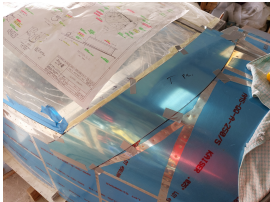


With the canopy rivetted on the canopy frame and the side skirts attached, it's now time to start one of - for me - the most feared parts of the canopy construction : the rear skirts.

I quickly decided early in the canopy fitting stage that getting the perfect dimensions everywhere on the forward rear top skin would be almost impossible. I was more worried on the sides and the front than actually on the absolute precision in the back. I noticed the passenger 45° point to be a little lower than the skin, and the top to be slightly higher. On the right side, the fit was better and could be worked away with spacers between the frame and the canopy. On the passenger side, the amount of spacer would have to be too big and the rivet would not attach properly. So early on, I decided to go with custom made fibreglass skirts. I had never made fibreglass parts before in my life and I have to admit it looked like an impossible task at first to make a professional looking large 1 piece part.

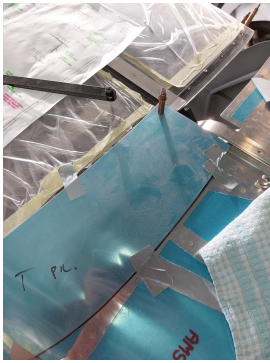
I highly recommend the article by Larry Larson on Kitplanes magazine before you get started. Very usefull information for newbies. Read the article in [this link](#). There's a 2 more on finishing and on painting in [part 2](#) and [part 3](#).

To start of, I wanted to get an idea what the rear skir would have to look like and "how bad" my shape actually is. I cut the delivered stock material skirts and tried to tape them to the closed canopy.



It quickly became very obvious that shaping the aluminum was no option at all. I used the skirts to draw some lines on the fuselage top skin and canopy to get a better idea where the epoxy would have to end.



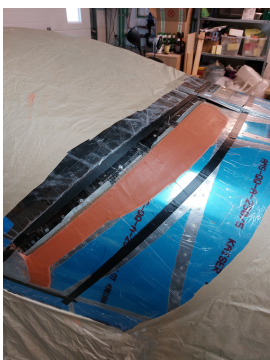


Next I put electrical isolation tape on the line defining the shape and tested how to fill the opening between skin and canopy. A simple cardboard with ducttape will do the trick. The picture shows just one strip in place but I closed it all down.



Next, I put some strips of transparent packing tape all over the surface and used packing paper from the kit to protect the canopy and fuselage. Fibreglass resin goes everywhere when you apply it. It's a mess and hard to remove later so take your time to protect your valuable plane. Everything you see in blue below is covered with tape.

After adding the tape, I started to smoothen the gap and transitions using modelling clay (the cheap stuff you can buy anywhere, nothing fancy).



Leaving it at this for now to dry and cure. The surface will become light orange when it's fully dried out. I tried to make the surface as flat and smooth as possible. You can sand this later so no worries if you have a little too much in one place or the other.

05/02/2022 - Starting rear skirts - 5h30

Category: 4.3. Slider Canopy

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