



SPRUE CONFESSIONS

Styrene Six

Jarrold Cunningham

Resin, photo-etch, tubing, armature wire, after-market decals; where does it all end? I guess a better question would be: "where did it all start?"

I find myself in this state of mind while working on my latest project. Its funny to me in a way, that what once was considered a "nicety" has become the norm. I guess that's just the way that it is these days. I'll forever be eating resin dust and combing the carpet for lost photo-etch.

There isn't a perfect kit out there by any means. Meaning, as long as kits are produced somebody will always find something that can be improved upon. It seems that as I have progressed in my modeling efforts, the desire to "improve" or "enhance" has grown exponentially. I wonder if that makes me a weirdo? I hope not. Is that what happens to us? I stand looking in my closet of stacked models and see hundreds if not thousands

of hours staring me in the face. For within each box lies some form of extra cheese, whether it be a resin cockpit, or a sheet of photo-etch or something of the like. Who in his or her right mind would do this to themselves? I know this all is pretty morbid to think about. But I know I can't be the only one who's ever asked themselves this question.

Why do we do it? What drives us to this? Why is it that some of us cannot simply walk into our hobby shop and walk out with just a kit? Why do we go back in a week or so pick up some of that "extra cheese" stuff? Why can't the kit be "good enough"? Frankly, I can't answer that one. Maybe it's seeing people strive to attain the "ultimate" in accuracy/realism that sparks us? Whatever it may be it has happened to others and me. The compulsion, if you will; to spend sometimes more than the value of the kit on "extra cheese" for that kit. The stuff, that in reality, won't be seen by most. The stuff that only the "penlight brigade" would notice. I still

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from the Editor...

It's almost time for another ASMS meeting. As usual, we'll be meeting at Luby's on North Loop at 7 pm Thursday. Greg Springer will talk about rigging biplanes, etc.

The days are rolling by now and before you know it, it's going to be August and our show will be in the final stages of preparation. Before that happens however, there are a couple of other shows you need to check out. The "biggee" of course is the IPMS/USA National Convention in Chicago. I know a lot of ASMS people will be going and I know they will have a great time.

The next big "local" show is the Squadron ScaleFest '01 which will be May 26, 27 in Mesquite. Since this show is sponsored by Squadron, you can expect an Open House at the Carrolton Headquarters of SMO. I can guarantee that will be fun and worth your time, although it can be expensive! (Kids in a candy store!)

If you plan to attend, and I really recommend this one, here are some phone numbers and

addresses for you. The Exhibit Hall at the Mesquite Rodeo Center is attached to a very nice Hampton Inn which will cost you \$59 for a single and \$69 for a double/triple/quad. For reservations, call the Hampton Inn at (972) 329-3100, ASAP.

Model registration begins at 9:00 am Saturday morning, May 26 and ends at 6:00 pm. Judging will be Saturday evening. If you want to judge, the host club usually supplies Pizza and soft drinks before judging commences. It should all be over by 10:30 pm. Viewing times on Sunday are from 10:00 am till 5 pm. The awards presentation begins at 3:00 pm.

This issue contains some very colorful photos courtesy of Dennis Price. Dennis is heading back home (England) for another round of picture taking at airshows.

For this NL, I had more material than I had room to print! I like that but some articles were a bit long. Remember, a page holds about 1000 words, MAX. If there are pictures, a 600 word piece is great. Just keep buildin' and writin'.

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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)

enjoy modeling as much as ever but still these thoughts creep into my mind from time to time.

On to lighter matters, it appears from the last meeting that the AMC guys are trying to make a genuine effort to help out with the show. I hope that this is the case. Both Kenny and I had the opportunity to speak to them at the meeting and it does give me a better feeling about things. Not to doubt their sincerity, but after last year's experience I am glad to see them contacting us now.

I hope Dave's presentation on pastels for weathering was helpful. I use pastels quite a bit myself in my modeling. I like their effect and I hope you all found that they aren't that tricky to use and master. I know that Kenny is actively working on presentations, so if you have an idea or request please hit him up on it.

I hope all of you will attend the Spring/Summer event. Mike has graciously once again, offered his place up for the club. I have attended every one since my affiliation with the club and they are always (at least in my eyes) a good time. Be sure and scrounge up some items for the auction, we can definitely use everyone's support.

Jarrold

ASMS Officers for 2001

Jarrold Cunningham, president, jhbmccunny@aol.com	292-3639
Kenny Roady, vice president, kar66@swbell.net	260-2907
David Ranney, secretary, dcrtx@aol.com	990-9699
Dave Orloff, treasurer, the.orloffs@worldnet.att.net	989-2795
Milton Bell, editor, mbell6@austin.rr.com	454-2395

Austin Model Show Coordinators

Tim Vogt	447-2668
Bruce Burden	250-9424
Web Site www.realtime.net/~brucegb	
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.

April Minutes

Visitors

We had three visitors at the meeting all from the Austin Model Car Club. They were Wade Strickel, President and Contest Coordinator of AMC, Michael Broussard, who serves as the Club Secretary, and Carl Roberts.

Old Business

Contest: The first item discussed was the choice of woods for the contest trophies. Tim Vogt reported that 9 1/2 board feet (bf) of material would be required to produce the 216 individual awards. This covers the 72 Categories each having 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners. Prices ranged from \$2.30 - \$18.95 per bf. Some of the lighter colored woods discussed were Ash, Canary, and Willow. Some dark woods were discussed but there was a concern how the laser lettering would finish out. It would seem that the likely outcome would be to spend \$300 for the wood. Another concern the contest faces, is the continuing saga of finding a screen printer. The club offered additional ideas to Bruce Burden on locating both traditional and nontraditional sources.

Ken Laronde reported that he would be mailing out the vendor letter on the first of May.

Tim Vogt had a "show and tell" for us concerning the logo. He presented to the club a design that featured a flowing Texas state banner in red, white, and blue. Tim again requested that we see what we could come up with to add to the selection.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Dave Orloff report that we had \$2657 and change. I missed how much was in savings.

New Business

Milton Bell asked of us our impression of the emailed newsletter. In my opinion it was up to Milton's excellent standards and now we can have it in color. This is of course available only to those who have email. Emailing would be a way that we could reduce some of our monthly expenses. Most cast their vote to receive it this way as opposed to a monthly postal mailing.

Ken Laronde motioned that he would be happy to bring books from the Friends of the Austin Public Library that would fit your general requirements. He would be able to do this but not any specific Title or Author. Ken is already doing this for me and for some others. Thanks, Ken.

It's decided! Mike Kachoris has volunteered once again to host for our summer picnic. It will be Saturday June 2nd in beautiful Mountain City. Mike has made some additions to the property and I look forward to Mike and Sally hosting this event.

Jeff Barringer was at the meeting talking about the website that he hopes to support/maintain for us. I have seen just a bit of it and like what I see. Of course I like what I saw on Bruce Burden's pages also. Maybe we can combine these two efforts, which will give us lots of options to choose from.

Toward the end of the meeting we took the opportunity of our visitors to raise concerns and receive some feedback from the members of the Austin Model Car Club. Wade Strickel informed us that the club did have a current IMPS Charter and they wanted to be participants in this years contest. AMC mentioned there was some money still owed to them for last years contest. They recommended the credit be applied to this years contest and any balance due be payable upon request. It was concluded that they would be added to the upcoming flyers and promotions. Tim and Bruce were to continue discussions with them to determine due dates and commitments for the final planning of the contest.

David C. Ranney

German Sub U-99 Revell Kit No. 85-5054-3800 Reissue

By Ray S. Katzaman



This Revell-Germany sub is fashioned after the U-99 Type VII B U-boat. After WWI, the allies imposed armament restrictions on Germany and one of them was NO subs. The memory of the German Wolfpacks still brought shivers to many in London. However, to work their way around the limitations, Germany had dummy plants set up in Holland, Finland and Spain. In early 1935, Germany repudiated the terms of the Versailles Treaty and their subs were launched as the first units of the reborn U-boat arm.

When the war finally broke out in 1939, Germany had a fleet of brand new subs. Germany had played with several types of subs, type I, II and the VII. This later one became Germany's main operational type.

Under the command of Lieutenant Otto Kretschmer, one of Germany's three U-boat Aces, U-99 acquired a very notorious name. The majority of 44 British ships were accredited to Lieutenant Kretschmer while in command of U-99. Called the
(continued on page 10)



CAR CORNER

by Skip Perrine

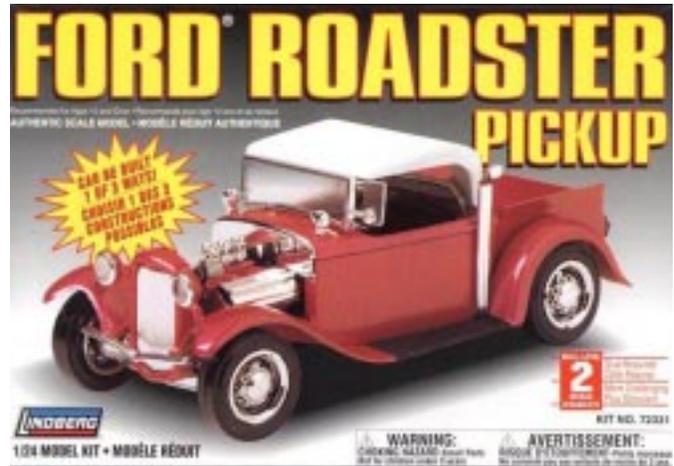
We have three reissues from Lindberg this time around. First is kit # 72331, the Ford Roadster Pickup. It's molded in white, clear and chrome with black vinyl tires. All three of these kits were formerly motorized, as you can see the area in the model where the motor went. They are 1/24th scale and skill level is 2, which requires glue and paint. It has no suspension and on a scale of 1-10 with 10 being the best I give it a 3.



Kit # 72332, is a 1910 Ford Model T in 1/16th scale. Now what threw me for a loop with this one was the box it came in was the same size as the 1/24th scale kit box! It's molded in white, clear and brass colored plastic. It can only be built stock. I made mine into a pickup with Plastruct and a lot of cardboard. Could be it's the old Cowland and Cowland issue which used to backfire and jump or could have been motorized. On a scale of 1-10 with 10 being best, I give it a 5



Kit# 72334 is a Model T pickup, very juvenile, molded in white, clear and chrome—the best part about this kit is the chrome—and it has no suspension to speak of and the interior is all molded into the body. The tires, which are plastic, leave a lot to be desired, I may try to use some other tires on mine to see if I can make it look better than the ones the box shows. I gave it a rating of 1.

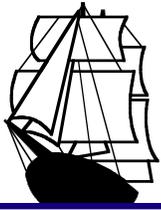


That's it this time around, unless you'd like a blast from the past, I am working on an original kit from the AMT stable, before ERTL was a thought in their minds. It is an oldie but a goodie, kit #02-349-149 —those last three digits being how much it cost; \$1.49. This kit was way ahead of its time back then, the date was about 1963, the kit was the '49 Mercury two door Club Coupe 3-in-1 customizing kit, it could be built one of three ways, stock, custom or competition. It stated that the trunk lid opens and the front wheels steered. It was a trophy series kit so it came with a trophy among other car show prizes. Back then you really got your money's worth, here's just a few of the "goodies" included in this kit.



You get a one-piece body, detailed chassis, bucket seats, front and rear roll pans, skirts, stock-custom grills, chrome "show accessories," Chrysler Ram Induction engine. In addition you also get the stock engine, and stock and custom hub caps, interior accessories and lots of chrome to shine your car up with. You open the box and this kit is packed, top to bottom it is nothing but plastic, no air at all. On the decal sheet you have custom "scalops" and competition numbers.

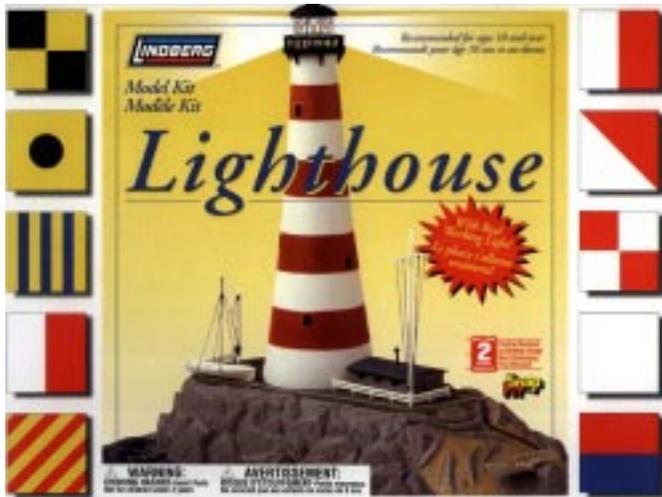
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**BY THE
LATEST
PACKET. . .**

by George Lewis
IPMS 15401

A light was spotted on the stormy horizon and identified as an approaching vessel. The Officer Of the Deck notified the captain and was told to contact the approaching vessel and have it identify itself and alter its course to starboard. Under the Rules of the Nautical Road when two vessels approach each other head on both alter course to their starboard and pass port to port. The "approaching" light radioed back for the other ship to identify itself and alter its course to starboard. The OOD relayed this to the captain. Greatly agitated, the ship's captain got on the radio and responded "This is the captain of the United States Ship Enterprise, a nuclear-powered aircraft carrier. You, as a merchant vessel, are required under the "Rules" to yield to us and alter your course." The light, now identified as not moving, came back with "This is the Bodie Island Light Station. Your call." With a meek "Roger," the Enterprise altered course.



Lindberg 70779 Lighthouse Diorama 36 parts in white and clear plastic, and lighting with battery box no scale listed MSRP \$13.25

This is another reissue of an old kit, so old I never had it as a child or it never caught my eye. I did slip and build a lot of Airfix and Revell 1/72 planes while in Junior High. The model is of a generic lighthouse, patterned after no light station in particular though the "rocky coast" base is reminiscent of New England. The tower and keeper's quarters are white plastic. The lens house is clear. There is a naked 1.5v bulb in there and no Fresnel lens to focus the beam, which was no doubt beyond molding technology of the 1950s. There is a simple derrick for hoisting out the station's boat. This can be better detailed and rigged.

Many keepers were married and had their families with them so

you may add a small flower or vegetable plot. The United States Bureau of Lighthouses was one of the few institutions that employed women on a footing equal to men, and there were a number of women Keepers on the rolls in the 1800s. Therefore, a woman standing on the platform would be as correct as a man. Decals are for four red horizontal stripes that will divide the tower into equal parts red and white. Each lighthouse on the coast was painted in a distinctive pattern to act as a day marker with Cape Hatteras' black and white "barber pole scheme" the most famous, and the sequence of the flashes identified it at night. I don't know what mariners would think of the Lindberg light as it does not rotate. Some enterprising modeler could fit a rotating device to the tower's innards...nah, too much like work. Build it and have fun.

There are a few real light stations that the model resembles. These are the Key West Light Station, Florida, lighted in 1825, the Bodie Island Light Station, North Carolina, lighted in 1872 (still in service but now unmanned and automated, as are all others), and the Charleston Light Station, Morris Island, South Carolina, lighted in 1885.

Reference: *America's Lighthouses; An Illustrated History.* Francis Ross Holland, Jr., Dover Press 1981. Other lighthouse models currently available are a German one by Kibri, (which I used to make my Point Bolivar Light Station diorama) and several small US type HO scale wood kits. There are quite a few paper models available. I recommend this kit.

WSN of China #2503 1/72 scale
JMSDF PT 815

406 parts in bluish gray and black plastic. Motorized with scale option.

AND

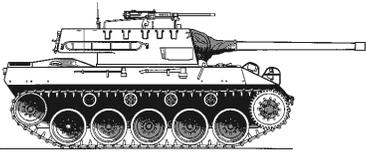
WSN #2504 1/72 scale
Vosper Fast Patrol Boat

289 parts in gray and black plastic. motorized with scale option. Both kits the MSRP varies with the importer, between \$17.95 to \$26.95.

Both of these kits are copies of the Tamiya models. In most cases the detail is the same, just a little "soft" but that can be fixed with fine sandpaper. Because both models are motorized, and the motors are already installed, there are switch holes to cover. A small piece of sheet plastic will fix that. Instructions are based on the Tamiya sheets and so are very good. Decals don't come with the kits. For reasons unknown WSN made peel-and-stick markings; these are useless. Check your spare decals for replacements.

The Vosper model is of the Royal Navy's "Brave" class MTB and follows the progression from the early WWII 70' boats through the postwar "Gay" and "Dark" classes. Only two "Brave" boats were built for the RN and a follow-on order for

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The Armor Column

M5A1 Stuart, Part II

by Don Jones

(OK, so it wasn't next month, I know it has been several months but now here is part two.)

Let's begin with the turret. I added all my weld seams as I described in part one. I then used brass wire for the lift rings. The kit rings always seem to be so thick. I then followed with hatch handles and grab rails for the TC and loader. The mantlet was textured to give a cast appearance; I used a very small dental burr and bounced it off the mantlet. Make sure you have a firm and solid base underneath. This way it seems to give the best effect. I picked this technique up from Angus Creighton, an incredible model builder From England. I am sure you have seen his work in Tamiya Model Magazine. He has always been a true inspiration to me.

I then drilled out the pivot for the gun barrel and added the Jordi Rubio barrel. I then added a .30 cal. machine gun barrel from the Verlinden accessory set and drilled out the barrel. Verlinden's .30 mount is awful; I used the .30 cal out of the Tamiya Willis jeep kit. It has a small sinkhole that was remedied by a little dab of putty. I then modified the mount as per Hunnicut's Stuart book, the best reference you will ever find on the subject. I then added the ammo belt fabricated from Apoxy sculpt, a little trick taken from Chris Mrosko.

I then moved to the rear of the turret and drilled out the holes for the rear inspection cover. This was used for installation and removal of the 37mm cannon. I used the Eduard PE antenna mount and added some fine wire for cable to the radio, which is located at the rear of the turret. My next step was to punch out a jillion bolts for the cleats bolted to the turret. I think this adds a nice touch and also gives you some idea how the cleats were actually attached.

Now back to the upper hull. I added the late war stowage box to the rear. You must reposition the pioneer tools for this to work. I used the Aber tie down cleat set and after several days of cussing, I finished this task. Little bitty buggers if you ask me, but the end result is great! Now for the hard part, I built sandbag racks for the sides out of brass. This was the first time I attempted this feat. After building two left sides and then using a few choice words, I started on the right. I liked the results so I carried on with the preparation for the sandbags. I used Apoxy Sculpt for this—it's great stuff. I like it much better than A+B putty. I then added sandbags to the front glacis and tied them down with ship scale rope. I textured all the sandbags using a handkerchief.

Time to paint, I shot the complete tank OD green and then went back with a mixture of flat black and flat finish and sprayed all the corner and joints. I then began to panel fade using a lightened OD green. Finally, I added dry transfers, and airbrushed a stencil-it star on the turret roof. I then painted the track using a mixture of earth brown and rust and painted the track pads flat black, fading them out with a light gray dry brushing. I finished weathering the tank with oils and pastels.

DJ

Osprey Modelling Manual 14, M4 Sherman

By Marty Hebda IPMS#34703

While at a Hobby Shop, I'm always on the lookout for a good reference. When I saw this book I figured it would be a pretty good reference. I've always liked the Osprey Manuals, and have a few on aircraft at home. And like those, it's printed on good quality paper, and has sharp, clear, photographs and illustrations are sharp and clear.

The content is not all I'd hope it would be. It covers the building of an initial production M-4, M4A1, in desert paint, three Marine Corp Shermans used in the Pacific; M4A4 Firefly, Sherman mineroller T1E3, and an M4A3 Calliope. All these have great photos of how they were built, but the instructions are a bit vague. The book seems to be written for experienced armor builders. I get the impression they think any modeler who tries one of these models already has the knowledge for all the techniques used in their construction.

On the plus side the book lists all the aftermarket stuff used in the construction of the models and even states whether it's available or out of production. I think the best section is the one on building the Marine Corp Shermans. It's nice to see camouflage tanks, and these would add color to anyone's Sherman collection. Speaking of color, the M4A1 in desert pink, is a real have-to-build for those of us who get tired of O.D. The book also has a good reference section that lists web sites and books for the Sherman modeler.

To sum it up I'd say the book was worth the \$14.95 I paid for it. After all, the pictures are enough to inspire one to start on an armor kit. If only it would go into a little more technique for us learning builders.

M.H.



San Antonio Regionals Sherman

In-box Review

Gavia 1/48th scale Polikarpov Po-2LNB

By Dave Orloff



The Po-2 biplane holds the distinction of being one of the world's most prolifically produced designs, serving the Soviets and their allies for decades after its 1928 introduction. Originally designed by Polikarpov as a primary trainer, the homely little "wheat cutter" saw service in WWII as a trainer, artillery spotter, liaison craft, psychological warfare platform, ambulance, and light bomber. This type was also frequently crewed by women, including the famous "Night Witches" who harassed the front lines at treetop heights. German troops said the Po-2 could peek over windowsills to see whether they were inside buildings.

The type served long enough to be granted the NATO designation "Mule", and one of the first kills by a Navy Tigercat night fighter in Korea was a Po-2 "Bedcheck Charlie".

The Gavia kit, from Czechoslovakia, is crisply molded in a medium gray plastic, with few sink marks. Like many kits from the region, it has few locating holes. Though the struts have locating pins, you'll need the trusty pin vise to provide mounting holes in the wing panels. All panel lines are recessed, with the fabric-on-frame areas done without the usual trough and ridge approach, framing being represented by slightly raised ribs and leading edges. This is really closer to how a properly covered fabric wing looks. The total parts count is 98 plastic, 62 photoetched, and six film. There are a lot of neat parts on the PE sheet, including a variety of fasteners that apply to the exterior and a plethora of cockpit goodies. The instrument panels are photo etched with film gauges, which should be clearly visible when the model's finished.

The five-cylinder Shvetsov M-11D radial contains over 20 parts, including pushrods to be fashioned out of stretched sprue (per instructions) or wire. A good thing, too as the engine hangs out front without the slightest cowling to hide the detail. Add ignition wiring and it should be a beauty.

D. O.

2001 ROYAL INTERNATIONAL AIR TATTOO, RAF Cottesmore, July 26-30, 2001

by G. R. Dennis Price

This year's event will be held at RAF Cottesmore, with public displays on Saturday and Sunday, July 28-29. However, aircraft will be arriving and practicing on the Thursday and Friday; and departing on Monday July 30. Proceeds benefit the Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund.

Scheduled to appear for the first time at the event are aircraft of the Romanian Air Force: two MiG-21's, a Lockheed C-130B, and a Harbin Hong-5 (Chinese version of Il.28 Beagle). In all, over 350 aircraft from more than 50 of the world's air arms are expected to be present. Some of the aircraft participating in last years Tattoo are depicted below.



- Hurricane XIIB (LK-A: built by Canadian Car & Foundry c/ n 52024, ex RCAF #5589, presently registered G-HURR) operated by the Real Aeroplane Co.



- Spitfire LF.VB (JH-C: ex RAF BM597 and 5713M, presently registered as G-MKVB) operated by Historic Aircraft Collection, with Polish insignia on nose.



- Bristol Blenheim/Fairchild Bolingbroke IVT (NU-X: ex RCAF #10201, presently registered G-BPIV and carrying the false RAF serial "R3821") operated by the Aircraft Restoration

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How I Got Started Building Models

by Bruce Burden

I don't remember the date, but it was the late 60's or very early 70's, while we lived in Florida. My father bought the Monogram or Revell "Tarantula" dual-engined dragster. Of course, its assembly had to wait until the "right time", which seemed ages in coming. Naturally, I started the kit before "the right time" arrived, which doubtless put "the right time" off. Eventually, however, "the right time" arrived. Bless my father, but spacial relationships really aren't his strong suit.

Assembling that kit with the necessary "parental assistance" was an ordeal. It was immediately obvious to me how the parts were to go together, but my father just didn't have that ability to interpret the 2-D instructions to the 3-D "real thing." Anyway, the model was eventually completed, without too many extra parts left over. I don't have a clear memory of any more model building until the early-mid 70's, by which time we had moved to Michigan.

Anyway, Jr. High found me once again building models, sans parental err, assistance, thank you very much! Revell ships, Monogram tanks and planes plus AMT and MPC cars and trucks and Ertl farm tractors. Painting, of course, was completely optional, at least until early High School. The first 'real project' for painting was the Monogram B-17. Of course, the use of tube glue meant that, eventually, there were strings, generally over the windshield or some other impossible to hide, project terminating part. Sigh! These not at all rare occasions required me to practice my vocabulary of words not to use around adults.

Decals at this point were quite the mystery, as well. The general approach was to throw the whole sheet into a dish full of water, and wait for the decals to float free. Of course, the decal sheet itself curled up, making the release of any decals rather problematic, and any long and/or large decals generally found their way to the bottom of the dish as a nicely balled mess. Needless to say, decal film solvents and softeners were completely alien concepts. Not to mention applying decals to a gloss surface. Heck, the decals were lucky to be applied to a painted surface! Ah, those were the days!

It was during this time that I first came upon the idea of "battle damage", and "washes." The wash thing found parental approval, even if it was not really understood. However, the bottle of thinner I cleaned my brushes in seemed to be of the correct general shade, and there was hardly any paint compared to the amount of thinner in the bottle, so a Tamiya Sherman was duly selected as the sacrificial goat. Understand that this experiment was undertaken with some amount of trepidation, because this was a "Tamiya" Sherman, with cool battery powered running gear—not one of those stupid old Monogram kits that just sat on the shelf, and didn't do anything. Ahh, how things change... Anyway, the wash experiment was judged to be a success, which led to kit modification, something else I had read about in a magazine. Two Revell Iowa kits were combined to form a Montana. Hmm, well, no not really,

but the basics were there, including the use of Testors' white putty to fill the resulting seams.

The whole battle damage thing, on the other hand, quickly fell into that shadowy world of parental "bad things™," complete with hysterical claims of "you could have burned the house down!!!" Soft plastic tends to shrink (just before catching fire) and droop, rather than bend and buckle like steel. Oh well, the parents were at least allowed to believe "they had got their point across!" Since I had already abandoned the whole battle-damage-by-candle thing anyway, they were allowed to feel secure in their misconception.

The end of the 70's, and high school, saw my modeling go into the "Great Hiatus." Girls, cars, girls, extracurricular sports and girls left little room for modeling. College simply replaced extracurricular sports with sports and role-playing games. (ummm, note the absence of study and homework. Modeling would have been more important than that stuff, dang it!) Upon graduation, I returned to Florida, and entered the "real world."

Finally, in the late 80's, ten years after I left scale modeling, I returned, lured back by something called individual track links. I was in a hobby shop to find some Panther tank references, as the authors of a particular war game clearly bought into the German propaganda machine regarding the superiority of the German tanks. So, I went looking in local hobby shops for suitable references to back up my contention that the capabilities of the German armored units was grossly biased in the German players favor. While paying for the Squadron "in Action" book on the Panther tank, I noticed, but really didn't pay any attention to some of the point-of-sale items. One of them, as it happened, was Model Kasten individual track links.

While studying the "in Action" book, the desire to build a model of the beastie slowly took hold. Slowly, because only Tamiya made a model of the Panther, and that horrid motorized running gear turned the model into nothing more than a toy—a toy that threw its tracks off, at that. (Yep, things had changed.) However, the vague memory of those "individual track link thingies" insidiously whispered that a decent model could be made, but only if they really existed. Well, further visits to the hobby shop verified that, yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Cl...err, yes, there was a company selling individual track links, and their name was "Model Kasten."

Well, as it turned out, the Tamiya Panther A was never built. Instead, the quest was to build something called the "Nichimo Panther" because it was a better kit. (Nichimo? Who were they? What was this blasphemy that they could offer a better model than the mighty Tamiya!) Before one of those kits was secured, the new—quest was to find a "Gunze Sangyo Panther."

Yes, AMS had set in. Doubtless due to something in that package of Model Kasten individual track links. Because I am (finally) on the verge of completing the first model since high school. And, no, it is NOT a Panther tank model!

B.B.

In-the-Box Review....

Nero Models 1/48

Ryan XF2R-1 "Dark Shark"

Kit Number 48002, \$40.00

by Phil Brandt, IPMS 14091

Obtained from: Aviation Usk Nebraska

In his never-ending struggle to level the plastic playing field against hordes of micro-tolerance WWII injected kits, Bondo reaches out this month to the esoteric fringes of the hobby to bring you a nice 1/48 kit that I doubt you'll see on the Region VI (or any other region) show circuit in the next couple years.

The small Canadian firm, Victoria Products, has done some relatively rare multimedia kits such as the Bondo-owned 1/48 Yak-25 Flashlight, a decent kit, with resin parts where the vac builder needs 'em. A little plain, but that's where the modeling fun starts. Apparently, Victoria Products has recently morphed into Nero Models, same address, and has added all-resin offerings of the Navy's historically important first generation composite-powered fighters, the Ryan FR-1 Fireball and XF2R-1 Dark Shark. I chose to build the Dark Shark because it was IMO the esthetically sleeker, turboprop/jet follow-on to the recip/jet Fireball. Ironically, although the Dark Shark had significantly more power, and sure looks meaner swinging the big four-bladed Aeroproducts prop, it was only seventy-five knots faster than the Fireball! The Air Force was very interested in an XF2R-2 with bubble canopy, elongated vertical fin and flush-mounted fuselage jet intakes, but the project only got to the mockup stage before the composite power concept was overcome by all-jet events.

My expectations of the Dark Shark kit weren't extremely high, based on the moderate work required on the above multimedia Yak-25, so imagine my surprise to find inside the small box a first-rate, Slovakian-mastered release. Eggshell-colored resin molding is excellent, very reminiscent of the better-known Planet Model and Czech Model product lines. The petite engraving is every bit as good as that of the Tamiyagawa Dynasty. Silky smooth surfaces abound, and there's no flash on major components. The fuselage is hollow-cast and includes the vertical fin and rudder; the wings and stabs are solid. In supporting roles are numerous small castings and even metal gear struts, complete with disc brake calipers and resin details to be added.

The main gear wheel wells are detailed, as are all gear doors. They're not Black Box-detailed by any stretch, but close enough for government work, especially since this airplane has been out of existence for over fifty years (however, one Fireball does remain, at the Planes of Fame Museum). The nose gear bay is unadorned, so you might want to 'busy' it a bit. Wing root-mounted jet intakes are separate pieces, as are the turboprop exhausts and the jet exhaust. Unfortunately none of the exhausts has any more depth than about an eighth of an inch, so you might opt for drilling them out and adding tube stock.

The cockpit consists of no less than nine components, but the seat has no cast harness or belts, and PE is not included in the kit. The instrument panel has sunken circles which should be easy to drill out and back with individual decals from any 1/48 kit. The consoles have sufficient detail (it's a small space), but they're not a threat to the Big Dog aftermarket folks.

The large vacuformed windscreen/canopy—two are included—is very smooth, with raised frames, but both have patches of very slight cloudiness on the canopy sides. I'm betting that a dip in Future will make things OK.

Two ordnance stubs are included for each wing. The two external fuel tank pylons pictured in Squadron/Signal's Mini In Action No. 5, "FR-1 Fireball," (the only dedicated reference source I've found on these two birds) have been left out, but the holes for same—the companion Fireball had the same wing—left in. Scratchbuild City....

Markings for the Dark Shark were painfully plain: just four all-white stars and bars, plus two small BuAer type designations for the empennage. The only offsetting colors to the overall Navy Blue paint scheme are the long, red turboprop spinner and the yellow-black-red tipped prop blades to which I'll add Aeroproducts logos from the spares file. The included decals are thin, and since I can't tell how opaque they'll be over the Navy Blue paint scheme, I'll probably revert to Aeromaster or equivalent quality insignia.

Instructions consist of two self-explanatory, no-text computer graphics-generated sheets: one depicts isometric exploded assembly views; the other gives standard three-views and paint details.

This fine kit is an excellent alternative project if your 'World War II Overload' light's been glowing on the panel for awhile. Hey, it's even got a prop!

Phil



(Car Corner continued)

The instruction sheet is a gem too, since very descriptive pictures of assemblies were the norm, and very descriptive. If only instruction sheets today were this well done! Easy to follow, you don't have to try to decipher what is being explained, and then on the last page, were some tips from the customizers of our day, ways to make your model more "personal." This great old kit is calling to me to build it, and I just may give in and do it.

Skip Perrine

(Latest Packet continued)

four from the Malaysian Navy, the "Perkasa" class. These boats can be configured into torpedo, gun, or missile boats as needed.

The Japanese Maritime Self-Defense force had no usable PT experience to build on so the PT 815 is an entirely new and indigenous design. Very large for seagoing operations, it too can vary its armament for each mission. At the time of this review I don't know if either class is still in service. When these kits were last available from Tamiya they sold for \$50-60. With these low-priced kits, one need not skip lunches or take out a second mortgage. Use the motors for something else and build one; they are impressive ships.

In the same scale there are the 73' Elco by Commanders Models, the 80' Elco by Revell, the German E-Boat by Airfix and soon the late war version E-Boat by Revell/Germany, the late war Vosper by Airfix, and the Vosper/PT-73 by Revell/Germany (actually I think this kit is 1/64 scale but has always been listed as 1/72). Maybe one of the Chinese companies or ICM of the Ukraine will give us a 1/72 Osa PGM. Now that would make a nice collection. Note: when the fliers came out a few weeks ago about these models the importers said the kits were from Trumpeter. These came listed by WSN. A new company? Trumpeter have a deal with WSN like Revell and Advent in the 70s? I don't know. They're here and affordable. I recommend these kits

G.L.

(U-99 Review continued)

"Golden Horseshoe" because of two horseshoes that were brought up on her anchor chains ran out of luck in March 17, 1941. After having been attacked by the British destroyer Walker, U-99 was destroyed by self-destruct charges. There were only three losses of the crew. The remainder, including Lieutenant Kretschmer spent the rest of the war as POWs at Camp 1 at Grizedale Hall in Great Britain.

How many times do you build a good thing? This is the third time around for me of this U-boat. The first time was about 20 years ago in Puerto Rico, then about six years ago in Austin, and now here in Virginia. The U-99 is an easy to assemble, 22 inch long boat, does not have many parts and those that are there are very nice. With the exception of the Bridge Deck/Conning Tower assembly, which could have been updated for this release, the rest of the detailing and parts fit well. There was

very little sanding and virtually no filling of gaps. This time around, I spray painted the thing versus paint brushing. For the main hull I used Testors Model Master paints. Flat Gull Gray, No. 1930, FS 36440 for the lower hull beneath the demarcation line and Euro I Gray, No. 1988, FS 36081 for above the demarcation line. Other colors used were gold for some of the detailing, brass for the screws, flat black for the armament and some of the masts.

The most tricky part was gluing the two hull halves together so as not to have much of a visible joint line and then attaching the decks, fore and aft to the hull. Once that was done, I painted the hull with a light coat of primer, and then the two shades of gray. All parts that were to be painted were cleaned and sanded on the sprue tree, then painted their appropriate color. Once cut from the sprue, I touched them up with paint sprayed onto a small glass bottle.

The Bridge Deck/Conning Tower assembly was a delicate job to say the least. Test fitting of the conning tower halves took a considerable amount of time, then making sure that the bridge deck assembly fit properly between the two tower halves. Perseverance and my trusty No. 11 and some sandpaper prevailed and the tower looks pretty good.

The sub's armament consists of one 88 mm gun mounted on the deck in the front of the conning tower, and one 20 mm gun sitting on and aft of the conning tower. These were painted flat black. Again, here are some parts that Revell should have retooled for this release. The rest of the parts were painted on the sprue tree in the colors that were depicted on the box art, then assembled onto the sub.

Since sprue stretching is not my forte, I raided my wife's sewing kit and used some her very thin black nylon thread. A dab of slow setting CA and a sharp No. 11 made this part of assembly seem like kid's work! The flags and decals were cut attached or flown with a bit of white glue or decal set/sol to make them stay in place. The stand for U-99 left a lot to be desired, so I pulled out some lumber from my wooden ship bin and made a new one, including the torpedo where her name is carved.

The instruction sheet is very clear and easy to follow. The sheet with the drawing and assembly pictures is written in English. German instructions are included in another sheet, with warnings in several other languages. As is the case with the English instructions, I imagine that the others are easy to follow.

All in all, this was a fun project to undertake, even if three times hence. For those of you who have not put a sub together yet, here is a nice kit to try your luck at. There are some aftermarket resin replacements for the conning tower and the armament, but I did not want to spend half of my retirement on it, so I went with the kit's hardware. Did I mention that the kit cost \$22.00 here in VA?

R.K.

(RIAT Aircraft continued)

Company, exhibiting half of a “fine pair of Bristols”.



- Tornado F.3 (ZE839, AV, 56 [R] sq.). Usual light gray overall, but with a red spine and orange/yellow flames enhancing the phoenix squadron badge on the fin.



- Hawker Hunter F.58A (G-PSST, ex Swiss Air Force J-4104) operated by Delta Jets. Extremely colorful, the tip of the nose is very pale yellow that darkens to just aft of the intakes, where the color changes to a red that continues to the trailing edge of the wing. There is then a very narrow band of white that transitions quickly through light blue to a midnight blue that acts as a background for numerous white stars. The color scheme continues from the fuselage to both upper and lower wing surfaces. The registration is on the fin just below the tailplane. The drop tanks are midnight blue with white stripes and stars.



- Jaguar GR.3A (XZ364, GJ, 54 sq.). Usual gray color scheme, but with red, white and blue striped fin celebrating 60 years of RAF Coltishall.



- Mirage F.1C (#24, 33-FC, EC 03.033 French AF). Red intake/rear fuselage, with ‘1940-2000’ in white; fin red and yellow with white markings.



- AMX (MM7101, 103 Grupu, 51 stormo, Italian AF). Dark blue forward fuselage, with profile of Indian head and war-bonnet outlined in white dots on fuselage forward of the cockpit, with white dots continuing rearward in star-like pattern to mid fuselage where there is a band of lighter blue. Rear fuselage and fin is yellow with stylized three-feather (white, red stripes, black tips) war-bonnet/shield with three pendant/trailing ribbons (blue, red, green).



- SAAB 105OE (c/n: 105-416, GF-16, 1UbwGeschw, Austrian AF) gray forward fuselage with darker gray ‘tiger stripes’, yellow rear fuselage and fin with dark gray ‘tiger stripes’.



- F-16A(E-180 [Esk 726 Royal Danish AF). Normal gray forward fuselage, mid-fuselage bronze/gold vertical zig-zag band, dark blue rear fuselage with e-mail address in bronze/gold (added since last year). Mailman (always delivers) representation on fin.

[Space permitting, Old Rumors and New Kits will return next month as well as more reviews and some neat photos! MB]

Air Show Show Dates!

May 19, 20, 2001, Southwest Texas Regional Air Show, Beaumont Texas

June 16, 17, 2001, Aerospace America International Show, Oklahoma City

July 15, 2001, Aviation FunFest, San Angelo, Texas

September 8, 2001, Air Show Oklahoma, Muskogee

October 6, 7, 2001 Confederate Air Force Air Show, Midland, Texas

October 13, 14, 2001, Amigo Air Show, El Paso, Texas

October 19-21, 2001, Wings Over Houston, Ellington Field, Houston, Texas

**October 20, 21, 2001, Alliance International Air Show, Alliance, Fort Worth
(<http://www.allianceairshow.com/>)**

**Next Meeting:
Thursday, May 17**

