



CONSTRUCTION

BY GERRY YARRISH PHOTOS BY BEN HAGGERTY & GERRY YARRISH



Yes, that's Snoopy's doghouse flying over the Old Rhinebeck Aerodrome. Snoopy can be added on top with a pivoting mounting post.

50th-Anniversary Snoopy's Doghouse

The famous Peanuts' beagle flies again!

When it comes to RC designs that have stood the test of time, one classic model is head and shoulders above the rest: Snoopy's Doghouse. The design, by Al Signorino of Bridgeton, Missouri, with Snoopy sitting atop an RC doghouse, debuted at the WW I RC Jamboree at the Old Rhinebeck Aerodrome and was an instant showstopper. Gaining an amazing amount of attention on the flightline, Snoopy found himself scheduled to perform during the afternoon RC demo flights before the full-size aeroplane took to the air. Al's RC opponent was none other than Nick Zirola, who flew his famous Fokker Eindecker. Nick took off first and started circling overhead...and waited. Al then advanced the throttle, and Snoopy's Doghouse sped down the runway. When the wheels left the ground, the cheers and applause from the crowd were amazing. Until that point, no one really thought that the Peanuts-inspired flying contraption would fly.



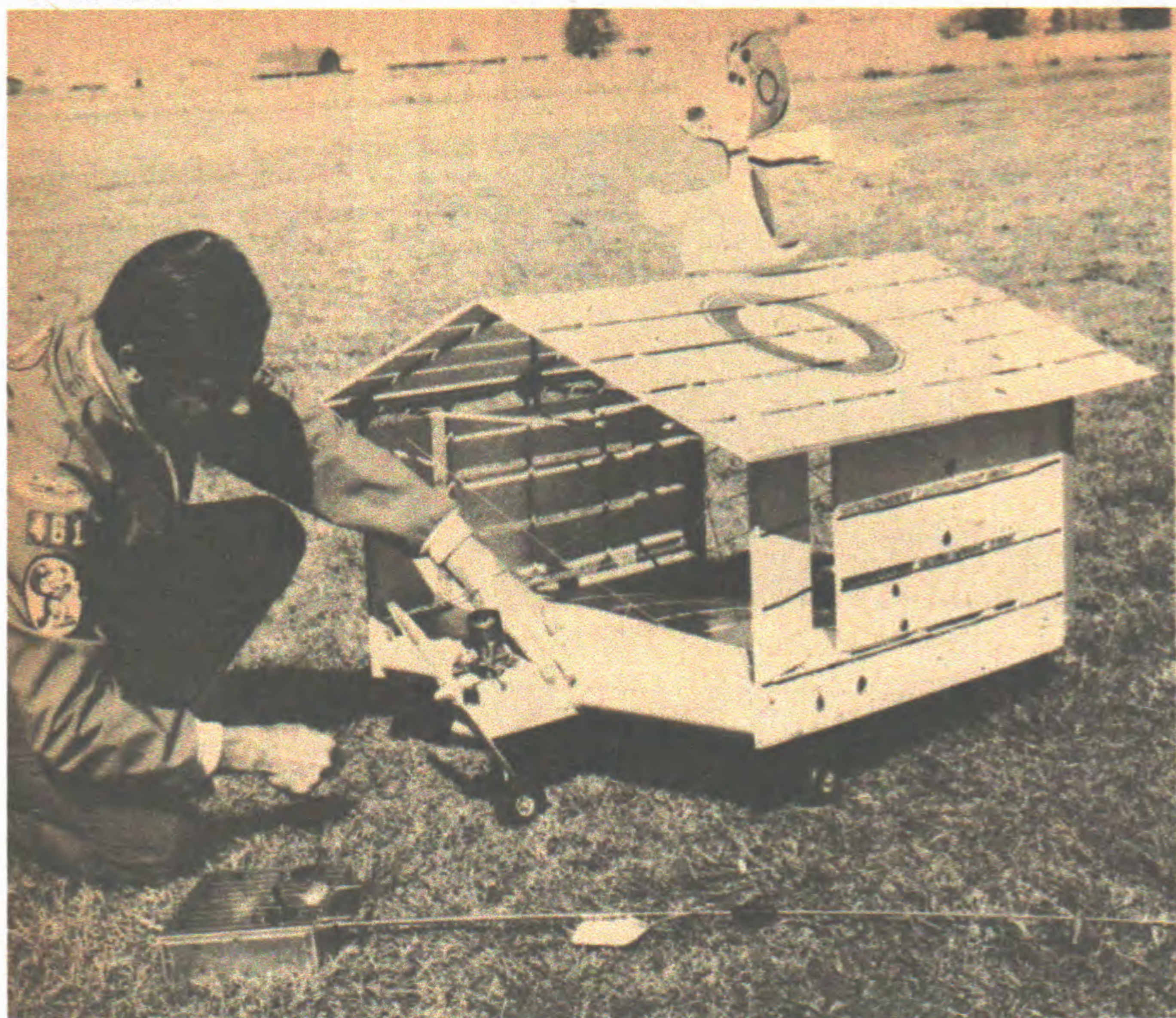
Above: The revised Snoopy is ready for his big debut at the same place the original model was first flown.

Right: Landings are pretty easy with plenty of control.

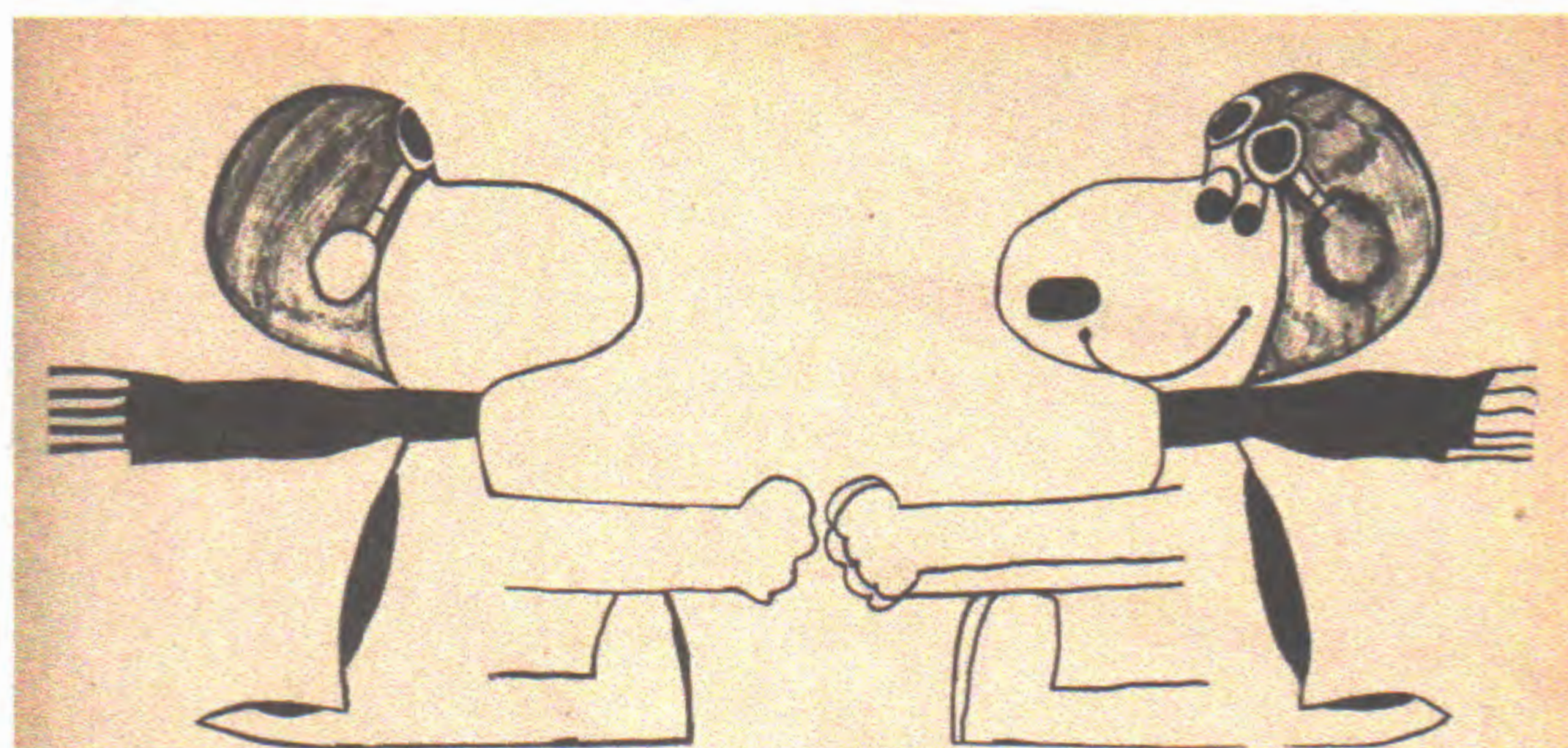
TO EVERYONE'S SURPRISE, SNOOPY'S DOGHOUSE APPEARED AGAIN AT THE 2018 WW I RC JAMBOREE AT OLD RHINEBECK AERODROME, AND IT WAS JUST AS MUCH A HIT AS EVER.



CONSTRUCTION SNOOPY'S DOGHOUSE



Here is the father of the original RC Snoopy's Doghouse, Al Signorino, with his revised version of the model.



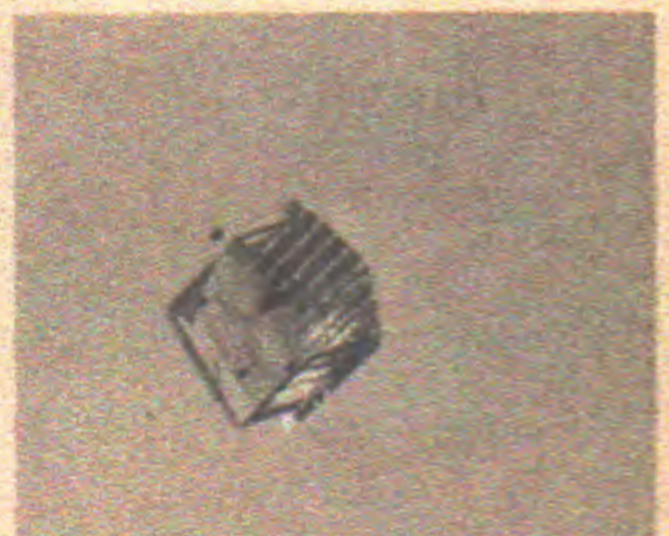
EXACTLY 1/4 ACTUAL SIZE



Al readies Snoopy's machine for its first flight at Rhinebeck. Lou Perrini watching for other planes.



With a mighty roar, the Enya .60 pulls Doghouse up into the sky.



"Now that we are airborne a tight bank and a hurried search for the Red Baron, ensues out there."

SNOOPY'S R/C DOGHOUSE

By AL SIGNORINO . . . editor of the McDonnell Radio Control Club's newsletter the 'Carrier Wave' went all out for something different and came up with the sensation of the year! His Snoopy Doghouse stole the show away from 42 various World War I models at Rhinebeck.

The question most often asked of me is, "How did you come up with the idea of a radio controlled flying doghouse?" Well, for as long as I can remember, whenever I saw Snoopy flying his doghouse in the Peanuts comic strip I'd think about possible ways of making an RC version of it. Then when I saw a picture of the successful control line version in the February 1968 issue of A.A.M. I knew I had to try it with RC. My biggest surprise was that no one beat me to it. My original (on paper only) design had airfoil roof sections as well as an airfoil floor, with the engine on a pylon. To expedite completion

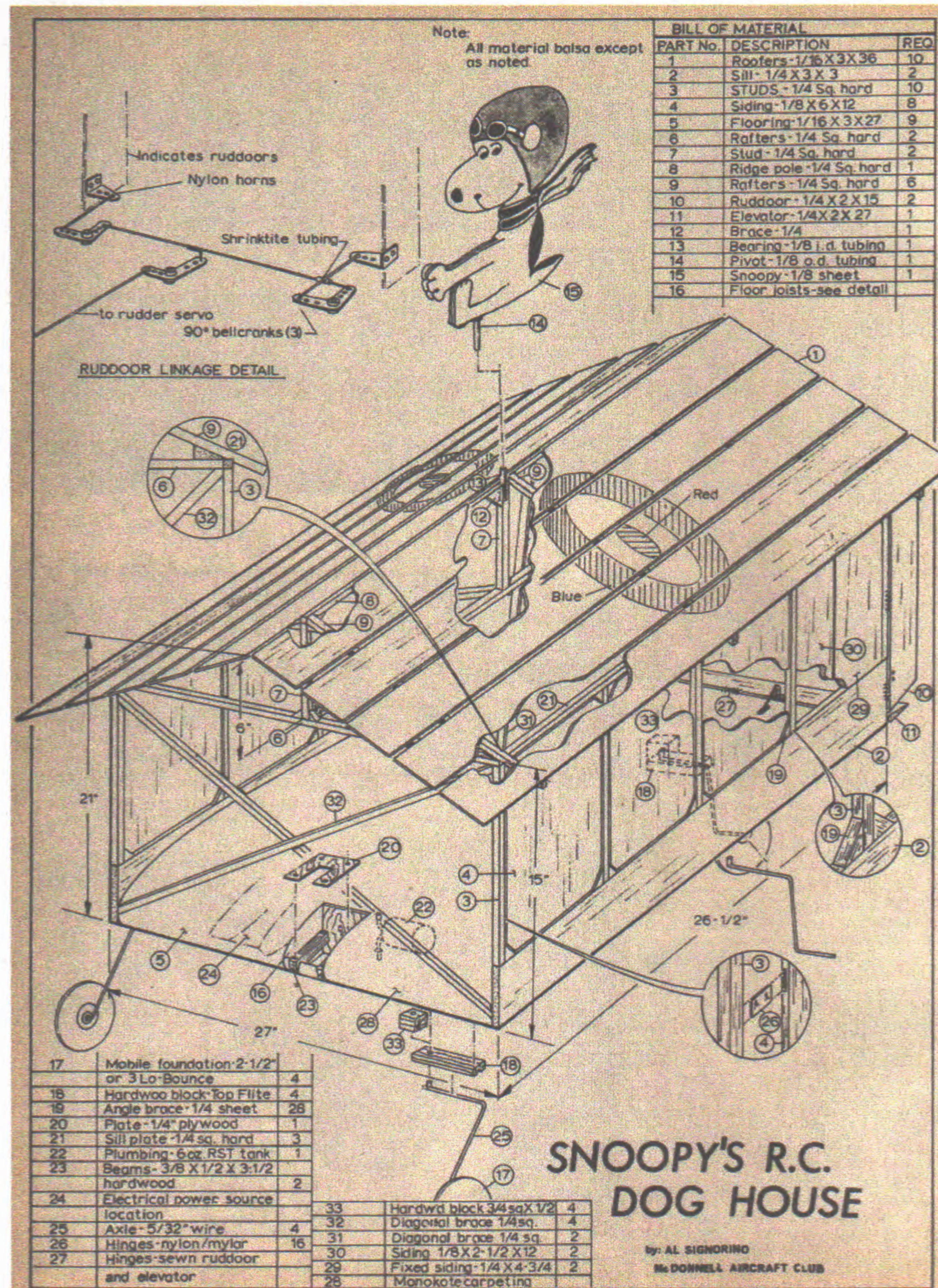
I built the engine into the floor and gave up the idea of a lifting roof. I reasoned that the reflex airfoil design used on the Midwest Hustler XD-7 Delta design would work here too. I used their largest rib pattern for the floor joist airfoil size and shape but departed from their construction technique. After construction of the floor was almost complete, I asked fellow McDonnell RC Club member Don Casper (Senior Aerodynamist) if it would fly. He said it might fly but would probably be very unstable, compared to the Hustler Delta, due to the straight, rather than the swept, leading edge. He added that it

would be mandatory to get the CG as far forward as possible—between 20 and 25% back from the leading edge. I was a little discouraged but completed enough of the construction to make a test flight. Tricycle arrangement of the mobile foundation was tried but ground handling was very poor so the two forward outrigger gears were installed and the single nose gear removed. The first flight went very well except for the landing. It tracked straight into the wind and lifted off at a very steep angle with no tendency to snap roll. As a matter of fact, it practically hung on the prop and mushed along. (Continued on page 46)

The article about Snoopy's RC doghouse even had a template guide for drawing your own version of the intrepid beagle.

formed the floor of the doghouse. Noteworthy is that the model had several hinged sections along the entire length of the two side panels (free to weathervane to minimize side-wind forces), and similarly, Snoopy was allowed to pivot in the prevailing winds. At the end of the day, Al was awarded a prize for the most original WW I "scale" entry. Later that year, Snoopy's creator, Charles M. Schulz, witnessed the RC doghouse fly at the airport in San Carlos, California, and later that day, the Navy's Blue Angels presented him with a "Wings for Snoopy" award.

MAN editor Walt Schroder was so impressed with the star of the Rhinebeck show that he convinced Al

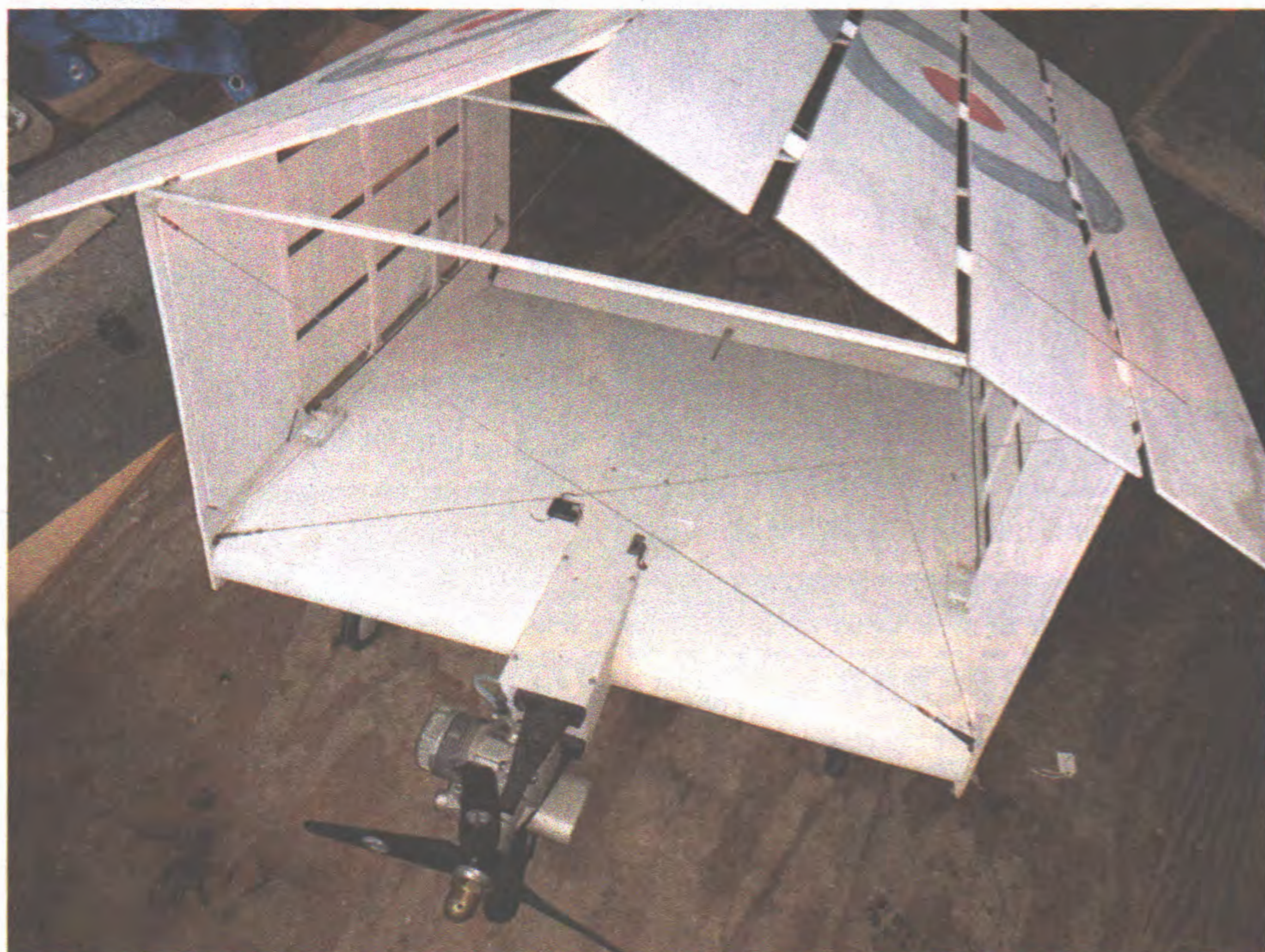


This drawing shows the basic details of the original model.

to follow up with another article in the February 1969 issue, which included detailed drawings. The main wing used at the time was from a Midwest Hustler XD-7 Delta design and had a reflex airfoil. The all-up-ready-to-fly weight of the original was 9 pounds (with 2 pounds of ballast in the radio compartment), and the engine was spinning an 11x6 propeller. The model had a tendency to hang on the prop, and Al had to add full down-elevator to gain forward momentum. Two changes were eventually made: the trike gear was replaced with a four-wheel arrangement (two nosewheels and two aft wheels), and the ailerons, which proved ineffective, were eliminated. The airplane flies with two vertical rudders along with elevator and throttle control.

Snoopy had been flown at about 50 RC events and flight demonstrations in 12 states and in Canada. All told, Snoopy suffered a crash or hard landing only six times out of more than 175 flights. Al eventually built four models and took the opportunity to make some design changes to reduce weight. The ballast weight was removed, and the engine was positioned forward of the wing with an extension box/fuselage structure. The wing was changed to a more conventional flat-bottom airfoil, and the numerous side vanes were

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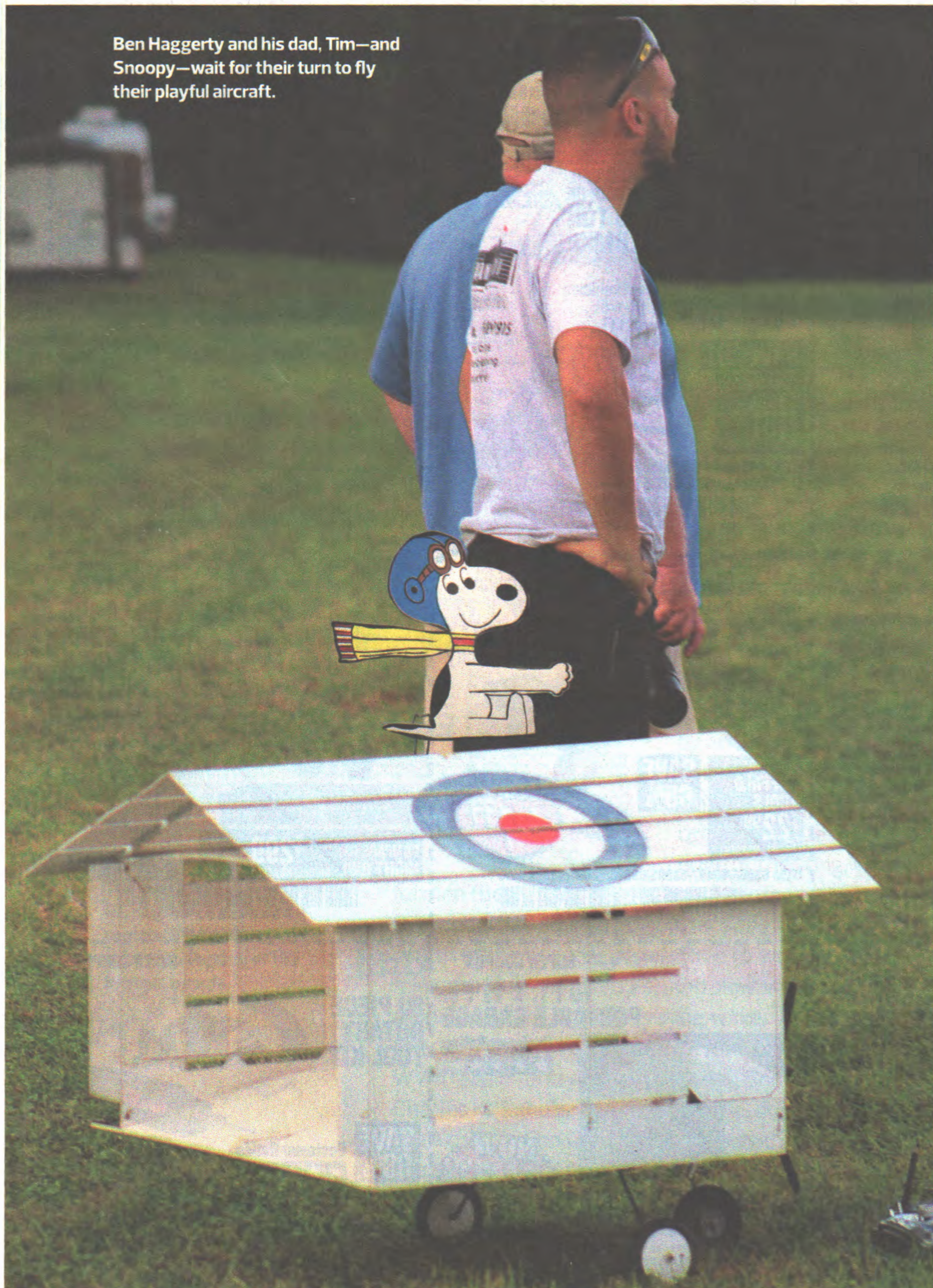


This front view shows the engine installation. Note the rigging wires going from corner to corner for added bracing.



This rear view shows off the elevator and control linkage. The twin rudders have a servo for each control surface.

Ben Haggerty and his dad, Tim—and Snoopy—wait for their turn to fly their playful aircraft.



The roof is made out of flat balsa sheets attached to a framework.

replaced with sections of balsa sheets with half-inch gaps between them. All these changes produced a more-well-behaved flier, and the prop was switched to an 11x7. The next 25 flights were all without difficulties, and *Model Airplane News* published the revised Snoopy's Doghouse plans in the April 1971 issue.

NEW PLANS

To everyone's surprise, Snoopy's Doghouse appeared again at the 2018 WW I RC Jamboree at Old Rhinebeck Aerodrome, flown by Ben and Tim Haggerty, and it was just as much a hit as ever. Ben and Tim had acquired the doghouse from Jamboree regular Keith Zimmerly, who built the model following the revised 1971 plans. With an O.S. .65 in the nose turning a 3-blade propeller, Ben and Tim's doghouse flew extremely well and even performed some decent loops and a roll or two. Takeoffs and landings were uneventful using the revised tricycle landing-gear arrangement. The only thing that they commented on was that the plans were in poor condition.

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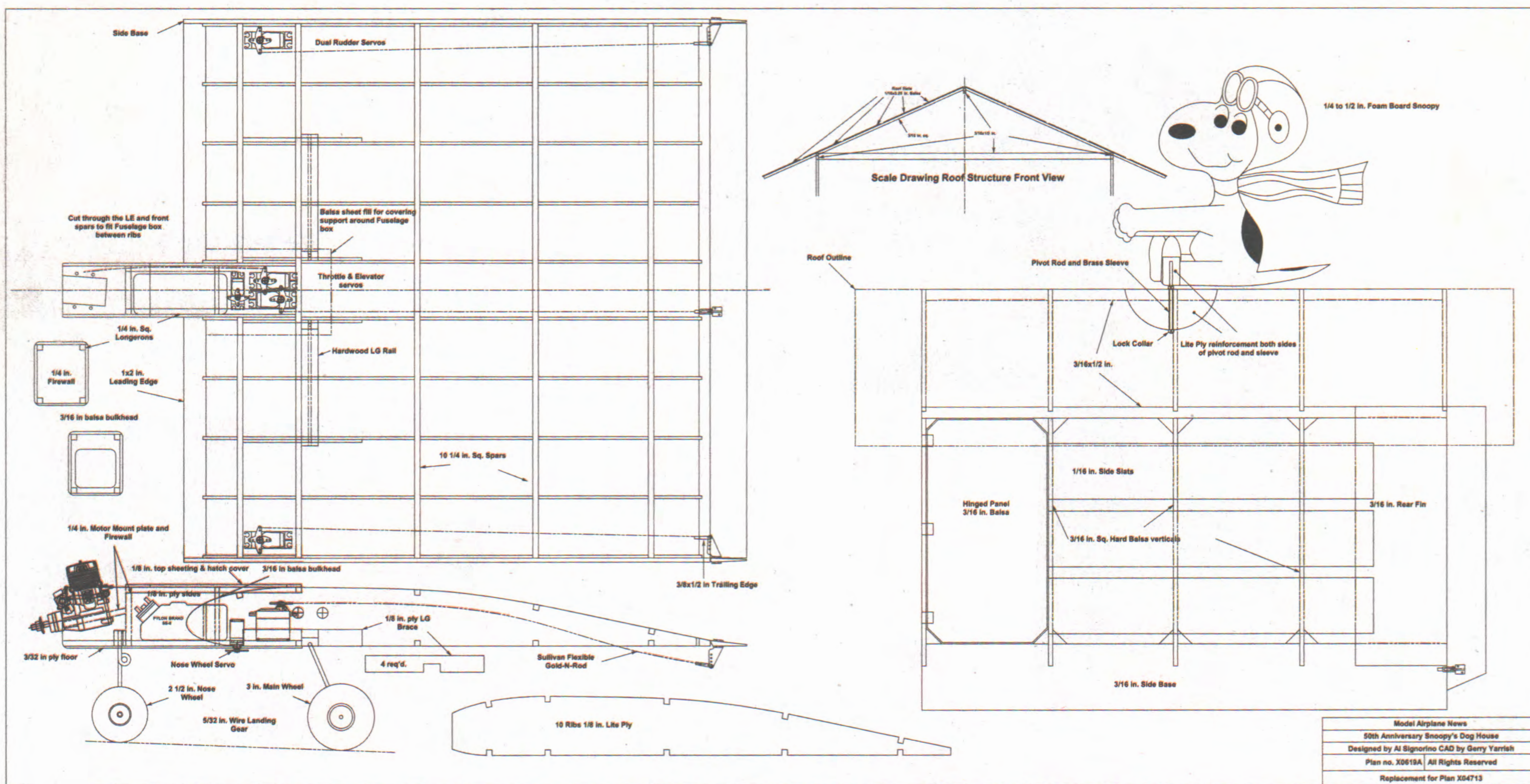


The tricycle landing gear is normal and set up for a slightly nose-down attitude while the model is at rest.

To solve this problem, I scanned the drawings from the MAN plans library and then traced them using CAD while making some minor changes. These changes were to replace the retro 90-degree bellcranks used to control the twin rudders with two direct-control servos and simple straight-shot wire pushrods. The new 50th-Anniversary Snoopy's Doghouse plans (X0619A) have now replaced the older plans and are available from AirAgeStore.com.

Other building notes include the use of corner-to-corner rigging wires and clevises in place of the original balsa stick braces. The new plans show the same plywood plate engine mount, but you can easily angle the firewall for the required downthrust. Also, the center-of-gravity range from the revised plans is shown on the new plans as well. The photos included in this article show the details needed to build your own flying doghouse. With a little effort and patience, you too can have your own Snoopy patrolling the skies for the dastardly Red Baron! ✈

OTHER BUILDING NOTES INCLUDE THE USE OF CORNER-TO-CORNER RIGGING WIRES AND CLEVISES IN PLACE OF THE ORIGINAL Balsa STICK BRACES. THE NEW PLANS SHOW THE SAME PLYWOOD PLATE ENGINE MOUNT, BUT YOU CAN EASILY ANGLE THE FIREWALL FOR THE REQUIRED DOWNTHRUST.



X0619A 50th-Anniversary Snoopy's Doghouse

Designed by Al Signorino in 1969, Snoopy's Doghouse has been a crowd favorite for more than 50 years. This article celebrates Snoopy's golden anniversary and includes newly drawn CAD plans replacing the older plans. The "floor" is the wing, and the sides and roof are made with balsa sheets attached to a framework. Rigging cables (corner to corner) are used for additional reinforcement. These plans show the revised model from the April 1971 issue. WS: 24 3/8 in.; L: 32 in.; height: 19 in. (29 in. w/ Snoopy); area: 616 sq. in.; engine: .60; radio: 3-channel; LD: 2; 1 sheet; \$16.95



To order the full-size plan, visit AirAgeStore.com.