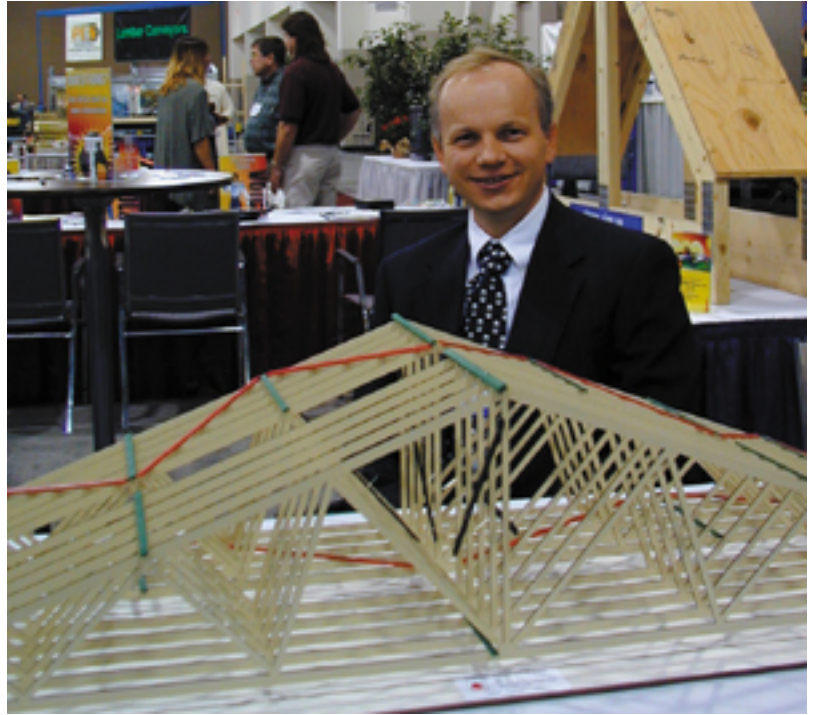


November 2000

"Promoting Safety with the
"Model" of Temporary Bracing"
by Ted Kolanko, P.E.



Those in attendance at the BCMC show in Milwaukee are sure to remember the Temporary Bracing Display Model at the WTCA booth. All were amazed at how strong a group of trusses can be when properly braced as shown in the models. As a truss fabricator, your dilemma is how to convey this message to the "experienced" erection crews in the field. The HIB-91 summary document just doesn't quite hit them over the head with a 2x4.

Instead of using the proverbial 2x4, WTCA, along with Cherokee Metal Products, Inc., has made available two temporary bracing display models. These are real, "touch and feel" models that show the actual field conditions to scale. Each model displays a stable method of bracing per TPI recommendations and the instability from the lack of bracing.

About a year ago, a fabricator in Tennessee had the misfortune of constructing 60' trusses that collapsed during erection due to lack of bracing. I was asked to go to the site to inspect the damages and while doing so I took with me a smaller version of the current model to the fabricator's office. While explaining the effects of bracing, there was a gentleman in the corner of his office, quiet as a mouse, just watching and observing. I did not know that he was the head of an erection crew. A month later this gentleman came to the fabricator and explained that he tried putting in the top chord diagonal bracing on his jobs. He said "it made something that used to feel like walking on jello to that of walking on concrete."

Just earlier this year another fabricator constructed 60' trusses that collapsed nearby. I arrived at the site with a temporary bracing display model in hand and showed what needed to be done. Some of the trusses were still erect on the site. There were plenty of purlins, but no diagonal

bracing on the chords. After installing the diagonal bracing on the top chord, I asked one of the workers how it felt up there. He was jerking and pulling laterally on the trusses with all his might, trying to make them sway. They would not budge. He yelled down, "They're a whole lot different now."

Put a Temporary Bracing Display Model on display for the benefit of field personnel and the building inspectors in your area. Just as Tennessee is a little bit safer, your state can be too.

P.S. If he doesn't get it, use the 2x4.

Ted Kolanko, P.E., is a Corporate Engineer for Cherokee Metal Products, Morristown, TN. You can purchase Mr. Kolanko's models through WTCA. For more information or to order your model, contact WTCA at 608/274-4849.

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