

SPRUE CONFESSIONS

Styrene Six

Jarrold Cunningham

Hey “plastic fanatics,” it’s good to be back! I was pleased to see all that turned out for the last meeting. And it was really good to “talk shop” again. I was happy to see all of the plastic on the tables as well. Congratulations also to those who went to the Houston show. I’ve heard (through the grapevine) that Skip took a first (a personal best for him), and there were some other members that did well also. WELL DONE!! I was not able to attend, but I wish I had. Personally, I think it speaks well of us to have good representation at nearby shows, since we host many “out of towners” for our show. I hope that those who attended had a good time.

On to other matters. Last month we had an offer from an outside source to construct our website. During some debate, we have agreed to let this individual show us a demo page and vote on the issue at the next meeting. I think that this is a very fair opportunity and I am very anxiously waiting the presentation.

I would like to interject some personal observations at this point. I believe that a club website would be a good thing. I think outside

from the Editor...

This month’s meeting will be on Thursday, April 19, at Luby’s Cafeteria on North Loop. Meeting time is 7 PM. Since Jeff Barringer promised to bring a sample page for a proposed website, I’m sure he will be on the program. In addition, Dave Orloff will talk about weathering with pastels.

There was a lot of discussion last time about the website. Bruce Burden started a site last year before our annual contest and it’s still up. If you haven’t visited it, it has all the results of the show along with several photos of winning entries. And it has lots of other informatin as well, like time and place of the meetings and information on our next Austin Scale Model Show. Bruce has an editorial comment in this issue regarding his thoughts on websites.

of our yearly show and “word of mouth” this is THE BEST way to get exposure to our efforts here. I have spent many hours just “surfing” different club sites and have been both pleasantly surprised, and sorely disappointed. For all that a website would bring, it takes *us*, the club to keep it going with content. There is nothing sadder than to go visit the Houston IPMS page (personally, I haven’t tried in a while so I don’t know if it still exists). This page was superb, but it fell by the wayside because of lack of support.

We have been given an opportunity for “somebody else” to do the legwork, and all we need do is support a flow of content for it. Every month I hear Milton ask for contributions for our monthly newsletters and see little except from the “regulars.” If we have any hopes for a web site for the club, this has to change!

For all that our club is, it’s certainly not “Bondo’s Club” or “Skip’s Club” or Milton’s for that matter. It’s *our* club. That means it serves *all* members. For a successful operation we need to have everybody willing to contribute, not just a select few. If we are to have a web site this must be our focus. If we don’t, then we will never have the web site that ASMS deserves.

(continued on page 2)

Unfortunately, I didn’t get to make the annual trek to Houston; my old college roommate was in town for a few days and stayed with us. His modeling interests have been replaced with rockhounding but he still enjoys peeking into new kits.

I hear that Skip scored big; his first First for Automotive Diorama. Greg Springer did pretty well, bringing home four trophies for a single entry! His Pearl Harbor Zero is about the best thing I’ve seen him do. His research was remarkable. If anyone doubted the color of his model, he opened his briefcase to show fragments of the actual aircraft! His color match was dead-on. The interior is about as complete as any 1/48 Zero you’ll ever see, with equipment not usually even shown on photos.

Other ASMS’ers did well to, especially Russ Holms and “Bondo” Phil. Congratulations all.

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Bruce Burden**Dave Edgerly****Marc Hobbs****Model Show Schedule**

IPMS/HAMS Texas Shootout Model Car Contest, Bay Area Community Center, Seabrook, Texas	May 19, 2001
IPMS/NCT, Mesquite Rodeo Convention Center (Dallas)	May 26, 27
IPMS/USA National Convention, Chicago Ill.	July 4-7, 2001
IPMS/FWSCS, Arlington, Texas (Fort Worth)	August 11, 2001
IPMS/Wichita, Oz Con 2001, Wichita, Kansas	August 11, 2001
IPMS/Austin, Austin Scale Model Show, Austin, Texas	August 25, 2001

(Styrene Six continued)

If you are concerned that what you have to say isn't worth it, or you feel like you can't express yourself in words, THINK AGAIN. I am, by no means an Ernest Hemingway, nor do I profess to be. If I can manage to get some thoughts down anybody can. So what if your build stack isn't that great. I have just as many Monograms as I do Tamiyas and Hasegawas. The truth be told, I've even got some ERTL and some AIRFIX lurking about in my closet. It really doesn't have to be even on the more recent stuff either. There are many of us that would love to hear what you have to say; or difficulties that you ran into when building your "something." Write it down. Don't be shy. You don't have to give a 5000 word term paper on it; just tell us the "meat and potatoes" of the thing. Lastly, it doesn't EVEN have to be a KIT!!! Pick up some decals, or a book, or a brand of paint, and tell us the deal. Your opinions count, believe me.

I really don't mean to preach to you all, I feel that we are all adults here. The statements I made are my own two cents about the website idea. I just really believe that to make an honest go at this we really need to make an effort. I'm sure you guys don't really want the Houston rep of "that really neat website that once was."

Jarrold

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Kenny Roady, vice president, kar66@swbell.net	260-2907
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Austin Model Show Coordinators

Tim Vogt	447-2668
Bruce Burden	250-9424
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Ken Laronde (Vendor Liaison)	288-2137

Austin Scale Modelers Society (ASMS) is affiliated with the International Plastic Modeler's Society (IPMS) as the Republic of Texas Chapter. ASMS meets the third Thursday of each month except December. Dues for full membership are \$20.00 yearly. Subscription to the newsletter *Sprue Confessions* is \$15 yearly. For more information on meeting times and location, call Milton Bell at (512) 454-2395. The views expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors. The Austin Scale Modelers Society does not endorse the contents of any article.

March Minutes

Visitors

We had two visitors at the meeting. Matt Wablor, who models in both aircraft and armor, (but I made no indication of what scale) and Jeff Barringer who models a bit of everything and who hosts kithobbyist.com.

Old Business

The first item discussed was on how we need to proceed in producing our own awards for the upcoming show. We need to locate a Silk Screener for the clear acrylic/plastic pieces of the awards and decide what types of wood and finishes would be best for this application. We also need a source for the laser engraving of the names/sponsors/category.

Also concerning the Contest were two other items. There will be a Make and Take program this year. It was determined that a contact with IPMN was needed to help coordinate this effort. The other item is AMC. It would seem that their participation has yet to be determined. This situation has come about by their lack of involvement to this point and it doesn't look as though it will get any better. It was generally agreed that we as a club would not go to any effort to pursue their help and that we could judge this part of the contest by ourselves.

Milton then brought it to our attention that was a problem with the IPMS charter. It would seem that I had let my membership lapse. I had it in my head that somehow the club would be aware of the ending of my membership and would take care of it for me without my input. It has now done that and I would like to express a sincere apology to the club for the lapse.

Treasure Report

At the meeting Dave Orloff reported that we had \$2661.75 in Checking Account and \$363.22 in the Savings Account.

New Business

Milton announced that several publications have been donated to the club. These items seem to cover a broad spectrum of titles and interest and he was wondering what would be the best way to use them. It was moved and seconded that we would save this for our club auction to help raise money for the Contest expenses.

Tim Keily then made a point that I am glad that I get to put into writing. His point was that during the program part of the evening, those people not interested in the presentation have, in the past, been disruptive and distracting from the event that others wish to hear. Upon his statement of this there was quite a bit of agreement on this subject. It would seem that during the program portion of the meeting, we are about the only ones left in the restaurant and those members not interested in the

presentation could move to another area to avoid interrupting the proceedings.

Tim Vogt then raised the question/issue of our logo. He feels that the logo gives the impression of ASMS being an aviation club only. He asked if we might want to change our logo to reflect more of the diversity of the club. Would this be an all-inclusive logo or separate logos that would reflect other themes of modeling. (Sounds like a homework assignment to me. How about those of you with artistic talent coming up with some ideas?)

A suggestion was made to have event T-shirts for sale at the contest to aid in fund raising. I would imagine it would be like some of the ones seen at Nationals.

Congratulations went out to those who were winners in San Antonio.

Kenny Roady put out a call for people to volunteer for programs and to offer ideas for future programs.

Milton introduced a latecomer to the meeting. Jeff Barringer who is the man behind Kithobbyist.com, made a pitch to us about us having a place on his web listing. He discussed that what drives a web page is a constant feed of content. During the discussion we asked him to make us a test page to see what we thought of it and to give our opinions as to our participation.

David Ranney

Editorial Comment... Bruce Burden

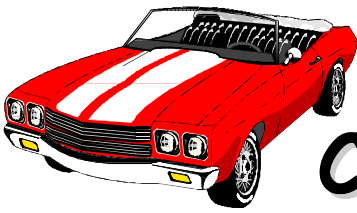
I listened with interest to the presentation by Jeff Barringer last month regarding his web services. Well, here are my thoughts:

I have looked at several of the web pages on kithobbyist.com, and all of the web pages have their points. Some, like the IPMS Kalamazoo web site, are very nice, indeed. Unfortunately, some of them suffer from the disease of too many web sites: a nice layout, but far too little content. And that is my concern for the ASMS web site, where ever it is hosted, and whomever the webmaster happens to be:

The web site will only be as good as the material contributed to it. In the six or so months I have had my version of the ASMS site up and running, I have received zero (0) input from you, the members of the club, regarding features you like/dislike or would like to see on the web site. Perhaps in stating my desire to keep the web site simple, yet have some useful content (i.e., I want a life separate from the web site!), I sent the wrong message. So, let me say this:

I welcome and encourage any comments/suggestions/submissions/etc. regarding the ASMS web site.

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CAR CORNER

by Skip Perrine

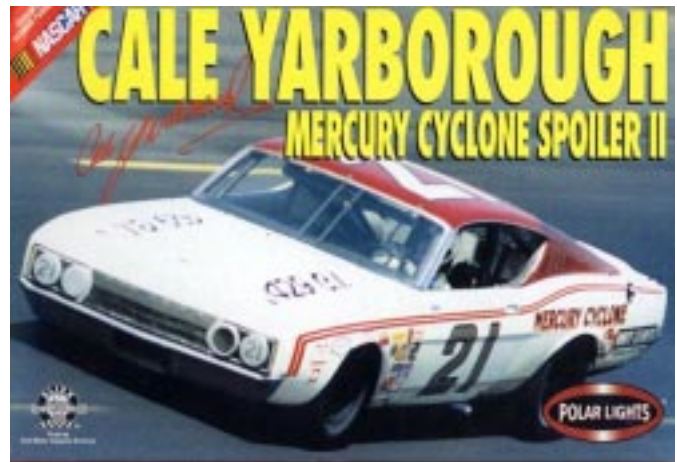
Car Corner for April is going to look back at two of my favorites; the 1940 Ford Coupe and the Tudor Sedan. You will recall I had them at the last meeting. I am now doing era customs and I just finished a '49 Ford Custom with Crestliner trim and it was entered in the Houston IPMS show on March 24th.

This is a kind of miracle work from yours truly. Several months ago my doctor told me I might as well give up building because my nerves were winning the war and there was nothing he could do, so I set out to disprove him, and more importantly prove to myself that I hadn't lost the touch. That '49 Ford was not only my first completed model in about a year, but it's a tribute to a modeler's determination, but above all, it was FUN to do.



So, on to our kit reviews. These are in many ways AMT's flagship kits. They were among the first kits to come out back in the early '60s so detail was at a minimum, but they were true 3-n-1 kits, and could be built one of three ways, stock, custom and drag. The neat thing about these old kits is they came with more than enough parts to build anything you wanted to, and the instructions even had customizing "hints." Both of these kits were molded in white and clear with black vinyl tires and chrome parts. The engines were a Cadillac V-8 and a Ford Flathead V-8. The interiors were basic, and consisted of usually one 2-piece seat (bench seat variety), a dashboard, steering column and wheel, gear shift and seat belts. Some of the custom goodies included, "dummy spotlights," fender skirts, "nerf bars" (instead of bulky bumpers), outside mirrors, antennas, engine dress-up items; ie, valve covers, blower drives, air cleaner, carburetors, mag wheels or Moon hubcaps, there are two grills in the kit, so you can build either a '39 or '40 out of the Tudor but the coupe can only be built as a '40.

Now on to my new stuff I got from Polar Lights. First up is the Cale Yarborough Mercury Cyclone Spoiler! It's molded in white, clear and chrome, and the body was separately packaged



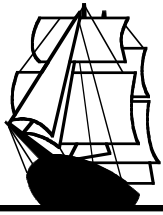
within the box. This prevents what used to happen to kits many years ago when tires used to melt to the bodies when the kits got too hot, and the clear parts got tire and decal smudges. Now thanks to their packaging decals separately and tires being bagged in separate bags, we don't have that problem. The finished model is a replica of the Wood Brothers' Mercury Cyclone Spoiler II. Its record of wins is impressive, its powerplant was the Boss 429 cubic-inch, 600-650 horsepower engine with wet-sump lubrication and hemispherical head.

The instruction sheet is very detailed, everything is broken down in detail, it is suggested that you read and study the instructions before beginning to assemble the kit. This is a skill level 3, it says to "Take Your Time—Work Carefully." I can emphasize this, as it looks to be a difficult kit to build. It should make a nice addition to any collection. This kit is exceptional, and the engine assembly instruction part is worthy of your attention (I will have this kit at the meeting in April for your inspection) You have two engine options—you can build a 429 or 427, and, as you will see, it is a blown-apart drawing, it leaves nothing to chance. I count 26 pieces to just the engine. Decal placement is also well represented, as depicted by the drawing of the car.

Next is the Mustang Funny Car of Gas Ronda, sponsored by Russ Davis Ford, a very popular car in the NHRA in the late '60s. He selected a Logghe Stage II chassis with a 120" wheelbase for the Mach I body-style Funny Car, and mounted the SOHC (single overhead cam) engine only 52" ahead of the fully-chromed Ford rear end. This kit is done with the same attention to detail as the previous one. The immaculately detailed engine even has a drive belt for the supercharger and drive pulley. You can put one of two options on top of the supercharger, either the Hilborn style fuel injectors or the Enderle style. Again, the engine is a model in itself; a 28-piece assembly.

Oh wow, the chassis is one of those that you have to assemble completely, it is not a one-piece assembly. It consists of left and right main chassis rails, and three cross-members including the rear end assembly. Onto this goes the completed engine and the

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**BY THE
LATEST
PACKET. . .**

by George Lewis
TPMS 15401

Skywave #W35 1/700

IJN Chogei Submarine Tender

88 parts in light gray plastic MSRP \$39.95



The Chogei and Jingei were put into service in the mid 1920s. They were designed to be both flagships to submarine squadrons as well as “motherships” to nine submarines each. The Japanese strategy for submarine deployment was as long-range scouts for the battlefleet. To this end the tenders were well armed for forward deployment where enemy action was possible. The tenders carried a seaplane for reconning suitable advance bases and anchorages. The Chogei survived the war and was used afterward as a repatriate ship; she was broken up for scrap; soon after.

This kit deviates from the usual Skywave practice of one-piece hulls in that hers is in two halves and all the portholes and strakes are there. Put your drill back. A nice looking kit and there are several aftermarket sets available. Excellent diorama possibilities with the increasing number of Japanese submarines on the shelf. The silhouette of raised superstructure, extended forecastle, two funnels reminds me of the numerous small passenger ships built between the wars, a not too difficult conversion for those who are interested in merchant ships. I recommend this kit.

Lindberg #70884 1/300

USS Nautilus

26 parts in black and clear plastic, MSRP \$10.65

The USS Nautilus was the world’s first nuclear powered submarine. Many kits have been made of her and they are all inaccurate, being based on an artist’s painting. Revell was the first to get a plastic Nautilus on the shelf and it is the worst as far as accuracy goes, but I’ve seen the Tom Foreman painting and I can see where Revell messed up. Lindberg’s is smaller and more accurate as the hull goes. The sail has the same inaccurate shape as the others being tapered in profile when it should be straight.

Lindberg also added a clear conning station at the top of the sail, a

Regulus II missile forward and an unfathomable deck gun aft (looks like a miniature California railway cannon to me). The box shows the model in gray plastic; mine is in black. When first commissioned she carried the three-tone gray and black scheme. Later she was overall indigo blue—looks black at a distance. The decals are useless, being white with red edges! I don’t think so. Get small Block Gothic numbers from the nice folks at Champ Railroad Decals. But this kit is OLD! So old, I never had it as a child. So, don’t try to correct anything; just build it and have fun.

But if you must fix it, get Norman Polmar’s *US Submarines Since 1945, a Design History* by the Naval Institute Press. I recommend the kit for its *fun* value.

Lindberg #70885 1/240 Full Hull

USS Gato

32 parts in black plastic MSRP \$10.65

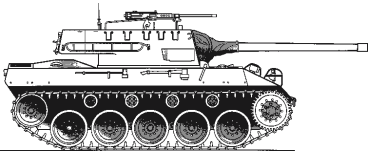
I remember as a child seeing this kit, either Lindberg’s or Varney’s box sitting on a bookshelf in the manager’s office of the McKeesport YMCA. How I ached to acquire it, but I never did—until now. Like the USS Nautilus, this is a very old kit, not close to today’s standards but still a very fun model. At \$10 one can acquire several and build the Gato in three different sail configurations and color schemes. No suitable brass rails but you need only stretch some sprue for the rails on the cigarette decks. If so inclined to modify your sub, I recommend any of the US sub books around such as *Submarine Operations of WWII*, US Naval Institute Press, *US Subs in Action*, Squadron Press, etc. As above, toss the decals and replace them with railroad Block Gothic. I recommend this kit.

Rumors...

Revell US announced that it will issue a 1/72 scale German Schnellboot, or E-Boat, with the armored conning tower. Airfix said the same thing several years ago and reissued the same old early pilot house version. Anyway, the picture in the catalog shows the late war version.

Commanders Models said to me that a future release will be the USS Utah as commissioned, in 1/350 resin. Although reclassified as a gunnery training/target ship by the 1922 Washington Naval treaty, many of us consider her the 9th battleship at Pearl Harbor (good ID contest question) and a Texas. This is good news as Ted Paris puts out a quality kit and with the demise of Viking Models there has been no Texas on the market.

Mike West of Lone Star Models has some exciting news for ACW fans, a USS Roanoke, a new Ironsides, a new navy Monitor. After the Battle of Hampton Roads, the US Navy took the USS Roanoke, sister to the Merrimac, and converted her into a three-turreted ironclad. If Mike gets her out in time, you could build her for the local contest “Flops” category as she was not strong enough to carry her armor and turrets, strained her heel, and spent the war at the New York Navy Yard.



The Armor Column

[Since the local armor guys are getting busy for their AMPS Regional, this month's Armor Column comes to you courtesy of the IPMS Seattle Chapter News.]

Comparison Review: 1/35th Scale Tamiya and Italeri Leopard 2 A5 Main Battle Tanks

by Terry Ashley, IPMS Perth Military Modelers Society

The release of the Leopard 2 A5 by Tamiya so soon after the same subject from Italeri leads to the inevitable comparison between the two. This is even more prudent because the kits reflect the state of the art of both companies at this time.

The Italeri kit has more parts, at 270, compared to Tamiya's 240. The Italeri kit also has the option of the standard 120mm Rheinmetall L/44 Smooth Bore cannon or the new longer caliber L/55 gun, as well as the tall commander's hatch tunnel for deep wading. The Italeri kit is half the price of the Tamiya kit. Unfortunately, that's where the good news for Italeri ends. It's all downhill from here.

To see if this price difference is worth it, let's have a look at both kits, part by part. A direct comparison of the parts reveals the surface detail on the Tamiya kit to be far superior to the Italeri offering. The rendering of the surface texture and small details such as bolt heads and other fine detail on the Tamiya kit is light years ahead of the Italeri Leopard.

Lower Hull and Suspension:

Both kits have separate suspension arms, shock absorbers and idler wheels. Again the detail on the Tamiya parts is far superior (a comment that is going to become quite common during this review). The bolt head detail on the Italeri road wheels borders on the crude. Some of the extra parts in the Italeri are here with separate wheel hubs on the road wheels and return rollers. Even this doesn't do anything to improve the detail. The Italeri drive sprockets have some impressive sinkholes in the center as do the suspension arms. Tamiya also includes a tool to aid in aligning the suspension arms, a real bonus that makes fitting them a breeze.

The Upper Hull:

Both kits have the upper hull as a single large part, with the surface detail rendering and details much finer on the Tamiya part. The Tamiya hull also has the engine fan grills as separate parts while they are integral on the Italeri part. The big difference

here is the driver's hatch. It is molded closed on the Italeri hull, while the Tamiya hull has the hatch separate and can be assembled so it slides open and closed like the real Leopard 2.

At the risk of being repetitive, the detail on the Tamiya turret is again far superior to the Italeri item. The two forward side armored panels on the turret are designed to swing outward on the Tamiya turret, while they are molded in the closed position on the Italeri turret. Other refinements on the Tamiya turret include open periscopes and main sight with clear parts inserted for the lenses as opposed to solid moldings on the Italeri turret. The turrets are laid out differently in the two kits. The Italeri has the forward panels molded with the turret top, with separate pieces added to the bottom part. Tamiya does it just the opposite: this is to allow for the operating side panels as mentioned above.

All remaining details such as the smoke generators, hatches, Mg3 machine gun, the side skirts and all other small parts are again far superior on the Tamiya kit. A commander figure is also included with the Tamiya kit. The method used to mold the side hull details is also indicative of the state-of-the-art of each company. Tamiya includes these details as part of the lower hull molding with no loss of detail. Italeri includes them as part of the side skirt parts. Even so, the detail on the Italeri parts is not as crisp as those on the Tamiya item.

Tracks:

The Tamiya tracks are truly state of the art moldings. They are continuous length track in a soft flexible material that has exceptional detail on both sides. There is daylight between each track shoe and the end connectors. Center guides have detail bordering on that which you will find on individual link track. The Italeri track on the other hand is in four equal length segments in a harder, less flexible material. There are some prominent pin marks on the inside of every shoe, and the detail is not as refined as the Tamiya tracks.

Kit Markings:

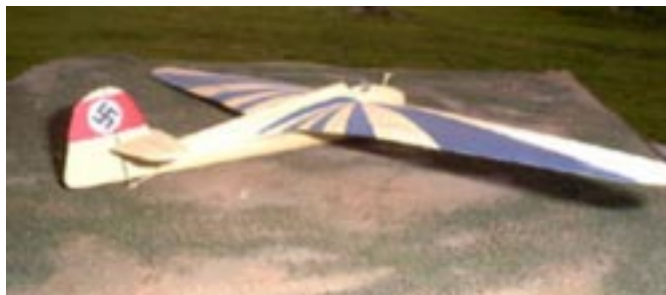
The Italeri kit has markings for two Leopards, one German and one Dutch Army vehicle. The Tamiya kit has markings for seven German Army Leopards, including one serving in the KFOR forces in Kosovo. Also included with the Tamiya kit is a small printed card with six Division Plates as fitted to the rear of the turret.

Conclusion:

To answer the question: Is the Tamiya kit worth double the price of the Italeri offering? In my opinion, it's a definite **Yes**; the Tamiya kit is vastly superior in every regard and really shows the gulf between Tamiya and the others in today's kit production. The only reason to consider buying the Italeri kit would have to be economic. If your budget can take the extra price and you want the best Leopard 2 A5 going, then it has to be the Tamiya kit.

1/48 DFS Habicht, Resin

by Floyd Werner



Here is a little model of the DFS Habicht in 1/48th scale. It is manufactured by a Czech firm whose name I can't remember.

The kit consists of about eight parts including a clear canopy. The instructions are just a copy of an article in *Flugzeug*. No construction help is given and none of the parts are identified. Parts are molded in a dark green fragile resin which includes two wings, two fuselage halves, a cockpit enclosure, a one-piece horizontal tail, and two parts that I couldn't identify (so they didn't get used) plus the clear canopy. No decals and no painting instructions are provided.

Construction was straightforward except for the following things. The fuselage was badly warped and had to be straightened with hot water and the bottom of a pan. The halves were joined with superglue and epoxy.

The cockpit was scratch built using Evergreen plastic and Waldron instrument and bezels. I had to build the fuselage first and then insert the cockpit. The only part that had to be put in first was the instrument panel because I couldn't get to it later. Under the cockpit floor I put putty to provide some stability to the plastic. The rudder pedals didn't exist because there was just a rudder bar.

When it came time to do the tail it required some ingenuity to get the stabs straight. I thought about how to keep the fuselage and tail perpendicular because its fit was terrible. The gap was too big to use superglue and let it set. I came up with the idea of using modeling clay to anchor the fuselage and level the tail. Just a small drop of superglue to tack it in place and the gap was filled with two-part epoxy. If done properly the amount of filling or sanding is kept to a minimum. To finish the tail I needed to install the tail supports like the 109E had. This was done with airfoil shaped styrene.

The clay and epoxy worked so well that I did it for the wings too. They had huge gaps, almost 1/4 inch and I drilled holes and inserted wire for strength. This step was important because the kit has some exquisite fabric detail molded on the wings and I didn't want to lose it. I ensured the bottom was mated perfectly and then filled it in with epoxy.

The skid tube was built with some piano wire for the vertical part and some plastic supports to finish it off.

The whole aircraft was washed and then primed with Floquil Primer. After fixing any problems that I found I painted the tail red for the swastika part. After masking it off I painted the whole kit Polly-S RLM 05 Cream. It was beautiful, but still required a couple of coats to cover completely. After it was dried it looked good but needed something. A quick look at the provided article showed the answer. There was one aircraft that

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How I Started, and Stopped, and Started, etc... Modeling

By Dave Orloff

Growing up in a household dominated by aviation, and longingly gazing at the Aurora and Hawk _" models upon the highest shelf, I was perhaps destined (doomed?) to become a modeler. Dad was an avid pilot and modeler, and my earliest memories of him are the nights he crouched over the kitchen table with the latest project, usually a Fokker or DeHavilland, occasionally a "modern" type like a Stearman. Pop fervently believed that the finest machines known to man were products of flying's first fifty years or so, and saw jets as more of an annoyance... sorry Bondo!

At first, he'd build one for me every once in a while, and I'd fly it to destruction in short order. In hindsight, the man had more patience than I will EVER possess. Eventually I tried it myself, and learned a valuable lesson: it's not as much fun to bust 'em if you built 'em YOURSELF. The bug bit hard, and my total income from birthdays, allowance, and even the occasional visits from well-heeled relations funneled towards my increasing private Air Force. When the shelves filled, dogfights spread across the ceiling of my room.

Alas, the arrival of my late teens, along with a sudden discovery of girls and the like, pushed modeling off to the side. I still built the odd project, as I could get credit in my Air Force Jr ROTC class, but the collection for the most part simply gathered dust. By the time I graduated college, I'd even given away my unbuilt (Yeah, I know...)

I can't really pinpoint all the times since I started up again only to fizzle out, but about eight years ago I was freshly divorced, with a sudden surplus of free time, and headed back to the hobby shop. This time in, I got serious about it, tools, airbrush, even joining a couple of clubs. The incredible increase in available subjects and aftermarket accessories was a pleasant surprise. The only limit on the hobby now seems to be time to build, but... I'm managing.

To me the biggest attraction of our hobby is the ability to hold in hand a miniature piece of history, in color and 3D. And there is no finer compliment for me than to be told by a pilot of a particular original that I "got it right" !

Sud Aviation Vautour IIN

1/48 Hi-Tech Kit HT 007 \$42.00

Obtained from Squadron Mail Order

In-the-box review by "Bondo Phil" Brandt, IPMS 14091



The twin-engined Sud Aviation Vautour, an esoteric-but-little-produced (approximately seventy) French aircraft of the Fifties, rose to distinction dressed in Israeli camouflage in the 1967 Six-Day War. The airframe is unusual in that its main landing gear is of bicycle configuration, as in the B-47, XB-51, B-52, Yak-25/28 and U-2. Smaller outrigger landing struts retract into the side of each engine nacelle.

Israel bought some twenty-eight, including seven of the IIN nightfighter version, with deliveries starting in 1957. When the Six-Day War started, the Vautour IINs were quickly switched to the surface attack role.

This is a nice limited production kit! Hi-Tech, unlike its fellow French model producer, Mach 2, is definitely picking up the quality pace. I've not seen the older, Hi-Tech Dassault Ouragon, but it's been roundly criticized by a well-known West Coast builder and reviewer. I do have the Mystere IV, and IMO it's a decent, limited production kit also.

The Vautour is mostly low pressure injection plastic, with extensive resin, PE and white metal detailing. Plastic molding is generally very good, with some sandable surface roughness, mostly on the fuselage top. Engraving is sharp, a tad heavier than Tamiyagawa. The large fuselage is split down the center, as are the engine nacelles. The wings are a simple butt-joint with the fuselage, that is, no real load-bearing structural joint, and the builder may need to fabricate a crude spar. Separate speedbrakes are provided, but you'll have to cut out the engraved outline on the fuselage, backup the resulting "hole" and add fabricated hydraulic cylinders and simple associated piping. Some flash is present on many parts, but nothing out of the ordinary and easily removable—did I mention that this is a kit for builders rather than assemblers? In an enclosed CYA statement, Philippe Jourdan, the Hi-Tech principal, levels with the consumer, making no bones that this kit is not meant to run with the "Big Dogs," but will, with reasonable effort, result in an "original and accurate" model; Bondo concurs.

Resin details are numerous and excellent, just a notch or two below Black Box. Included are: a large tandem cockpit tub with

well-detailed walls and consoles; a plug-in instrument panel/coaming, ejection seats; intakes and exhausts; flattened, bulged wheels; both landing gear wells (the details here are well above other limited production kits and compare favorably with Tamiyagawa/Aires); and jet engine sections, seen when the outrigger gear doors are open. My kit did arrive with one bit of resin breakage, one of the delicate exhaust housing rings; I'll build a new one out of .005" plastic.

To the resin is added PE instrument panels (no film instruments, though), seat pans, seat harnesses, console details, rudder pedals, wheel hub trim, etc. Multipiece gear struts are also well-detailed, but will need the normal flash cleanup. The single vacuform canopy—every such kit oughta include a spare—could be clearer and more defect-free, but it's usable.

The decal sheet features French national and unit markings and lotsa stencils, all to be placed over a natural aluminum finish. The decals are admirably thin, but registration of the yellow roundel ring—the blue center is a separate piece—is very slightly off (but acceptable, IMO). All of which matters little to moi, since I'm going to do the blue/brown/light gray Israeli scheme which evolved from the NMF finish present when the birds were initially received from France.

I'm very pleased with Hi-Tech's obvious efforts to produce a competitive kit of an interesting subject. This is what Mach 2 should be.

Phil

Revell of Germany's 1/48 Eurofighter "TYPHOON"

An in-the-box review
by Jarrod Cunningham

The Eurofighter Typhoon is another result of the combined efforts by several European countries to develop the next generation of air superiority fighter aircraft. I have to admit this is one of my current favorites. In this decade of "stealth" type designs, and lower radar cross section planning I believe that the artistic license has been abandoned and has given way to "weird geometrical shapes" that happen to fly. This aircraft in my opinion (second only to the French Rafale) proves that an aircraft can still be "sexy" and get the job done as well. The current plans call for about 620 examples to be built for the parent countries. This number could, and probably will increase with foreign orders as older generation fighters are replaced. Suffice to say, this one will be around for a while I think.

Revell brings to the table what appears to be a modified Italeri mold of the earlier EFA kit, which is the "Typhoon" evaluation aircraft currently, will most likely be what the two seat version looks like in production. Bondo's evaluation of this kit wasn't too pleasing, so I didn't buy it.

The review kit is a little better, but not by much. What comes in the box is four sprues of gray and one clear plastic of the softer



variety. The overall surface appears moderately smooth but has minor graininess in spots. The panel lines are recessed but look a little over done for my taste. They would best be described a “moderate”, they aren’t Airfix trenching, but they aren’t the petite lines seen on the Rafale kit by the same manufacturer. My guess is the Italeri mold had these lines this deep so they “went with it”. It’s a shame, but nothing a few coats of primer won’t cure. As far as the detail accuracy goes it’s hard to say. They do have various panels and access doors represented, but if they are correct, I couldn’t tell you. The aircraft really hasn’t been released to production yet, so documentation is fairly limited. But this will change and there may be some rescribing panels in somebody’s future. But for now, I think you’re safe. In typical Italeri fashion there is minimal cockpit detail.

The kit has a tub and an ejection seat, but all radio and instrument faces are decals. The ejection seat is poor in detail and really not worth the effort to “dress her up.” This is a major “black mark” for me. In 48th scale, cockpits (at least to me) are the cornerstone of a good kit. The scale is big enough that you can actually see it, so there is no excuse why manufactures should leave it so devoid of details. I plan on substituting a Monogram F-18A/C cockpit in its place. The F-18 is new enough so that with a few changes it will look Ok. As far as the Ejection seat goes, I will replace it with an aftermarket one. I believe that it is a Martin Baker seat MK.10. That’s what I’m going to throw in mine. In any event, I would not recommend using the kit pieces. They just aren’t that good.

The wheel well detail level is minimal as well. I am not really concerned with what is in there, the casting and how it is represented is poorly done. This is not a major obstacle; because there isn’t much in there. It’s easy to add detail with wire. The kit comes with a couple of options, one being an open or closed refueling probe (drogue) extension; the other being a speed brake open or closed. The detail levels on both of these bays is basic, the speed brake suffers from the same lack of detail as the wheel wells. These things aren’t insurmountable, just disheartening. A creative license will be needed to bring these areas to life. The landing gear is kind of basic, but I’m not quite sure what it really looks like anyway. The moldings are fair, and they seem to be proportionate to the airframe. The wheels themselves are pretty simple—I may just rob some more out of that ‘ol F-18 kit that will be cockpitless.

The main disappointment, other than the cockpit, is the massive boxlike intakes. These are fashioned from four pieces that comprise “an intake to oblivion.” There is no attempt to show the inlet blades of the engine (but on that note, Hasegawa’s F-16 does the same thing). I think that once the kit is assembled this will be a major problem. I just may have to employ some kind of trickery to either hide or build some inlets.

The kit comes with fair examples of external stores. These are AIM-9L and AIM-120, and two external tanks. The modeler is given the option to put six AIM-120’s or four 120’s with two AIM-9’s on two different loadouts. The 120’s are loaded in four recessed bays just like F-4 sparrow bays. The additional 120’s can be loaded on a wing hardpoint, or the AIM-9 can be used there instead (it’s the same pylon). These stores are usable, and will look acceptable when hung on the wings.

Now on to the good stuff, the kit’s decals. For all that Revell hasn’t done with this kit they did do a very nice job with the decals. All appear in register and are thin. They have very nice color quality (I wish that they would share their secret with Revell domestic). The kit comes with three different versions to choose markings for two prototypes and one “maybe” squadron aircraft. The prototypes come in English or German flavors, and the “maybe” aircraft is German from JG 73 squadron. All schemes appear attractive enough, so it all depends on the builder’s personal choice.

Overall impression—is this a good kit? From a technical standpoint, no. From a builder standpoint, maybe. With a few changes here or there this could be really nice. I would recommend it to somebody who isn’t afraid of a little kit bashing and scratch-building to get some things done. This would be a good one also to try some new techniques on. It would be a good candidate if you have never “plumbed up a bay” since there’s not much to get in your way. Build it? Why not? I’m going to build mine!

Jarrold



What? Floyd built this? But it’s not an Me 109. Full story later in this issue.

(Car Corner continued)

interior tub. Then the rest of the chassis is assembled and the tires and wheels are attached. And finally the 15-piece body is attached and the decals are applied per the illustrations included on the last page. It says to check the box front for decal placement.

And last but not least in the car department is the Dodge Supercharger by Polar Lights. Mr. Norm's Grand Spaulding Dodge 1969 Super Charger has a celebrated history. The virgin voyage of the car took place during the Coca Cola Cavalcade of Funny Cars Championship. This replica has the same attention to detail as its predecessors. The engine has the same options as the Mustang F/C, with the exception of the engine being a Chrysler 426 Hemi, instead of a Ford. So the same holds true for the super Charger as did the Mustang, the engine is a 28-piece assembly, the chassis is identical to the 'Stang. In fact the entire car except for the engine and body is the same kit.

Next we have from the movie classic, "Forbidden Planet" Robby the Robot, molded in chrome metalized parts, and clear. Assembly begins with Robby's head, consisting of a main gyro stabilizer, followed by the arms, the body, then the legs as the final assembly. It's for ages eight to adult, so it is not rated as to what skill level it is. As with all PL kits, it is very well described and the instructions are self explanatory, and from what I can determine, it looks to be fun.

And lastly we have the Dick Tracy Space Coupe by PL. This is sort of a sci-fi kind of subject and the only reason I am even writing about it, is because PL was good enough to send it to me. It's molded in an off-white kind of color, comes with four figures, and it appears to be a very easy kit to assemble, probably can be done in a matter of hours. There are three steps to it. First assemble the bottom and top hull, rear and front air intake, nose cone and flasher light. Then assemble "thrusters" and attach to "hull," and then, place the completed space coupe on stand and apply your POLICE decals and figures to the diorama base. It's a very basic kit. Well, that's it for April.

Skip "Skipster" Perrine

(Editorial Comment continued)

Unfortunately, I am afraid that it isn't a case of ASMS members not feeling welcome to provide input to the web site, but rather, we are comfortable with the way things are going in general, and just haven't bothered to contribute. This seems to be supported by our newsletter editor asking (begging?) for material.

So, okay, back to Jeff Barringer and his offer to host a web site. Please note that Jeff only offered to host the web site, and create the web pages as needed. That is a very generous offer, considering the time I spent on the contest pages, but it still doesn't help with respect to generating content. Now, a web site has some advantages over the newsletter. We can have a photo gallery of models. In fact, that is probably the easiest thing to add to a web site. Unfortunately, that doesn't help if we wish to use the web site to promote the club and our day to day (okay, month-to-month!) activities.

Despite all of the work required (and, make no mistake about it, it will be required after the show this year) to generate the contest results pages, I would prefer to continue being the ASMS webmaster, simply because I feel it needs to be done, and enhances the image of the club. The most difficult part of the web site (well, okay, not difficult, but very tedious and very time consuming!) is posting the contest results. It is a task that is easier if the webmaster knows what the winning entries are, has a digital camera and can photograph the winning entries as the results come in. Oh, and won't blab what the winning entries are! :-). Otherwise, matching a collection of photos to the entries can be like working on a puzzle where the pieces of two or three puzzles are all in the same box. (And, no, I haven't forgotten Andrew's ASMS web site, but it hasn't changed since it was created. Perhaps it is time to declare the site dead, and disband it?)

What I want to absolutely avoid is the ASMS web site looking like the IPMS Gateway-St. Louis web site. That site hasn't been updated since March of 2000. Ouch! Collectively, the members of ASMS look at more web pages per month than I do (ummm, I hope you do, anyway!) If you see something that looks interesting, point it out to me (or whomever the webmaster is), and explain what you like about it.

One final thing regarding posting the newsletter on the web site. I think a better idea would be for club members to indicate whether they prefer to receive a hard copy or an e-mail copy when they pay their dues. The email format would be in just one (1) format, probably MicroSoft Word (ugh!), simply because Word is almost universal on PC's. The newsletter editor then can keep a mailing list, and mail out the email copies the same day the newsletter diskette is sent to the printer. The club saves on postage, there is no need to post a current newsletter to a web site.

[Ed. Note. I use a G4 Mac and do not have MS Word. The newsletter is done in PageMaker 6, a "vastly superior alternative" to MS Word. I have tried to send the NL as email with very limited success. Files are very large and formatting is often lost. Probably a better way would be to send it as a PDF document (5mb for March), provided members have Acrobat Reader. And I don't send a disc to the printer; they get a hard, clean copy because they can't read Mac files. And no, I have no intention of changing. :)]

(Habicht continued)

had dark color sunburst pattern applied to the top of the wings. Actually I'm not sure if it was on the bottom, so I elected not to put it on. Prove me wrong. I thought that black was too dark for the tonal qualities of the photograph so I opted for a dark blue, RLM Floyd likes the way it looks. It was masked with Tamiya masking tape in 15-degree arcs. Each arc was painted separately to ensure they were symmetrical between wings and that the points were crisp. The landing skid was painted a wood color and stroked from front to back to simulate a wood grain like the cockpit floor.

A couple of coats of Future sealed the paint job and prepared the kit for the decals. I used some Aeromaster decals for the He-51. The white and the swastika looked great. *(continued next page)*

(Habicht continued)

I highlighted the control surfaces with a little dark gray india ink and sealed that with Polly-S Flat. Once everything was dried a quick dry brush of white brought out the great fabric detail. Sealed one last time with Flat. Removing the vacu-formed canopy and dipping it in Future cleared up most of the imperfections. I attached the canopy with Elmer's White Glue and the model was done.

Now came the real fun part, entering it in some shows. The first show was the Region VI contest where I entered it in the civil category as it depicts a pre-war airplane. I thought that this would raise some eyebrows to have a swastika and flat colored airplane with the glossy airliners. Well, I got the results that I expected as arguments ensued on the Internet after the Nazi glider won 1st place. It got modelers talking and I really like that.

It was a fun kit and would recommend it to anyone who can find it. It is different than the drab colors of tactical aircraft and definitely adds some color relief in my display case.

Floyd

Modeling on the 'Net

My name is Jeff Barringer and I am a long-time modeler (Bob King has sold me models for over 20 years), part-time historian, and full time web guru for my own small dot com business here in Austin.

I have been a member of the high tech business community here in Austin for the last 15 years and surfing and working on the web since 1994. I could write this column every month for the next 20 years and barely scratch the surface of all the good modelers content available on the web, so what I will try to do is present you with a selection of my favorite web sites. I have an interest in virtually every modeling subject so I will try to give you a taste from a variety of topics and will cover at least one commercial, one content, and club web site each month.

Content Site:

AFV News - <http://www.activevr.com/afv/>

For armor aficionados, one of the best places on the internet to start is AFV News, George Bradfords excellent site. Visited by thousands of people every day, AFV News is a very feature rich site for anyone starting an armor research project. I was able to locate paint and marking information and links for a Jagdtiger build that's on my workbench. The site loads very fast, is well laid out, and has a broad selection of content both on and off site. I especially like the Armor Camouflage & Markings section, which provides a nice selection of color schemes for AFVs, from WWII Italian to modern South African vehicles.

Commercial Site:

Aeromaster - <http://www.aeromaster.com/>

I know we are all disappointed with the discontinuation of the Aeromaster paint line, but I sure am glad they still have decals. Aeromaster has an incredible mass of color and marking

information available in their searchable decal database. While some of the decal spec sheets are in 256 gray scale, most are in full color. With this much information available online free, it has almost replaced the color plates in Osprey's book series as a required purchase... almost. (Still too tough to read the 19-inch monitor in bed!)

Club Site:

IPMS Ticino Switzerland - <http://www.kithobbyist.com/IPMSTicino/>

The AMT, Associazione Modellisti Ticinesi, AMT was founded in 1992 as a section of IPMS Switzerland by a small group of modeling enthusiasts in the region of Switzerland that borders Italy. Some of the models displayed on site include an incredibly detailed 1/72 CAM Hurricane torn down for servicing on its catapult mount, and a 1/72 MS 406 with numerous access panels removed leaving the scratchbuilt interior tubing bracing and wiring exposed. Both of these were made by Nicolas Poncini, who displays several other works on the site, and who must be a watchmaker by trade. Other features worth checking out are the Swiss Aviation, Airshow, and Photofiles section for a good cross section of photos of some of Europe's vintage aircraft.

Also check out...

The ASMS New Beta Test website at <http://www.kithobbyist.com/ASMS>. Please feel free to send me suggestions for features you want to see. Remember this isn't my web site, it's ASMS's, and that means it's YOURS, so help us make it one of your favorite sites!!!

You can contact Jeff Barringer at his model website <http://www.kithobbyist.com> or by sending an email to webmaster@kithobbyist.com

JB

Rat Fink Creator Roth Dead at 69

Ed "Big Daddy" Roth, whose crazy car creations and anti-hero Rat Fink character of the '50s and '60s defined the California hotrod culture, died on April 4 at his Manti, Utah, studio.

Many of Roth's custom car designs eventually became plastic model car kits such as the "Outlaw" roadster, bubble topped "Beatnik Bandit" or futuristic "Mysterion." He was a pioneer in the use of Fibreglas in custom car bodies. Roth created the Rat Fink character and others to help finance his car design work. Even at 69, Roth was still reported working on new designs that he hoped to tour in 2002.

Old Rumors and New Kits will return next month, plus special features by Ray Katzman and more modeler's bios. Thanks to all the faithful who contributed to this month's issue of Sprue Confessions.

Air Show Show Dates!

**Lone Star Flight Museum 11th Annual Showcase & Aircraft
Walkabout, Galveston, Texas, April 28, 29, 2001**

Georgetown Air Show, Georgetown Airport, May 4-5, 2001

Fayette County Air Festival, La Grange, Texas, May 11, 12, 2001

**Next Meeting:
Thursday, April 19**

