

# HOBBY MERCHANDISER

## HM Review

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### Guillow's Mini Models

Easy to build models that expose young hands to new skills.



I can't imagine anyone living in the free world who's not familiar with the Guillow's name and the hand launched gliders or the rubber powered stick and tissue models they have been producing since 1926. As for myself, I have built countless Guillow's free-flight models and converted a number of its airplanes to control line since first starting to build.

It's hard to imagine just how many kids experienced their first flight with the simple slide together gliders that have been sold in drug, variety and of course hobby stores over the years, but I'm certain the numbers must be staggering. The hand-launched or chuck gliders are the simplest assemble and toss in the air models available. There are also the rubber powered models that have the addition



*Mini Models fill the gap between the slide together airplane and a complicated built-up structure.*

of a rubber motor which results in much longer flight times. Those who want to take the next step within the Guillow's line graduate to the stick and tissue models. Even the simplest of these require a gentle hand and the learning of new skills with a hobby knife, glue, tissue and model airplane dope.

Guillow's must have seen the gap between the hand launched airplanes and its stick and tissue models, so they created the Mini Models line to add what I call an intermediate growth step. The Mini Models are small rubber-power airplanes with a twist; an easy to build structure. Two of the six Guillow's Mini Models are offered for review, the US Warhawk of WW II fame and a Rockstar (civilian) Jet. Guillow's has taken advantage of today's laser cutting technology to provide a less challenging build. By using lasers to factory cut the parts, Guillow's has eliminated the need for putting a hobby knife in the

hands of a young modeler. The parts are cleanly cut and just about fall out of the sheets. Another benefit of laser technology is details relating to the model type are etched into the balsa.

The main attribute of the Mini Models is the built up wing and stick on covering. This is pretty neat because it gives the new modeler a chance to experience building a structure without being overwhelmed. The kit instructions are simple and well done. Guillow's also provides support on their web site with an assembly video to help the builder visualize the construction process.

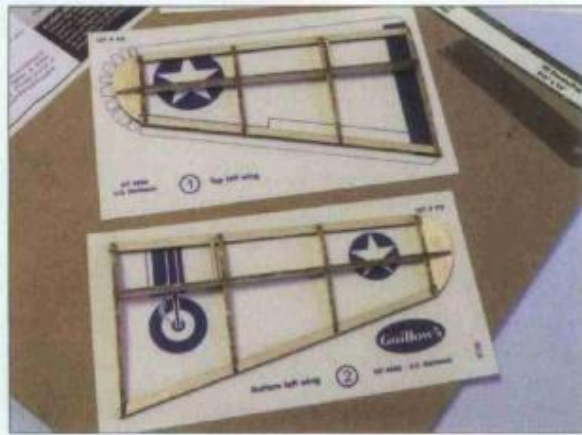
The instructions say it takes about an hour to build one of the Mini Model kits. Honestly, for a newcomer maybe a little more time should be set aside, but I built both models from start to finish in less than two hours total, including breaks to take the necessary photos. Even though the airplanes are shaped differently assembly of each is identical.



*Once completely assembled, the Rockstar mimics the appearance of a civilian business aircraft.*

To get started, lay the plans over a flat surface and cover them with clear plastic kitchen cling film so glue does not get stuck to the plans. I used medium CA (cyanoacrylate) for assembly. Like most well cut laser kits, the Mini Models can practically be assembled without glue. The parts key together ever so nicely as opposed to the old die-cut kits. The wings are built directly on top of the plans so identify the parts needed and do a test fit. When satisfied all is correct, place a little gentle pressure on the structure to hold it flat against the building surface and glue all of the joints with a drop or two of CA.

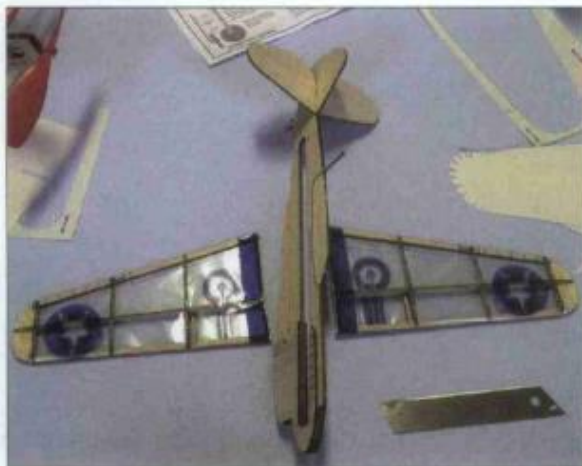




The Mini Models use a clear adhesive backed covering that is easy for the modeler to apply.

When the CA sets, double check the joints and re-glue as necessary. The fuselage requires the addition of some doublers, a propeller tube and the tail assembly. Although the fuselage is not built on the plans it's just as easy. One caution is needed. Make certain to let the end user know to use adhesive sparingly when installing the propeller tube so the glue doesn't find its way onto the prop shaft. [Need I ask why? - Ed]

In very short order, there are three assembled components, two wings and a fuselage. Before the wings are attached they need to be covered. The Mini Models use a clear adhesive backed covering with some printed details.



After about an hour's work the modeler will be rewarded with a completed model he built himself.

The instructions for cutting and applying are very good and work well. Basically cut the covering on the outline shown. Make all the little cuts for the curved areas — a good pair of scissors works perfectly — and start with the bottom and work to the top of each wing. When fully covered, bend and attach the landing gear. And make sure and save a short piece of wire for the rubber band post.

To assist in attaching the wings, there are small tabs on the wing root and mating holes on the fuselage. Let the young modeler know to again test fit and make any adjustments needed before applying any adhesive

For any model to fly properly two things needed. First the airplane must be straight and symmetrical. The other is that it is balanced at its CG (Center of Gravity). This is the magic spot that either makes or breaks (literally) many a model. The process is to pick the model up with your fingertips at the CG. It should balance level or slightly nose down. The Rockstar Jet required some tail weight and the Warhawk needed nose weight to properly balance.



To fly properly, a model airplane must be straight and symmetrical and absolutely must be balanced.

Once balanced, it was time to do some unpowered glides. Both airplanes were spot-on and glided well. The box and advertisements say flights of over 50 feet are the norm.

The props were wound with a single row of knots and pointed at the horizon, the airplanes were released. Multiple flights were performed and each was easily in excess of 50 feet, all concluding in a shallow glide to terra firma.

Four other models; V-Tail, Stunt Flyer, US Hellcat and German Fighter are offered to choose from besides the two reviewed. These airplanes are the perfect step for new mod-



Guillow's states its Mini Models will fly 50 feet, but this distance was easily exceeded every single flight. elders young, or old to see what it takes to graduate to a built up a structure, cover, and tune a flying model.

Dealers should consider displaying the Guillow's Mini Models together with the hand launched chuck and rubber powered slide together models as part of a three-step growing process for the new modeler. **HM**