

On tuning I was struggling to remove a rich point in mid-range throttle, but I felt that this might improve with running. The first flight was without incident until an engine cut when throttling up from half power, but I will come back to that.

Take-off required a reasonable amount of elevator to unstick due to the nose down attitude mentioned in part one of this review, but once off the ground the wheels were retracted and the model accelerated rapidly. Only a few clicks (bleeps!) of trim were required, so with consideration to the new engine I flew it through a few typical manoeuvres. The first thing to note is even with a slightly rich engine, the West 52 had plenty of power suggesting that a 60 would be overkill. The centre of gravity felt pretty close to optimum, requiring only slight forward stick pressure for level inverted flight. I felt that the mid F3a rate setting felt most comfortable, with the roll rate being a little too slow for my taste on the low rate. Application of rudder for corrections and during rolls and knife-edge flight showed virtually no deviation other than yaw.

After several more trimming flights I can now confirm that my settings are very close to Hanno's recommendations. I am still using the mid F3a rate setting all the time. I have changed both of the mix values but only by an additional one percent; it now has 3% opposite aileron and 3% up elevator with both left and right rudder. The preset side thrust has not required any adjustment — this is clearly a well-tested airframe. The only other adjustments I made have been to the centre of gravity, as I have moved it back a few mm and it is now right at the rearmost recommended position. Also, I increased the exponential value slightly with down elevator only, as it felt a little sensitive around centre, possibly due to the C of G being at the back of the recommended range. These adjustments are clearly very small so I am very impressed with the level of detail and accuracy of the supplied set up information.

Longer Term View

After around 20 flights with the model, I have to say I absolutely love the Curare! It really makes a refreshing change from modern aerobatic designs, both of F3a and freestyle type. For one thing it really likes to fly fast. With the relatively low side area compared to the latest designs, manoeuvres with knife-edge elements like slow rolls, point rolls, rolling circles and of course sustained knife-edge benefit from the higher speed. That's not to say the rudder is ineffective, in fact it is much more powerful than I expected. Single roll rolling circles are easily achievable and, given enough height for the second half, it will get round a knife-edge loop. For me the higher speed is not in any way a negative. It is what sets it apart from most other current aerobatic models and increases the fun factor. It just eats up the sky and just feels so solid in the air. It is very smooth through all manoeuvres. Huge loops are possible with plenty of speed through the top of the manoeuvre due to the power of the West 52 and the low airframe weight. Long slow and hesitation rolls are easy and can be flown as long and as slow as you like with plenty of rudder authority to hold altitude.

I have experimented quite a bit with the 'snap flaps', which move opposite to the elevator and I now leave them switched in



Beautiful sleek lines are typical of F3a pattern ships of the 1970s



Landing flap allows you to come in with a bit more power and touch down at your feet at low speed every time



Back in the 70s the Curare was a big model. Not so these days!