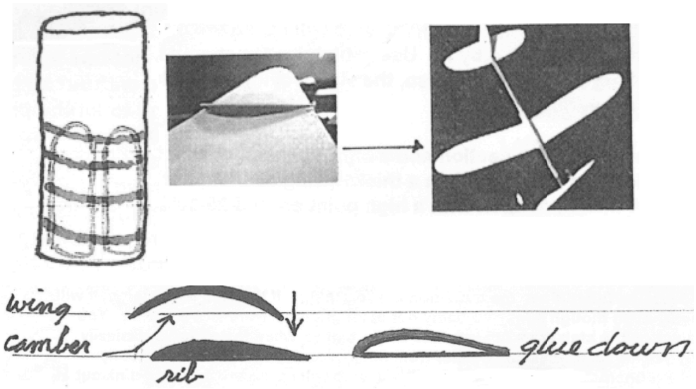
FORMING BALSA SHEET WINGS FOR ROG MODELS

by Capt. Jake Larson USAF (RET)

While building the Bay State Skeeter ROG stick model that was published in the July/August 2014 issue of *Tailspin* our Florida amigo, Jake Larson, used a technique for adding camber to the all sheetwood wing panels that is well worth passing on to the rest of you ROG stick fans. First, Jake cut out and sanded the wing panels and misted only the top surfaces with water. Then, using an old 4.5" diameter shipping tube, he strapped the panels vertically to the tube (wet surfaces facing out) with rubber bands and simply let them air dry. Jake says that this technique produces ROG wings that hold their camber much better and that don't try to "lift" between the ribs. Jake's drawings, shown below, illustrate the technique clearly.



ALL-BALSA SHEETWOOD MODEL BUILDING TIPS

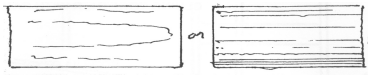
by Capt. Jake Larson (USAF Ret.

Published in the July 2015 Issue of Tailspin, Mike Nassise, Editor

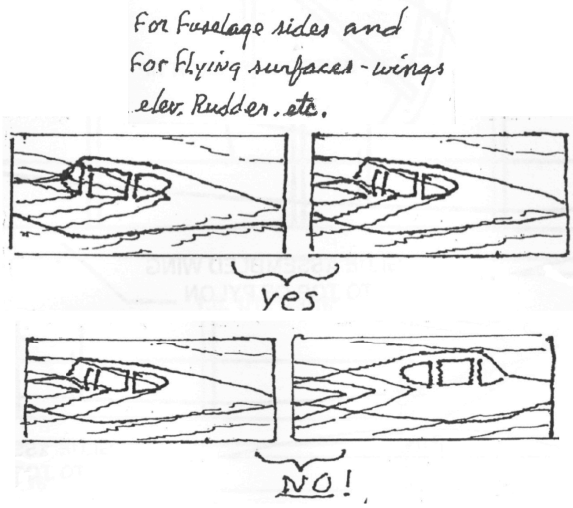
First of all, these models will definitely fly! I have, and you can as well, easily get 2 minutes with these ships. I've done it indoors, in a large domed stadium, and outdoors too. I've even had a couple go OOS! I admit that I "cheat" a bit by using *1/64"* sheet on the flat bottoms and turtle-decks of some of my airplanes, but why not?

The wood I use is quite light, almost white in'color and of the straightest grain I can find. For fuselage sides, and for flying surfaces such as wings, stabilizers and fins, select wood that has the grain direction shown in the drawings below.

The drawings labeled "yes" show the fuselage side pattern positioned on the wood so that the fuse has the same flex fore and aft. The "no" drawings, with the fuselage pattern not positioned correctly, will give you a warped fuse every time. I generally use *1/32"* sheet for everything - except the fuselage formers. Those are, more often than not, cut from *1/16"* sheet. Sometimes, I'll use *1/20"* sheet for wings on low-wing types where the wings are subject to damage on bad landings at higher speeds.



Use only new, sharp #11 X-Acto blades when cutting out parts. Don't be stingy; change them often! Same goes if using single edge razor blades. Keep whatever type of blade you are using sharp to avoid splitting thin, soft wood.



Use fine sand paper with a "sanding block" for smoothing balsa sheet wood before cutting out any model parts. For rounding-over edges, emory boards are very useful. They can be found in drug stores and beauty supply shops. As a word of warning, *DO NOT USE HER'S!* This could lead to situations that are detrimental to modeling activities.

I like to use Testors wood cement (in the green tube) for gluing up my models. It's getting hard to find these days, but it still out there if you look hard enough. CA glue is pretty much a "no-no" in my book except for nose thrust buttons. Elmers' types are too slow and drippy and they tend to "wick" (as does CA.)

For adding camber to sheet wood wings see the "Forming Balsa Sheet Wings for ROG Models" in th Nov/Dec 2014 issue of Tailspin for the technique that I favor. It's simple and fast, and it produces sheet-balsa wings that hold their camber very well. That's about it for this article, my friends. Stay loose, build some all-sheet wood models and have fun. Above all, don't forget it's still only a hobby!