

FLIGHT TRIMMING ADJUSTMENTS FOR NON- PURISTS

By George White

For those of us who are purists that arrive on the field only to find that the stab needs a bit of up or down, the rudder needs more turn, or that the wing has either warped or needs to be warped, the answer is to take the model back to the workshop and make the corrections and come back with it properly adjusted. This article is not for you.

For the rest of us, after having driven to the field, or worse yet, driven long distances to a contest, only to find that the model needs trim adjustments, I've taken some advice from that super craftsman Richard Adams and from some of the articles previously published in this rag to offer some advice. First of all, Richard told me that on nearly all his scale models (or I assume any relatively small rubber model without a pop-up stab DT) he initially attaches the rudder and stab to the fuselage using rubber cement — yes that stuff you can buy in an office supply store. It adheres better than you might think. Then as Richard trims the model and needs to adjust the tail feathers, he is able to pull them off and move them with relative ease and reattach them with rubber cement. Once he has the model trimmed the way he likes, he then glues the surfaces on permanently.

Taking the rubber cement idea one step further, the recently all-too-often discussed Gurney flap comes to mind. When the model is not behaving as required, I have found the use of gurney flaps far more predictable than the use of a tab stuck on the trailing edge of a flying surface. Carrying a batch of 1/16" square balsa in the field box, together with a bottle of rubber cement provides all the tools you need to determine what flying surface correction is required to get the model behaving properly. Wing warps are easily and quickly corrected by the use of a 1/16" square balsa gurney flap rubber cemented to the trailing edge of a wing. Gluing the gurney flap on the top of a wing is just like giving that wing "up" aileron, and vice versa. If you find that you've added too much correction, simply cut the balsa stick shorter; if insufficient, add an additional piece. The gurney flap is not subjected to moving as airspeed changes as is the "tab" many of us use for temporary adjustments. Once you have the model trimmed as you like, the next time you have the model on the bench, you can make the adjustments needed to the flying surface and pull of the gurney flap. If you decide to leave the gurney flap on, you can deal with the esthetics by simply painting the balsa stick to match the rest of the wing.