Horsham & District Radio Control Model Club
Learning to fly a radio controlled model aircraft
Part two - Building a trainer

Having chosen the trainer aircraft you're going to build here are one or two tips on how to go about it. Most people will probably choose a kit, but there are also many good plans around. Hopefully this sheet can be applied to either.

Before you start to build the model, read the instructions carefully all the way through. Identify all the parts in the box, and make a note of anything else you need to purchase. If there are any parts of the instructions you don't understand, ask another modeller, or a model shop for advice.
You will need a building board that is about 3 or 4 inches bigger than the largest item you're going to build. Also a separate cutting board is very useful.
The table or bench you are using should only have the items on it, which you need to use. Try to keep the building area clear of anything you don't need.
A new blade in your modelling knife is a good idea. Change it regularly to keep any cutting as accurate as possible. A small razor saw is also very useful for thicker wood.

When you build the model follow the instructions if possible. The designer should know the best order of building, so you won't run into problems later. The best advice I can give is to build the model as accurately as possible. If the wings are built flat (unless wash in or out is specified), and the fuselage is straight, then the model will probably fly better. Also take your time. If something goes wrong, take a rest from building and go back to it later. One mistake is easier to correct than a whole string of them!

Something to bear in mind throughout the building phase is the weight of the model. Lighter models are easier to fly and are more forgiving in most cases. But also ensure that the strength of the model is built it. Areas such as wing joints, firewalls, etc, must be strong enough to withstand the stresses they will be subjected to.

Once the basic airframe has been constructed, ensure it is smooth, prior to starting the covering phase. Although there are many methods of covering a model, try to avoid the more fragile covering materials, e.g.: - tissue. This is a trainer, and will be subjected to the odd heavy landing at some stage in its life!

Most of the irons on films are suitable, and care here will pay dividends later. Also ensure the model is well fuel proofed especially around the engine and tank bays. (Soggy oil soaked balsa wood is very difficult to glue later!).

Please also see the sheets on installing the radio gear, running in an engine, and the first flight!