

# COVERING LANDING GEAR WIRES

by Gerald Sullivan

Published in the October 2008 issue of Scale Staffel  
Newsletter, Gerald Sullivan, Editor

Working on my FAC Sportster, I got to the part where I had to cover the landing gear wires to make them more like real struts. Some of the guys used soda straws but I wanted a better streamlined look. The Flying Models writeup had you glue a flat piece of 1/32 balsa to the inside of the wire and bend and glue a piece of 1/32 on the outside and bind it in place. This sounded really dangerous to me as Cy A has a bad habit of sticking to my fingers.

It seemed that if I had two curved pieces, I could glue one on each side of the wire and achieve a really good look. No matter how I tried, I could not get such a small curve lengthwise in the balsa. I wondered if I could make a (female) curved clamp to wrap a narrow piece of balsa around a 1/4 inch mandrel. While looking at a 3/16 OD tube, the little light bulb came on.

Now to describe how to actually do the job. Get a piece of 1/4 ID tube about 6 inches long, and a piece of 3/16 ID tube just a little longer. The balsa should be 1/32 x 3/16 x 4 inches. Wet the balsa for a few seconds under running water, hot if you want. Then place the balsa on the smaller tube and round the end with your fingers. You can then force this combination into the 1/4 ID tube. Let it dry.

You will find that this will take a long time to dry. You can hurry this by placing the assembly in a warm spot. The dash of a closed car in the California sun does a good job. When removed the balsa will have a nice curve. I used 5 minute epoxy sparingly to glue to the wires.

If your balsa comes out stained, thoroughly clean the 1/4 tube with soap and water or solvent. Of course if it is to be painted, it won't matter.

