

Things to do and things not to do.

When I was a child I started building control line models. I had an .049 Wen-Mac from a plastic flying model. The old Western Auto in Moosup, before it moved to the new building, would have a Scientific kit or two now and then. A dollar fifty plus five cents tax got me a model called "Little Mercury". If I could get the Wen-Mac running, using a mostly dead dry cell, I could get in a flight or two. I built many control line models over the years crashing most of them. Teaching myself to fly R/C and building R/C models took the edge off control line models. I did build a Sig Twister profile stunt model with a Fox .35 about 30 years ago. I fly it about once every two years or so. Just enough to keep the Fox from gumming up solid.

A couple weeks ago while looking through my old Model Airplane News magazines a .15 size sport profile C/L model caught my eye. I whipped up plans for an .049 size version of the model. In a couple of days I had an .049 size C/L model. I wanted a small plane so I could fly it in my yard. I even built the handle shown in the plans. I found some string I figured would be strong enough to handle the 1/2 pound plane. In late February on a rare warm day I flew the thing. My wife served as holder. The plane left the ground and picked up speed. By the third lap I realized I had made a major planning error. The control lines were 15 feet long. That equates to a lap every 2 seconds. And just as when you lose radio control of an R/C model the engine runs so well that the plane is at max mach number when it hits the ground. The little .049, a Cox Thimble Drome, ran like never before and I'm not in shape to be spinning around like this. The little .049 said you think this is fast Gramps? try this. Then I remembered that when my C/L models run low on fuel the engine speeds up even more. Oh baby. I can't recall what was screaming louder the engine or me. What turned out to be the leisurely pace of 2 seconds a lap increased to one and a half seconds per lap. I could hear that .049 laughing as it screamed slightly louder than I was. Finally the beast quit. Being quite nose heavy and extremely light on the lines the model angled down and hit the ground the same time I did.

Back in the building room I increased the lines to about 25 feet. Another flight proved milder but still too fast. I didn't fall down this time though. I had some wing skin pieces left from building a Deception pattern plane. I found a control line model in the magazines called a Strathmoor. One of the first to use a wing design called 'detroit'. I scaled the plans down from .35 size to .15 size. and came up with a profile 30 inch span model. I should be able to use 52 foot lines with this plane. I found the lines still on the reel in the original box with an EZ-handle attached at the recycle center where I found the Eaglet 50 fuselage. The center has better choices and prices than the old Western Auto. A pretty good return policy too.



I had been watching eBay for an original Ringmaster kit. Several came up but the bids went way out of my price range. The original kit price was \$3.50. I finally went to the AMA plans service and they have the plans from the original Sterling kit. I ordered a set and built the Ringmaster. The wing leading edge is one inch wide and one inch thick or one inch square by 42 inches long. Rounded and slotted for you in the old kit. Nobody makes a leading edge one by one. So I figured I would laminate two pieces of 3/8 stock with a piece of 1/4 inch stock between them. While cutting the pieces to be laminated on my table saw I managed to grab the saw blade with my thumb and index finger on my right hand. Nine stitches later I'm building the Ringmaster left handed. I have some nasty gouges on the digits but nothing missing. I did learn not to do that again. I have flown the Ringmaster and the head bolts came loose which caused the engine to loose power and run for ten minutes.

On the Brodak web site is an address for a C/L hobby shop in Grosvenordale. I called the number and they said they weren't selling stuff anymore. I did get the color scheme for the Astro Hog in early April But until my thumb toughens up C/L is all I can fly. In the picture the plane on the wing is the .049 from hell, the biggest is the Twister, the next biggest is the Ringmaster and the one with the diamond shapes on the wing is the scaled down Strathmoor. Cox .049, Fox .35 and .29 and .15 power the planes in that order.