



EL GRINGITO

Based on the famous pattern ship designed and flown by Ted White, the "Little White Man" gets it all on with a hot .40, proving that a good big man doesn't always !

Loosely translated, "El Gringito" means the "Little White Man." As you can very plainly see, it is the smaller version of the now famous El Gringo designed by the renowned competition pilot, Ted White. What you don't yet see is the story behind this plan.

Ted White has been a very close friend of mine since 1964 when we flew prototype F & M radios together. He and I have probably had more fun at this great sport than any other two people I know. This plan and story are, therefore, dedicated to Ted White and our friendship.

In 1964 we built many airplanes and found a plane called the El Toro (loosely translated means "The Bull") designed by Marty Moad of Las Vegas, Nevada. Marty's plane had a very thin symmetrical wing and vaguely similar lines to a P-51C and performed a spectacular maneuver consisting of a vertical full speed dive, with rolls, followed by a very low pull-out! That, notwithstanding, the fast and flashy El Toro provided some inspiration for the original El Gringo.

Ted designed the El Gringo and, although I have built many of them, it is, nevertheless, 100% his own creation. Throughout its development, and in fact, to this very day, Ted and I argue the relative merits of symmetrical versus semi-symmetrical wing sections. Obviously, I prefer the semi-symmetrical airfoil and I am dedicated to its development exactly the same as Ted is to the symmetrical foil. Ted's wife, Dorothy, asked me once why I didn't use Ted's theory and I told her I couldn't very well do that for the same reason we have Fords and Chevys, Democrats and Republicans, et al.

The fact that this plan of the El Gringito appears with a symmetrical

By Jim Simpson

section just as Ted meant it to be is my salute to him for his outstanding creation and his unparalleled flying ability. It also becomes a "fringe benefit" to those who will not build a "big" plane and I know quite well how many modelers feel that way. Built correctly, this one will not be "squirrelly" as is all too often the case with the smaller Pattern ships.

To build this plane rapidly, cut the fuselage sides from 3/32" sheet balsa and add the triangular stock as shown on the plans. While this assembly is drying, cut the formers and plan your engine installation. The firewall is simply a rectangle to hold your engine mount and its size is determined by measuring the side and top view at the distance aft of the 1/16" plywood ring former dictated by your particular engine. The K & B RR .40 with a Kavan carburetor and K & O muffler on a Tatone mount is a great combination for this plane. Don't knock it until you try it!

The turtle back may be cut from foam and covered with balsa or, if built up, cut the formers as shown. Glue in place and ensure that the fuselage is in perfect alignment while spot gluing the front, top, and bottom blocks in place. Add the turtle back and bottom fuselage plankings and then carve and sand to shape.

Cut the empennage out of sheet balsa as specified on the plans and sand the final shape. If you're going to silk and dope your plane, glue the horizontal and vertical stabilizers in place at this time. Hook up the elevator now if you prefer internal pushrods. After the wing is built you can

cut the lower nose block loose, install and align the wing, drill the hold-down dowels through the number one bulkhead and wing, then glue your pre-shaped wing fillets in place and permanently install the nose block. Other than the radio installation, this will complete the fuselage and tail assembly.

The wing must be built straight and true and this planform lends itself nicely to the many wing jigs currently available. Cut the ribs, then stack and drill them for the pushrods. Jig is required, adding spar, sheeting and leading edge. Finally, finish up with the capstrips and, when dry, join the panels adding 2" wide pinking tape at the dihedral break. At this time, cut out the ailerons, trimming away excess material and adding the trailing edge stock to the leading edge of the ailerons. Be sure to add the sheet balsa to the aileron well. Install the linkages as shown on the plans. Next, install your favorite retract gears, then sand the entire structure and prepare it for covering.

I, personally, prefer Top Flite's Super MonoKote and if you use this material be sure to cover all components and then assemble the plane. If you prefer silk and dope, you may wish to hinge the controls, then cover them. Paint your model to suit, then clean the hinge lines and install your favorite radio according to the manufacturer's instructions.

Finally, check your craft for warps, free controls, proper direction of servo movement, proper balance, and so forth. When you are satisfied with the engine and radio performance, then and only then, fly it.

Ted White and I both wish you good luck and happy landings. □

