

# MOLDING WITH CARBON VEIL

by Jim Varno

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It seems as though technology is advancing so quickly that no one can keep up. Sometimes one gets discouraged because just when you get good at one aspect of modeling, the products are no longer available or new techniques are being used. Each change requires new skills that must be learned.

I have found that the old ways of building still work and it is easier to pick and choose which new building skills and materials you can incorporate into your way of building. The key is to keep an open mind and be willing to change to what will make your building easier or better without compromising quality.

One such technique I have learned is using carbon veil and molding to replace carving and hollowing out balsa blocks. Carving out the top block on my Cardinal took several days and a very light, 4-pound balsa block—which is almost impossible to get these days. The new method is as follows:

1. Cut and sand a piece of pink foam to the shape of whatever you want to make (like the top of your new airplane or a wing tip, etc.).
2. After the part is finished to size, reduce it in size by 1/16 inch on the top and sides (or 1/8 inch if using 1/8-inch balsa).
3. Soak your balsa sheet in ammonia for a few hours until fully soaked in ammonia. Use light, A-grain balsa.
4. Place the wet balsa over the foam form and wrap from one end to the other with an Ace bandage. Set aside to dry overnight at least.
5. Unwrap the Ace bandage and you will have a molded balsa shell. Now place the shell back on the mold and repair any imperfections in the balsa.
6. To give the strength to the shell, lay a piece of wax paper on your bench a little larger than the inside of your molded balsa, and place the carbon veil on the wax paper.
7. Cover the veil with a thin film of slow-curing finishing resin and squeegee the excess resin off with a flat piece of plastic or old credit card.
8. Place a piece of wax paper over the veil, and from the center out, use the plastic card to remove almost all the resin working it out to the sides. You can't take off too much, because you only need enough to stick the veil to the balsa.
9. Next, remove the top piece of wax paper from the carbon veil. Place the veil on the foam with the bottom piece of wax paper down on the foam, and place the balsa shell over the veil. Again wrap the shell, veil, and foam together with the Ace bandage. (I also place wax paper between the balsa and

the Ace bandage to keep any resin off the bandage.)

10. When the resin has hardened, remove the wrap and balsa shell from the foam. The veil now will be attached to the inside of the balsa and the unit will be extremely strong and light, ready to glue in place.

This method may seem complicated but it is actually faster, stronger, and easier than carving out a block.