

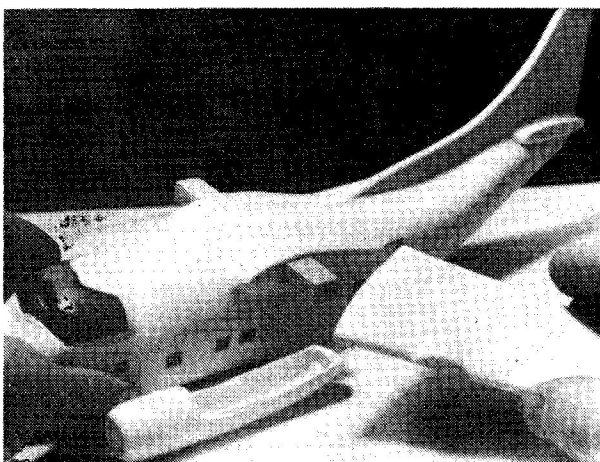
6 the fuselage interior has been fitted with cabin and cockpit floors and also cross-section formers for rigidity.



7 both fuselage halves are stuck together using Microweld or Mek-Pak. Masking tape is used to hold the halves in the correct position while the liquid is run down the joint line. Two bulldog clips have been used to support the fin and rudder in position.



8 all of the kit parts ready for assembly but before any filling or rubbing down has been done. The cockpit interior has also to be detailed.



9 using a square of balsa for a main spar. As there was a lot of plastic between the wing and fuselage joints it was not necessary to make this spar longer than a fairly short stub.

entirely suitable for this type of work. There is no reason why it should not be used with the exception that the thinness of the edges to be glued does, on occasion, present problems. Through experience I have found that the American product Microweld is the most suitable medium but Mek-Pak is a very good alternative. Humbrol liquid cement is not too good as it takes too long to dry.

The method used to apply the liquid cement is slightly different from the tube variety. Each fuselage or wing half is matched up to its counterpart and held exactly in place by a piece of masking or Sellotape. A brush, depending on the size of the joint to be welded, is charged with the liquid cement and run down the edge. Providing the two parts are held together correctly this can be done a little at a time and by working slowly round the fuselage the whole thing can be joined together almost instantaneously as Microweld dries out very quickly. This latter quality is another reason why the two halves should be held together correctly before starting.

I normally do not join the wings, tail unit and other parts to the fuselage until each has been filled and rubbed down. This is a time-consuming job and is closely allied to our efforts before plastic kits, rubbing down wooden shapes and filling them with wood grain filler. It took time and had to be done properly. The work on a vacuform model is nowhere near so laborious but nevertheless must be done with the same thoroughness.

Many of the larger models do not fit exactly down the joint line even though the modeller may have been very careful to smooth off the excess plastic after having cut out the shape in the first instance. Of those on the market, I find RAREplanes the best for fitting as their work is generally extremely accurate, but at the same time this manufacturer keeps to the smaller size models and the chance of parts not fitting properly is therefore less.

A variety of filler materials are available but out of these I favour Green Stuff. It dries quickly, is not brittle and can be sanded easily though rather messily. Kaku Paste, a German product not generally available in England, is very useful for large areas as this is exceptionally strong and will file and sand better than any others on the market. Its disadvantages are that it needs a catalyst to set it and therefore small quantities are very wasteful. Humbrol have had a body filler on the market for some time but I have never been able to get on with it very well. The big problem is that it is porous and when paint is applied the difference in texture can be seen immediately. I do, however, know that the company's research department is working on the matter at the moment and we hope that the product I have tried experimentally in recent months will be available soon.

For final finishing, and the very smooth surface needed to match the perfect one of the moulded plastic, there is no substitute for my old faithful, clear dope and talcum powder mixture. This will fill the small scratches left by over-vigorous sandpapering, the hard edges sometimes left by other fillers and a multitude of other small jobs which cannot be dealt with by the prop-