

Ron Gray, Lavochkin LA-7 Resurrection, 3

Now that the Rascal is all but finished I can turn my full attention back to the LA-7.

The cockpit area had been annoying me for 2 reasons. I had previously infilled the rear section behind the pilot seat with some foam covered thin ply, quite why I used this I can't remember other than it came from the scrap box as a result of a crash, and the second annoyance were the sides to the cockpit, made out of balsa that was too thin! These were the first couple of things I tackled.

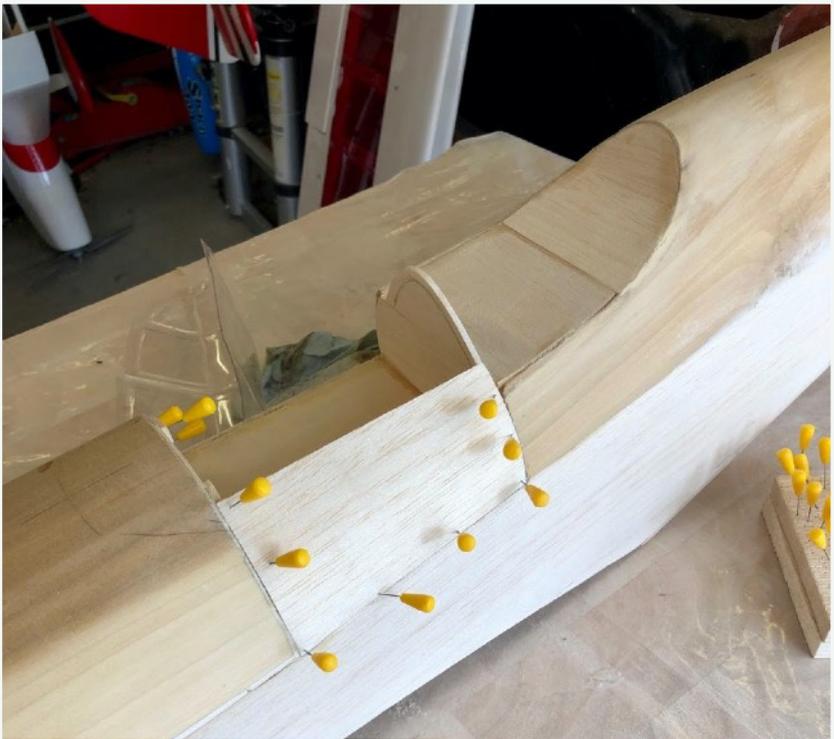
New balsa sheeting to replace the foam (I need to tidy up / fill areas where the old material was removed), plus I fitted a new former which will allow me to form the cut out to represent the glass protective panel behind the pilot's head.



I then wet and bent some thicker balsa to form the new sides to the cockpit which made it easier to glue in place. (I used the cowl as the former to bend the balsa around).



Cut, stuck and pinned in place.



Happier now with the cockpit area I went back to the tail surfaces to fix the concealed Robart hinges.

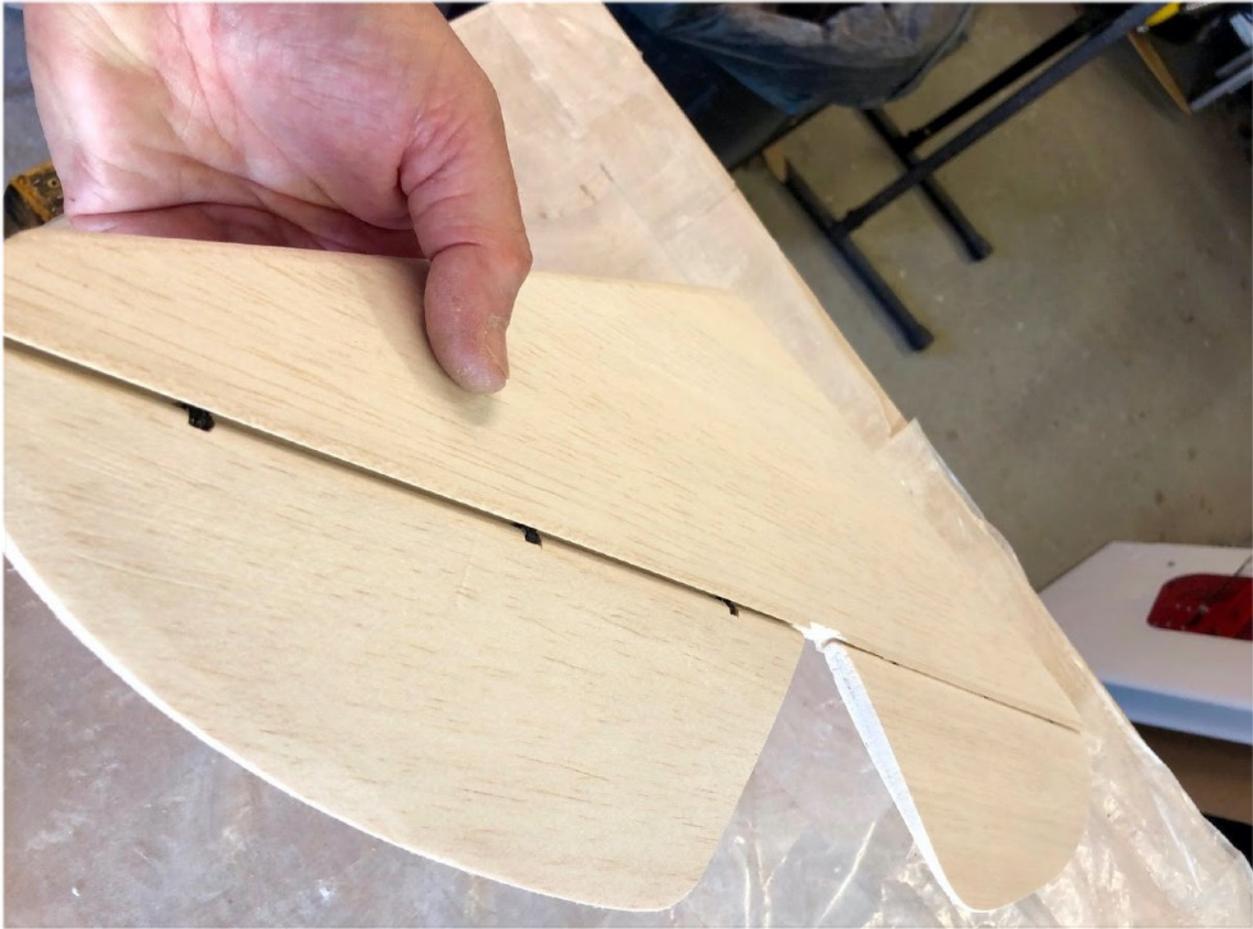
Tailplane



Elevators



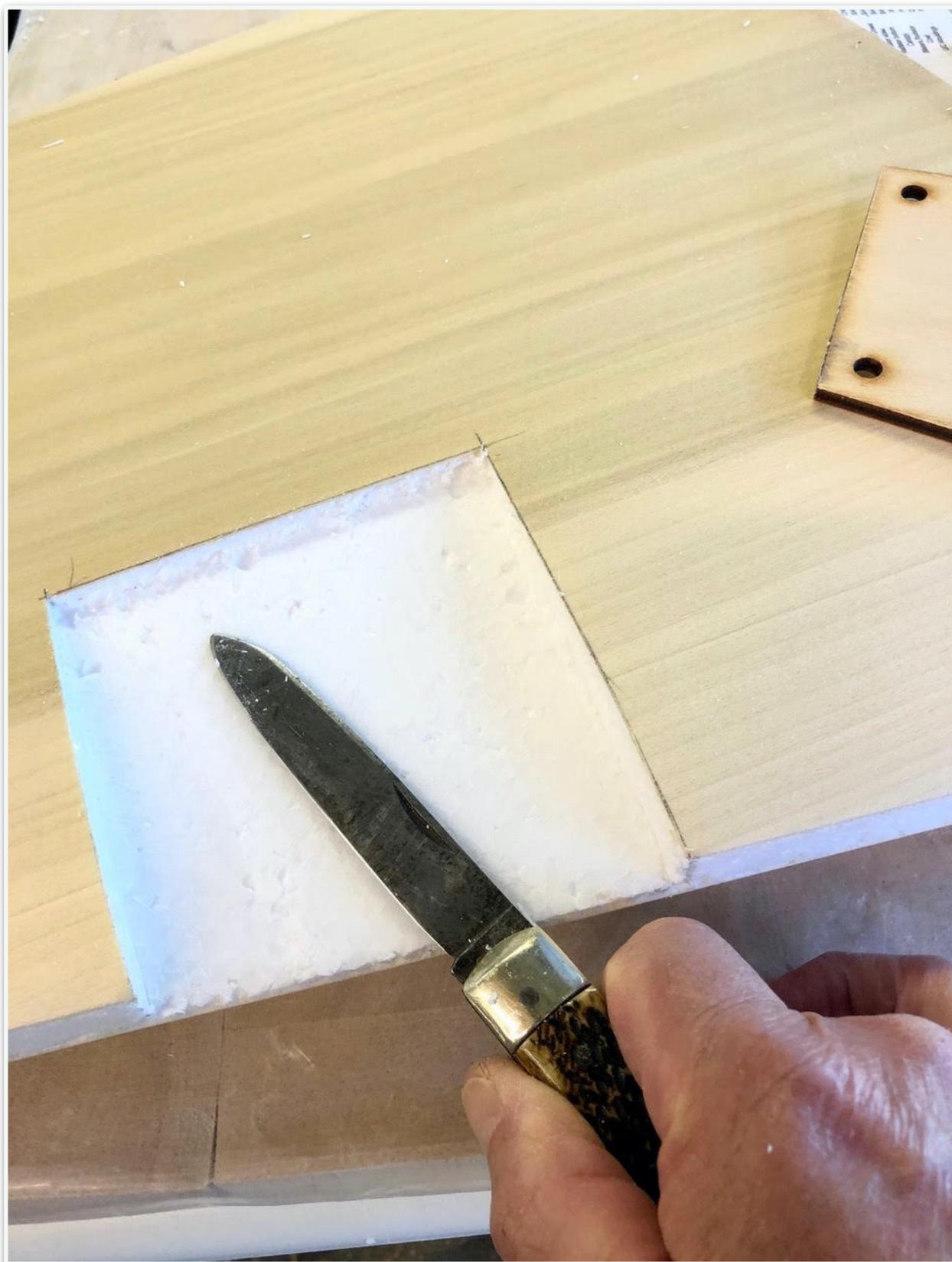
Trial fitting of Robarts

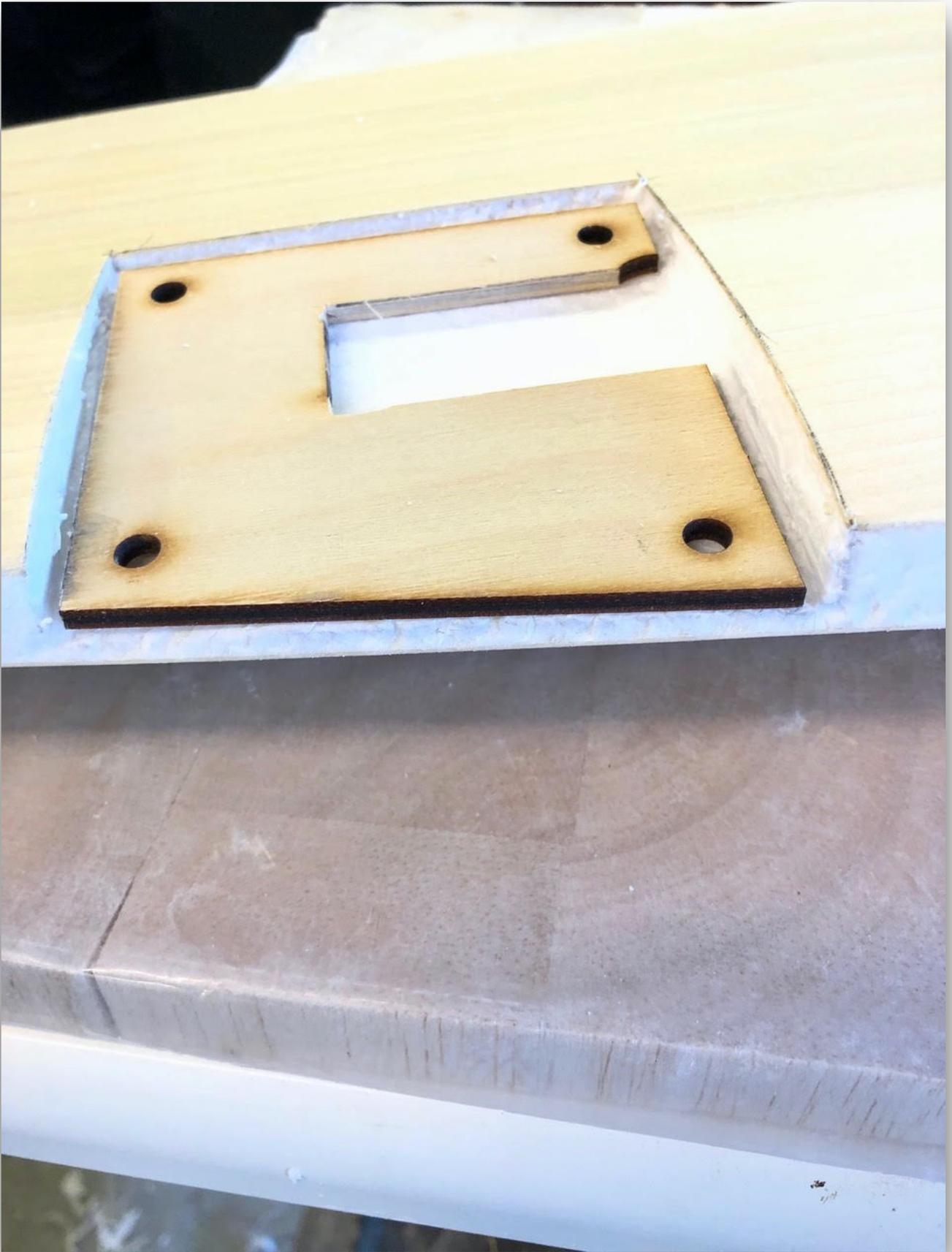


And the same for the fin and rudder



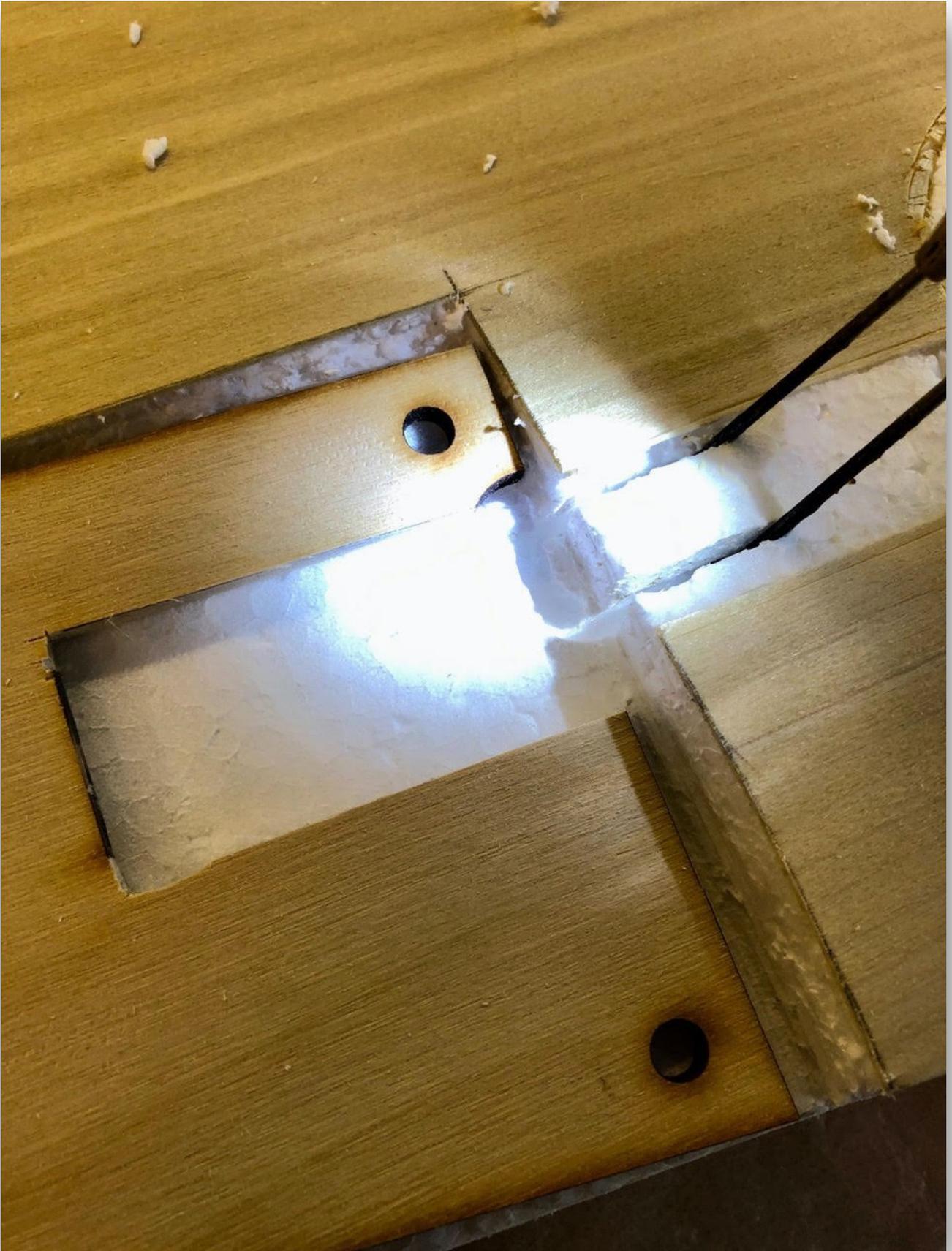
That's about as far as I wanted to get with the fuse so I moved onto the wings. The first job was to mark and cut out the recesses for the retracts and wheel wells. The retracts are mounted on a ply plate which has to be let into the wing at an angle. After removing the veneer I then cut out the foam using an old penknife which has a nice long blade and is very sharp!

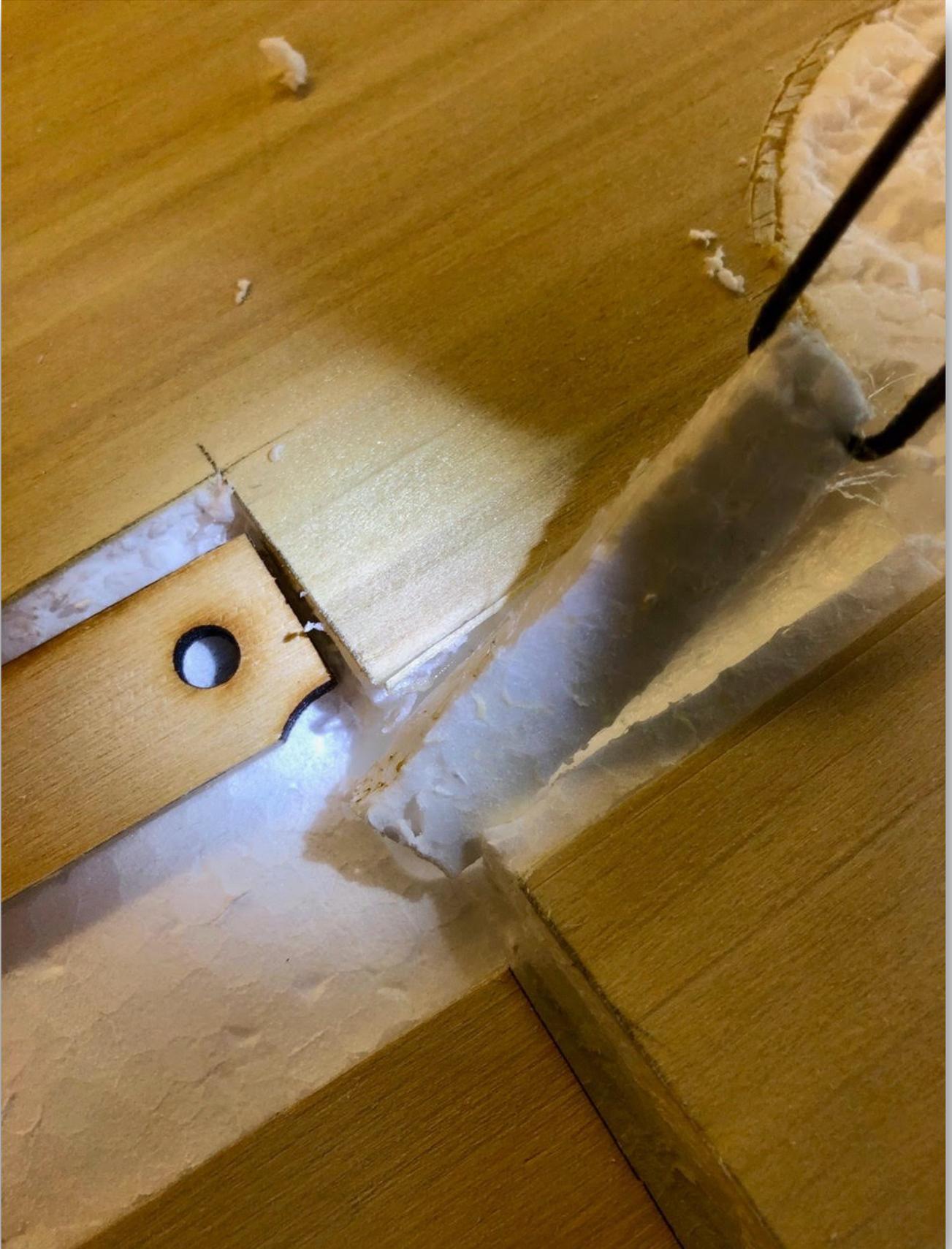




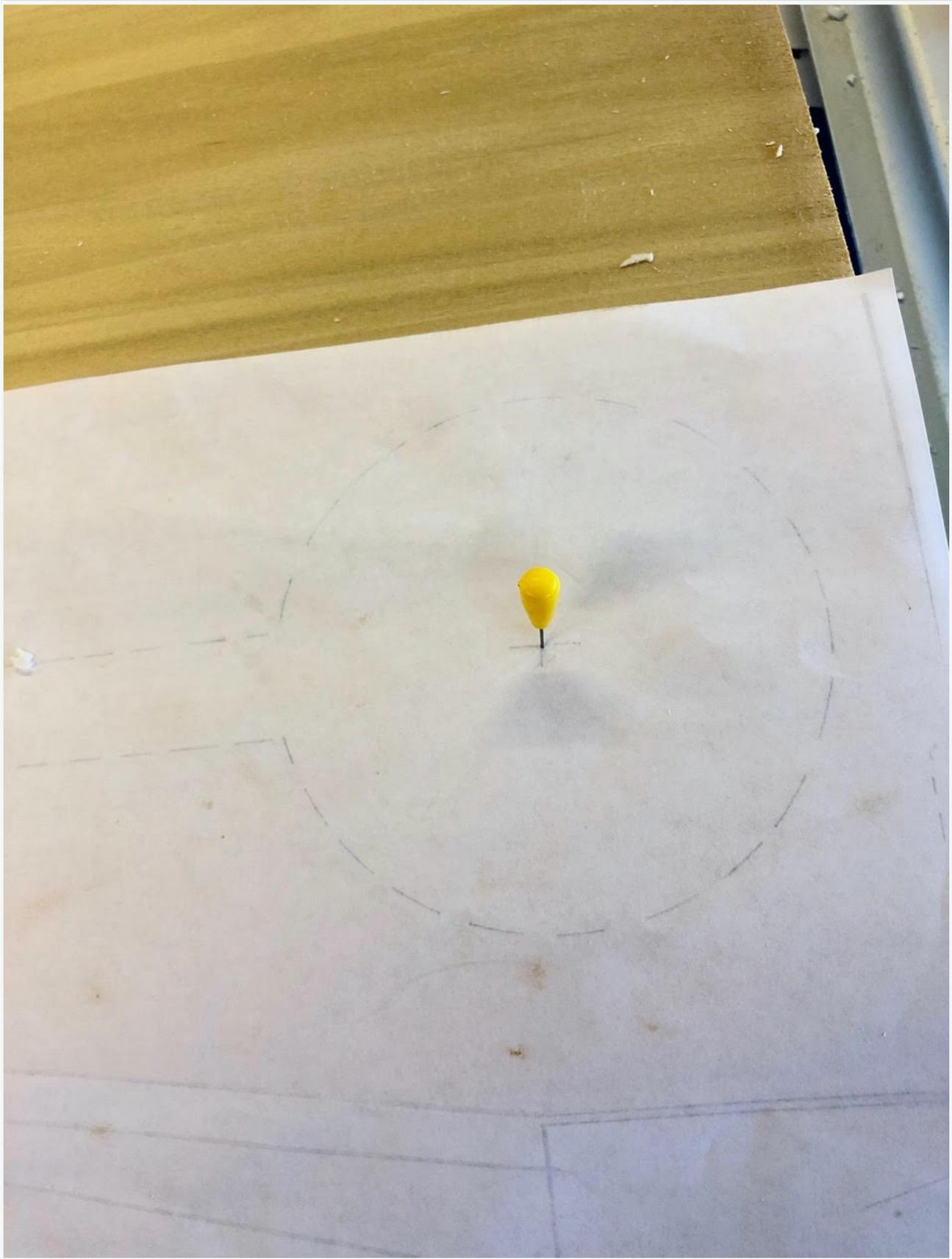
But I used another tool for removing the foam to allow the retracts to fit. This is a gun type soldering iron in which I've inserted a U shaped piece of wire. When the trigger is applied the wire gets hot and makes short work of foam cutting.







The wheel well was marked out - fortunately the kit came with a template to make this easier.



For the initial veneer cut I used my (paper) circle cutter.



Lifted the veneer,



and used the soldering iron to remove the foam.



The plastic mouldings for the wheel wells will have to be cut down to suit!



And the soldering iron was used again to cut out slots around the ply retract plates to facilitate the fitting of the balsa sides to the retract 'bay'



I now need to look at fitting the balsa LE, wingtips and forming the ailerons.