



FLYOFF

Round **36** FALL 98

The **Skyscrapers**, whenever we get around to it, newsletter.

What's Up? XXXVI

I'm Sitting here staring at eight empty pages again trying to figure out what to write. I want to continue to bring you the kind of cohesive free flight information that I brought to you in my first go around as editor.

A lot has happened since the last round of Flyoff. The Skyscrapers had their annual dinner, we had a demonstration at Galeville, and the Eastern States Free Flight Championships returned. So fasten your safety belts put your seats in their upright positions, and prepare to takeoff on your next Flyoff round.

Galeville updates

I was passing through Walden on my way from New Paltz to Pine Bush the weekend of June 27. I stopped by the field to look it over and dream a little bit. The heavy brush did not appear to grow back but the grass was very high. The proverbial tall grass (couldn't we go there just to test glide?). The weeds growing in the runway expansion joints are also quite tall. We have a lot of work to do if we ever do get the field back. Oh, and for all you bird watchers out there I saw a total of 5, count em, 5 %^&%\$# birds!!

The fight for Galeville continues. The Skyscrapers and the SOURS club confronted the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on our old turf when they met with the local politicians to survey our flying field. Skyscraper member, Aram Schlossberg's letter, as it appeared in the June-July issue of the NFFS Digest, fills us in on some of the details of the demonstration.

"We had a demonstration at the entrance to the Galeville flying site April 15, concurring with a visit of two federal Fish & Wild Life Service (FOWLS) officials to the site, to decide where the Township of Shawangunk's few baseball fields would be located. There were about 25 demonstrators, mostly from the local RC club called the "Sours" and the demonstration was covered by the two local newspapers. The following day the Times

Herold Record reported on the demonstration with a large picture showing a heated discussion between Libby Herland, the designated Galeville National Refuge manager and one of the demonstrators.

Most of the confrontation with Libby and her boss, Anthony Leger, was carried out by the Langelius brothers, Bob and Bill as well as by Don Ross. We were basically told that they are following the law, and that model aviation is incompatible with their mission.

In 1997 Congress passed a law which states that only wildlife-dependent activities will be allowed in National Refuges (bird watching, hunting and fishing). There are no provisions for grandfathering previous outdoor activities, or grabbing access to any wildlife-neutral activity, whatever its merits. (This may not be an isolated case, and I understand that the F&WLS is trying to attain control of other airfields which are being disposed of. Any information along this line would be very useful.)

We are looking into the possibility of challenging the constitutionality of the law, but the fact that the land is owned by the Federal Government seems to be the main stumbling block.

The local congressman, Maurice Hinchey, happens to be one of the leaders of the environmental movement. He will not publicly support the town's attempt to get a few ball fields on the site and has ignored all pleas by the fliers. We are hoping to make Galeville into an issue in the upcoming November elections, and we think that there is wide support among the local farmers and local residents for continued aviation activity on the site."

Nice letter Aram I only wished you would have sent it to Flyoff first. Bob Langelius also wrote a letter which appeared in the same issue of the Digest and continues the train of thought.

"The two-year controversy over Galeville has not yet been settled but that's more of a tribute to the general lethargy of the federal government than to any major break-through. Dealing with the United States Fish and Wildlife Administration (USFWA) and the General Services Administration (GSA) has been an incredible learning experience for the many

East Coast modeling folks involved in this project. The USFWA flat out distort anything to justify confiscating the 620 acre site for their private sanctuary and that of their fellow travelers, the bird watching community.

Their latest distortion to Congress is that **we modelers intrude on the pleasure of said bird watchers** and therefore should be driven off. This, after 27 years of effectively working with the environment and all involved. Of course the "Greenies" and the bird watchers are greatly in favor of this.

The incredible disingenuousness of the USFWA and their unwillingness to follow due-process has provided a glimmer of light in what appeared to be a real bleak situation. Aeromodelers demonstrated at Galeville April 15, to galvanize the media and free flight modelers around the issue. It was the opening gun of a more publicized (hopefully) effort to encourage the Congressional representatives to take their heads out of the sand. This issue is highly political and we local modelers are being asked to be the point men in the phalanx against the entire environmental lobby.

What emerged from this conflict is that the USFWA is in bed with the conservationists and has completely sold out to them out of fear of lawsuits. The local USFWA manager admitted outright that they are at war with aeromodeling in general. That is a shame because there is great competition for remaining open space and the USFWA is not only a competitor, but rule maker and the referee. Modelers must draw Congressional attention to that fact.

(Although the AMA has supported us by providing some much needed legal assistance, their interest now appears to be on the wane.)

I am hopeful that modelers of all persuasions will take courage in this fight, and especially free flighters, who have so much at stake in this issue. Individually free flighters need to contact their *local Congressional* members and let them know of their concerns about restricting recreational usage of lands controlled by the USFWA that legitimate recreation needs have to be developed and protected as much as land and wildlife.

If you don't know who or how to contact your representatives in Washington D.C, I can give you the addresses and phone numbers. Contact me only if you are serious as I too have a life. I will need your Congressional election district. My phone number is (914) 949-6083, and address is 32 Clinton St., White Plains, NY. 10603"

Great letter Bob, it really makes the USFWA look like a group of hypocrites once you read the next letter written by Frank L. Andrews

from Centerville, Mass. it also appeared in the same issue of the NFFS Digest.

"In the March *Digest*, a New Jersey reader sought a list of available flying sites around the country. He pointed out that they were almost totally lacking in the Northeast, especially since Galeville is no longer available.

(We have) a flying site on Cape Cod, in Falmouth near Otis Air Force Base. It is in the Francis Crane Wildlife Conservation Area, which at one time was the Coonamesett Airport. The Crane Area is administered and meticulously maintained by the Massachusetts State Division of Fisheries and Wildlife. This conservation area is shared harmoniously, according to the seasons, by the following groups: hikers, hunters, horseback riders, dog trainers, bird watchers, RC flyers and free flighters. The New England Wakefield Group has held free flight meets in the spring and fall for a number of years at the site."

I don't know about the rest of you, but when I finished reading Frank's letter I was mad, hell I'm still mad. Why does the Massachusetts State Division of Fisheries and Wildlife permit these activities? Don't they follow the same rules and regulations as the USFWA? Aren't they part of the USFWA? I don't know the answers, if any of you readers know the answers, please send them to me for publication in the next issue of Flyoff.

Bob Langelius also mentioned in his letter the "need to contact our *local Congressional* members and let them know of their concerns about restricting recreational usage of lands controlled by the USFWA". Well one of our club members, Syd Kriven, did just that. Seems Syd is friends with Congressman Benjamin Gilman and on May 28th the Skyscrapers had a meeting with the Congressman. Here is Syd's report of the meeting.

"On May 28 we were fortunate and had an appointment with Congressman Ben Gilman. We discussed the problems we have encountered trying to regain entry to fly at Galeville.

Those who attended the meeting were: Wes De Cou, Jean Paillet, Bob Langelius, Peter Ferrara and myself.

I dropped off a package containing newspaper articles, letters and a copy of the Skyscraper Video a week before the meeting to give Ben an opportunity to get familiar with the problem.

The Congressman's interest in aviation goes back to WW-II when he was a crewman on a B-29

Bomber in which he flew 35 missions over enemy territory.

Everyone participated in the discussion, the Congressman agreed with our point of view. After flying there for 27 years why suddenly have we become a threat to the wildlife in the area. He expressed interest in the number of people Wes De Cou represented in his district and that we *were* willing to pay for the maintenance of the site as we have done in the past.

Ben directed his assistant to contact the Secretary of The Department of the Interior and request them to review their policy regarding the decision to keep us out of Galeville. He also requested a second meeting with their representatives, himself (Congressman Gilman) and several Skyscrapers in Washington. He hopes he can get this problem resolved and get us back into Galeville.

My feeling is one of cautious optimism. All the hard work that Jean, Bob, Aram and many others have done for the past two years will now be brought into sharp focus as the letters and articles they have written are reviewed by the folks involved in making the policies we are forced to live with.

Jean Paillet who also attended sent in this report of the meeting with the Congressman.

"Congressman Gilman had a file of information to which he made periodic reference, but he also asked that we verbally explain to him the problem as it currently exists, the background on the situation, and what assistance we sought of him. He seemed sincerely and seriously interested in understanding the situation.

Our review emphasized the following:

We had flown at Galeville for approximately 30 years with no adverse impact as attested in both our own and the Army's environmental studies and surveys

It was our funding and effort that created the "grasslands habitat", and we will continue the funding and maintenance

We were given no opportunity to contest our removal from the site.

Without Galeville northeast modelers must travel to the Midwest and south to qualify for teams to represent the US in international competition.

Lack of flying sites inhibit young people from pursuing interests in aeromodeling and, ultimately, full-scale aviation.

Well-known ornithologist Professor Heinz Meng considers the impact of model aviation on birds to be negligible

The congressman seemed particularly impressed by testimonials from astronauts and aviation personages stating the high value model aviation contributed to their careers. He complimented us on how well prepared and thorough our presentation was.

He then directed his aide to write to the Secretary of the Interior asking for an explanation as to why we were being prohibited from flying at Galeville, and requesting a meeting, with the congressman in attendance, to resolve the problem.

I think Wes De Cou, Jean Paillet, Bob Langelius, Peter Ferrara and Syd Krivin must have impressed the Congressman. Below is a copy of a letter Congressman Gilman sent to Bruce Babbitt the Secretary of the Interior.

"Recently I met with representatives from the Eastern U.S. FreeFlight Conference regarding their concerns over being prohibited from flying model airplanes at the Galeville Airport in Wallkill, NY.

Eastern U.S. FreeFlight Conference (EUFC) is an organization with a longstanding tradition at Galeville Airport. During the period that the airport was owned by West Point Military Academy, EUFC enjoyed uninterrupted use of the grounds which they used for both recreation and practice for international competition.

Recently, West Point had transferred ownership of the airport to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). In a December 4, 1997 letter to my office, USFWS determined that model airplane flying is not compatible with the wildlife that exist at the airport and therefore. Galeville Airport would "no longer be available for their recreational use."

There are many reasons for EUFC's desire to continue use of the airport. Given such attributes as the size and shape of the airport, as well as its large acreage (620), Galeville Airport is an ideal place for them to practice their craft as they have done for almost three decades. In return for its use, EUFC is willing to maintain the upkeep of the grounds, which they have always done in the past.

I would like to take this opportunity to ask that the Department of Interior reconsider and encourage USFWS to reinstate EUFC's rights to continue to use the airport as they have in the past. I am enclosing a number of letters offering support to this regard. I have also requested a meeting with a repre

sentative form USFWS in my Washington office to further discuss this matter.

Thank you for your kind attention to this matter. I look forward to hearing from you.”

On Friday June 19th, Congressman Gilman met with the representatives of the USFWS. Syd contacted the Congressman’s office on Monday June 22nd, the next day I received the following e-mail from Syd.

I called Ben Gilman’s office today and was told that the meeting went well.

Ben worked over the guys from USFWS in good style, up one side and down the other.

They returned to their cave to reconsider their original decision to lock us out of Galeville.

I will get a letter outlining what took place at the now famous Friday meeting. As soon as it arrives in my snail mail box I will send you a copy.

Their final or not so final decision is supposed to arrive here in the near future.

In early July Bob Langelius was contacted by Libby Herland the USFWS Galeville representative. She called Bob to find out exactly what we do at Galeville. Bob gave her the entire rundown on what we do and how we conduct ourselves. She thought we towed our gliders up using cars and motorcycles! She took all this information to help make her final decision on our use of the field.

August 10th I received a copy of her reply to Congressman Gilman. If model airplane flying were allowed to continue, the USFWS would be in violation of the National Wildlife Refuge System Act of 1997. Which basically states that free flight is not a wildlife dependant activity.

SNAFU...but we have not yet given up our fight. I will keep you all up to date as we learn more.

The Club Dinner

On Saturday April 18th the Skyscrapers had their annual dinner. This year we tried a new restaurant, Maguires in Mamaroneck N.Y.

The restaurant is in a converted old house overlooking the Mamaroneck Marina. We had the upstairs private dining room. The room was bright and filled with beautiful spring sunlight, which was still shining when we left the restaurant around 7:30. I think April is a much nicer month for a dinner than March, when you never know what to expect from the weather.

Club members began arriving around 3 PM and the cocktail hour was in full swing with most club members by 4:30.

Appetizers served were Swedish meatballs, baked clams, cheese and flat breads. Dinner selections were Steak and baked potato, chicken marsala with mash, salmon with mash and a seafood pasta. The portions were generous and everything was prepared perfectly.

The Skyscraper Modeler of the Year Award was presented to Bob Langelius and Aram Schlossberg for all the work they put into our fight for Galeville. Thanks again guys you deserved it.

The Purple Shaft Award was presented to Bob Geyer, for trying to fly his T-Bird through a chain link fence. A week later at the EUSFFC his T-Bird hit a power line. Bob, most of us have been there, we know how you feel. (The day before I wrote this, he beat me with that T-Bird at the SAM 7 Summer contest.)

About 40 club members attended the dinner and a good time was had by all, if you couldn’t make it this year try and join us next year.

The EUSFFC

As advertised on the back page of the last issue of Flyoff, April 25-26 the 15th Annual EUSFFC were held at Tom Higgs farm in Ingleside Maryland.

The field was comprised of Tom’s farm and those of his surrounding neighbors, resulting in a very large flat flying field. A few scattered trees but otherwise a great place to fly.

Joe Wagner and Tom Kerr were contest directors below is Tom’s report.

After a two-year drought caused by the loss of the Galeville, NY site, the Eastern Free Flight Championships took place on April 25 and 26, 1998.

Joe Wagner and myself have been test flying at a friend’s farm for some 7 years, so I asked the Higgs brothers if it would be possible to use one of their farms for a meet. Through the encouragement of Tom Higgs, who is an avid RC flyer, the family agreed to hold off plowing the big farm one week to accommodate our request for as late a date in April as possible.

The first day, the winds blew about 20 mph with slightly higher gusts, but some of the 79 contestants flew. Considering a first meet at this new site, it was great to hear that everyone was impressed with it.

The second day, Sunday, started with a very light drizzle, so a good number of flyers left for home. This was a bad decision for them, because

very shortly the air became so light and variable that 2 minute flights were DT'ing as close to launch as 100 ft. Many maxed and the one design and scale events had a ball. I believe the highlight of the entire meet was created by a JR, 9 year-old Adam Higgs, flying in FIJ with his 1/2A Starduster X. He took 1st first place beating out all Sr. and Open contestants. Great for his first meet!

Hopefully, we will host another EUSFFC next Spring. This field is perfectly flat and is 1 1/2 miles plus in all directions to the nearest trees. Thanks again to the Higgs family.

P.S. I don't have the score cards, so can't tell you who did what.

Thanks Tom nice report, everyone I spoke with said the field was great and that another EUSFFC at this field would be most welcome.

In the last issue of Flyoff I requested submissions of material for Flyoff. Hank Sperzel was kind enough to submit the following building tips, so come on in pull up a chair and make yourself comfortable in.....

Hank's Workshop

You "Stick and Tissue" guys should try this, it worked very well on the construction of my "Gollywock" fuselage. Lay the plans out on your building board in the normal fashion, cover the plans with Cling Wrap® or some sort of plan protector, I use the transparent backing from Monokote®. Pin down the top and bottom longerons. Using 3M77® spray adhesive lightly glue two 1/8" square sticks together lengthwise that will be used for the uprights. Cut and fit the uprights to fit between the longerons from the sticks you glued together. Separate them as you glue each one in place between the longerons. Remove the pins and turn the completed side over, plan protector and all. Now pin the longerons for the other side down right on top of the completed side and install the previously cut uprights. Cut the cross pieces and install them in the same manner. I have found it cuts building time about in half. If you have a 4 inch Dremel table saw and a small disk sander it helps a lot too.

If you make your own "Return to me" labels on your printer you may have noticed that the dope

makes the print run. Try this: rub a thin coat of "Elmer's" white glue over the front before you put it on the model and the dope won't run. This idea comes from a friend in CA, Cindi and Bob Sundberg. Cindi times for Bob, her husband, and her father-in-law Gus. She uses an egg-timer with an audio alarm. Sets the egg-time for the Max they are flying, trips it at lunch, that way she does not have to take her eyes off the model, when the alarm goes off she knows she has the Max. Neat, by the way, she still uses a stop-watch to time the flight to the ground.

Thanks for a couple of good ideas Hank keep them coming. We here at Flyoff are always looking for more good ideas, if any our readers out in free flight land think up any good ideas, please send them to Flyoff and put Hank's Workshop on the outside of the envelope or email them to us at: hgtv@earthlink.net

Help Wanted

The publisher of Flyoff is looking for a back issue coordinator. The applicant must meet the following requirements. Must have space for 5 cartons of back issues, be able to bring back issues to post office a few times a year. The position pays the same as the editor receives. I've run out of storage space in my apartment, please somebody, HELP!!!

Pictures

Ten years, and thirty five issues of Flyoff ago, Flyoff published photographs in it's first issue. We are again adding photography to Flyoff. It is said a picture is worth a thousand words, great. More photos means less clever stuff for me to write.

The Drawings on pages 7 and 8 were submitted by Jorgen Korsgaard from Denmark. If I were to put both of his drawings on the same page they would have been too small, hence 2 pages.

If you have any drawings or building articles, please send them to Flyoff. We print anything!

**Skyscrapers of the Year Bob Langelius
and Aram Schlosberg with Club President
Alan Abriss**

**Bob Geyer this years
Purple Shaft Recipient**

Tom Kerr helps a young flyer

Bob Langelius & Dave Acton

Clark & Jo Darling

Vic Nippert

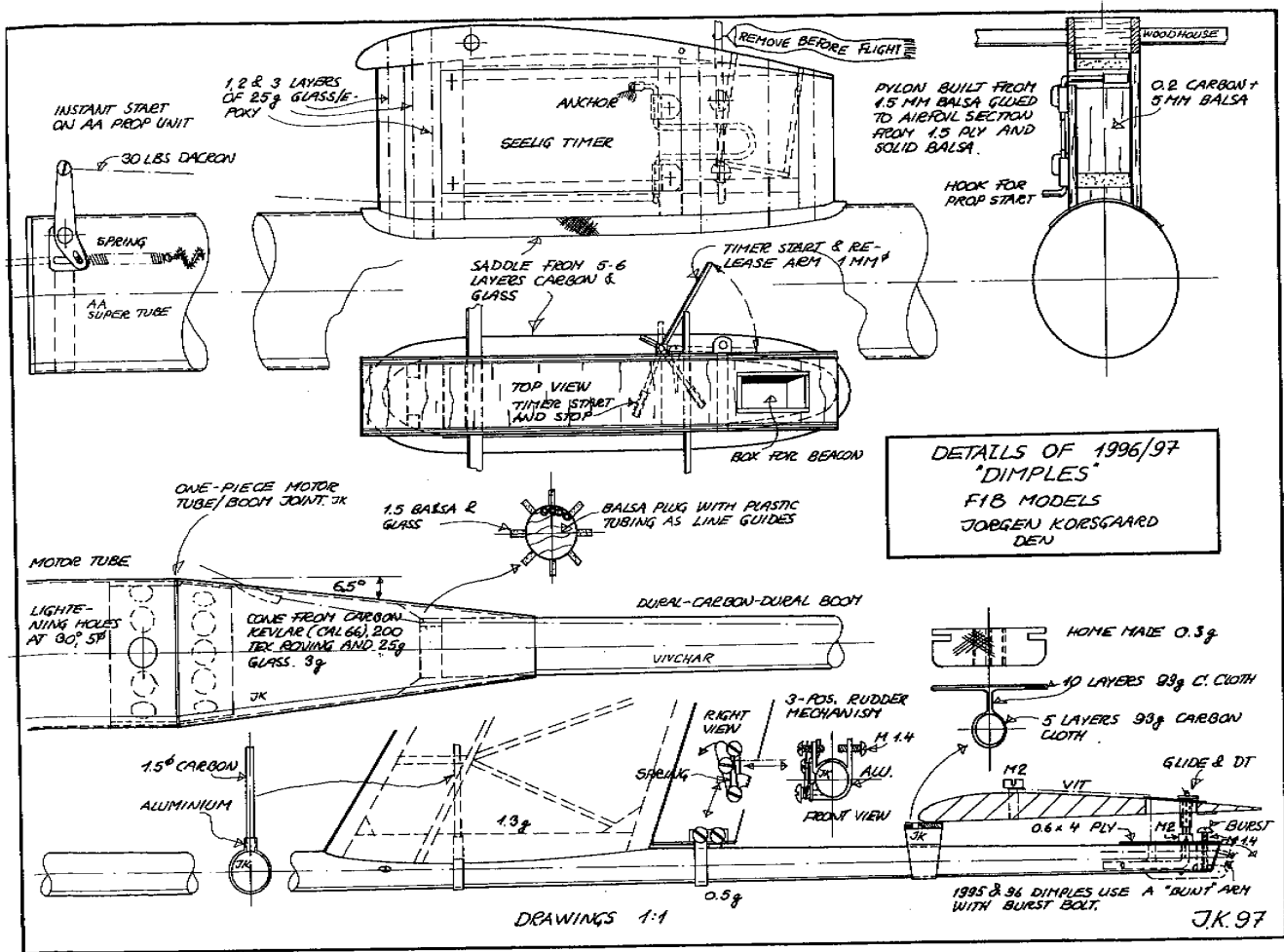
Jean Paillet



Joe Wagner

The Picture Page





Drawings submitted from Denmark by Jorgen Korsgaard

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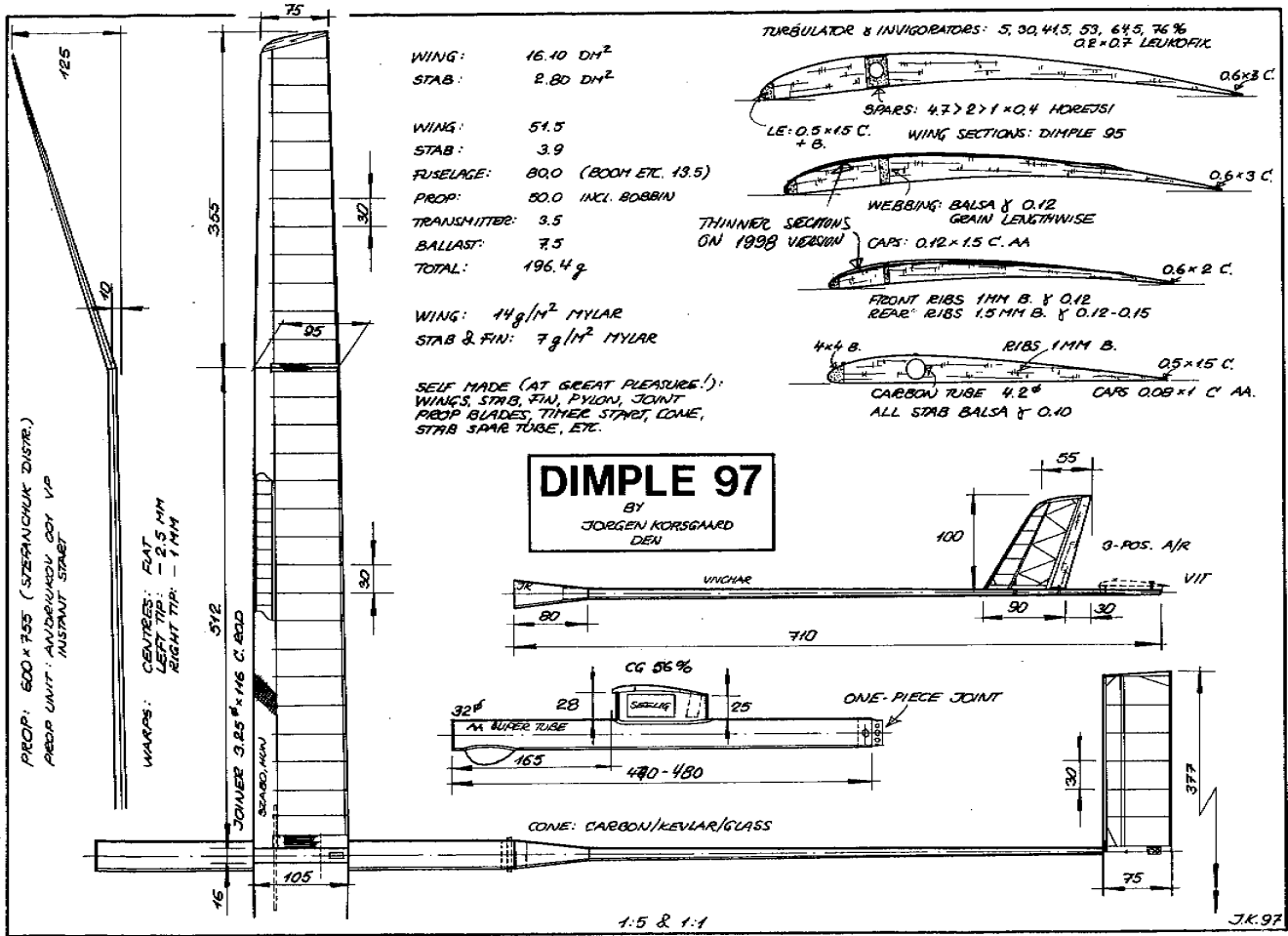
Articles: We also seek your contributions (free flight designs, letters, articles, drawings, ideas etc). Unfortunately, we cannot pay in any currency other than the gratitude of all *Flyoff* readers.

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