



The new ARTF provides an accurate copy of Hanno's colourful approach to covering

CURARE 60

Back in the 1970s and 80s, Hanno Prettner was the man to beat in F3A Aerobatics. His Curare design became a classic, and it is now available as an ARTF kit from ModellSport Schweighofer. We asked Jon Tappin to build and trim this stylish retro model

The year 1977 was a big year for me in model flying. I was 13-years-old and did my first R/C solo flight; I can still clearly remember it to this day. That same year, Hanno Prettner won his first of seven World F3A Championship titles. He was flying his own design Curare, which went on to become a true R/C classic. It also secured him three Las Vegas TOC titles in the '70s before the rules changed to require scale models.

Another early memory of mine is one of our club members turning up with a Curare, built from plans, in the late '70s when everyone else was flying 40-size models like Gangsters and Crescent Bullets. The Curare seemed huge to me then and completely out of reach. It's strange to think that it was around the same size as a Sebart Angel 50 is now!

Long time modellers will, I am sure, remember Hanno flying many times at the Sandown Park Model Show. I remember being inspired watching him in the early days, the first time I ever saw a one roll rolling circle! I also watched him win his final F3A World title in 1993, when I competed at my first World Championships.

With all of this nostalgia in mind, it didn't take me long to decide to grab the opportunity to do this review of this ARTF replica of the legendary Curare. It has been produced and developed by an Austrian company, ModellSport Schweighofer GmbH with the involvement of Hanno himself. It was supplied for review by Sussex Model Centre, complete with a special edition Weston UK West 52Ti 'Curare Special', along with a Weston manifold and pipe. The engine has been developed and produced with a retro look and it looked very smart with its red anodised head and carb.

SMC also supplied a set of Jetcraft electric retracts, which looked to be of very nice quality.

Opening the box and inspecting the contents revealed a very complete set of parts. The airframe components are all built up in balsa and ply, and seemed to be very light in weight, but strong. It was interesting to compare the typical modern ARTF construction methods with the original solid balsa sheet construction of the plan version, or the heavy glass fuselage and foam wings of the original kit version. It would be interesting to see what the final weight would come to. The original ones I used to see would typically be between 8 and 9 lb.

The model was very nicely covered with Oracover (Profilm to us), which in my opinion is the best covering film available. It is produced in the original 1977 colour scheme, of which two variations are available, one as per the review example and another with the green changed to blue.

Also included were a glass cowl, clear canopy and all hardware, wheels, tank, linkages etc. required to complete the model.

A nice touch is that it can be built either as an I/C or electric model and parts are included to mount both motor types. There are plastic beam mounts for I/C engines and laser cut ply parts to make up a motor box to take an outrunner electric motor. Both mounting systems are interchangeable, as they are designed to fix to the same locations on the ply front bulkhead with preinstalled blind nuts. This would make it relatively easy to swap power plants at any time if required.

On With The Assembly

I started with the wings. With ailerons, flaps and retracts to install, there was a fair amount of work to do here, but everything was very straightforward. I did most of the installation work before joining the wings for ease of handling.