lang

FALL IS COMING SO
ARE YOUR 2014
MEMBERSHIP DUES!



If you want to view The Long Island Aero Modelers (LIAMA) website go to:
www.liama.org

Send all suggestions to:
newsletter@meroke.com



FIRST ANNUAL PAINTBALL SHOOTOUT WOW, WOW, WOW!!!



BOY! OH BOY! did you miss the Meroke event of the year if you did not make it to Cedar Creek Park and the Lufbery Aerodrome for the Meroke FIRST ANNUAL AMA SANCTIONED PAINTBALL SHOOTOUT. The event took place on Sunday August 18, 2013 from 11am to 2pm and from the time the first plane took flight the line grew bigger and bigger with young and old waiting to take a shot at hitting them with paint balls.



You could not tell who the children were from the smiles on the faces of all who paid to try and SHOOT THAT PLANE OUT OF THE SKY! They say a picture is worth a thousand words so thanks to club

photographer Marc Trager's pictures, you will witness the success of this event. Led by Meroke President Allen Berg, event coordinator Russell Rhine, Meroke pilots Ted Evangelatos and Tony Pollio with the aid of Mike Hagens and his incredible pit crew team that kept the pummeled aircraft aloft, the day was a rousing success.

A special thanks to the HHAMS president Ken Casser, Sal Vallone and Mike Marchese who gave us terrific advice on how to plan the event and a very special thanks to Larry Acevedo who piloted one of the planes for most of the day and showed our pilots how to fly the planes to give the paintball participants the best opportunity to hit the planes and have the most fun. Ralph DJ Suarez brought his extensive and expensive equipment to give us a an uninterrupted flow of music throughout the day.

The event was successful due to the participation of all the Meroke members that helped during the day, cooking, selling paintballs, taking donations for food and much more. There are too many to mention but I must say that this was the best showing of club spirit I have seen since I became a member.

The highlight of the day was when the people who worked hard all day long to make this event a success, along with Kate the Cedar Creek Park manager and friend to the Meroke RC Club, took their shot at the planes. Ted Evangelatos was particularly proud of himself when he not only took out the rudder of the plane he had flown all day long but then proceeded to, with one shot I might add, take out both fuel lines on the trainer rendering it down for good...nice shooting Ted.

The bottom line is that the club re cooped all it's expenses and turned a profit. Plans are in the making for next years event and with this years experience it should be an overwhelming success!



Recently, I purchased a MINI VAPOR from HORIZON HOBBY. With the price for a BNF of \$29 and the ready to fly version at only \$39 I couldn't pass it up. As luck would have it the AMA magazine "Model Aviation" posted the following article in the MICRO FLYING section written by Joe Malinchak. Seeing the first picture of the MINI VAPOR on floats really got my attention.

Testing out the new Mini Vapor

The ParkZone Vapor introduced many people to the joy of flying a micro RC airplane in the living room. Featuring elevator and rudder control, the model is slow, maneuverable, and easy to fly. ParkZone improved the design by adding lights to the Night Vapor. Now the company has shrunk the design down to true micro size with the new Mini Vapor!

Parkzone RTF Mini Vapor

The RTF version of the Mini Vapor is perfectly sized with a wingspan of 8.7 inches and comes with everything needed to fly out of the box, including

transmitter, all necessary batteries, charger, and instructions. The box also functions as a nice carrying and protective storage case.

The airplane uses a new, lightweight DSMX three channel receiver/ESC with two servos. The servos use a 3.2mm motor that weighs only 300mg, and performs well. This interests me because it may have the power to fly some micro airplanes as a geared motor, or maybe direct drive!

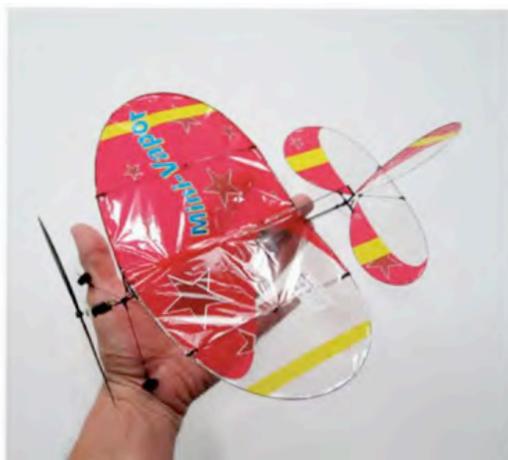
The model is powered by a geared short-can 6mm motor, and uses a 30mAh 25C LiPo battery. The airplane is beautifully constructed of composite plastic and lightweight carbon rod.

Flight Tests

It only took me a few minutes from opening the box to putting in my first test hop. I typically would have to charge the 30mAh battery first but I had one on hand that was ready to go. I installed the battery, tested the flight controls, and gave it a nice toss. It needed a few clicks of trim, but it flew beautifully right out of my hand.



I shrank my Vapor float design to Mini Vapor size. I am still working out a few minor issues, but they look cool!



The model can fly fast for a slow flyer, or low in the nose-up, high-alpha attitude. One of the requirements for a good room flyer is a small airframe. The Vapor flies well in the house, but the Mini Vapor's smaller size makes it better suited for a living room.

I was happy that the airplane had the power to take off from my carpet and climb out above the furniture. I had fun making a few approaches and landing in the same spot on my floor. The aircraft can also be flown outside in calm winds.

Mini Vapor Floats

A few years ago I designed a set of floats for my Vapor to fly off the indoor water runway at the JR Indoor Electric Festival. The floats are made of .5mm Depron foam. The airplane flies great with floats, so as soon as I received my Mini Vapor I began thinking about adding them to it.

I shrank my design to Mini Vapor size and went to a lake near my home to test it with floats. The first thing that I noticed was that my airplane's tail was setting low in the water.

I decided to try it anyway and gave it full power. It wanted to go, but could not break the water and fly. Then I made a sharp turn and it flipped onto its back, so I had to get wet to retrieve it! The plane was submerged, so I took it home and let it dry before flying it again.

This happened several times with my Vapor, so I was not worried. The plane functioned fine after drying out, but I knew I had to figure out a way to keep the battery dry. My solution was to use a small plastic bag and a twist tie.

I also realized that I had to modify my float design for the Mini Vapor. I made some changes and had a few successful flights.

I had planned to include my float design with my review of the Mini Vapor, I am still working out a few issues.

I have an idea for how to make them much lighter and hopefully more efficient. I should have them completed by the time you read this.

If anyone wants a PDF copy of my Vapor float design, or my Mini Vapor floats, send me an email... Joe Malinchak at joemal@echoes.com





So, you want to build a kit?

With the advent of quality ARFs in recent years, we have seen a huge influx of new people to the sport. Inevitably, many of you eventually decide to try your hand at building. Most are very successful while some others are not. Some of the more successful builders choose to build many more kits while others got the building bug out of their system the first time.

The truth of it is, building is not for everyone. When asked, "Is this a hobby or a sport?" my reply is, "Flying is a sport, building is a hobby" and there are many people out there who have neither the time nor patience

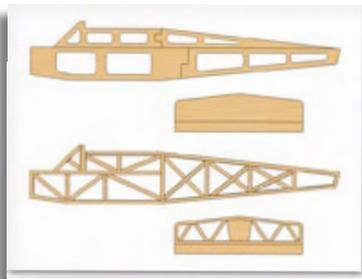
for a hobby (or find they are lousy builders and would rather collect stamps).

However, if you think you'd like to try your hand at building, you should be whole-heartedly encouraged. Building your own plane is a win-win proposition. Even if you later decide that building is not for you, you will have gained an immeasurable amount of building experience that will always come in handy if you stay in this sport for any length of time.

A good example of this is an experience I had a few years ago. I was invited to fly with a group of guys who were about an hour away from where I live. After a day of flying, one of the guys asked me to stop by his house to look at a damaged plane he had to see if I could help him figure out how to repair it. When we got to his house, he brought out a Goldberg Tiger II ARF that had one of its wing hold-down blocks cleanly broken off from the fuse side. The fix was as simple as gluing the block back in place with epoxy. I remember thinking, "He doesn't know how to repair THIS???"

This was the first time that I realized that with so many new people "assembling" ARFs, many of these guys don't have a clue as to how to "build" or "repair" an airplane. By building only one kit, you will gain enough knowledge to do most of your own repairs in the future, and who knows, you just may find that you enjoy building and now have a "hobby" for those days when the weather has you grounded!

Choosing a kit



Your first big decision will be which kit to build. When you learned to fly, you found that it was better to start out with some planes over others - The same holds true with building. No kit is "easy" to build if you've never done it before and like many things, some people are better at it than others, but certain attributes of a kit can either make it an enjoyable experience or a nightmare. Those things would include (but are not limited to): Quality of wood, quality of cutting, parts fit, and most of all - instructions!

Just as a trainer is easier to fly, they are also usually easier to build. As you build more advanced planes, more advanced building skills are usually required. However, even with a trainer you must be careful which kit you choose. There are many kits out there that still use building techniques from the 60's and 70's (if not the 40's and 50's). The more recent designs (and some updated renditions of the old

classics) might use a fuselage side where you need to join two to four die-cut pieces, whereas some of the older designs may have a "built-up" fuselage side where you get several 36" long sticks which must be cut into small pieces, pinned in place over the plans and glued together. While this is a building technique that is still often used for a stab or fin, it gets very tedious on a large component like a fuselage.

Another consideration is your flying skills. Nowadays, it's very often that a flier's first building experience comes at a time when he wants to build a more advanced airplane, but he has acquired no building skills. Fortunately, there are several planes that can appeal to a wide range of fliers. You just may have to hold off on building the plane you REALLY want for something that is more within your scope of building. It's like when you first wanted to learn to fly RC and were told you had to start with a trainer and needed to hold off on that P-51. Fortunately, there are several planes that make good "First Builds" even for the advanced flier, but before we go there, let's look at some other things.



Degree of difficulty

How hard is it to build a kit? You may have heard people say, "You pour glue in the box, shake it and an airplane comes out!" It's true that some kits go together extremely well, of course, they are often simple and/or boxy-looking. Let's face it; the only way to produce a simple build is to have a simple design. But the fact of the matter is, it's not SUPPOSED to be easy - but it IS supposed to be enjoyable. There's nothing like building a kit in which at no time during the process you:

- Throw things at the wall
- Threaten to kill the designer
- Start fights with family members
- Kick the dog/cat
- Have the police take you into custody "For your own safety"

So, it will help to know what, and what not to expect.

Don't expect to build it in a week or two - or three, if that's what you want, get an ARF. Building is not something that you want to rush. For many of us in colder climates, we use the term, "My Winter Project". That is, each winter when we can't fly, we build. Often, a kit shows up during the holidays and by spring, we hope to have the plane ready. While my personal best was a week from box to air (That was a week off from work where I did a marathon build) three to four months is about the average building time. So sit back, relax and enjoy the build.

DO expect that not every part is going to fit perfectly, so a hobby knife with a #11 blade can become your best friend. You'll most likely have to trim a few pieces here and there and sand a few rough edges, but this is the "hobby" aspect of the "sport". You are not just gluing parts together - you are woodworking. You are crafting a beautiful work of art from sticks and die-cut parts. In addition, you're getting away from your wife for a few hours per night - talk about relaxing! (I didn't say that)

Also, don't expect perfection (from yourself OR the kit's manufacturer). I have to laugh when I hear people complain about badly "Die-Crunched" parts. Take a piece of soft, grainy material like balsa, punch a die through it and you're bound to get some crushed areas. Many of us who have been building for a few years remember a time when a kit had sheets of balsa with parts printed on the wood and you had to cut them out yourself (we also had to walk ten miles to school in three feet of snow, etc.). In fact, there are still quite a few kits that are still out there like that - which is why it's important to know the kit you're getting before you get it.

Ok, so let's say the ribs have some rough edges. Your next best friend is a sanding block. Lightly run the block over the edges to remove any burrs, but don't try to sand the edges smooth! While it's true that the best glue joint starts with a good wood-to-wood fit, it is far more important that you don't sand the pieces until they have lost their size or shape. So maybe the edge isn't perfectly smooth, it just won't matter, the glue will still hold, no need to start throwing things.

Builder's Kits

Another problem you may encounter your first time out is the dreaded "Builder's Kit" (aka Craftsman's Kit). As I said earlier, some kits are easier to build than others. Obviously, a plane whose nose features an upright engine with "cheeks" along side it will be easier to build than a plane whose nose is carved and sanded to shape. However, regardless of the actual work involved, a builder's kit bumps the degree of difficulty up a few notches.

For example, in a modern kit, most parts are cut or pre-shaped, and numbered, and the instructions guide you step-by-step as if the designer intended it to be built by someone with little or no building experience. However, in a builder's kit the designer assumes that the builder is very experienced, even a master craftsman, so little instruction is involved and much of the engineering is left up to the builder.



To give you an example, a "good" kit may tell you in an early step to drill holes in the firewall for the engine mount and install blind nuts into the back, then in a later step, tell you to glue the firewall into the fuselage. Whereas, a builder's kit may tell you to "Install all fuselage bulkheads" leaving you to decide if this step includes the firewall - and if you didn't think to add blind nuts beforehand, you may have a very difficult time doing so after the firewall has been installed!

Now, don't get me wrong. I'm not saying builder's kits are bad. In fact, builder's kits will produce some of the best models you'll ever see. However, they are not for the novice builder! But here's the rub... Almost all of the kits that were designed since the mid-80's use the easier building techniques, and many of the earlier classics have been updated. However, there are still many kits produced by well-known companies that were designed way back when which have never been updated. These kits are in essence, builder's kits and if you are not aware of it ahead of time, you're first building experience could be very frustrating.

As always, the RCUniverse forums are always a good place to ask about a certain kit, but as good as the forums are for getting information, you'll want to specify things like "ease of build", "Step-by-Step instructions" or whether or not this is a newer kit. Otherwise, someone who may be a master craftsman might suggest you build a kit that HE thoroughly enjoyed building - forgetting that you do not have his skills and/or knowledge base. So it's always a good idea to ask someone you know and

Mistakes

Mistakes are a part of building. I must make eight or twelve mistakes with every plane I build. The way I see it, that's why God gave us wood filler. Now of course, some mistakes are worse than others and some you can live with while others may require un-doing a step or two. Then there are the big ones where you need to, oh, maybe remove the stab that was epoxied in the night before (At this point it is perfectly acceptable for even a member of P.E.T.A. to kick the cat). But don't get discouraged, you're not the first one who will make a mistake and you sure as hell won't be the last!

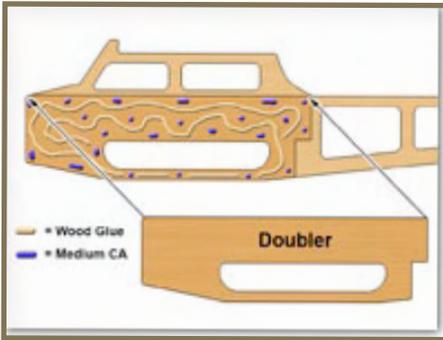
So you may be required to do some major surgery (this is a great time to ask the forum experts for advice). Just take your time, carefully cut into your beautiful creation and fix as necessary. Then slap on the wood filler and sand it back to its original shape. Once it's covered, no one but you will know it's there.



Glue

Another question we hear often is, "What type of glue should I use?" Most kits will require at least two types of glue and very often three. You will need epoxy for areas that require a lot of strength, like firewalls, wing joiners, landing gear plates, etc. Most of us agree that the 30-minute variety of epoxy is the best choice for building since you will need the extra setting time to align these parts properly. However, most of your gluing will be done with a glue of your choice.

Many modelers today use medium CA for the bulk of their building. Medium CA is what is popularly known as "Crazy Glue". It is strong and it sets very quickly, so it makes for much shorter building times. A few downsides to CA are the cost and the fact that due to its quick setting nature, you don't have much time to get the parts aligned before it's too late. It can also be a bear to get off your fingers (most builders who use CA will attest to the fact that they glue themselves to the model at least three or four times in the process). However, one of the biggest complaints about CA is that some people develop an allergy to it. It is for this reason that many modelers choose to use an aliphatic resin glue. "Aliphatic Resin" is a fancy word for what we commonly call "wood glue" and any good wood glue from Titebond to Elmer's Glue-All will work great (and they are a lot less expensive).



Personally, medium CA is my glue of choice, but to conserve its usage on large parts (Like fuselage doublers, or cap strips) I often use a combination of wood glue and medium CA. The wood glue covers most of the area while strategically placed drops of CA act as clamps to hold the pieces together while the wood glue dries. With this method there is no need for pins or weights, so you can continue building as long as the parts are not stressed.

If you are using CA hinges you will also need to use Thin CA. Thin CA (a.k.a. Instant CA) can also be used for building, but it needs to be used properly. To apply it, (just like when you are doing hinges) the parts must be already in place and must have a good, snug fit. Then, only a drop or two is needed directly on the joint. Unlike most other glues, you cannot add thin CA to one part and then attach it to another.

One final word about glue: It doesn't take much! No matter what glue you use, use it sparingly. Globbing it on will only result in gluing your parts to the table, or having it take forever to cure. If you're using wood glue, wipe the excess off with a damp cloth; don't smear it all over the sides of the parts you're gluing. This adds no strength, but it does add weight - moreover, it looks sloppy as hell.

Building Surface

A building surface should be one of your next considerations. The thing to look for here is that it must be flat - and it must STAY flat. A sheet of glass is flat, but if you lay it between two saw horses it will bow in the middle. You'll need a building surface that will remain flat even if you pile weights on top of it (which is very likely in many builds). Aside from that, it can be just about anything from a piece of quality 18" x 36" plywood that sits on your desk, workbench or dining room table (with the wife's permission of course), to a free-standing workbench with a butcher block top.

Many people like to use hollow-core doors, which can often be found inexpensively in the damaged goods section of your local home improvement store (ask the clerk, they usually have a few in the back). Now you can build a frame for it, set it on top of an existing table, or lay it across a couple of saw horses. If you use the saw horse method, don't put the horses all the way on the ends or the top may bow in the middle. Keep them about 1/4 to 1/3 the length in from the end (and if you have a third horse for the middle, all the better).

Most builders also like to pin parts to their building surface, so while you're at the home store, you might want to pick up a cheap ceiling tile (They may have those in the damaged section too). They are great for sticking pins into and all you have to do is lay it on top of your building surface and it will stay flat.

Tools

You will of course, need some tools. Just about everyone has their favorite list of "must-have" items, and it's true that the more you have, the easier jobs become, but you also don't need to run out and buy a fully equipped woodworking shop. Here's a small list of what you WILL need:

- A hobby knife with a #11 Blade
- Sandpaper (preferably with a sanding block)
- Drill and drill bits
- Straight Edge (preferably metal)
- Pins
- Various hand tools (Pliers, screwdrivers, etc.)

Another item that, while not essential, will make your build much easier is a razor saw. If you're on a tight budget, you can even get by with buying just a razor saw blade and skip the handle, but this is a VERY usefull tool when building.



Next come the more specialized items, such as a rotary tool (Dremel type), a long sanding bar, a set of ball-end hex wrenches, files, a razor plane, a square, etc. Again, while not essential, these tools can be very handy to have around.

Next come the machines, Drill Press, Scroll Saw, Belt/Disk Sander - The list goes on, but there's no need to run out and buy anything big right now. If you decide you really enjoy building, you may want to consider these in the future.

Covering

Another thing you need to consider is covering. This is a whole topic in itself and I have already written two articles on the subject which I invite you to read:



So, what kits should you start looking at?

Let's look at some of the top brands:

? Balsa USA: Excellent kits, but these are geared more toward the expert builder and not a good choice for the novice.

? Carl Goldberg: Excellent kits. There have been some issues with quality in the past, but they seem to be over that. One of the nicest things about Goldberg kits is that there's not a bad flier in the bunch. Every one of them is a winner. For a basic trainer, look at their Eagle II. For a great intermediate trainer, the Falcon III or Tiger II (or Tiger 60) are excellent. For the intermediate to advanced flier, the Goldberg Chipmunk is a winner!

? Great Planes: Also excellent, but a good example of, "The more advanced the airplane, the more advanced the building techniques". Easy builds are their PT series of trainers, or for an intermediate plane, try the Rapture or Dazzler. If you're an advanced flier, their Extra 300 is a good choice and while their Ultra Sport is one of my all-time favorites, it's not a good choice for a first-build unless you at least have some good woodworking skills.

? SIG: Another A+ kit maker, but you need to be careful. Many of Sig's kits have not been updated since the 70's and can be very difficult for the novice builder. The Sig kits that do make excellent "first builds" are, the LT-40 (The LT-40 is probably the most popular trainer on the market both for flying and building), for intermediate fliers, the Four-Star 40 (or 60) and for the more advanced flier, the Somethin' Extra.

? Top Flite: Another company whose kits are outstanding, but again, not for the n

A Suggestion...

For the intermediate to advanced flier, I have to plug my favorite choice of the best kit for your first build:
The Sig Wonder.

Here's why:

? Small - Due to its small size and low part count, it can be built faster than anything else out there. A quick build also means you won't get bored or discouraged as you might with a longer build. The small size also means less area to cover.

? Inexpensive - It costs so little that even if you totally screw it up, you can make firewood out of it and you haven't lost your shirt.

? Versatile - The Wonder is made to be customized. The directions give you several options for wingtip, tail and canopy designs so that you may build the version that you like best (which will also teach you some skills for modifying in case you ever decide to do modifications on a larger kit in the future). Also, the Wonder can appeal to a wide variety of pilots. An intermediate flier can put an .049 to a .10 engine on it and handle it well, while an expert flier can put a .15 - .19 on it and it will be a screamer! (I put a .25 on mine and it was insane!)

? Easy yet educational - Although the Wonder is an easy build, it incorporates a lot of the building techniques found in more complicated models, but due to its diminutive size, these steps are easily accomplished and will prepare you for future builds (You can also learn from any mistakes so you can avoid them on your next build). So with a small investment of both time and money, you can decide whether you want to build bigger and better things, or if building is just not your cup of tea.



Summary

Obviously, there are a lot more good kits on the market than what is listed above. If you have a particular kit in mind that you'd like to know more about, just stop by the Kit Building forum here at RCU and ask. They'll be glad to help you out!

Just remember, whatever kit you choose, read the instructions before you start and make sure that you understand what is happening in each step before you ever cut or glue something. - And when the inevitable mistakes happen, just pop into the Kit Building forum and we'll be glad to help.

And above all else... Enjoy the build!



Never forget

Remember 9/11 Prayer

The White House Commission
on the [National Moment of Remembrance](#)

Compiled by a Navy Chaplain

Almighty God, the past year will be indelibly inscribed in our memories.

We looked with horror on the terrorist attacks of last September 11th. But we looked with honor on acts of courage by ordinary people who sacrificed themselves to prevent further death and destruction.

We shed our tears in a common bond of grief for those we loved and lost. We journeyed through a dark valley, but your light has led us to a place of hope.

You have turned our grief into determination. We are resolved to do what is good, and right, and just.

Help us to remember what it means to be Americans — a people endowed with abundant blessings. Help us to cherish the freedoms we enjoy and inspire us to stand with courage, united as one Nation in the midst of any adversity.

Lord, hear this prayer for our Nation. **Amen.**