

Hauling Models the “Hodes” Way

By Robert Hodes

I live in Henderson, Nevada, which neighbors Las Vegas. Other than schoolyards and small parks for test glides and low hand-wind test flights, there are no grass fields large enough for real trim flights. Consequently, my trim flights have to wait until I travel to an FAC contest site (minimum 10-hour round trip drive). So, I take as many models as I can to a contest, many of them un-trimmed. My hope is to be able to get some trim flights in before the start of the contest.

To carry a lot of models, without having to pack them in boxes, I constructed a 2-layer platform, built from:

- ½”PVC pipe
- Tee and 3-way pipe fittings
- Foam/cardboard poster board
- Non-slip carpet padding
- 2-1/2” foam pipe insulation
- White duct tape.



This photo shows the basic frame made up of the ½” PVC pipe and fittings



These photos below show the fittings. The fittings are glued to the pipe with PVC glue. The 8 legs (uprights) are not glued and are removable.



The bottom shelf is 47”x41”, and the top shelf is 41”x41”. The sizes were dictated by the interior dimensions of my mini-van. The shelves fit behind the second-row seats of the van, with the third row seats folded into the floor. The basic design and materials, however, could be adapted to most vans and SUVs.



The platform surface is made of cardboard/foam sandwich poster board. Photo 7 shows the poster board attached to one of the frames with the white duct tape. There are 2 levels, and the assembly procedure is the same for the 2nd frame.



(Continued)





This photo shows the carpet padding duct taped to one of the poster surfaces. The padding is very important, as it has a tacky surface and prevents the models from sliding on the platform.



Here we have the shelf edges covered with the foam pipe insulation. The insulation fits around the PVC pipe and the platform surface. The insulation material is self-sticking, with a peel-off tape to expose the adhesive. This gives further protection against models sliding off an edge when the vehicle is turning corners. It also helps protect the van walls.



Now we have both shelves of the platform assembled. The legs for the bottom and top surfaces are not glued to the frame fittings – they are inserted and held in place by friction. Making the 8 legs removable makes it easier to install the platforms into the van and remove them after the trip.



Below shows the dual-level platform in the van. I put the heavy stuff on the floor of the van, under the platforms: stooge, winders, tool boxes, etc. The two surfaces above are for the models. I have safely carried 15 FAC-type models with this rig, and so far, have suffered no “travel rash” .

