

# Balsa Dust

Newsletter of the Fergus Falls Regional R/C Flyers  
PO Box 224  
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## FROM THE PRESIDENT

Greetings and welcome to the Tundra,

I managed to survive the -35 degree weather and hope all of you did as well. I was feeling very fortunate as I didn't have to go outside and work in those conditions. After spending my working career outside, I was perfectly content being inside looking out.

When I was young, I was introduced to building plastic models by my brother Vern. He is a Master Model Builder and has built some very beautiful and detailed masterpieces over the years. I was able to go to the hardware store and buy a kit for \$1.50. Little bottles of Testors paint were 19 cents. Fast forward 55 years and kits start at \$18.00 and the same bottles of paint are \$1.79.

Joel gave me the 1/48 scale Stearman kit last year. The wingspan on the finished kit is around 8 inches. The kit has a tremendous amount of detail to it as shown in the picture. The cold temperatures must have had an effect (good or bad?) on me as I decided to start work on it. The finished product will be a Super Stearman with details including the flying wires.

I am having a hard time coming up with the blue foam used in making the Blue Wonders. Anyone that may have some please call me or let me know at the meeting. We will schedule a Saturday for building and flying once I secure the foam.

The next meeting is Thursday February 7 at 7pm at the OLV gym. Open gym for trucking and flying from 6pm-9pm. I hope to see a good crowd there.

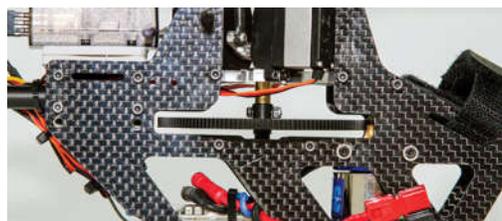
Keep warm, Tom

**February 7<sup>th</sup> Meeting @  
our indoor site (OLV gym).  
Meeting @ 7:00.**

## Notes from the January 10th Meeting

No business was conducted at this very short version of our meeting so no need for a secretary's report.

## So you broke it!



*Written by Greg Gimlick  
Helicopters  
How-to  
As seen in the Fall 2017 issue of Park  
Pilot.*

>> Don't panic, don't toss the helicopter in the trash, and don't get discouraged! If you're

going to fly, you're going to crash. How you react to the crash is as important as anything else you do in the hobby. My friend, Jim Ryan, is fond of saying, "The nice thing about fixing a crashed helicopter is [that] it's a brand-new one when you're done." There isn't any covering to repair—just bolt up some new mechanics.

A common break—The photo below shows something that is very common—a stripped section of the main rotor-drive gear. The damage is at the top of the photo and, although the heli will still fly in this condition, it won't get better. It sounds terrible and will eventually get worse.



The good news is that it's a 5-minute job to replace this gear. Some companies make after-market gears of tougher material, but I haven't changed to them because this is a simple break and nothing else gets damaged. Think of it as a sacrificial part in a bigger chain of more expensive things.

How did it happen? The short answer is, "Who cares?" It usually happens on FBL (flybarless) machines when we gingerly try to take off and dither around lightly on the skids too long. We end up dumping it on its side, striking terra firma with the main rotor blade.

FBL units don't like to wobble around lightly on the skids, so they try to correct it. Take off

with a little gusto and this won't happen as often.

How to fix it: The photos show my Blade 250 CFX and 230S helicopters (bladehelis.com), but most are quite similar. Don't start popping off parts before you study your machine to see what really needs to happen. In my case, it was just one bolt and three linkages.

The bolt going through the gear and main drive shaft is removed, along with the three ball links from the servos at the swashplate. Once that's done, simply slide the whole head assembly and the shaft up until you can slide the main gear out. Be watchful of any spacers that might be there. On the 250 CFX, you can see a brass spacer above the gear that needs to be put back in with the new gear.



After you slide the new gear in place and replace any spacers, slide the shaft assembly down until the top stop collar (that you, hopefully, left in place) rests where it's supposed to. At that point, the bolt should slide right through the gear and shaft.

Because you didn't move the motor, there shouldn't be any need to adjust the gear lash.

Snap the linkages back on the swashplate and you should be set to go.

Most helicopters are similar to these Blade machines. You will find some that have two stop collars. If that is the case, loosen the lower collar so that the shaft can slide upward. Some will require you to loosen the motor to allow room for the gear to come out. If that's the case, check the gear lash before disassembly so that you can replicate it when you put the new one in. The principle is the same, though. Don't remove more than necessary and you won't have to do a lot of setup tweaks upon completion. Tracking tip: I can't claim this as my idea, but I saw it done years ago at the field and it works well in a pinch. To quickly check the tracking of the blades, set your collective to neutral pitch, rotate the blade grips so that they are 90° to the frame, and rotate the blades backward.

When the blades are next to each other, you can see if one is going to be higher than the other. In this position, they should be as close to the same height as possible. This is a field check, and "close enough for government work" if you need to make a small adjustment. In the Army, we referred to this type of action as a "field expedient repair."



Learning how to easily deal with damage will enhance your helicopter enjoyment. Don't make it a bigger job than necessary. Study it before disassembly. Grab your phone and take photos of it as you take it apart. This helps jog your memory when you're staring at a bunch of parts on the table.

-Greg Gimlick  
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Meeting  
 February 7th at the  
 OLV Gym  
 Meeting @ 7:00

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