

Coloring Polyspan

(A compendium of information accumulated (lifted) from the Metro Atlanta FF Newsletter; from Bud Romak; and from David Ramsey, SAMI, Model Museum Flying Club, Denver, and finally, printed in the Flightplug, the newsletter of the Southern California Ignition Flyers.)

Anyway, here's what David Ramsey lifted from the Atlanta newsletter: "Polyspan is a wonderful covering material. The only problem is that blah 'white only' tone. There are methods of changing it to most any color you want, but they are difficult or messy to meddle with. Regular spray paint works but is rather opaque. That gorgeous sun through the tissue effect is lost. Don't despair. There now exists a way to color Polyspan quick and easy, plus retaining that translucent style. This stuff is produced by a name you know, Krylon. It's called Stained Glass spray paint and it is used for just what its name implies, creating a stained glass effect on a regular sheet of glass. Spray this on like regular spray paint and even with several coats it maintains its transparent nature in vivid color, so that the sun still shines through like an intense Japanese tissue. I've already used it and am extremely satisfied with the results. Weight wise this stuff is very agreeable, with a 231 sq. in. wing covered with Polyspan and three coats of "Stained Glass" plus a clear coat, the weight gain was 0.75 grams. The only drawback I can find is cost and availability. One small can is \$5.00, and I have only found it at Michael's Craft Stores."

So sayeth the Atlanta newsletter. I found the "Stained Glass" spray paint in the Michael's Craft Store in Glendale a couple of weeks ago, so it's available out here in California. I haven't tried using it yet. Michael's also carries some Design Master Floral Sprays. I've used the brilliant red, blue and yellow sprays to good effect over foam which would have been attacked by any normal nitrate or butyrate dope. These sprays were actually designed for the florist trade-to spiff up the colors on bouquets of flowers etc. They are very light, very bright, and come in a wide range of colors. While I haven't yet used the Design Master sprays on Polyspan, there's no reason why they shouldn't work there. Since they come in a spray can with a very fine mist sort of spray nozzle, you should be able to get a light coat down.

David Ramsey also repeated a tip from Bud Romak as follows: "Tip from Bud Romak: FAI Supply has liquid aniline dye in several colors which produce a good see-through finish when mixed per instructions on the bottle-but Bud has discovered the best yet finish in his estimation is Higgins FADE PROOF Artist's Color Drawing Ink. Bud says to mix it: 1 part ink, 1 part dope, and 9 parts thinner. It is best to spray it on, but if you ask folks to stand back a few feet, brushing will be O.K. If you use nitrate dope as Bud does, a thin brush coat of Hobby Pox will add fuel proofing or protection from oil soaking from diesel fuel. The red and yellow colors are especially brilliant."

Your editor (Mike Myers) has used the FAI aniline dye, mixed with dope and thinner, to color Polyspan with just okay results. It's streaky when you brush it on—probably several spray coats would work better.