

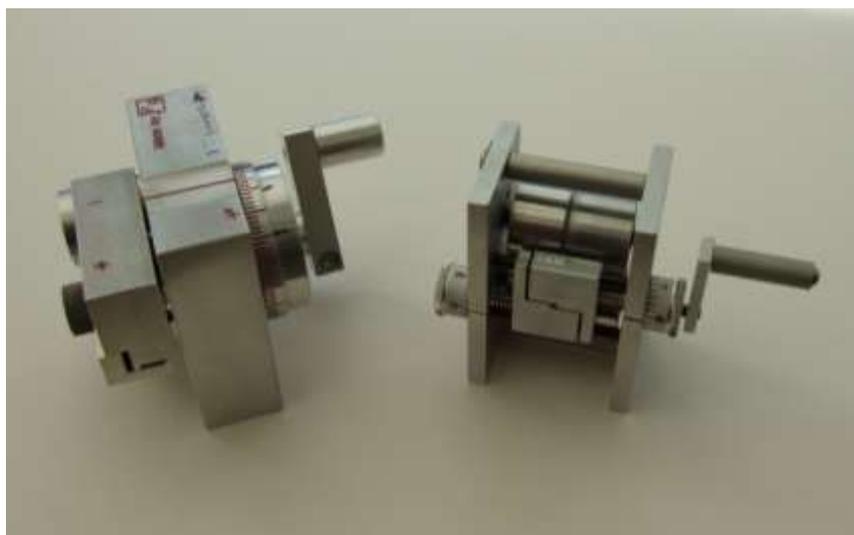
## How to strip Rubber.

The technique described below was described to me by Derek Richards (Many times British F1D team member and our resident rubber expert!) and I have used it ever since. Rubber stripping is not an exact science and can be a frustrating experience, if at first you don't succeed then this is one of those things that you do have to try again – but definitely another day!

Oh and only start if you're in a really good, patient kind of mood.....in any event don't expect to end any session with a pile of stripped rubber exactly the weight you aimed for, it rarely happens that way. But on a positive note little of what you strip will, over time, be wasted. You will no doubt like the rest of us end up flying a variety of models which all require different rubber sizes which will use the stuff that is either side of what you intended to strip. Practise makes perfect in all things, - well except rubber stripping - but using this technique *will* reduce your wastage!

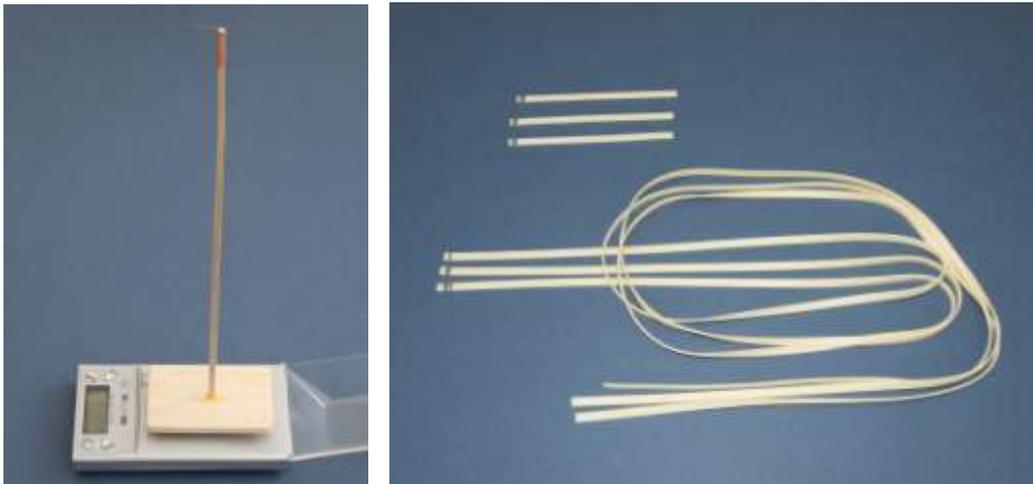
OK - first of all let's assume that you are happy to end up with stripped rubber in 1 metre lengths (otherwise please have a look at my end note), it doesn't have to be but it makes the maths easy. In the UK we always talk about rubber in units of grams/metre, so if we aim for the final strip to weigh 1.30 grams, then for the metre length we can say it is 1.30gm/m. The rubber I have used comes as 1/8" or 1/4" strip, though I'm sure there is 3/16" too. TANII is nominally 0.042" thick, Supersport can vary around this mark. Some strippers will not strip rubber which is much thicker than about 0.044" as the guide/feed channel will not accept it.

Below are 2 typical rubber strippers that I have. The one on the left was custom made in a very small batch by Peter Ing which features a long guide channel and the cut is pretty well vertical. The other is the Harlan one which strips beautifully too – though does tend to put a bevel on the cut edge –this one also handles very thin cuts well – such as for F1R motors. The other day I was splitting 1.5gm/m strips (F1D offcuts) into 0.7 and 0.8gm/m strips perfectly time after time, very useful. Big grin afterwards!



### The Method in the madness.....

- First of all cut 3 or 4 100mm long test pieces and mark a line across the top of one end with a felt marker pen.
- I also cut a couple of 200mm long pieces too as they can be later used for ¼ motors.
- Then cut as many 1 metre lengths as you wish and mark the top across one face with I to IIIII – that’s my normal batch of 5 lengths, if it’s not going well by then I give up and not too much is wasted!
- Set up your milligram scale and weighing arm for checking the weights of the cut pieces.



- If you know your stripper is already set close to the required width of cut then use the test strips of “good” rubber to adjust the stripper for your desired cut. Otherwise use some gash 100mm rubber strips to set it up close before starting on the real stuff.
- If its a new stripper be sure to mark on the width control dial which direction to turn for Thicker or Thinner cuts, otherwise you’ll get it wrong at some point and be very annoyed.
- The one problem with the strippers that I use is that setting the width of the feed channel is critical to consistently cutting accurate weight of strips. Setting it comes with practise so that you get a feel for the correct tension or grip. Basically open the feed channel knob until the rubber strip just slides in up to the cutters, tighten the channel until it just grips the rubber then slacken off until the rubber just slides freely. The problem is that each new piece you strip from will be slightly different in width and therefore you have to readjust the feed channel and this unfortunately introduces unwanted variations in stripped thickness. That’s why you need to be in a good mood and feeling patient, it’s really not funny seeing strip after strip of your very best rubber not weigh what you want!
- Once I am getting the 100mm strips off to within 1 or 2 mg of the desired weight I usually move on to strip a 200 mm piece, less room for error in the weight before moving on to strip the first metre length. Keep the rubber orientation constant by keeping the marks uppermost.
- Weigh the cut rubber and if it’s within 1 or 2 mg of the desired weight then keep on stripping from your 1 metre lengths, otherwise move the width knob a few notches to make the next cut lighter or heavier.

- Once you've stripped the first length from each metre of rubber then the next strips will definitely need the width control channel to be adjusted. Once again move back to your 100mm test strips and adjust the stripper until the right weight is achieved, then on to the 200mm strip and 1 metre lengths, once again varying the width control as necessary to keep the strips at or near the right weight.
- As the strips come off pile them up in usable weight brackets, for example 1.22gm/m +-1mg, 1.24mg+-1mg etc. There will also be some outliers – strips much lighter or heavier than currently required - I just bag them up and put to one side for some other model – as yet unknown. Remember that it's perfectly OK to fly on 4 strand motors – so for example a 1.15gm/m strip might be usable on a Pennyplane or Gyminnie Cricket as a 4 strand motor. Also as your own models get lighter or more efficient they may well fly on lighter rubber. It's amazing but over the last 5 years very little has actually not been of use to me, and you can always give it to someone who will use it!

### **Stripping other than 1 metre lengths.**

As I said I've so far always found it convenient to cut and store the strips in metre lengths – that way I can always check the gm/m weight of the rubber immediately and also maintain an inventory of what I have in stock. However there may well be occasions when, for example F1D, where full motor lengths are around 450/460mm with resultant wastage. In this case simply work out what weight the strip needs to be for your desired length and aim for that. Let's say you want to strip 1.30gm/m for a 595mg motor, then your initial strip needs to be 458mm long, allowing for a bit of variation I would suggest adding 10mm or so which makes the target cut weight 610mg.

### **Conclusion.**

You can probably tell that I don't find stripping rubber accurately easy, it can be so frustrating when you know exactly what you are after and the strips are anything but!! Honestly the best bet is to try again tomorrow, sometimes it's just a bit random.

As has been said "How come when there's a 50/50 chance of getting something right I'm wrong 80% of the time?" Welcome to stripping rubber.....

Good luck, Tony

March 2014.