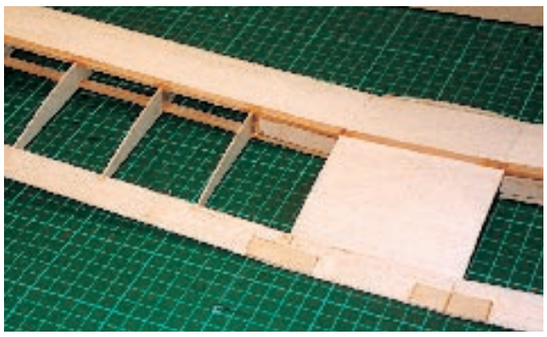


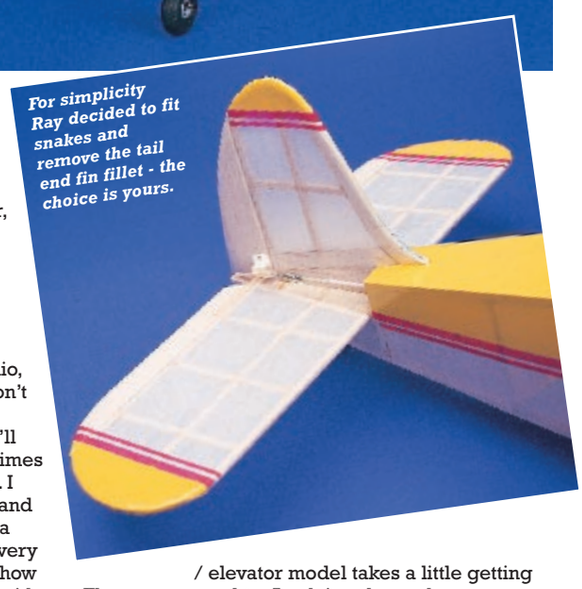
They don't come much easier to build than this. Parallel chord wing, a handful of ribs, and a bit of sheeting thrown in for good measure.

As Ray's club seem to have taken electric flight by the horns, who knows, a Chatterbox craze could be just around the corner!

DATAFILE

Name:	Chatterbox 2000
Designed by:	Vic Smeed / Ray Wood
Wingspan:	40"
Wing chord:	6.5"
Fuselage length:	30"
Overall height:	9"
Motor used:	280 Geared (J. Perkins)
Alternative power:	Speed 400 direct drive or geared
Propeller:	9 x 6" Graupner
Cells used:	8 x 500 mAh (AA size) 9.6 volts
Wheel diameter:	2"
Rec. no. of channels:	3
Control functions:	Rudder, elevator, speed controller (JETI 180 used)
Servo details:	Hitec mini's
Surface travel:	Rudder 3/8" each way Elevator 3/16" each way
All-up weight:	1 lb 10 oz

Looking for some fuss-free summer flying? You could do a lot worse!



For simplicity Ray decided to fit snakes and remove the tail end fin fillet - the choice is yours.

mini's (not micro), slotted into holes in the cabin tray. The flight switch sits between the motor and battery connector, allowing a little slack for removing and charging the pack.

FLYING NOTES

In addition to the obligatory checks (radio, engine, C of G etc.), don't forget, if your battery pack is a new one, you'll need to cycle it a few times to get the best out of it. I keep a 400 size motor and propeller mounted on a block of wood for this very purpose - it's amazing how the capacity improves with use. The prototype model used a 280 size motor / gearbox combination along with a 7 x 6" prop - all supplied by J. Perkins - but to be honest this particular set-up was a little unsuitable. As a result, the first flight (from hand-launch) produced little more than a low-level circuit. For the second attempt we substituted the 7" prop with a 9 x 6", and BINGO! She was sorted, climbing away with great authority.

To be honest, after flying with ailerons for so long and enjoying instant response, reverting to a rudder / elevator model takes a little getting used to. Applying down elevator makes little difference to the flight attitude, so, just like the full-size, you'll have to throttle back to descend. Only very small rudder movements are needed to change direction, but remember, patients is a virtue, and eventually she comes round.

I've yet to experience the flight duration on a hot summers day, but upwards of five minutes should be easily achievable.

So, now you know what I did last Christmas, lets just hope Mr Smeed approves!

A model for the millennium. Chatterbox 2000 was built in the 20th Century and flown in the 21st!