

Product Watch

Mini-reviews of editors' favorites

TME SMART SMOKING

LOOKING TO PUT ON AN AIRSHOW? One way to do it is by incorporating smoke in your aerial demonstration. One of the easiest ways to do that is to use the TME (Tejera Microsystems Engineering) SmartSmoker smoke pump. This little pump can fill the sky with white puffy smoke trails. It's simple to use but still incorporates all the necessary extras you need to keep the smoke trail looking dense at every speed.

The SmartSmoker is simple to install; all you have to do is plug the smoke pump into a spare channel on your receiver. Connect it between the smoke tank and muffler, add a battery and find a place for it in the plane. I was able to install it in minutes, and most of that time was spent finding a spot for it.

I installed a 4-cell 600mAh Ni-Cd flight pack to power the SmartSmoker. I was glad I didn't have to install another switchplate; when I turn off the receiver battery, power is automatically turned off to the pump battery. I connected a Y-harness between the battery and pump just to make it easier to charge the battery.

After I wrapped the pump and battery in foam to protect them from vibration, I attached them to the smoke tank with zip-ties. The entire unit can be installed or removed in a matter of minutes; you simply unplug it from the receiver and muffler.

I plugged the SmartSmoker into my retract channel so that the switch would operate it. If you are using the smoke pump on a scale plane that has retracts or flaps, you can use any unused channel. The important thing is that the channel must have endpoint adjustment and reversing. The endpoint adjustment is used to adjust the rate of the smoke flow to the muffler. I used a radio mix on the throttle along with the retract switch to get more smoke fluid into the muffler at full throttle and less at low throttle. This kept the smoke trail consistent at all speeds. TME has an online, 24-page "Secret Smoke Success" manual that's full of good ideas; it's well worth the download time. Need a compact smoke system for that scale, aerobatic, or jet project you're working on? Take a look at the SmartSmoker; it's hard to beat. It costs \$100.

—John Reid

TME; tmenet.com



MICRO FASTENERS STARTER ASSORTMENT PACKS

Starter Assortments from Micro Fasteners are great items to have hanging around the shop—especially for ARF and heli builders. These nifty assortments are sure to eliminate the hassle of driving to the hobby shop or hardware store to pick up a few nuts or bolts. Five Starter Assortments are available in the following sizes: 2-56, 4-40, 6-32, 8-32 and 10-32. Each assortment comes in a hinged, translucent polypropylene parts box with a hinged top and adjustable dividers. A label on top of the lid identifies each compartment. The Packs include black-alloy socket-head cap screws in various lengths, blind nuts, locknuts, hex nuts (20 of each) and 100 each of flat and lock washers.

ARF builders who prefer to replace the metric hardware that's typically included will find Starter Assortment packs especially handy. They are even great if you lose a fastener because now you won't have to spend hours searching for it. How valuable are these assortments? On the first day I got mine, I was working on an ARF and found out that it was missing 2-56 socket-head cap screws. I just opened the Starter Assortment pack, grabbed the ones I needed and kept on working—fantastic! Now I also keep some in the flight box in case I need them during a flying session. Not having to interrupt a build or a flying session for lack of a fastener is well worth the price of these \$17 to \$20 packs.

—John Reid

Micro Fasteners (800) 892-6917;
microfasteners.com

Wing Tote **BIPLANE BAG SET**

THIS NEW BIPLANE BAG SET comes with two gray and yellow bags that measure 58x20x2 inches. These bags were designed to accommodate the Hangar 9 46% Ultimate biplane, but smaller biplanes will also fit in them. Two of the bags have soft fleece liners with $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch-thick padded dividers that keep the wing panels apart. The front of each bag has a long pocket for wing poles and two large pockets to hold extra hardware for the biplane. The outside Denier nylon is very durable and water resistant. Although these bags are large, once they are on your shoulder, they balance out very well because of the strap spacing, and that makes it very easy to move around with them. The $1\frac{1}{2}$ -inch-wide shoulder webbing is easy on your body. These large bags offer great protection for wings, and you'll find that you can slide plenty of wings into them. Often, I can use one bag for two wing panels. Each set costs \$160.

—John Reid

Wing Tote (301) 725-6033; wing-tote.com



SKS VIDEO PRODUCTIONS **SUPER-MAN JET RALLY 2006**

Not many sights and sounds in RC are as inspiring as those of turbine-powered jets as they make low, high-speed passes down runways or put on precision aerobatic shows. The latest video from SKS captures the speed and excitement of the fantastic jets from Super-Man Jet Rally 2006. One of the largest gatherings of jets in the country, this 11th annual event attracted some of the best jet builders and pilots in the world. In 2006, Super-Man boasted a new facility at Cape Girardeau Airport in Missouri, and the nonstop action didn't disappoint. SKS has amazing in-flight footage of jets such as Dennis Crooks' unusual twin-turbine SR71 Blackbird, Andreas Gietz's turboprop Tucano and Jim Martin's XB70 Valkyrie, which even has fully articulated wings! You'll definitely hit "replay" more than once while you're watching! At the end of the video, we're treated to a tour of the ProMark plant as Jerry Caudle explains how he makes decals and offers tips and techniques on how to apply them.

This 110-minute video is available in DVD and VHS formats and costs \$20. SKS Video Productions' most recent releases include "Top Gun 2006," "JR Indoor Electric Festival" and "NEAT Fair 2006." Give them a try; you won't be disappointed! —Debra Cleghorn †

SKS Video Productions (800) 988-6488;
(717) 259-7193; sksvideos.com