

## A Tale of Two Pups

Once upon a time in a country far, far away I bought a Dave Boddington kit for a Sopwith Pup. It was about 40" span, 3 channel and powered by an OS 19. It came with a beautiful spun aluminium cowling so, having brought it to Oz in 78 and built it in 79, I added the panels behind the cowl from litho plate and finished it in the colours of one I had found in an old Aeromodeller magazine.

Here it is in all its glory (not the best pic as it is a digital photo of a print from film) and it flew a treat! It was stable, remarkably manoeuvrable for only rudder and elevator, I mean real barrelly rolls, and a visual treat doing slow low passes.



The years passed and I fancied building a bigger one so in 92, on a trip to the UK I bought the DB  $\frac{1}{4}$  scale kit and shipped it back here. It was a while before I got around to building it, covered it in Solartex and finished it in the colours of an RAF trainer (I had to find a painted cowl version as this one is fibreglass not ali). It weighed about 10 lbs - no problem for an 80" span biplane BUT was DRAMATICALLY tail heavy - the classic problem of a WWI biplane with a very short nose due to the massive weight of the original rotary engine! I balanced it ..... it needed 10 lbs of \*&%\$ing lead to balance - I just couldn't do that to it!

Soooooooo..... I cut off the complete tailplane and fin and rudder and built a new super light one with laminated edges and other lightening mods. It saved about 4 ozs but that makes a big difference when you have a long moment arm - I was now down to about 8 lbs of lead! I still couldn't do it, but did take it down to the field for "show & tell" on the Nov Scale Day in 98. Here it with David Rose and his Pup.



Time passed, it sat in a corner looking at me sadly. I went to the US for 4 years, then did a load of UK travelling but last year I thought "this is silly" and decided it *must* fly. I got some useful nose weight - an ASP 180 instead of my old Saito 120 (now in my Tiger Moth) and on-board ignition. I was down to about 6 lbs of lead and I knew it would not get better without serious mods to the nose or tail. The all up weight was now about 19 lbs but with nearly 16 sq ft of wing area the loading is only about 20 ozs/sq ft - it must fly if the engine has the grunt.



Here's the lead screwed to the  $\frac{1}{2}$ ' ply firewall - you don't normally see that much outside a plumbers! I took it to the field on 7<sup>th</sup> May and after David Pound had checked it over and pronounced it fit to fly we range checked it and I fired up the mighty ASP. Thankyou to the members there for letting me have "private sky", I stood out in the middle of the field and opened up the throttle ..... it rolled down the strip and rose gently into the air - IT FLIES!

Actually it flew very well. It needed some down trim and a fair amount of right trim but was soon cruising rock steadily round the field. I was loathe to do much in the way of aerobatics but since, if you intend to do them in future flights, you must do them on the certification flight, I did a loop. It was a bit of a staggering fall off the top kind of loop but apparently



f/s Pups were known for that (something to do with the gyroscopic effect of a heavy rotary motor).

I lined up for landing and all was looking good until I actually touched down - I had forgotten about the quagmire in the middle of the field - the wheels sank in about an inch (here are the tracks) and it flipped over. No damage, just embarrassing!

So home to make a few mods and clean the mud off and it won't be long before it is back to the field.



It's not often that you do a maiden flight with a 14 year old model, the time has worked rather well, it looks suitably "weathered".