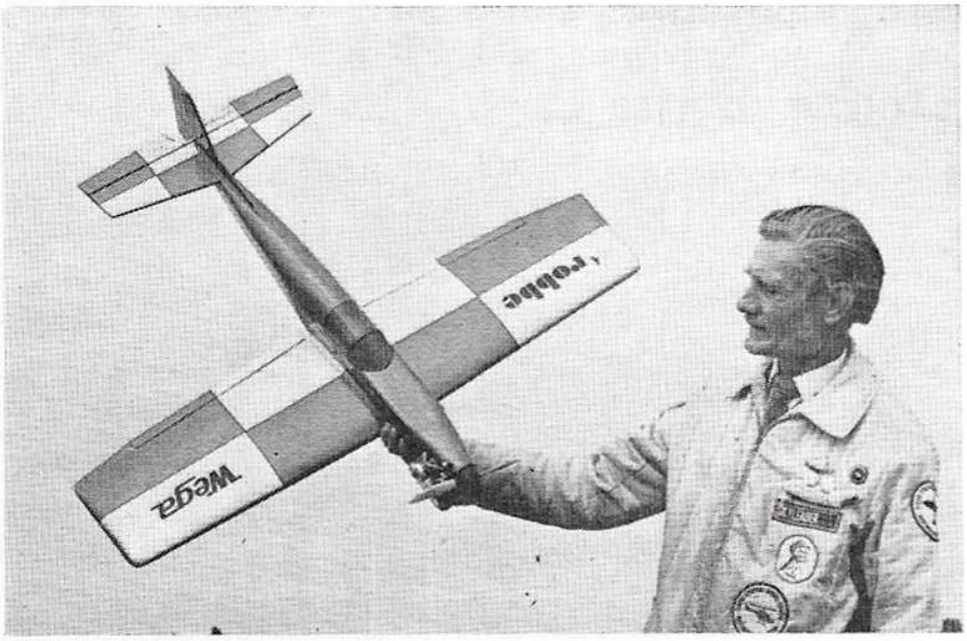
RM TEST REPORT

DAVE CRONIN builds and flys the WEGA



This ROBBE kit builds into a compact aerobatic job —and a real 'star' performer!

AS THE FIRST kit from Robbe tested by Radio Modeller, the *Wega* makes an interesting introduction to their concept of kit design and production. It is a streamlined and rather aggressive looking low-winged machine, of very low aspect-ratio, for four-function radio and (it says!) .35 to .61 power. The contents were fully described in the September 'RM Trade News', but the main point that strikes one is that, although the kit contains a wealth of nice quality wood, the only fittings included were the two main u/c legs, wheel collets, clamps, and a packet of mylar hinges. (The nice looking scale type noseleg shown in the plan and on the boxtop is not included—nor is it, apparently, in the Robbe catalogue).

Getting it together

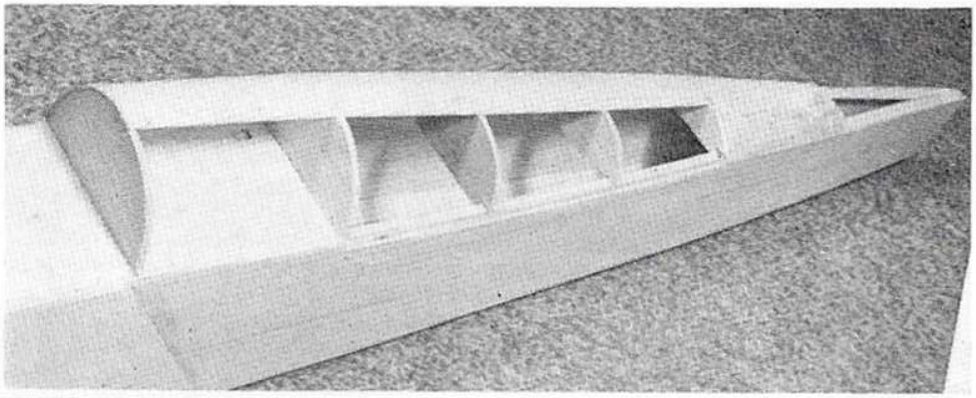
The wing is built up, rather than foam, and I was delighted to find spruce mainspars supplied. Ribs are all pre-cut and need only light sanding. Having built the two panels, ready to join with the ply brace, I decided that the "45mm under one tip" (just over 1¾in.) was too much for this sort of aerobatic machine, so I joined the wing with the top surface flat on the board. This was my only 'mod' and I believe it was justified. The centre section requires to be wrapped with glass fibre bandage, but that in my kit was not quite sufficient.

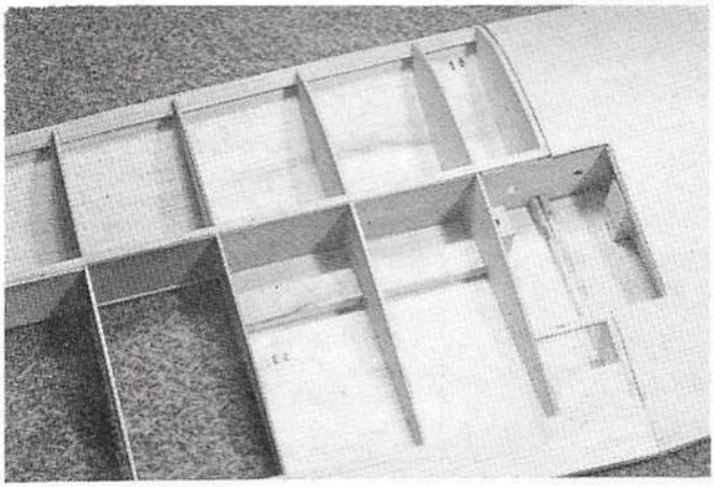
The fuselage goes together well, being built inverted on the plan—but it's necessary to refer to the illustrations of the engine bearer assembly frequently as it is easy to misalign these. The formers are marked to take cables but, as these are not supplied, I used pushrods, only needing to open out one former to take them. The sheet balsa sides have ply doublers at the wing seat area, and the turtle decking is only 1/16in. sheet balsa wrapped over. This tended to give just a slight "starved horse" effect—perhaps a planked decking would have been better. The canopy is supplied, not in moulded form, but as acetate sheet, from which quite a presentable one can be built up.

The *Wega* is small and compact, as may be seen in the heading photo, where our reporter admires his handywork.

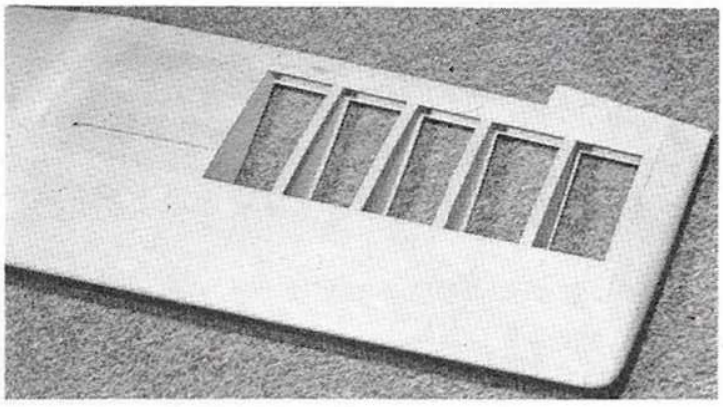
Finishing

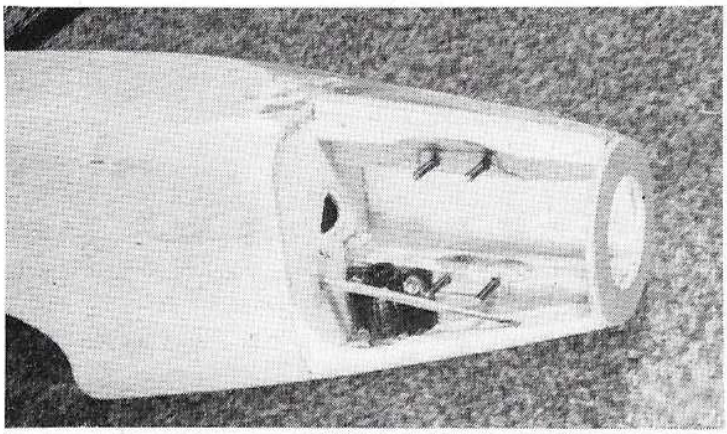
I covered the model entirely with heat-shrink film (that fancy pattern on the wing is actually in green and gold) and, with its radio gear instal-

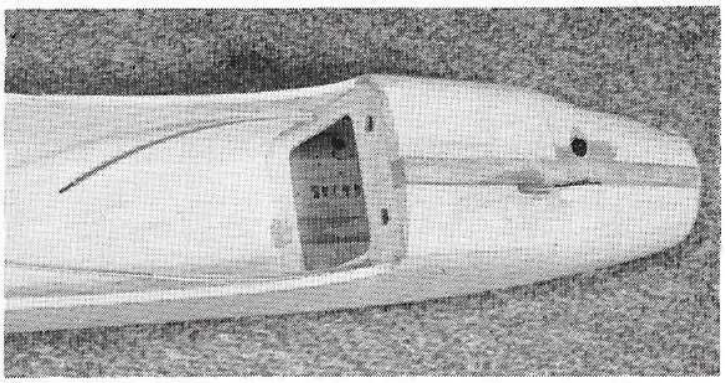




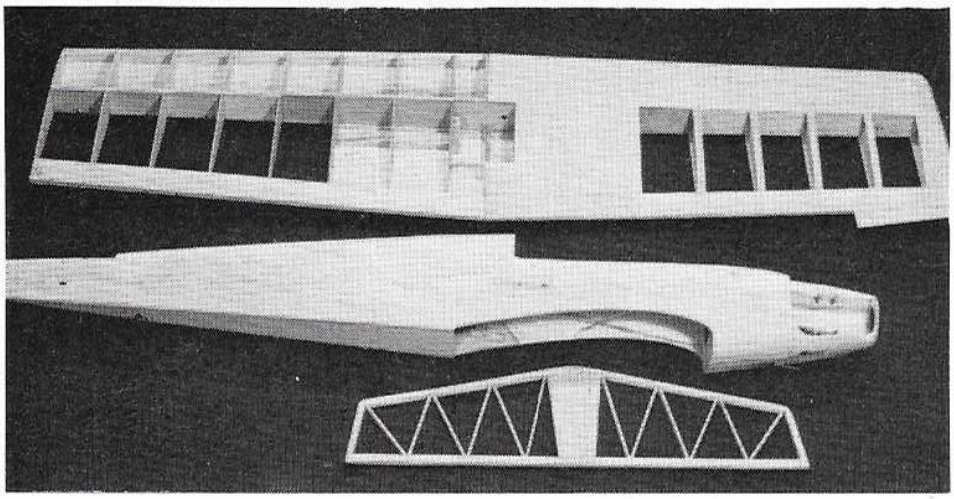
The 1/16in. sheet wrapped over the formers tended to sag a little—probably better planked with 1/8in. says Dave. Left: good strong centre section, 'D' box and ply braces. *Below:* all sheeted and capped.



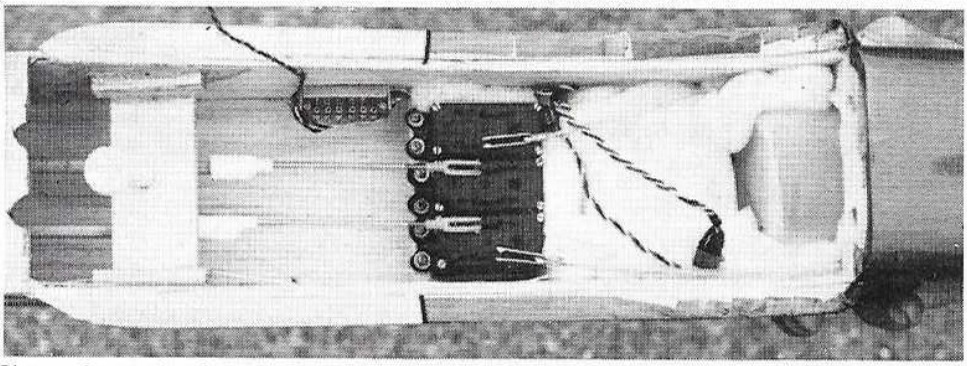




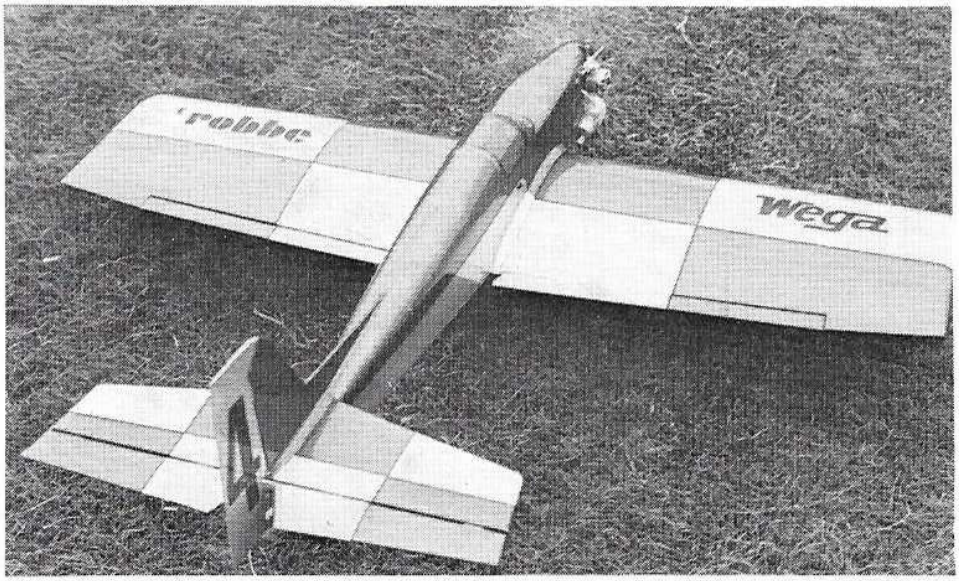
Engine bearers for the side-mounted motor need careful aligning, says Dave Cronin, who used an O.S. .40 in this one.



Component parts. Tailplane light—but elevators were rock-hard, reports Dave. (Had to shape them on machine sander . . . you could've replaced 'em, Dave!. . . Rest of the wood was fine.)



Plenty of room for three-abreast servos. *Below:* looking more aggressive than ever with engine revving, the *Wega* is raring to go.



led (plenty of room, as the photo shows) and an O.S.40 up front, turning a 10x6 prop, the all-up weight was just 5lb., ready to go.

Punching the sky . . .

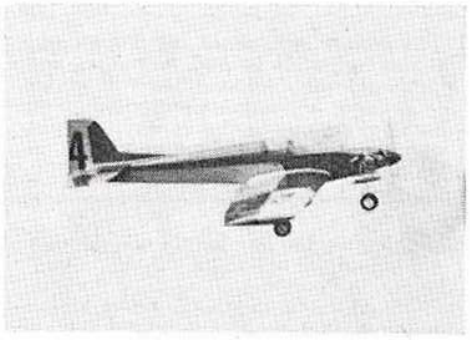
Yes, I fitted a .40 as the Manufacturer's blurb says "with a .60 you can punch holes in the sky". Personally, I think a .40 is enough for anyone, in a model this size.

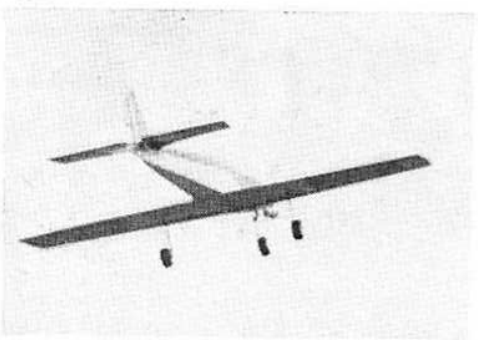
There were various excuses, like the nosewheel I had wound myself not being quite long enough (would she 'rotate'?) and the wind being fairly strong and bumpy . . . but . . . opening the motor to full bore, and holding in plenty of up-elevator, we were off. The *Wega* shot along the field, mowing the grass as it went! Within 20ft. she unstuck, and climbed away like a rocket. (*Use a sixty?—they've gotta be joking*!) I slowed her to half throttle at a reasonable height . . . round into wind . . . squared up and—hands-off . . . it just continued dead straight on the heading I'd given it.

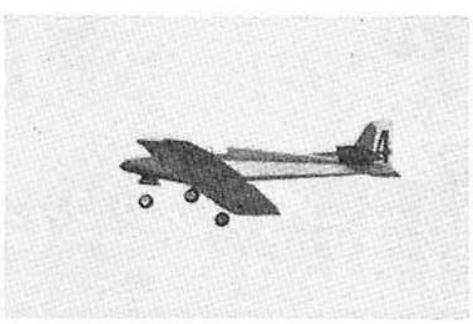
So then I started to throw the unsuspecting *Wega* all over the sky. Loops and bunts were tight, and aileron response, the way I had it set up, was rapid to say the least—*my*, did it roll! The spin, also, is very tight and fast, though it won't spin on just rudder and elevator, needing ailerons in as well, like most machines of this type. After all this, a nice throttled down landing approach—but, to my shame, I got caught out by a gust, and the model cartwheeled. Surprisingly, it sustained no damage, so having got the feel of her, let's have another flight before the wind strengthens too much . . .

I think maybe this just could have been a mistake. Doing an inverted pass, I had a mental aberration, and joined the "Up-elevator Club". It says a lot for the *Wega's* design, however, that I had her good as new by the next weekend, when, to see her go in, you'd have said she had to be a write-off.

After the repairs, I reduced the







aileron throw from $\frac{3}{8}$in. each way to $\frac{1}{8}$in. each way. I also modified the sit of the model, to reduce that nose-down attitude, by shortening the main legs. Conditions were still windy, but the control response felt a lot more comfortable. The roll rate, of course, was much slower, but the model's general handling, especially at low speed, was nicer, and the landings very confidence inspiring. I'll therefore leave the ailerons at this setting (and forgo my 'avalanche') for the time being, anyway. (Elevator movement, at $\frac{1}{4}$in. each way, seemed O.K.—though it needs all of it, on takeoff, to get that nosewheel off.)

Spins are not affected by the reduced aileron movement—but they are still needed. In trying to make the *Wega* spin without, I took her high and got her to the point of the stall (not easy, as this model really doesn't want to stall unless you really rear the nose up); I then put in a fistful of right rudder . . . and it just skidded sideways! So I tried left rudder . . . and it just skidded back again, crabwise—odd! But, with ailerons in—there she goes, in a nice spin.

Summary

As a fun model, the Robbe *Wega* (pronounced '*Veyga*') is certainly at least on par with most models of its size and type, and the price has been kept down, to a certain extent, by not including a load of fittings that most people who would be building this model (not for beginners) would probably have anyway. It is very responsive to adjustments of control-throws, so that you can make it anything between "docile" and "savage"—according to taste!

Manufacturer: Robbe Co., Germany.
Importer/Distributor: Eurapex Ltd., P.O. Box 106, Les Nouettes, Forest, Guernsey, Channel Islands.