

and saw up to the other end. Then, using quite a big screwdriver or some similar tool, push out one side of the cut from underneath. (Fig. 7.)

When you build the wheels, check the tyre section carefully. A tyre out of scale will spoil the whole effect of the model. I am against the use of commercial ready-made wheels. Work down to the right shape an existing rubber tyre (Meccano, model car tyre or similar). A core with the diameter of the inner part of the tyre, two plywood discs of the size of the actual rim joined together, and a good bush in the centre make a perfect wheel. To both ends of the bush, metal spokes can be soldered, the other end of the spokes being pushed through the plywood (see Fig. 8). To cover, cut a round piece of fabric, bigger than required, then, having smeared some clear dope between the tyre and plywood discs, tuck it in. The result is most realistic.

Cockpit details in a scale model are essential. Great care must be taken with the location of the various controls and instruments which must all be built to the right shape. Guns and bombs must also be built separately but remember that even balsa wood can look like metal if treated in the proper manner. So if you do not have a lathe to turn up metal parts (I have never had one and moreover would not know how to use one) do not despair, just use plenty of elbow grease!

Finishing and painting the model is most important. A wrong colour



This  $\frac{1}{48}$  scale Fairey Firefly powered by a Fox 59 spark ignition engine had complete wing folding mechanism.

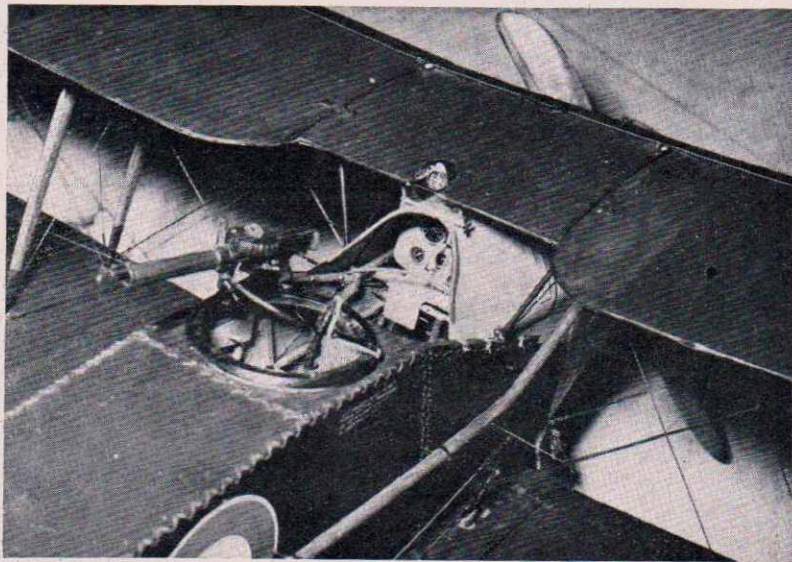
shade, a wrong size roundel, a non-existent serial number look silly and will lose points in a serious competition. Check all the information you can get about the true colour scheme, and if it is camouflaged, follow the original pattern of the various shades. Find a reliable source of information. Many books about camouflage are wrong. One of them gives the main colour of a French Spad XIII as silvery-grey. None of the French Spads has ever been painted grey. Their true colour was either yellow or a camouflage with not less than ten different shades of brown, khaki, green and even black. I use a foot

pump type spray gun for my colouring; it was cheap to buy and is very useful. Remember, if an aeroplane is finished in a matt colour, and most of them are, do not use a glossy dope. One sees all too often in scale concours events, beautiful models spoiled by this unnatural glossy surface. Matt plastic enamel can be used over a clear doped surface and it is quite effective as well as being petrol and diesel fuel proof.

When possible, roundels should be hand painted, but to make life easier I often use transfers repainted in the true shade with matt enamel. Serial numbers must be cut out of a transfer sheet, or, even better, hand painted. One seldom finds the right shape or size in commercial transfers.

Well, I have tried to describe what I think is necessary in building a scale model but I would like to add that the reward for all the time spent, all the work, is not a cup or diploma; it is the inner satisfaction which comes from making something that surpasses the usual model plane, something that, when in the air, is a *real* aeroplane. Have you ever flown a real biplane with lots of struts and wires? When you throttle back and put the nose down you hear it whistling a music which only someone in love with flying can appreciate. Well, your scale model will whistle in the same way. You can hear it and feel yourself sitting in the cockpit you know so well because you have made it. You fly with it.

Is it only a dream? I don't know. But that is the feeling I get when I take up one of my scale models.



Complete cockpit detail and fabric lacing of the Bristol Fighter are seen in this photo.