

A PAINTED FINISH FOR PATTERN PLANES ON A DIET

NOW THAT'S LIGHT!

BY WAYNE APOSTOLICO AND GENE RODGERS

A show-quality paint finish that weighs as little as MonoKote? You bet!

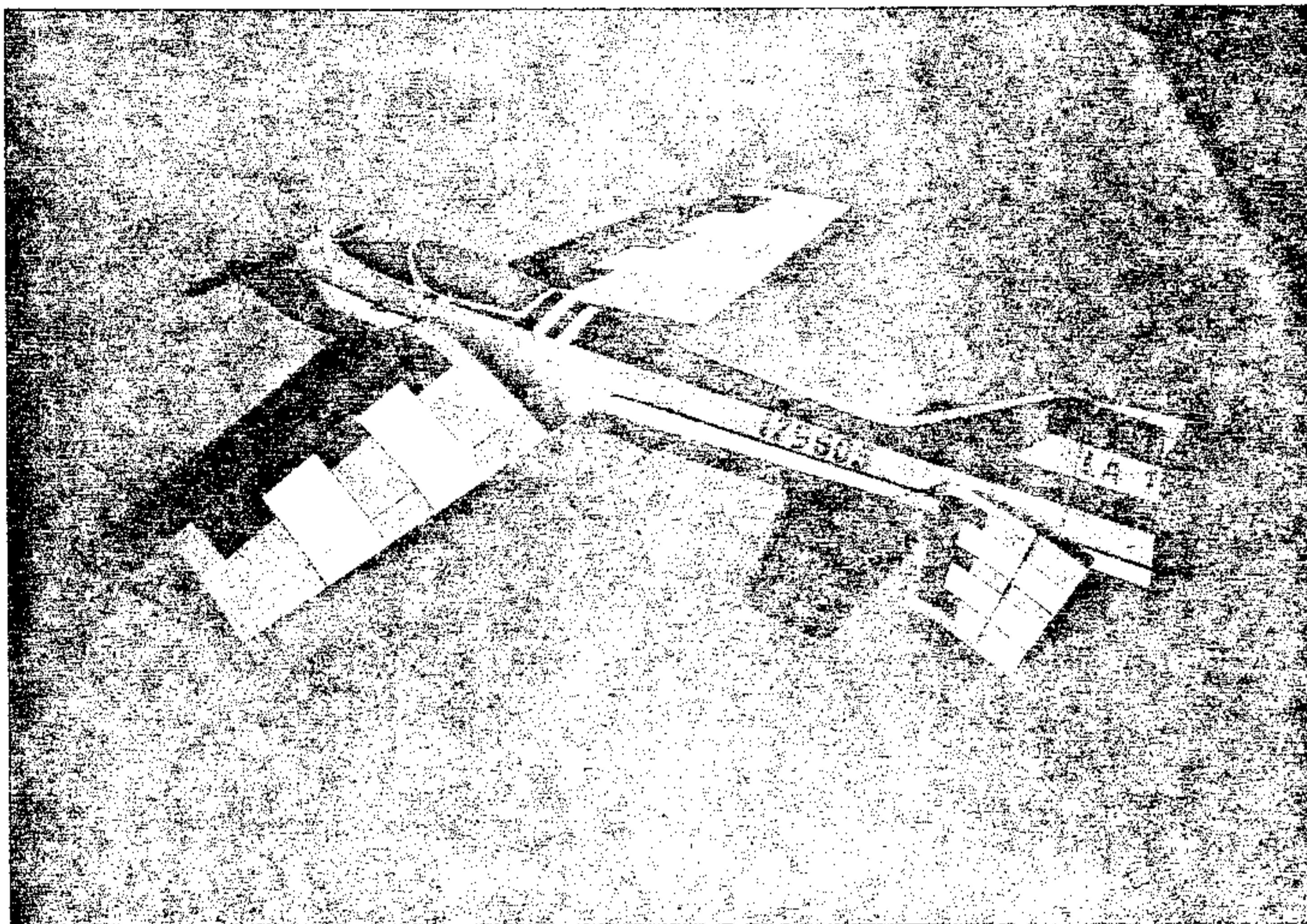
A painted finish that looks great and adds only seven or eight ounces is the result of careful finishing techniques. The better control line stunt fliers have been doing this for years. There's no reason pattern planes can't use many of the techniques that have produced so many PAMPA award winners.

You can finish your pattern plane in paint as light as MonoKote by following the process described here. Many pattern pilots struggle to keep their models as light as possible and have, therefore, gone to MonoKote or other heat-shrink films. With the techniques presented here, you can combine light weight with a beautiful trophy-winning painted finish.

I was pleased with my all-balsa Diamond Mark III and its 11-ounce finish (5-1/2 ounces of glass cloth and Safe-T-Poxy over balsa and 5-1/2 ounces of paint over the glass). Gene Rodgers promptly unveiled his LA-1 with a finish of six ounces *complete*. Both techniques are the same, except I used a glass base and Gene used a dope-and-silkspan base. The latter technique is presented here, as it's the lightest method we've found. Using these techniques, my new Sapphire's finish, complete, weighs eight ounces.

SURFACE PREPARATION

It is essential that your wood and glass surfaces be finish-sanded smooth with *open-coat* 320-grit sandpaper. Open-coat sandpaper is resistant to clogging and is generally white in appearance. All dings and dents need to be filled and sanded. We use lacquer glazing putty.



Examples of what can be done with the techniques presented here are Gene Rodgers' LA-1 (above) and the author's Diamond Mk III (below). The LA-1 uses the silkspan-and-dope technique described in the text to provide a base for the finish, while the Diamond has glass over balsa—more durable, but at a weight penalty of 5 ounces over the LA-1.

