

# GLOUCESTERSHIRE GANNET

TROPHY WINNER  
**AEROPLANE**  
MONTHLY  
1986 INDOOR  
SCALE NATIONALS



**Build Ray Johnson's Peanut  
winner from our full-size plan!**

**T**HE FULL-SIZE Gloucestershire Gannet was, by any standards, a delightful, pretty and diminutive craft. Unhappily it was not attended by good fortune.

One of several intriguing craft designed for the 1923 Daily Mail Lympne light aeroplane trials, the little Gannet (the work of H.P. Folland) possessed no airframe faults but was beset by problems from its unusual and untried engine, a 750cc twin two-stroke which had been specially designed for it by John Carden. Admirable in concept the motor may have been, but overheating troubles and difficulties with its oil and petrol systems ruled it out as a reliable proposition. The Gannet itself was a charming machine, particularly attractive, no doubt, in its house colours of ultramarine fuselage and white surfaces. Construction was unremarkable apart from the degree of compactness achieved, which caused much favourable comment when the craft arrived at the Trials. Wingspan was just eighteen feet, and empty weight was 283lbs. In order

*The Gannet was tiny! These Lympne photos appeared in the October 18th, 1923 issue of Flight (thanks, Aeroplane Monthly, for permission to reproduce).*

to comply with the competition regulations, the Gannet's wings were arranged to fold, pivoting about the rear spars. Pilot access was made easier by virtue of an upward-hinging centre-section panel.

Missing from the first day of the competition, the Gannet made only one flight at Lympne, and even this was curtailed by the onset of mist and resultant poor visibility. The engine troubles previously mentioned prevented any further activity at the meeting.

In the following year the Gannet was re-engined with a 650cc Blackburne Tomtit inverted V-twin, which gave improved performance and, presumably, better reliability. Larger wheels were also fitted. Nevertheless, the little craft was seldom flown (and never again at Lympne); and its last public appearance was at the 1929 Olympia show, where it formed part of the Gloster Aircraft Company's office decoration.

Its subsequent fate is unknown - at least to this writer - but the thought occurs: sixty years on, what a marvellous microflight it would make...

**And now for the model!**

Ray Johnson's Peanut Gloucestershire Gannet, one of our full-size plans this month, was the winner of the Aeroplane Monthly Trophy at the last Indoor Nationals. Construction is quite straightforward, so detailed building instructions are not given; instead, the following observations by Ray himself may be of interest.

I decided to build the Gannet as it has a long nose, which makes it a good choice for a rubber model; it has parallel-chord wings and tail, which makes it easy to build; the fuselage is a simple box with top and bottom fairings, which makes it easy to build, and light; and the cabane and interplane strut arrangement is straightforward.

If the model is built for outdoor flying I would suggest that the basic box should be from 1/6in sq with firmer wood for the wing ribs (and possibly every other rib omitted). Conversely, for indoor use the tail assembly could be from 1/20in balsa. A five-inch Peck plastic prop will be best for outdoor performance, and a shorter motor may be used. It will then be necessary to hand-launch only, or to fit a longer (and non-scale) undercarriage. As designed, average indoor flight time should be in the region of 36 seconds.

Colour finish is a 50/50 mixture of Humbrol enamel and acetate thinners sprayed on. The wing registration letters are cut from black tissue, pre-shrunk with dope on a small frame. Fuselage letters are from white tissue lightly oversprayed, cut out and fixed with diluted white glue.

The Gannet is docile, but it would be interesting to try it with a slightly rearward CG and one degree of tail incidence. This could mean a saving of weight in the nose. Happy ultra-lighting!

