

Chipmunk Follow Up.



It's funny how a small detail, usually unnoticeable by the average punter, can get on your goat if you have made it wrong and you know you have made it wrong. When I rebuilt this plane for the second time I had to order a new canopy from the UK, the canopy arrived in three pieces, front, centre and rear. No big deal I just framed it up and plonked it on. After completing the re-build I noticed that the canopy front screen was at the wrong angle. The front of the screen should be 45 degrees from the thrust line. I hadn't trimmed the supplied canopy bits to the right shape and it's bugged me ever since.

Since retiring I've been able to get the fleet pretty well up to date and under control. I was thinking about a new project after finishing the P40 when I had a rush of blood and cut the canopy off the Chippie to shape it up correctly. I thought that while I had the canopy off I would remove the back seat and fix the slop in the elevators that was getting worse with age. Unfortunately the slop was not in the servo but was in the tail end and was caused by the horn coming loose on the elevator joiner. The elevator and the rudder horns are internal, thus a minor job turned into a major job necessitating cutting away the rear fuselage planking, cutting off the elevators, making and fitting a new elevator joiner, re-planking and fibre glassing the fuselage and now I have to re-decorate it.

I'm sick of the old scheme so I fired up Google to look for a good looking Australian Chippie to replace it.



VH-RSQ

VH-MMS



VH-DBS

VH-RTW and others



VH-RVK



The one I have gone for is VH-RWI operated by the Royal Aero Club of WA. Its a simple scheme, a bit lairy and it has some nice nose art features that I can replicate with water slide decals that will look good.



The down side of my rush of blood to fix the canopy is that I now have to re-do all the surface detail after sanding off all the old paint.

These pictures are of the plane in primer after panel



lines and rivets have been added. The Chip-pie doesn't have that many panels but it does have a gazillion rivets. It took me about 5 days to do the detail and now she is ready for the first white coat.

All the coloured paint will be Durobond air dry acrylic semi gloss. I'll finish her off with a coat of Durobond 2 pot gloss clear to protect the surface from the nitro fuel. Weight is a real issue here so I'll be applying paint in the thinnest possible coats.



The white base coat is on and the canopy framing is work in progress.



The black anti glare panel is done and next is the bright red flash down the fuselage sides, across the wing and fin.



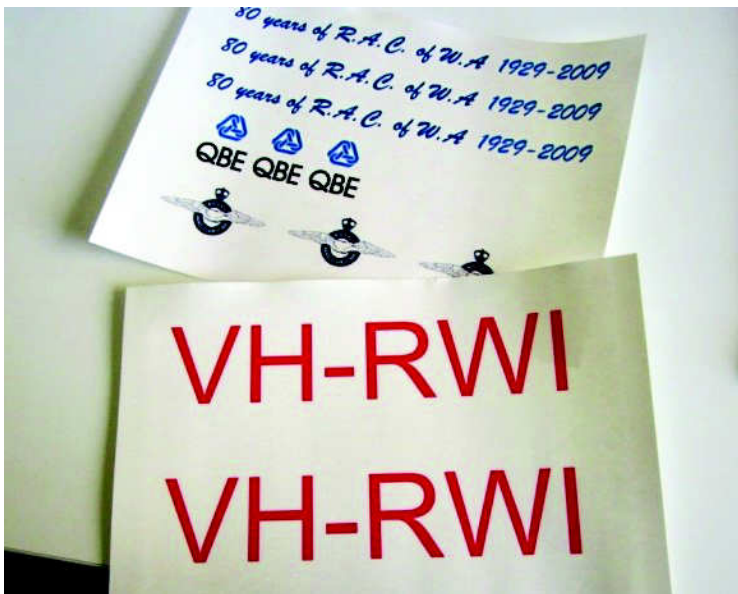
Wings finished and fuselage masked for stripes.





Job done.

The next job is to make and fit some decals and then frame up the canopy before completing the cockpit by replacing the seats and the pilot.



I made up a couple of pages of decals using MS Word and scanning a few images before editing in my favourite graphics software, Snagit. The decals are then printed on clear water slide paper with a laser printer and applied to the plane.





The underwing Australian rego decal was made with Col's beaut Roland vinyl cutter and is made from black adhesive vinyl sheet.

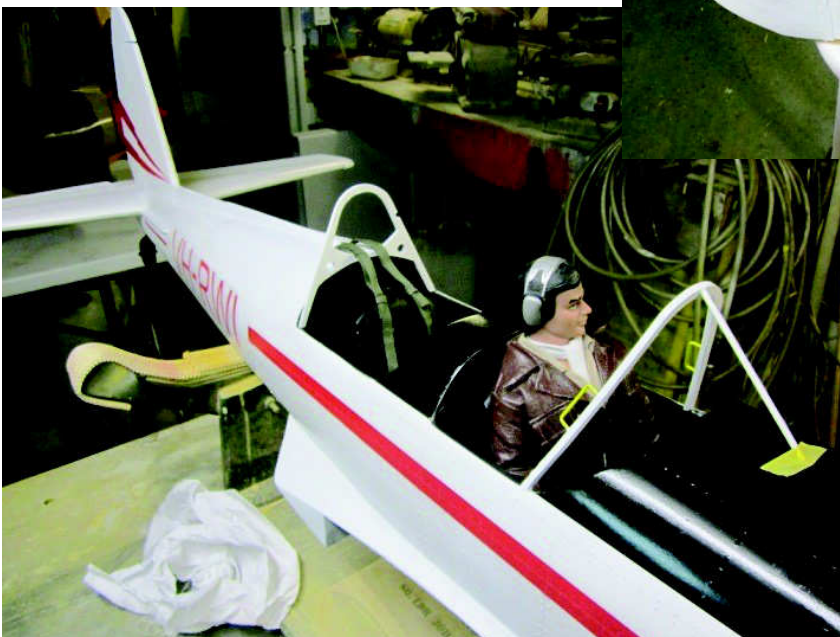
Now that the canopy is the correct shape internal and external frames need to be made.



The external frames are made from cardboard glued to the clear plastic with canopy glue.

These frames will need priming then rivet detail added before spraying

with the same colour as the fuselage.



The internal frames are cut from 3mm ply and glued to the airframe to simulate the internal canopy structure.



The canopy is glued in position with Pacer Canopy glue. It takes about a day to dry and then I can spray the complete plane with clear gloss.

Two pot clear gloss Durathane now applied. Masking removed and now ready for re-balancing and then back to the air.





The plane was rebalanced and no additional weight was required so on to the weigh in where she came in at 6.90kg which means that the repairs and re-decorate have added 100g to her previous weight. I can live with that..

So there we have it, all done because of a sloppy elevator.
This plane has had two new noses, a new motor, 2 new left outer wing panels, a new elevator servo and now a new tail and like my Grandfathers axe, is as good as new...



Cheers and Beers
Stan