

Fokker D V111

Built by Fran Oakey



Reinhold Platz was, in his day, an extraordinary aircraft designer. He was a welder by trade, had no knowledge of aerodynamics, no research facilities at Schwerin and was not told of the existence of official technical publications. In spite of his genius he was content to work in the shadow of Tony Fokker and to see his employer claim all the credit for all aspects of the aircraft he designed. Once he had proven that satisfactory and safe wings, devoid of all of the complexities of conventional interplane bracing, could be made and flown it was obvious to him that the ideal aircraft must be a monoplane.

In 1918 a number of Platz designed EV monoplanes suffered wing failure. The fatalities led to an immediate investigation by the "Sturz-Kommission" headed by Lt von Mallinckrodt. It was found that slipshod workmanship and the defective timber that had been used for the spars was the cause. Platz had a wing built, precisely as he had designed it and delivered it to Adlershof on 7th September 1918. This wing proved to be entirely satisfactory when tested and Platz was vindicated. The source of the Fok EV wing troubles lay at the Perzina works, the former Perzina Pianoforte Fabrik that Fokker had bought in 1916, where the wings were made. Production of the EV was resumed late in September 1918 and the aircraft with the modified wing were re-designated the Fok D V111.

The model was built from a Flair kit and is depicted here as an aircraft of No 7 (Kosciuszko) Squadron, Polish Air Force, Lwow, c.1919. The letter "S" lying on its side, on the aircraft's fuselage, is the personal insignia of Lt S Stec, who flew the aircraft and who was the Squadron Commander during the Ukrainian campaign, February to July 1919.

Construction of the fuselage is of balsa and spruce with hardwood supports for the undercarriage. The front bulkhead is made from 1/8th hard ply and provides a solid base for a glass filled nylon motor mount. The main wings are made from balsa with a spruce main spar, the tail surfaces are of balsa but the balsa axle wing has been omitted. The airframe was then covered with Solartex heat shrink covering and sprayed with bronze green polyurethane paint, polyurethane for its fuel proofing properties and the colour as depicted in the Profile Publications issue no 67. The markings are sprayed on, again with a polyurethane paint.

The 56.5inch wing span model is powered by an OS 25, which gives the 4.7lb model a wing loading of 22.5 ounces per square foot. Whilst the power from this engine is adequate it is not enough to give the model a sparkling performance. With such a short nose moment extra weight was needed in the nose so that the correct C of G could be achieved. The weight added to the nose was in the form of a brass cooling ring clamped to the cylinder head of the engine, so increasing its cooling area. More nose weight was added by mounting 4 sub C batteries, on the front face of the engine bulkhead under the cowl, instead of 4 AAs normally used to power a 4 channel radio control system.