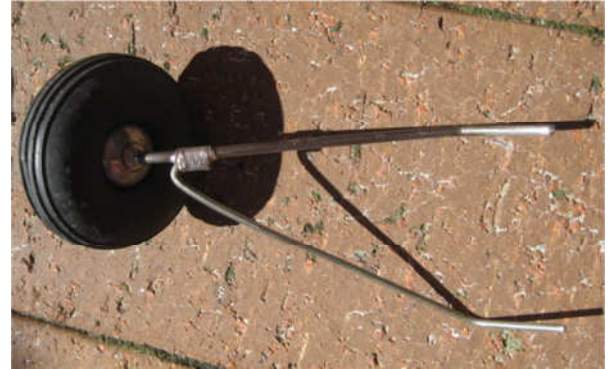


## The real model continues

So now I have to cover it but just before that I have to sort out the undercarriage. The original has 2 rather spindly legs bound to the main cabin former and raked forward at a pretty steep angle. Given the increased size (and weight) I decided on a four leg system that plugs into brass tubes sewn onto that and the next former. It's pluggable partly in case of a bendy landing but mainly because it makes it much easier to cover the fuselage without the legs getting in the way!

I found some old MK wheels in the "wheels" box and bent some bits of wire from the "bits of wire" box and with the soldering iron, some copper wire from the ..... you guessed it, "useful copper wire" box and I'm not saying where the four wheel retaining washers came from, I soon had a pair of these!



Now to cover it - which of course means silk and dope as per the original - but being a bit short on them I chose heat shrink film - but what colour? I was determined to have transparent covering, I didn't do all that fancy balsa work and stringers to cover it up! I had red (left over from the Bird of Time) green (left over from the Aquilla) and some orange that I'm not sure where from. I couldn't think of a decent combination of those so decided to do it all red with white on the solid bits. The white was a bit of a bugger to pull around the compound curves of the nose but it looks ok from a distance. I also decided to re-name it. Since it was a lot bigger



than the Mam'selle I decided on Madam. I typed the name in Word in 280 point Brushscript, printed it, spray glued it and stuck it on some of the white covering material. A bit of scissor and scalpel work and I had a respectable "decal".



Of course, when I ironed it onto the wing ..... I couldn't peel off the bloody stuck on paper pattern and had to resort to soaking it in thinners to soften the spray glue! Two final bits of decoration, a monogram of VS on the fin designed by Andrew Yu to celebrate the designer and a genuine SMAE waterslide transfer on the cabin side to remind the aficionados of the good old days and the Society of Model Aeronautical Engineers that we used to be! Finally fit the inner snakes and the horns, paint them red to match the covering and here it is in all its glory. Over 100 years old if you add the motor and plane designs together!

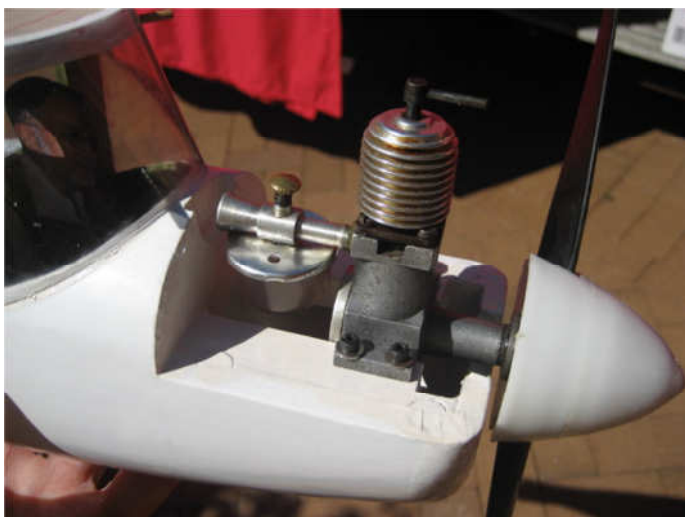
The final all up weight (including 2 miniature servos, switch and 360mah battery) came out at 24 ozs or to the people who work in that funny French system, 670 grams according to my eBay, dual system, \$7.50 digital scales. A bit heavier than I would like but the Mills should have more than enough power, it just may not "float" so well.



The CG seems to be spot on though I may add a little bit of lead in the nose for the first flight just to be on the safe side



Here's a few detail shots to show the plug in U/C, the mighty Mills 1.3 (sadly not an original, a "modern" Indian



repro from the '70s), and the ubiquitous pilot sitting below the rubber band pegs made of bamboo kebab skewers. I'm tempted to fill in the gap between the U/C legs with 1/8 balsa and cover them in white film but I'll wait a while and think about it - VS didn't go in for flash stuff like that.

The spinner is an old plastic one from the "assorted spinners" box and has a screw on cone - great for

flick start motors. The original cowling was held on with wire hooks and rubber bands, my ultra-modern one has 4 small rare earth magnets - love that "click" when it snaps into place!

And so to flying. It's been pretty crap weather since I finished it but Sun 3<sup>rd</sup> April proved to be perfect, some sun, a light breeze and Madam was ready to fly. Following the time honoured instructions for such a model "test glide over long grass" I did so with no extra nose weight and it

just floated gently away to a perfect touch down beyond the "long grass". I filled the tank (it holds about 12 ccs) and a prime and a few flicks had the ancient Mills roaring ..... well, running anyway. I backed off the compression so it was not on full "power" since I didn't know how it would react to the motor and heaved it aloft. It climbed slowly leaving that lovely trail of ether, oil and kero fumes in its wake. I did a couple of circuits, the motor cut and it landed safely. Further flights showed it needed all the right trim I had to fly straight and with the motor on song would climb to a respectable height and glide around in a most satisfactory manor!

I have to say I have thoroughly enjoyed building it, the way it flies, the nostalgia and not least, the admiring comments of other members. Why not give it a try, it was cheap to build and you can't get an ARF of one of these!

*Mike M.*