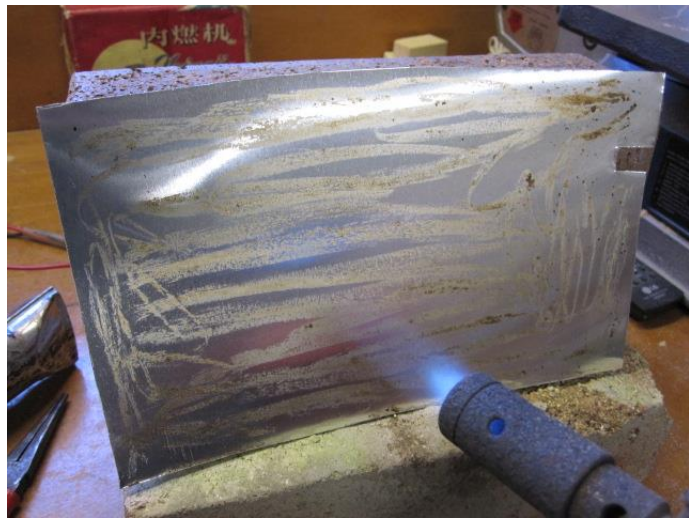


I've got the covering all ready but first I have to do some metalwork! The top and side panels on the Camel (& Pup) are aluminium and on the Scooter (with a Camel fuselage remember) they are polished. I wanted to use litho plate as it's soft and light but I didn't have enough and with printers going digital it's not so easy to get! So I emailed Mick Reeves in the UK who sells it for his  $\frac{1}{4}$  &  $\frac{1}{3}$  scale Sopwiths and it arrived with a



few other bits I needed. It was thicker than I'd like but I set about annealing it. You rub it with soap and then heat it with a torch until the soap goes black. I'd always thought there must be some cunning chemical reaction going on but, when I googled the process, it turned out it's just a simple "thermometer"! When the soap goes black it is the right temp! I worked it to the curves



and epoxyed it in place. It's starting to look like the Scooter I'm aiming for. And so we get to the good bit - the covering! I am using Solartex, white for the fuselage and tailplane (much of which will be painted red) and natural for the wings. I like Solartex, it goes on easily, goes round compound curves like a



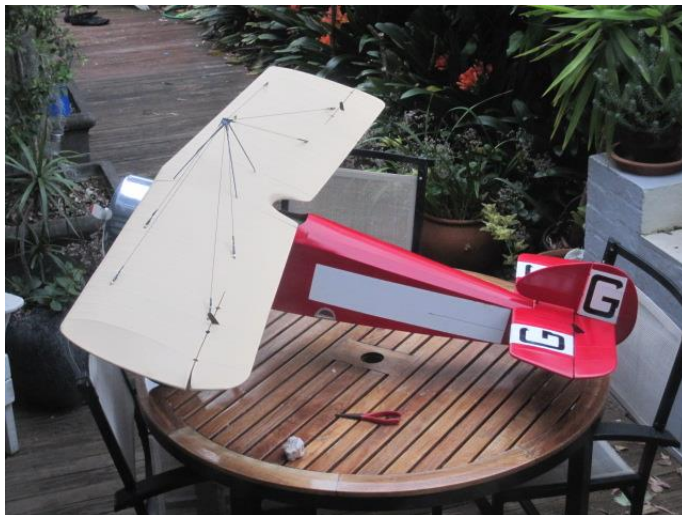
dream and shrinks well. It's not cheap but after a bit of searching the cheapest supply turned out to be from Sussex Models in the UK despite the postage but of course less their GST. It was the usual covering job for the wings, bottom first and the ailerons done separately.

I put rib stitching on but since it is only Stand Off Scale only on the top surfaces. I think a fabric covered wing just looks wrong when it's all smooth and they are not hard to do. I got some sticky strips from a bloke in Canada for the Pup and used them with strips of Solartex over the top - it tears into strips very easily. The white stuff is the stich tape and you can see the Saolartex strips hanging over the L/E to the right.



The fuselage is straight forward, bottom, sides, top and then edge strips along the edges - where else! Tailplane, elevator, fin and rudder got the treatment and rib stitching on top. Suddenly it's a plane!

I assembled it all and checked the CG - aaaagh - another short nosed Sopwith - it needs a lot of lead to get the CG anywhere near the right position. I loaded it up and it took  $3 \frac{3}{4}$  lbs to balance



(but that's roughly half what the Pup needed) and took it's all up weight to 8.6kgs giving a wing loading of about 20ozs/sq.ft. - do you like the mixed measurements? I masked up the fuselage and tail and sprayed the red - nice stuff from a can but not fuel proof so that went on top. I started to do the

registration markings but decided I would test fly it first.

I arranged to meet George Kaley on Wed 11<sup>th</sup> Sept afternoon hoping for us to be alone but Richard and Al were there already. George would be my nerve steadier!

It looked really good sitting in the Belrose sun - time to commit aviation!  
The engine wouldn't start! Maybe I should go home. A quick check showed a



sticky exhaust valve and a bit of oil and a quick jiggle and it was fine.

The engine ran well, on-board ignition works fine and since the wind had dropped there were no more excuses.

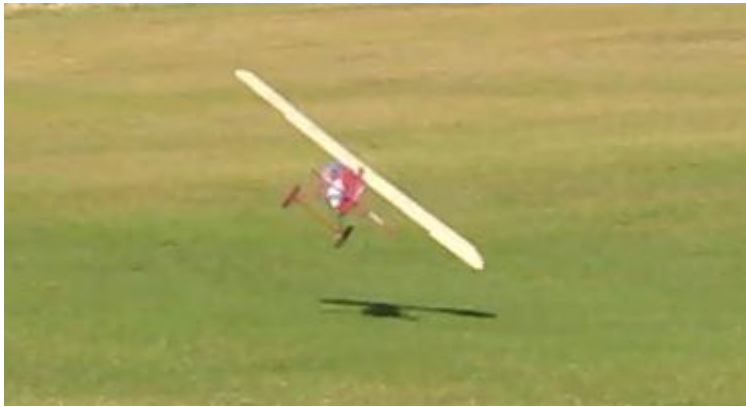
George filmed while I headed down the runway. It accelerated well, the tail came up and it was airborne! And that was the end of the good news - as soon as it left the ground it rolled instantly - right, I tried to correct with rudder and aileron but I fear with not enough R and too much A - this sequence of pics is extracted from about 2 secs of the movie!



Tail skid just off the grass



Whoa, rolling right



Still rolling, you can see ailerons are moving and some rudder



Heaps of aileron, not enough rudder



Wing tip hit the ground, cartwheel commences!



Oof! We come to rest, broken wing tip, broken wing centre support, crumpled cowling, one wheel mounting ripped off, pride badly damaged!

Ah well, as they say, back to the building board! **Mike**