G-LYNX: World Speed Record Holder

G-LYNX, photos courtesy Geoff Russell and Agusta Westland UK.

World Speed Record holder
Westland Lynx G-LYNX

In the late '70s, the British Experimental Rotor Programme (BERP) was formed to investigate the use of composite materials for helicopter rotor blades. The unique properties of composites also allowed aerodynamic enhancements as well, and one outcome was a design for a rotor tip which offered higher tip speed. By 1985, BERP blades had been flown and the results were encouraging enough for Westland to make an attempt at the world speed record using their company demonstrator Lynx with some minor modifications.

Westland Army Lynx (s/n ZB500) was civil registered as G-LYNX, and used for company developments. The aircraft was fitted with modified engine exhausts pointing straight aft (vs. to the side). Because it was expected that higher speeds would require additional longitudinal stability, the tail-mounted stabilizer was removed and a boom-mounted stabilizer complete with end plates from a Westland WG-30 was added.

Photographic evidence is somewhat sketchy, but it appears that no other structural mods were made, although there were a few aerodynamic clean-ups done. No doubt the interior was stripped out to minimize weight.

Photos indicate there were some sort of aerodynamic fairings over parts of the rotor head; no details other than the photo above are available. There were a number of corporate sponsors for the record attempt, and their logos were displayed on the aircraft (presumably after the flight).

On August 11, 1986, Westland Lynx G-LYNX set a world speed record (FAI verified : 15/25 km straight course) of 400.87 kph or 249.1 mph, a record which still stands today.

G-LYNX continued to serve as a company demonstrator, and unfortunately was modified back to AH.1 standards, then fitted with new engines and painted in a desert camo scheme; the record-setting markings were removed in the process. The aircraft still exists on display in the International Helicopter Museum at Weston-Super-

Mare. In 2007, it received a facelift, being restored back to its original G-LYNX record holder configuration and paint scheme by Westland. One interesting point is the large block of corporate logos on the side of the aircraft. Since 1986, a number of companies have changed or gone out of business. The restored G-LYNX has several logos which represent current company grphics ... the decal sheet which accompanies this conversion actually has representations of the ORIGINAL corporate sponsorship.

Resin Conversion Set

The conversion is pretty straightforward. Build the Airfix kit as per instructions, except

1. Replace kit part 23D (engine housing) with the substitute part supplied in the conversion.

2. Replace kit parts 26C, 26D and 35D (exhaust) with the substitute part

3. Do not fit the horizontal stabilizer kit part 66D, and cut off its fairing on the gearbox (part 27B). Fill and smooth out area so left and right halves are fairly symmetrical.

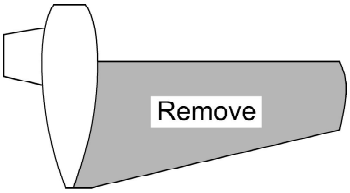
I suggest that the fitting of the stabilizers be left until near the end of construction when you can line everything up so that they are horizontal, and at square to the tail.

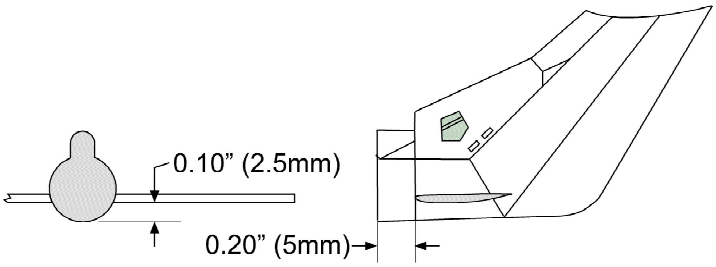
The two resin stabilizers are identical and each must be slightly modified to make port and starboard versions; see sketch below. Double check that the flat portion of the airfoil is on top. Glue the stabs in place as shown at bottom right.. Use the resin end plates supplied and the drawing at right as a template. Glue on the ends of the stabilizers where indicated. Done!

Painting and marking

G-LYNX was painted in standard green and black camouflage as shown in instructions. The stabilizers and endplates look to be in the black area of the camouflage. The logos are handed, with large letters leaning back on both sides.

The white LYNX logo goes on the nose.





Westland G-LYNX: World Speed Record Holder
Black and Olive Drab (FS 34098).

Drawing shown at 1/72 (2/3 actual size)