

# NARCON 2014

## LPR Build Tips Session

2:00 p.m., Flamingo Room  
Chris Michielssen, Odd'I Rockets

### THINGS YOU NEED *(They Don't Tell You About)*

#### To Build This Model

Dowels (Shroud Forming and Glue application)  
Sanding Blocks (Wood and Adhesive Backed Metal)  
Q-Tips (Glue App, Removing excess glue, sanding fillets, burnishing masking tapes edges)  
Scotch Tape for Masking  
Black Electrical Tape (Engine hook retention)  
Rotary Punch (3/16" lug hole and EH-2 relief)  
Surface prep

### SESSION SUBJECTS

MASKING *Scotch Tape*  
FORMING SHROUDS *Dowels and Hand Forming*  
SAVING MONEY *Reusing 400 grit Sandpaper, break off blade knives*  
BALSA and BODY TUBE SEAM FILLING *CWF Mix Ratios, 1 part H<sub>2</sub>O, 2 ½ parts CWF*  
BLACK TRIM *Contact Paper Blackboard Covering Material*  
PARACHUTE TIPS *Tying shroud Lines*  
SANDPAPER *Sanding Blocks*  
FINS *Prep and Cutting*

### GENERAL BUILD TIPS

Before starting a kit, check for a build review on  
[www.rocketreviews.com](http://www.rocketreviews.com) or The Rocketry Forum TRF

#### **Slow Down!**

Take an extra five minutes on each step of assembly.  
Better Built Models last longer

“Ends and Edges”

White Glue dries Clear - Yellow glue dries yellow  
Use yellow glue on interior, white glues on exterior

Glue in couplers above the engine mount  
to prevent stress crimps in BT-50 tubes

Body surfaces and root edge fillets must be clean and smooth -  
If you want a sharp mask line and color separation

Sanding between first two color coats  
Simply remove the gloss, just dull the surface.

Remove small over spray areas with a “Magic Sponge” or  
Goo-Gone (light) on a Q-tip

Decals and decal edges  
Seal with Future applied with a Q-tip “brush”

Stop by:  
[www.modelrocketbuilding.blogspot.com](http://www.modelrocketbuilding.blogspot.com)  
[www.oddlrockets.com](http://www.oddlrockets.com)

## My Finishing Schedule

On a forum thread there was talk about what goes into a good finish. Some use three or four coats of sanding sealer, sanding between coats. Followed by three coats of grey primer sanding between coats. Then thin coats of paint, sanding between coats. Then, polishing compound and wax. Decals are applied followed by a Future clear coat.

In posted pictures I've seen great results. This obviously works well for many. If I had to go through this many steps, I'd probably never get a model finished!

*Here's my abbreviated steps to fill and finish:*

**1.** I usually fill the wood grain and tube seams before the fins and launch lug are glued onto the model. You'll never be able to effectively fill and sand balsa grain near the root edge over a glue fillet. CWF is water based and doesn't seal the wood. White glues will soak in and hold just as well on fins filled with CWF.

Brush the thinned CWF with the wood grain, then against the grain. This forces the filler into the grain pores. Sand smooth with 400 grit. If you use sanding sealer it will quickly load up sandpaper. CWF doesn't clog up sandpaper.

If done properly you should only need one coat of CWF to fill the wood grain. Any grain that remains will be filled with the grey filler primer.

**2.** I only use one thick coat of grey primer. Note I wrote one thick coat. First, lightly sand with 220 grit to remove most of the primer coat. Follow with 400 grit to smooth it out. I sand the grey primer until the tube color starts to show through.

Grey primer will also fill any body tube seams that remain after the sanded CWF. Note that CWF can be used on body tube seams. To fill body tube seams, mix the CWF thicker than what is used in balsa filling. Thicker CWF will adhere better and not be knocked out as easily when sanding the tubes.



**3.** Light white undercoats always follow.

Hold your dry, painted parts up to a bright light and look for any rough spots.

Dry sand the rough areas. You don't have to sand these all the way to the surface, just rough up the area. Don't wet sand yet. If any water can get down to the tube surface it'll swell up! The same goes for the wood surfaces. Dry sand for now. Wet sand (if needed) after the final color coats are applied.

**4.** I still follow the spraying advice from the old catalogs.

Use light coats first then finish with a final heavier "wet" coat. This has served me well over the years.

The heavier final coat is tricky though. Slow down the spraying passes over the model. Lay it on heavier, but not heavy enough to cause drips.

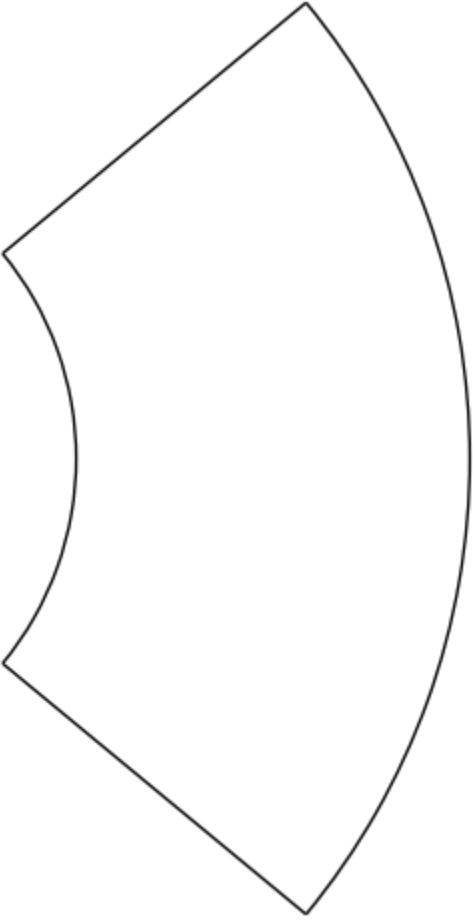
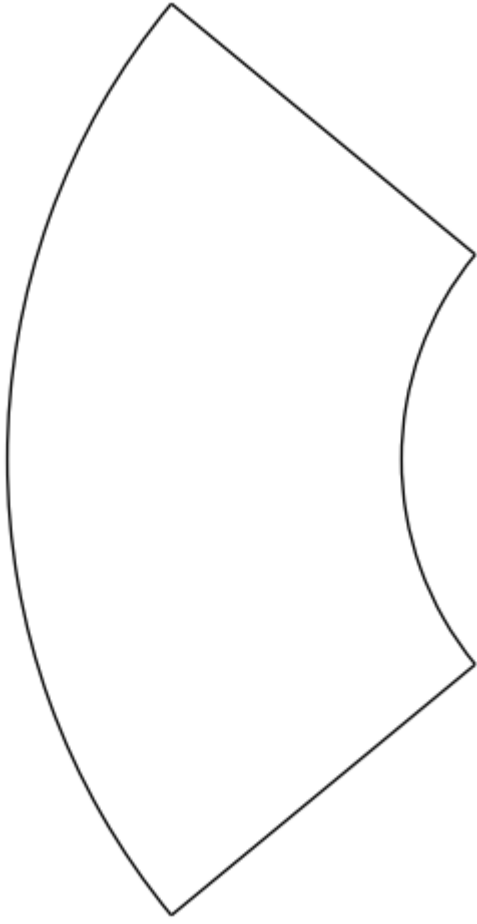
The models pictured here were painted using these steps. Future clear coats were not applied or needed.

*My finishing techniques are just that, it's what works for me.*

Too many factors can affect a good finish, like the quality of the balsa and seam width on body tubes. Spray paint formulations and compatibility of paints from the same manufacturer don't always play well together. Pile on top of that humidity, dust and insects that'll land on wet paint! It can get frustrating.

*This page is simply food for thought. I would never tell anyone their finishing techniques are wrong. If something works for you, just keep doing it!*





NARCON Shrouds for Curling Demo

