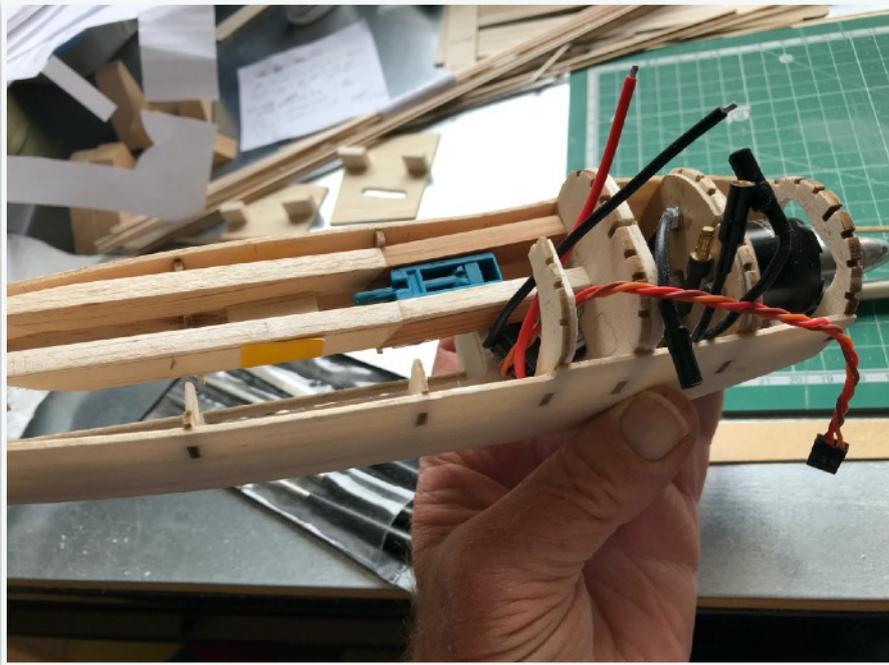


De Havilland Hornet build, part 9

As the test nacelle appears to fit I worked on strengthening the precarious lower formers by fitting the lower stringers and added the soft balsa tailpiece.



The gear mechanism rests within the nacelle, but will initially be attached to the wing, then used to support the nacelle.

Note the unhappily 'trapped' motor.

Centre lower crutch left in for now.



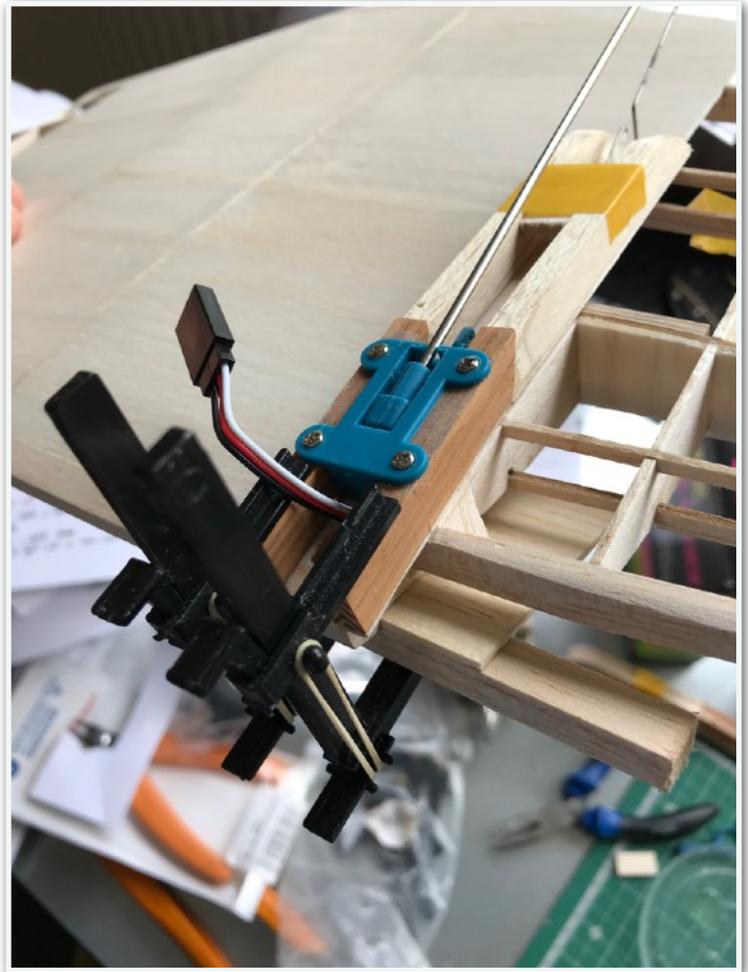
The gear mechanisms cannot be fitted to both wings before the wing is slotted into the fuselage. Keeping the lower body attached, there just isn't the clearance. However I need to fit gear servos before top sheeting the wings.

So, first attach one gear mechanism (extensively tested and fettled for fit earlier).

Thankfully five minute epoxy was up for the task.

Then, trial fit the gear servo, attach it up and test, before building the servos in and encasing them in the top sheet.

You can see that there is very little room between the beams to fit pushrods. Again using Dubro micro E/Z links (allowing a single right angle bend to be securely held), and adding an adjustment kink in the wire, I thought that I would fit the rod in situ...



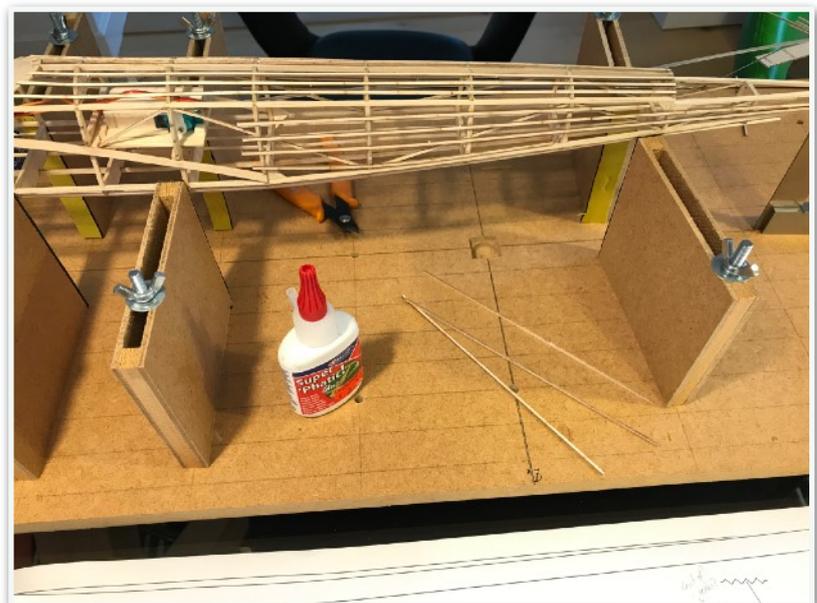
And learned why this is not a good idea

Happily a stiff drink showed that this was not insurmountable. One of the joys of beautifully prepared laser cut kits is the availability of accurate templates in the discard pile.

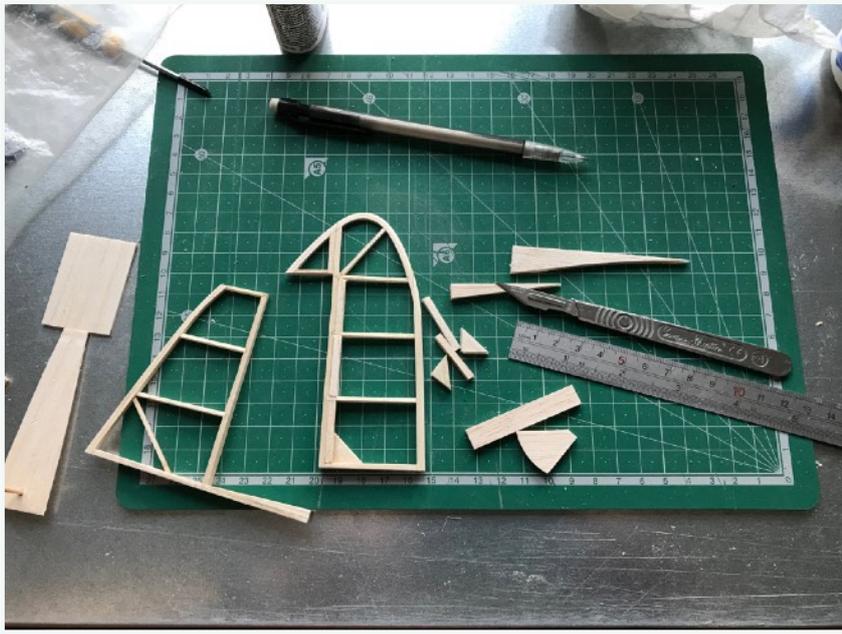


This shot from the top shows the repaired section beyond the aileron servo plate.

With these shenanigans heading towards top sheeting the wings I also needed to address whatever else was possible to strengthen the fuselage before cutting out the wing seating. Back to the SLEC like jig and fitting the rear side stringers (not forgetting the final side former shaper, left unattached because it's position is indeterminate until the stringers are fitted).



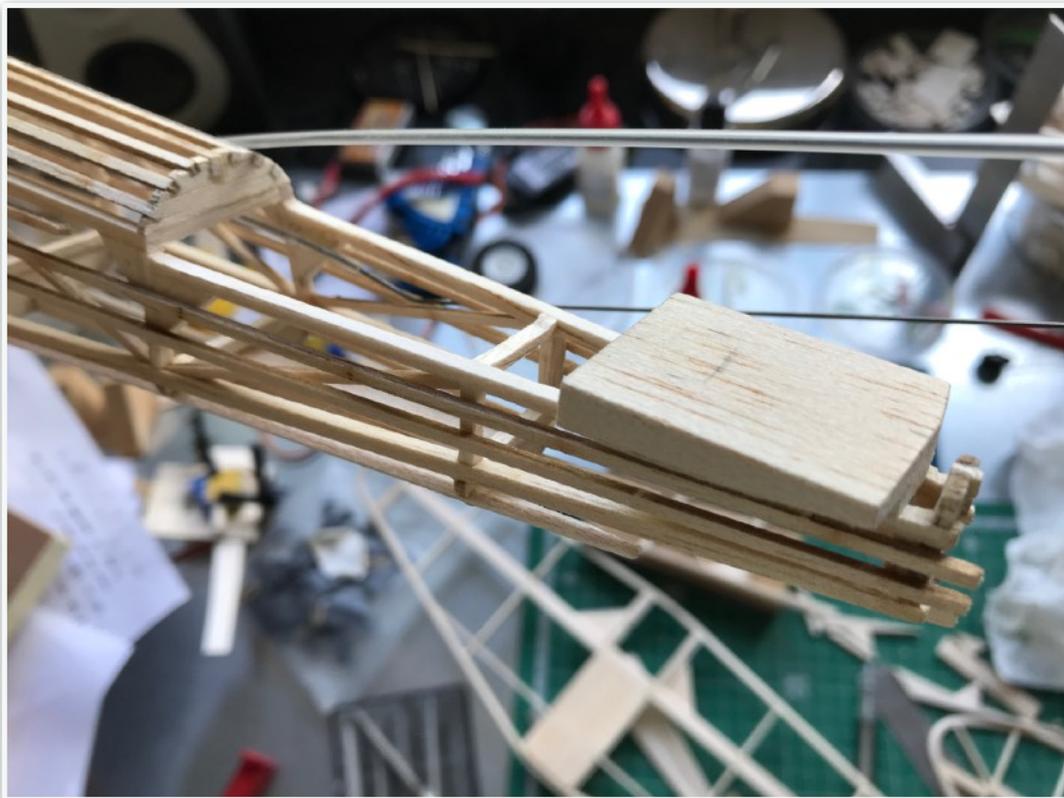
That done I could also check the tailplane for level, work out how it will be finally glued, add the soft block tailpiece and shape and test a soft block bedding to strengthen the fin.



Separated the fin and reconnected the rudder counterbalance. Initial shaped fin base block with cocktail stick pin, for the fin, is on the left.

The rudder has also been strengthened along the hinge post where it will be bevelled.

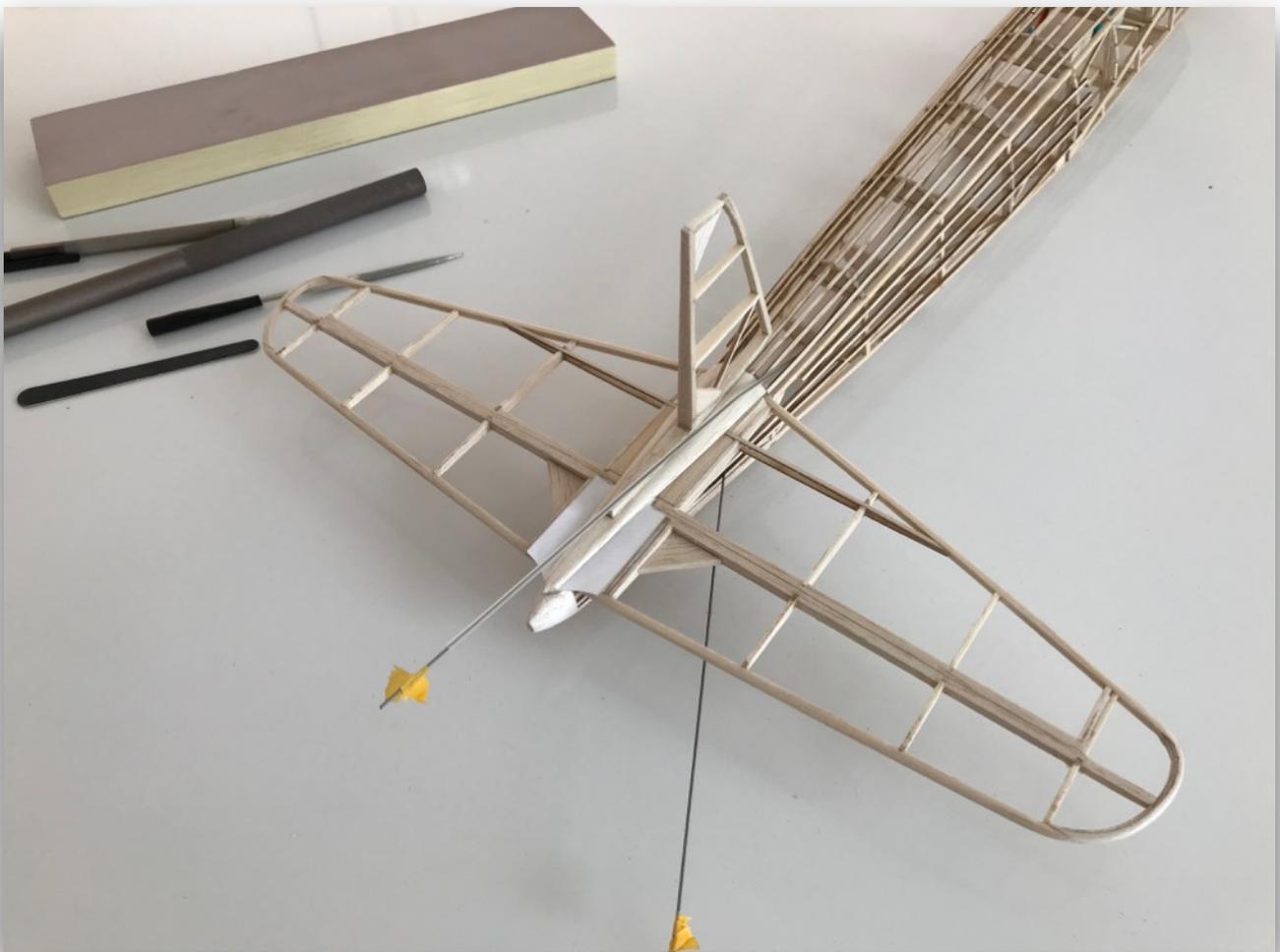
Rear tail block (shown in part 8) attached to the fuselage, ensuring future alignment of the tailplane, then shaped to match the tailplane aerofoil underneath.



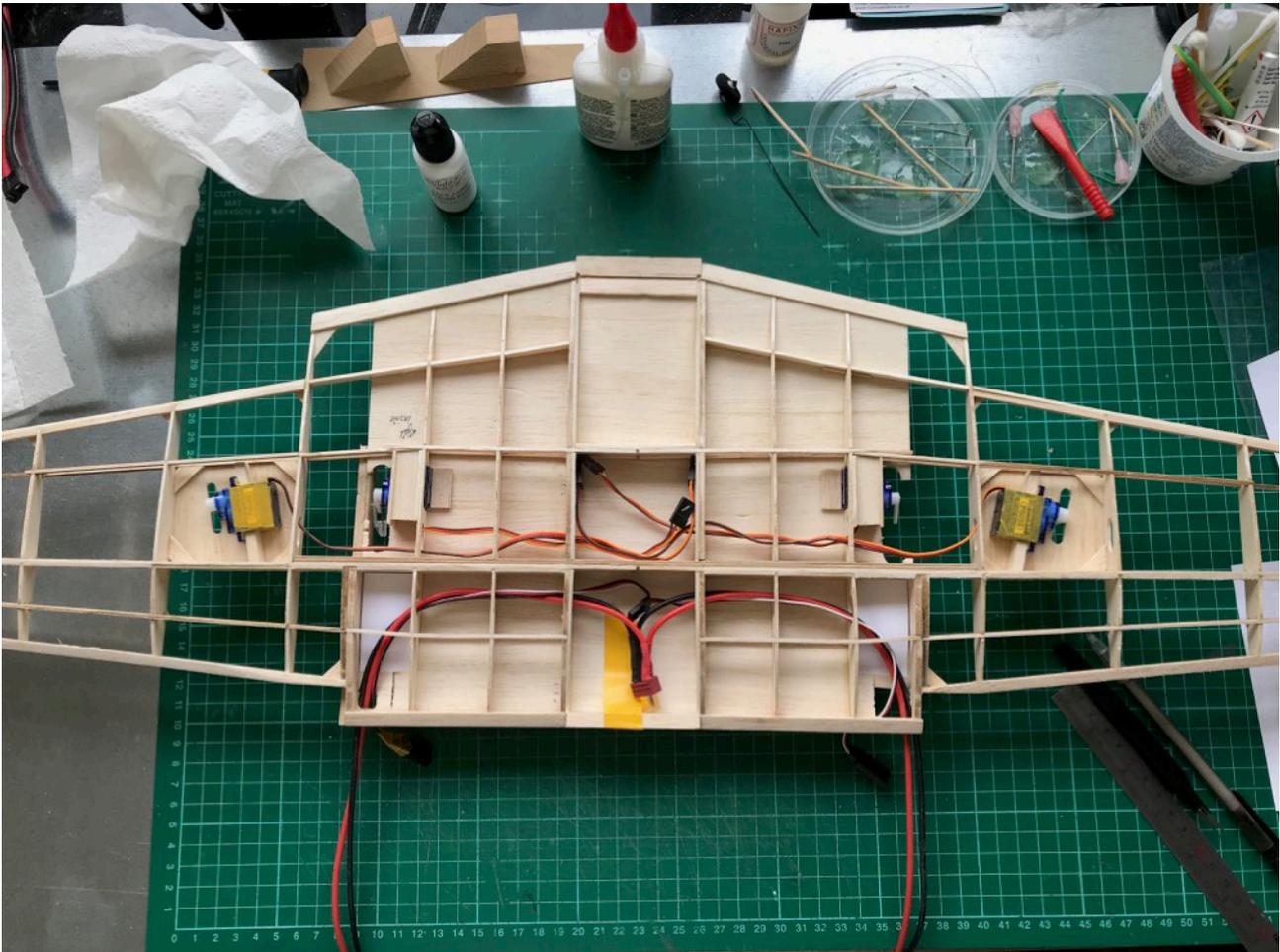
The remaining two inserts are glued in the tailplane and support the fin block. The angle of attack is now fixed to that shown on the plan, despite the build instructions.

I have included this picture to show how the fin is set into the curved block at the rear, as well as pinned through it further forward. I will also be using one of the card pieces supplied for a neat finish and a tiny height adjustment. Tailpiece also now attached to the fuselage.

These additions to the tailplane have increased the weight from 3g to 7g.

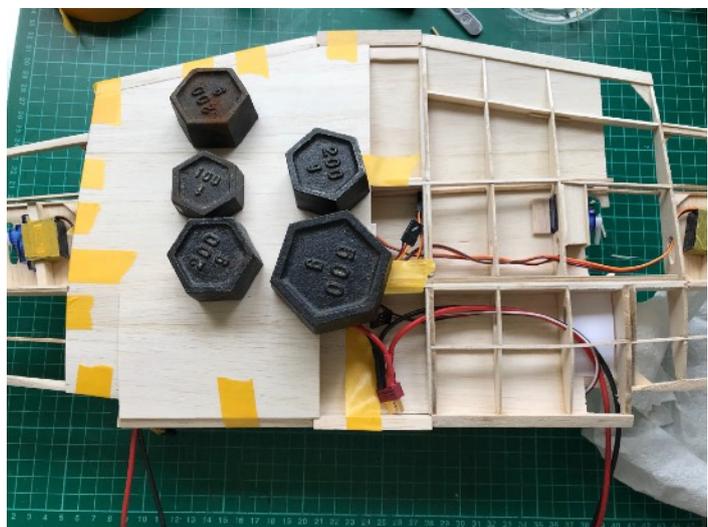


Back to the wing top sheeting. No choice but to pre-fit servos, leads and power wires. The power wires are over long to give wriggle room when soldering them to the esc's (in the nacelles), which can only be done after the wings are covered and fitted in the fuselage.

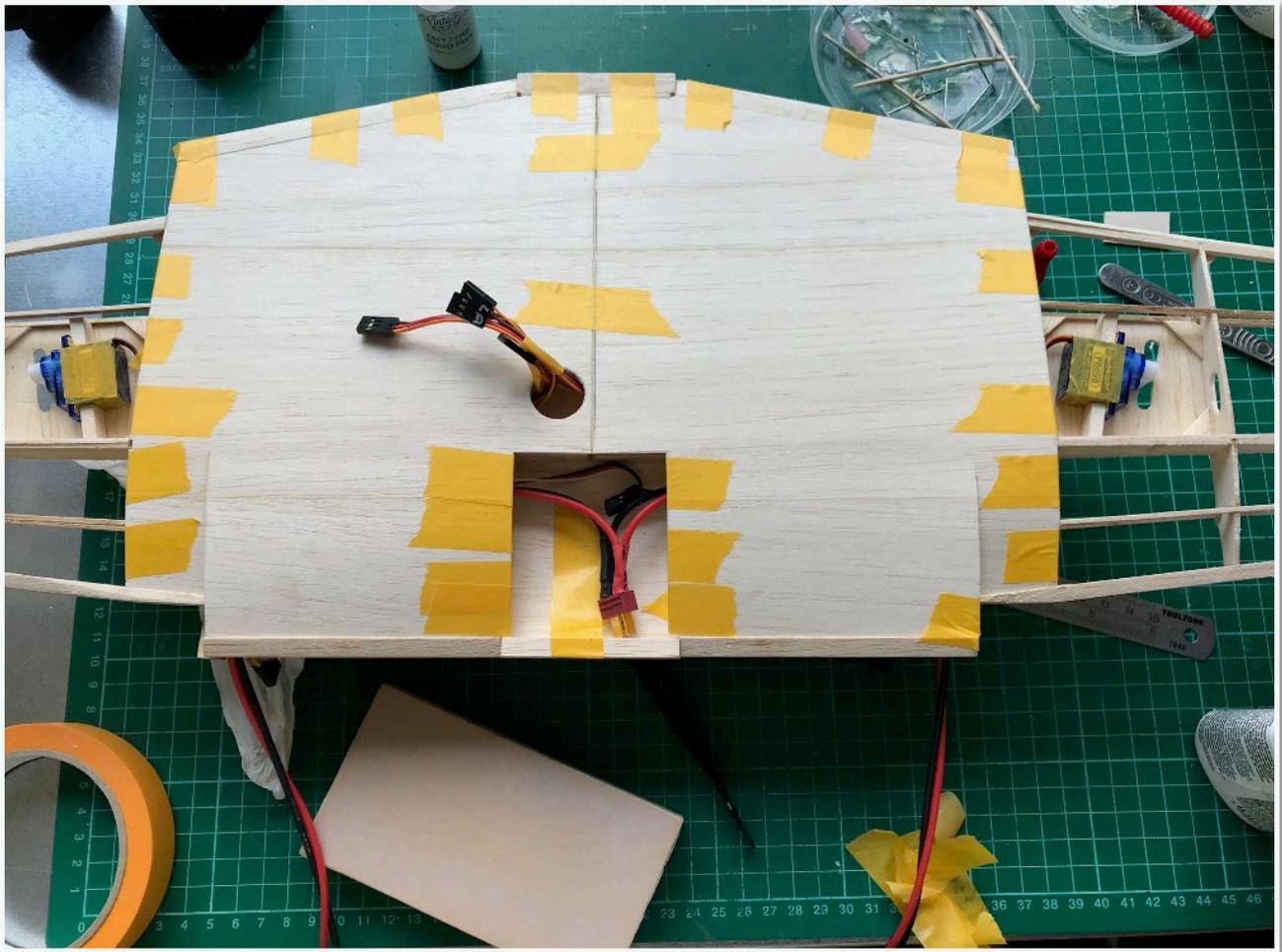


Note the now huge slots for the gear servo arms, additional rear block to support the rear of the covering sheet in the centre, and temporary spacer between the separate leading edges.

Weight and support seemed like a good idea. Another lesson, use a flat support, not a roll of tape.

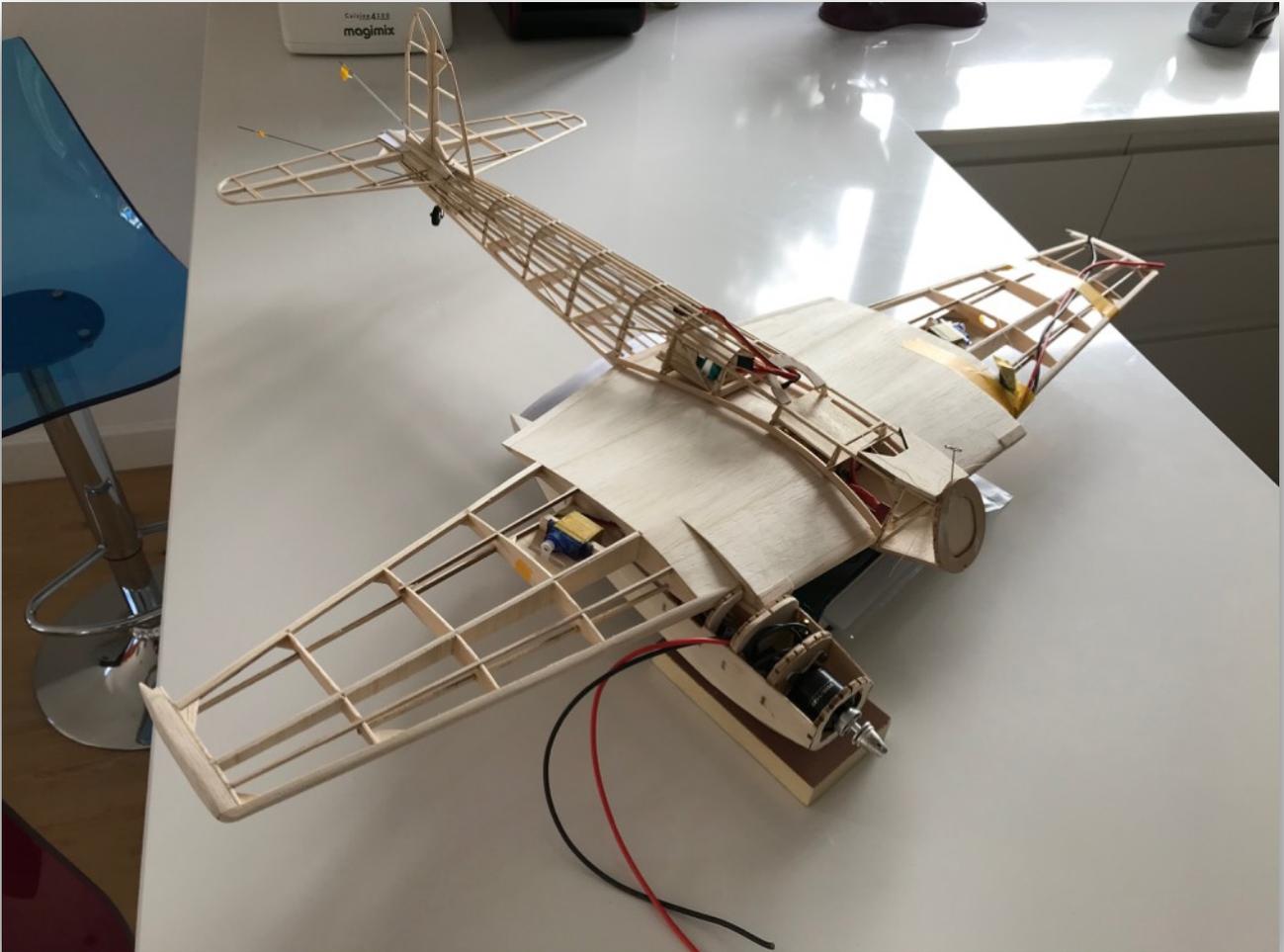


And the second sheet.



Meanwhile I added the tail wheel. Given how flimsy the fin and rudder are I decided not to attach it to the rudder for steering, but even now I am not sure that a caster tailwheel is a good solution on a twin.

Finally, I opened the wing seating for a trial fit. The fuselage didn't reduce to uncoordinated parts and I was inspired to mock the final shape up.



There's a long way to go, not least building the second nacelle and a streak of inspiration to work out the order of construction and covering.

Note the absence of forward side stringers. I am still aiming to sheet over, and ahead of, the wings, but can't see that being done before the covered wing has been fitted.

I am also puzzled by the twist flexibility of the rear fuselage. On previous builds using covering over stringer constructions, with tissue or Solite, have added rigidity, but the diagonal braces are very thin 1/32 sq strip on this model and the long fuselage is pretty flexible.

Come to that, the outer wings are not that stiff either.