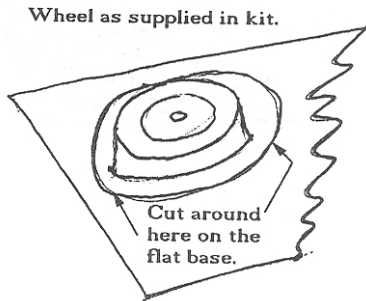


# ASSEMBLING VACUUM FORMED WHEELS

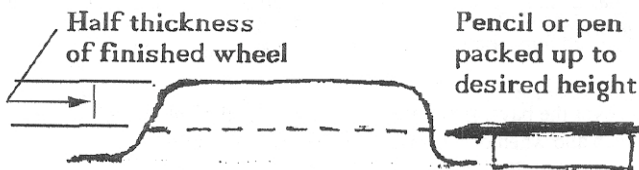
by Jerry Sullivan

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When faced with the task of using the vacuum formed wheel halves sometimes supplied in kits, I find that trimming and assembling the halves sometimes results in wheels that are less than satisfactory. Well I finally got a little smarter with the last set that I completed.

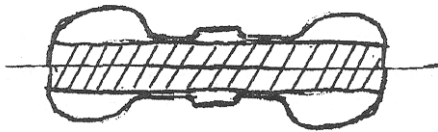


The secret is in the initial cutting of the halves from the supplied sheet. Rather than trying to cut them as a finished half from the sheet, just cut them out oversize leaving a piece of the base all around the wheel. Figuring the half width, use a pencil or fine pen propped up to the correct height to mark the center line for trimming. This is easily done because the wheel half will now sit level on a table.



I found that filling the wheel with a disk of balsa built up to the correct thickness allows the trimmed wheel halves to go together nicely. Epoxy works well, especially if support is used to get the depressed centers up against the balsa filler. A hole can be drilled through the center to accept an aluminum tube as a bearing. The use of a drill press allows the hole to be accurately made at the right angle, resulting in a true spinning wheel.

**Wheel halves assembled over balsa filler.**



Yes, model shops have wheels, but most times they are heavier than what you might want. Also, the vacuum formed wheels more often than not have great detail molded in. This technique also works on spinners supplied in a vacuum formed sheet.