

The Scooter flies!

It was the 11th of Sept when I test flew the Scooter and you know the result! It was painful.



When I got it home the damage was mainly to the wing and the cowling (and my pride) but I set to and stripped the covering off the tip. It was a bit messy but a few bits of balsa and it was ready to re-cover and now you'd never know.

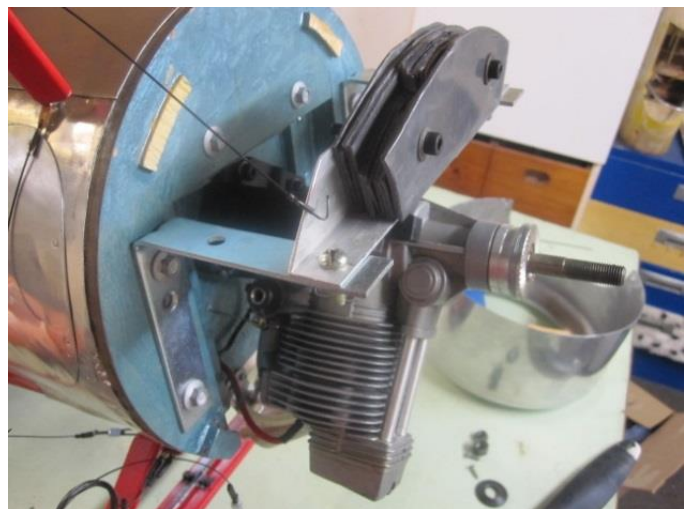


The cowling is not so good!



I'm no panel beater so I just had to soften it, pull it, bend it and providing you don't get too close it doesn't look too bad. I had to do a bit of work on the bent undercarriage but it was soon looking respectable and ready to fly again maybe?

I rigged it up, checked out all the incidences, checked out the CG again and, in the hope of using less lead balance, mounted the lead as far forward as I could on angle brackets from the firewall.



Christmas and New Year meant a non-stop hangover and shaky fingers not fit to touch transmitter sticks but I took it out a few days ago to test fly it - it was far too windy but I could run up the motor and the on-board glow was working fine.

Wed 29th January and there was no wind in Balmain at 9.30 so I headed for the field. There was a steady breeze there and luckily so was George Kaley who again helped me by filming the take-off. I was more than a little nervous after the first attempt but tried to remember "more power" and "more rudder - less aileron". My other concern was the CG - it is almost directly over the wheels which would mean any nasty bump or over rotation and it would be a nose in or, even worse, a forward cartwheel.

I started up, George started the camera, it was time to fly! It rolled pretty straight, I tried to let it get to flying speed and suddenly just as it was lifting off it dropped a wing just like the first time!



You can imagine what was going through my mind - something along the lines of "Oh bother, this could end up like last time" or words to that effect! The pics are extracted from the movie sequence and you can see - TOO MUCH ELEVATOR but I managed to sort it out and it was flying!

One circuit to steady the nerves and check the trims not bad. A lowish pass to impress George and time for a landing.



I lined it up, it drops a lot faster than the Pup (not surprising as it weighs about the same but with half the wing area!) but it came in smoothly, rolled nicely on the main wheels, though I needed a bit of elevator to stop it tripping over its own wheels, and settled down on the ground.



We looked at the movie again - clearly the plane was leaving the ground at a reasonable speed but at the wrong angle - I had to get the tail up earlier.

Back to the strip (after relaxing for few minutes) and try again. This time you can see the tail is up while the wheels are on the ground and the plane lifts off in a much better attitude.

Another good landing except for a final nose over when it slowed right down, and time to go home - a happy end to the day!



Now all I have to do is build a new undercarriage - I want the wheels at least 1" further forward; complete the registration markings; tidy up a few bits and pieces and get it certified. Of course that will need a few manoeuvres too - gulp!

Thanks for the filming George, it was a great help in sorting things out.

Mike M