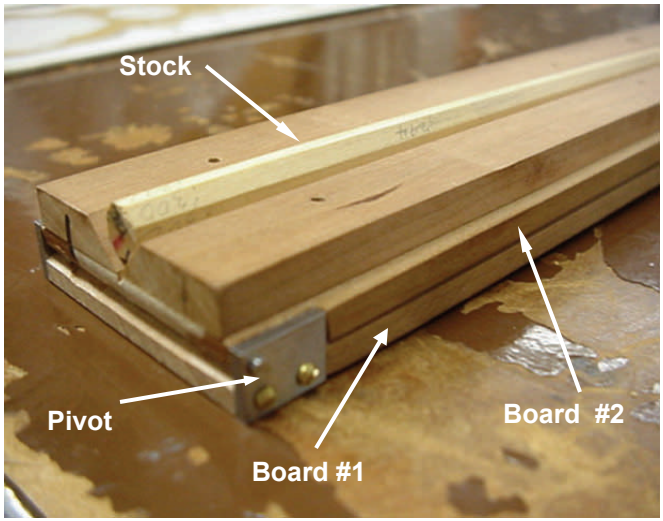
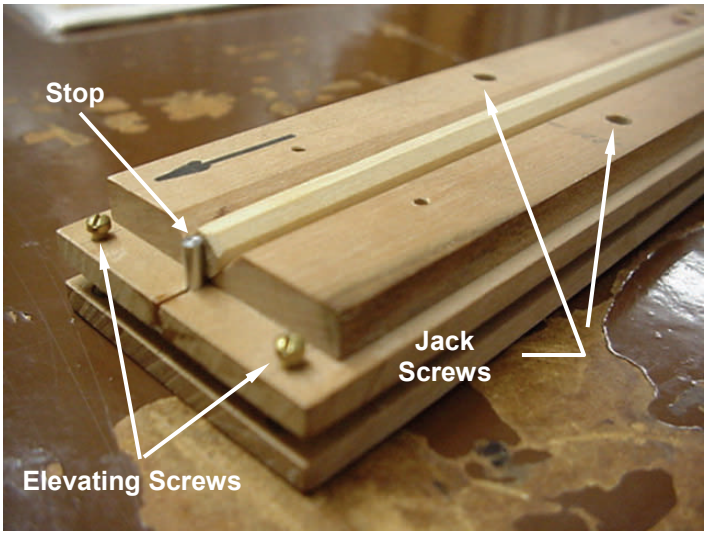
A Fixture for Making Masts

Ray Oswalt and **Sid Wotman** recently collaborated on the design of a device that can help a modeler make properly tapered masts. If you own a thickness sander, this may be worth trying. The design is quite simple, and starts out with two boards that are joined at one end in



such a way that the upper piece can pivot up or down. The length of the boards is dependent on the size of the masts you wish to make. Width is not as critical as thickness since the design will have to take into account the capacity of your thickness sander. Ray stated that if you own a Preac, it might be necessary to remove approximately 3/16" off the backside of the guard for additional clearance.

The upper board is fitted with two strips of wood that have 45° bevels that form a 90° "v" groove. This groove will keep your square stock in position as you run it through the sander. The taper is achieved by inserting two small screws at the other end, which will allow you



to elevate the bed, and obtain the desired angle.
Because the wood had a tendency to flex downward as it went through the sander, small "jack screws" had to be placed along the fixture's length. These were lowered into position once the correct elevation had been determined, which eliminated the problem. In order to achieve a 16 sided taper, a second set of beveled blocks were required that are set at 22½°. When this is complete the mast can then be rounded out to its correct shape.