For as many airplanes as there are in this hobby, there are few that have the instant recognition of a Stik. And it's no wonder - Since Phil Kraft first introduced "Das Ugly Stik" back in the 60's this plane has taken on more forms than - well, than you can shake a stick at!

If imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, the "Stik" should be very proud - Ugly Stik, Sweet Stik, Big Stik, Little Stik, Fast Stik, Slow Stik, Foam Stik, SPAD Stik - You name it, there's a Stik for it.

And there's a good reason why there are so many versions - It is a no-nonsense, straightforward, damn good flying platform! I had one when I was a kid, both of my brothers had one, in fact, just about every flier I know has had one at some point in there lives.

Now, Great Planes introduces the latest Stik in their Hangar, "The Giant Big Stik ARF". This 80.5" monster is IMAA Legal, and - being the purist that I am - I'm thrilled to see that it comes in the familiar
Red/White with black Iron Crosses.

While I plan to use a small (35cc) gasser on it, the Giant Big Stik is also made to run on a 2-stroke 1.20-1.60 (20-26cc) or 4-stroke 1.20-1.80 (20-30cc) glow engine. And while the Giant Big Stik can be flown on 4 channels, Great Planes give you an extra dimension of fun by adding Flaps! (I love Flaps!)

Ok, time to clean off the workbench, break open a new bottle of CA, and dig in!

**SPECIFICATIONS**

**Name:** Great Planes Giant Big Stik ARF

**Price:** $249.99

**Wingspan:** 80.5 (2045mm)

**Wing area:** 1520sq in (98sq dm)

**Weight per Mfg:**
Total: 13-15lbs (5.9 - 6.8kg)

**Actual Flying Weight:**
Total: 13.5 lb

**Skill level:** Semi Advanced

**Radio Used:** Futaba 6XAS
Futaba R148DF FM Rx
(4) Futaba S-9001 Servos for Ailerons (2), Flaps (2)
(2) Futaba S-9202 Servos for Elevator, Rudder
(1) Futaba S-3004 for Throttle

**Channels Used:** 5 total - Elevator, Aileron, Rudder, Throttle, Flaps

**Prop Used:** Top Flite Power Point 15 x 8

**Required to Complete:**

- 4-5 channel radio with 7 or 8 Servos
- Servo Wire Extensions - Two 6" Two 24" and Two 36"
- 1 or 2 "Y" Cords
- CA glue
- 30-Min epoxy
- Loctite thread lock
- Solder and Soldering Gun or Torch
- 1.20-1.60 cu in (20-26cc) 2-stroke, 1.20-1.80 cu in (20-35cc) 4-stroke, lightweight 26cc - 35cc gas, and Propeller
- Standard building tools
The box measured 59 x 24 x 6.5 inches (Note: I placed a can of alcohol in the picture as a size reference). Everything was nicely packaged and separated, but while the box was in good shape, it looks like the "Guys in the Brown Truck" may have played hockey with this one. Nothing was damaged - which says something for the packaging - but the various bags of accessories, which had been taped to the sides of the cardboard compartment, were no longer secured by the tape and were floating around loosely. They stayed within the confines of the compartment, they were just no longer taped in place.

Aside from that, everything looked good. There were a few minor wrinkles in the covering, but nothing a little heat didn't take care of.

The box shows that the Giant Big Stik can be built with a conventional glow engine, or with a small gasser. It can also be built with a Nose Wheel, or as a Taildragger. Since I will be using a Fuji BT-32b Gas Engine, I will be building it in the Taildragger configuration. Great Planes also provides a large Composite Engine mount for those who choose to use a Glow Engine.
The Manual is well written, with clear illustrations. I was surprised to see some minor details left out, but then, if you're flying a plane that is this far along the learning curve, you'd better be able to figure these little things out for yourself anyway. There was also an addendum to the Manual correcting the misprinted CG and control throws, but frankly, the CG range is so huge on this plane that I even brought it back to the originally stated 7" (Just to see what would happen) and found that I liked it even better there!

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**WING ASSEMBLY**

Time to start! The first thing that needs being done is to open the covering in the four places where Wing Servos will mount. I used Futaba S9001’s in all 4 locations. Once the holes were opened, I touched up the covering as per the instructions.

With the Servos installed, I can now hinge the Ailerons and Flaps (Note: Do not hinge the Rudder and Elevator at this time!). Great planes supplies ample sheets of hinge material from which to cut CA Hinges. I opted to drill "Wicking Holes" into each of the slots before installing the Hinges.
The next thing to do was to mount the Control Horns in line with the Servo Output Arms. Then, the pushrods are cut to length, and a Clevis is soldered to the other end.

Dowels were epoxied into the front of the Wing, and an anti-rotation dowel was added to one side near the Trailing edge. Then the Wing Hold-Down blocks were epoxied in place to strengthen the Wing Bolt area.

With that, the Wing Assembly is complete!

TAIL FEATHERS

Pretty basic stuff here. Align the Stab, remove the covering in the gluing area, and attach with 30-minute Epoxy. The same goes for the Fin, the only exception being that there is a shipping block that needs to be removed from the rear of the Fuse first.

Once the epoxy on the Fin and Stab had cured, I installed the Tail Wheel. The Manual called for the wheel to be installed, and then the wire bent to a 90 degree angle. Since the wire was so strong, I found it easier to bend the wire first, and then install it. It made it a little tricky to get through the bottom of the Fuse, but all in all, I thought it would be a lot easier than bending the wire in place.

With the Tail Wheel installed, the Elevator and Rudder were hinged in place.

LANDING GEAR
The landing Gear was another piece of cake. As much as I like the looks of those little details like Wheel Pants, they sure can be a pain to install. This is one of the nice features of a Stik. By omitting a lot of the "Bells and Whistles", it's a joy to assemble such a simple design. Bolt axel to Gear, slide on Wheel Collars and Wheels, and bolt to the Fuse. (Ok, I did have to file a flat on the axel for the Wheel Collar Set Screw, but no biggie)

I'll also note here that Great Planes gives you two complete sets of Main Gear Mounts in the Fuse - one for a Nose Wheel configuration, and one for Taildragger.

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**MOUNTING THE ENGINE**

Since the Fuji BT-32b is one of the recommended engines for the Giant Big Stik, Great Planes Provides almost everything needed to mount it. A paper template is supplied for locating the mounting holes, but you'll need to make a trip to the local hardware store for the 1/4 - 20 Blind nuts and bolts.

A specially designed mount for the Fuji BT-32b is also included. Just glue the two identical mounts together, drill for the four 8-32 screws, and mount it to the front of the Stik.

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**Engine Spotlight**

**Fuji BT-32b**  
*Flip by Hand Gas Power*

- The BT-32b 2.1 gasoline engine boasts several upgrades for better performance and more convenience.
- The scavenger port has been improved, boosting top end rpm by 200-300.
- A stronger magnet on the flywheel allows the BT-32b to be started by hand.
- Retains the same quality Walbro WT407 carb, Champion RCJ6Y spark plug and rear-mounted muffler.
- Solid-state, 1-piece CDI (Capactive Discharge Ignition) system for reliable, virtually maintenance-free use.
- Compact, rear-mounted muffler is designed to fit inside more cowls and...
Another very impressive feature are the 4 aluminum engine mount stand-offs that Great Planes provides. Once the frame is bolted in place, the engine is ready for mounting.

- Factory-set midrange, for optimum performance under normal conditions — very little adjustment should be needed.
- A regulating pump optimizes fuel flow for dependable performance at any attitude; a 40:1 gas/oil mix extends engine life up to 4 times longer than other gasoline engines.
- Linkages designed for R/C-only applications.

Mounting the Fuji BT-32b is now as simple as installing the four 8-32 bolts. I can't emphasize enough the importance of using some type of thread lock when you're dealing with large engines. If you have a metal to metal thread contact, it WILL come loose without thread lock! (Note: This applies to ALL screws, not just around the engine)

Now the Throttle pushrod can be installed, and the engine mounting is complete.

**TANK**

If you are using a Gas Engine, you'll need to replace the provided stopper with one that is suitable for Gasoline Engines. Once the Tank is assembled, it inserts into the nose through a large hatch opening in the underside of the Fuse where it is cradled in place.

**RADIO INSTALLATION**
Mounts are provided at the rear of the fuse for servo installation. I mounted two Futaba S9202's in the tail for the Rudder and Elevator. A plywood tray and Velcro Straps are provided for mounting the Receiver and Battery pack. However, I later moved the battery pack just to the rear of the radio compartment for balancing. That and 1/2oz. of lead at the tail got the balance point right where the Addendum to the Manual suggested. (Note: I later found that it needed more tailweight)

There is a space provided for mounting a standard switch, but instead, I added a DuBro Switch/Charge Jack. With the switch installed, it's time to charge it up and introduce this beautiful giant to the sunlight.
I have to say right off the bat how impressed I am with how easily the Fuji BT-32b started. It literally flip-starts as easily as any standard 2-Stroke glow engine. I ran two tanks of gas through it to break it in, then headed out to the field.

I got a great evening for a maiden flight. The temperature was 75 degrees, and the evening was dry and calm. I cranked up the Fuji BT-32b and taxied the Giant Big Stik out to the runway.

It tracked very well as she powered down the runway and liftoff was smooth as silk. Minimal trim was required before the Stik was flying hands off, and after a few customary laps to get the feel for it, I started putting it through a few basic maneuvers.

She tracked very well through Loops and Rolls, but it felt a bit nose heavy for my taste. I brought her in and back on the ground, I added some tail weight. A few flights later I had added enough weight to bring the CG to the Manuals original location of 7” aft of the Leading Edge of the wing, and found I liked this much better. And even after adding the tail weight, she still came in just a hair under 13.5lbs!

Next, I zipped up the controls a bit to where I like them and took it up again. Now I was REALLY having fun! What a thrill! An old familiar plane in a new HUGE size! I was really having a ball.

I got a total of four flights in that day, and three more the next. I can see that this is going to be one fun airplane!

As it turned out, the following weekend I got an invitation to attend the annual Fun Fly sponsored by the Alexandria R/C Fliers in Alexandria, MN. The Alex Club has a great field, and some really great guys who really know how to put the "Fun" in Fun Fly (I can still smell that roast pig!) So I thought that would be a great time to bring the Stik out in public. The weather was so good, I decided to shoot the video right then and there. See for yourself what a nice flier she is!