



IPMS/Republic of Texas

Newsletter of the Austin Scale Modelers Society

April 2002

SPRUE CONFESSIONS



FIFI Visits San Marcos' Gary Field

The Commemorative Air Force's B-29 "FIFI" paid a one week visit to San Marcos earlier this month. When asked what the occasion was for the visit, a crewman replied that "it was just to let the public see the airplane." It was also to solicit donations from the public to keep "FIFI" and others like her in flying condition. "FIFI" left San Marcos on April 15, heading for Conroe for a week. Then it's on to Louisiana for several stops.

Unfortunately, the local visit was not well publicized and from what I could gather, the reception was not all that it should have been.

Thursday, April 18 is the next meeting date for ASMS but the date is pretty important in itself. Does that date mean anything to you? Well, it probably should, but

if you are like most Americans, you may not easily remember historic dates.

Sixty years ago on April 18 a bunch of very brave young men took off in 16 B-25s from the pitching deck of the carrier USS Hornet to bomb Japan. They succeeded not only in demonstrating to the Japanese that they were vulnerable but also in lifting the spirits of the American people at time when we sorely needed it. I was six years old at the time but when the news broke, it was all people could talk about.

I guess it's sort of ironic to talk about "FIFI," the last flying B-29 and the Doolittle Raid on the same page. The Doolittle Raiders staged the first raid, doing little more than hurting the pride of the Japanese. Three years later just a couple of B-29s made the last raids, ending the war.



Our Sponsors

These are some of the individuals and organizations which help make Austin Scale Modelers Society possible.

King's Hobby Shop

8810 N. Lamar, Austin TX 78753
Phone 836-7388

The Village Hobby Shop

2700 W. Anderson Lane, #801
Phone (512) 452-6401

Roger Williams

PO Box 291
Pflugerville, TX 78691-0291

Rudy Cline

Bruce Arbo

Ray Katzaman

A K Young & Associates

Squadron Mail Order

1115 Crowley Drive
Carrollton, TX 75011

Action Traffic Services

11012 Georgian Dr.
Austin, TX 78753

MB Publishing & Photography

7509 St. Phillip, Austin, TX 78757,
Phone 454-2395

Dave Edgerly

Commander Series Models

Ian Edgerly

Texas Military Forces Museum

Pat Lowe

Testors Corporation

Bob Kieras

SD&D

Model Show Schedule

Inaugural Space City Nationals Model Car Contest and Scale Automotive Expo., Clear Lake TX (one mile east of Johnson Space Center)	May 17-20, 2002
Airliners International 2002, Houston TX (Sheraton North)	June 19-23,
2002IPMS/USA National Convention , Virginia Beach VA	July 31-Aug. 03, 2002
SuperCon 2002, Arlington Community Center, Arlington TX	August 10, 2002
Austin Scale Model Show, Crockett Center, Austin TX	August 24, 2002

From the Editor...

Heavens, it's April already. This year is no longer slipping past—it's in a headlong rush! I still haven't had time to do any serious modeling but perhaps that time is coming. I know this will hit Tim Robb particularly hard but...I'm retiring—again. Now, for a modeler to say they are "retiring" doesn't necessarily mean that there will be a sudden outpouring of models or that there will be loads of time. I found that out before when I started doing a little "business" at home. Believe me, there are lots of other places to spend time than behind the modeling bench. But I still look forward to what I hope will be a little more quality modeling time. Maybe I can do some painting and finish those dozen or so projects that have been on hold for the past ten years or so. I hope so.

If you got your IPMS Journal this month, you may note that our August Show is significantly absent. I don't know why no shows other than the Nationals were listed for July/August but you can bet there are many other shows around the country slated for those months. And yes, the information was submitted so, IPMS does know that we will have a show in August! One of Dick Montgomery's headache jobs is to see that shows are not stacked and scheduled in such a way as to work a hardship on any club or modeler. And we are straight with him. As usual, the Arlington (Fort Worth) show is in early August and ours late. It has been so for some time and so far both clubs have survived.

I announced last meeting that you could pay your dues via credit card and the internet. Well, not quite. True, IPMS takes MC/VISA but you have to print out the form, and mail it in, unless you want your card number on an ordinary e-mail. Still, that makes it a little simpler than sending checks or money orders. Have you renewed **your** IPMS membership?

Milton

ASMS Officers for 2002

Jarrood Cunningham , president, jhbmccuny@texas.net	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 Liason)	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

John Vernon and Tony Morgan were visitors. John collects figures and needed help repairing one. Tony is a former member who renewed his membership. Tony builds helicopters and is usually in the winners circle.

Old Business

Milton Bell reported that the nametags are ready but he forgot to put them with his stuff he brings to the meetings. They will be there for you to get them at the April meeting.

Contest Report

Tim Vogt gave a history of our financial involvement with Austin Model Car Club. It was determined that we owed them from past shows and this amount has been paid. Tim also brought the sign up sheets for our August show. By the end of the evening most but not all positions were filled. Tim will be bringing it to the April Meeting for our review and updating.

Treasurer's Report

I made no notation of a report.

New Business

It was decided that we would sponsor a category at the Nationals in Virginia Beach, July 31st – August 3rd.

AABS sponsored a field trip to Bryan, Texas, to view a private collection of restored armor and vehicles. People wanting to go were to meet at the Crockett Center on the March 23 before 8:00am.

The summer picnic will be on June 1, hosted again by Mike and Sally Kachoris. We have eleven (11) boxes of kits donated by Brad Perry to fight (bid) over plus the usual bring one (or more) donations by the club members. The party will start at 1:00 and go until (?). There was some discussion of what type of meat the club was to purchase and it was decided that the executive committee would decide the choice. However, we will be depending on the membership to provide the potluck items. The meal will be served from 1:00 – 3:00 and the auction will begin shortly afterwards. So bring your bathing suits and cash.

Kenny Roady informed the members that King's Hobby had donated the evening's Quarterly Contest winner's gift certificates that totaled \$100. It was decided that we would give King's Hobby a Certificate of Appreciation for their donation. He also brought up that at our previous Quarterly Contest we had some junior modelers competing with the adults. In the future they will be voted on separately.

Some of the upcoming air shows were discussed especially the expenses incurred in putting on a show. Burnet's show is set for April and Georgetown will have theirs in May. It takes a lot of time and money to get one of these air shows "off the ground."

(continued on page 10)

Styrene Six

Jarrold Cunningham

"The Brotherhood of Plastic"

Greetings from California, home of the redwood, "in-n-out" hamburgers, and many, many good modelers. As if you didn't know, my job requires a fair amount of travel, and in the process I may be absent for meetings from time to time. My latest trek allowed me to travel to San Jose and meet some REALLY good folk! Let me preface the next lines by saying up front one of my first tasks when I travel is to find the nearest hobby store. It's just a "model geek" thing I guess. This time (because of location), I have to admit, I took it to the NEXT level.

Armed with a DSL connection and a decent level of club hierarchy, I posted a call out on both of the more popular web page discussions for some good ol' "networking" (technical term for BS session). To my good fortune a couple hours later, replies showed up directing me to one of the local hobby shops for an impromptu gathering of the resident "plastic fanatics." In addition, a few emails showed up from others I knew only from the 'net inviting me to this and that.

After finishing my business day, I made my way to the shop mentioned and enjoyed a very pleasant evening with several members of the Silicon Valley Scale Modelers group. Some I had met previously, and it was nice to be able to chat with them again. After the shop had closed we all trekked to a local coffee shop and continued on with our ramblings. Colorful discussions were had about kits and bits that were and ones yet to be seen. Couple this with a fair amount of "war stories" and there you have the contents of my time with them. Returning to my hotel, I knew that I had been a witness to the "brotherhood of plastic." Okay, maybe not true relations, but definitely sharing of common interests and viewpoints. I was truly set back when I thought about it. The fact that in this evening, these guys accepted into their "fold" a stranger, a person that, other than a chance meeting on an Internet discussion group, they knew virtually nothing about!

When I was stationed in Germany, the local gasthaus always had a table filled with a select group of friends. If I remember correctly, it was referred to as the "stahmp-titsch" (please forgive me if my spelling is incorrect—my German wasn't that great even when I was in Germany). At this table, specifically reserved for them, they had weekly—possibly daily—gatherings. They discussed all the current events, and social happenings in their burg. The unique thing about it was, not just anybody could sit at the table with these guys. An invitation from a member of the group was necessary to attend. In this day and age it seems elitist, but that aside, it does seem like an honor. That these guys would allow me to spend an evening with them as if I lived in the area, and was a regular attendee at their club meetings, speaks volumes about our hobby. I'm positive that I am not the only one to experience this.

(continued on page 11)



CAR CORNER

by Skip Perrine
IPMS 40167

On to what CC is about—cars. This month we are looking at two kits that are actually die-cast kits with plastic parts. From Revell come kits 1513 and 1514. These are replicas of cars used in the movie Bullitt, a '68 Ford Mustang and a '68 Dodge Charger, since nobody does a '68 Charger in plastic except for Revell's Dick Landy Charger Super Stock drag car. I had to purchase one for my collection of Dodge Chargers.



Both of these kits are done very nicely, the bodies come pre-painted, the Mustang is a dark—almost black—green, and the Charger is black. Both have black interiors, which are very basic. Their respective engines are nicely detailed but both need to receive some aftermarket things like ignition wiring and maybe some Detail Master accessories.

They build up very easily into nice additions to any collection. What I really liked about the Mustang is that it came with American Racing Mags (the dark center ones), I am thinking of getting one each of these two kits and putting American Racing Mags on a Charger, should make for a nice look.

What it says on the side of the box is “Steve McQueen, one of the greatest cult movie heroes of all time, was also something of a car enthusiast in his off-screen life. Being an avid car collector and race car driver, it was only natural that the movies he made reflected his love of anything automotive. One of his most famous films ‘Bullitt,’ features a wild, roller coaster chase scene through the streets of San Francisco, with Steve in his '68 Mustang and the bad guys in their '68 Dodge Charger. The scene is probably the first major car chase ever used in a feature film and every movie car chase that has followed over the years owes its allegiance to Steve McQueen for making it happen.”



Also I am enclosing pics of my Danbury Mint '51 Ford Pickup mild custom, it is an incredibly beautiful piece as produced by DM. Their attention to detail is second to none and this is now my all-time favorite, the stance of it is perfect, from its flawless candy apple red paint, to its very conservative interior, 'shaved' door handles, 'Cad Bullet' taillights, wide white walls on chrome reversed wheels with 'Baby Moon' hubcaps, Lakes pipes and a fully plumbed and wired 'flattie' V-8. Custom grill, front and rear 'rolled' pans, chrome-tipped exhaust pipes, a bed cover, and opening tailgate. It even has windshield wipers, steerable front end, springs, a fully detailed under carriage. The pics were taken by our own Milton Bell and they are excellent as all of his pics are.

So that's it from Skip Perrine



Resin Kit Roundup:

The 1/48 Collect-Aire F-108 Rapier

Kit Number 4815 \$199.95

Obtained from: Collect-Aire (www.collectaire.com)

by Phil "Bondo" Brandt



BACKGROUND

The F-108 Rapier was North American Aviation's answer to DOD cutting edge interceptor criteria issued in the mid-Fifties and envisaged as countering all airborne threats in the post 1962 world. A complete weapons system, as were other members of the "Century Series", the F-108 was to eventually supplant the F-106 by operating independently, well beyond the limits of the then standard SAGE (Semi-Automatic Ground Environment) air intercept system. The Rapier was designed to "run with the big dogs," at Mach 3 and to zoom climb altitudes in excess of 100,000 feet. Manned by two aircrew members in a tandem cockpit, powered by two brutish J93 General Electric engines (six of which powered the XB-70), the cranked delta-winged Rapier was some fifteen feet longer and slightly heavier than the F-111. Missiles only were the order of the day, and the F-108 carried three AIM 47 Falcons on a rotary launcher in the weapons bay.

The project moved along smartly, with a full scale mockup finished, the first flight scheduled for 1961 and Initial Operating Capability (IOC) estimated in 1963. Although the project was on schedule with few, if any, developmental glitches, the USAF suddenly announced in September 1959 that the F-108 was canceled "because of a shortage of funds and priorities..." "Priorities" seems to be the operative word, since an apparently unknowing North American design team was running against a parallel "Black World" ultra project which was to become the YF-12. Interestingly, the Hughes radar and AIM 47s appeared on the Lockheed Blackbird!

THE KIT

This, save for the RB-57F, is probably the largest Collect-Aire release extant, and the familiar love-hate relationship between the master modeler and the person who will be building the kit is still there. It's a very desirable and rare subject, big and sleek

looking, a fitting stablemate to a Testors SR-71 or YF-12, but a careful look and you know--somewhat in the manner of Mach 2 kits--you're gonna take a beating doing it! Generally smooth molding is pettily engraved but suffers from numerous, and I do mean numerous, tiny pits, not the usual resin voids. It's gonna take a bunch of carefully applied putty to fix! Fit of large components is problematic and slight warpage of the large flying surfaces will need careful adjustments with hot water. But then, you wouldn't be into this Two-Bill project if you weren't serious, would you?

The cockpit features individual crew ejection capsules shaped like ones in the XB-70, but the seats inside seem too small when compared to current 1/48 aftermarket ejection seats, and there are no belts or harnesses. In addition, the consoles also seem undersized, the instrument panels are relatively plain and there is no sidewall detail. Since we're working with an aircraft that never got to the prototype stage, my solution for cockpit "busyness" is to kitbash the Black Box F-105G tandem cockpit along with B-58 capsules from either the Monogram kit or the Engines & Things aftermarket set for same. Really makes a difference...and nobody I know has the drawings to disprove it!

The huge intakes are multipiece with a cloned compressor first stage and a teeny starter bump in the center. I substituted the engine fronts from the Zhengdefu rip-off of the Minicraft/Academy F-111 kit.

The nosegear well is typical Collect-Aire: bare well surfaces adorned with a few strips of Evergreen. The main well is slightly better than normal, however, with shaped formers and multilayering.

Two sets of vacuformed canopies are included, fairly clear, with slightly raised detail.

The afterburner nozzles mimic the real J93 engine in shape—there's a real one on display at the March AFB Museum in Riverside, CA—but the nozzle leaves are minimally detailed, with casting flaws, and the diameter seems a bit too large; I may substitute some F-15 nozzles with the individual "turkey feathers" in the open position. Plus, the Collect-Aire nozzle interiors need to be at least two inches deeper to look realistic.

Landing gear struts are in metal with so-so detailing and a fair amount of flash to file. Main wheels seem too large in diameter and much too bulbous—another reviewer has written that they seem to have been cloned from a Ju-88(!)—and should be replaced by either F-15 units (you'll need four wheels) or slightly narrowed 1/72 KC-97 ones. Bondo's also substituting F-4 nose wheels; better detail and larger diameter...this was a big aircraft!

The less said about the included metal missiles the better; El Crude-o Grande! I'm going to use suitably modified AIM 7s so that three of 'em will fit up in the narrow bay.

(continued on page 10)

Alan Hobby 1/35 Bison II

S.I.G.33B (Sfl),150mm, 12-TON Self-Propelled Howitzer

by Richard Eaton IPMS # 40101



I purchased this kit from Great Models Webstore and had to start it immediately upon arrival. It is just one of those kits that just burns a hole through my bench. If you are into large bore armor models as I am, read on.

HISTORY

From a ballistic and destructive effectiveness, the S.I.G. 33 was judged to be outstanding. But, due to the short range and poor mobility of the towed gun, it rarely got into action during attacks. The 15cm S.I.G. 33 (Sfl) auf. Pz.Kpfw. I Fargestellt version was first tested in combat in May 1940. The Waeebant was already engaged in development of an improved model, based on the Pz.Kpfw. II chassis.

On the first variant, the howitzer was mounted on its wheeled carriage too far to the rear. Firing resulted in the Pz.Kpfw. II unacceptably tipping backwards from the recoil. Without its wheels the S.I.G. could be mounted considerably further forward, which was a significant advantage for stability when firing. Since the room inside a standard Pz.Kpfw. II was unacceptably small, a lengthened and widened hull was made. Additional space in the fighting compartment was also achieved by mounting the engine transversely across the rear of the vehicle. A transfer case was mounted in the right rear, redirecting power forward through a drive shaft, which ran along the right side to the transmission and transverse mounted Pz.Kpfw. II steering unit. Unlike the normal Pz.Kpfw. II suspension, a sixth road wheel was added to the lengthened chassis. A trial series of 12 S.I.G.33B (Sfl.) were ordered from Alkett for delivery starting in August 1941. Being months behind schedule, Alkett finally completed seven S.I.G. 33B (Sfl.) vehicles in December of 1941, and five more in January of 1942.

These vehicles were organized into two independent companies and were sent to the Afrika Korps, in Libya, to take part in the intended attack on Tobruk. The S.I.G. 33Bs were engaged in the major offensive called Operation Venezia. Combat experience

quickly revealed the engine's weakness and many other design faults, mostly aggravated by African climatic conditions. The greatly overloaded vehicle immediately would overheat and was too unmaneuverable. The vehicles were reported as having all been lost by the 2nd of December 1942. The British reported capturing six of them, when they were abandoned during the withdrawal. These were all found in dismantled condition in a German tank workshop.

Building the Bison II

Well, I have some earlier experience with Alan Hobby models and I must say that they are improving in quality rapidly as new models come out. Their Marder II D was well done but had a few warts especially in the track to road wheel area. I am pleased to report that their new Bison II is a big improvement.

Construction

Following directions in step one I assembled the transmission and drive shaft assemblies. These parts have fair detail that make a great start for additional detail if you like. The kit instructions are well drawn and all parts are numbered.

In step two I assembled the lower hull, fighting compartment rear wall, and floor. Here details are very well done. The floor section has places for seven projectiles at the ready.

The compartment rear wall is beautifully detailed with louvers and a shell storage area. I then assembled the suspension arms, road wheels, return rollers, idler wheels, and drive sprockets as directed. These suspension parts require some clean up but I just eliminated mold marks with a sanding stick and assembled them. Use care in placing suspension arm parts C56 and C58. They are molded in a compressed pose compared with the other arms and the overall look of the suspension would not be right if you mixed them up.

Following steps three I cut out and installed the PE motor screens in the bottom of the upper hull. The fit and look was spot on. They were so well done that I decided to pose the engine covers open on this one.



In steps four and five I assembled the front headlamps and jerry cans. The headlamps were well molded and only required minor clean up. The slit covers are separately molded which is a nice touch. I wound up using substitute Italeri jerry cans for the kit supplied one were a touch on the crude side.

Step six has one diagram and basically calls for you to assemble the tank and add all front and side components, and tracks! Slow down big fellow! I took these parts in the following order. I assembled the upper hull components and kept the lower hull separate to ease painting and track installation. Hatches visors, and other hull details fit very well with only the usual cleanup required. After painting the lower hull and road wheels I then assemble the separate tracks over two nights and applied them after each had setup a tad. Track parts are very well done with super fit. The tracks fit beautifully around the drive sprockets and return rollers. Where I ran into trouble were around the road wheels. They were too thick to fit in the track races. Humm... I had not noticed this before and I had to do something quick. I wound up cutting the inner track races so the tracks would snug up to the road wheels. They wound up looking fine unless you turn the model over. In fact I am no expert but I think they look pretty darned good!

In step seven I added the remainder of the kit parts to the rear hull. Again no fit problems and only minor cleanup required. In steps eight through 11 I assembled the fighting compartment shields, various tools, radio, and all the remaining fighting compartment cases and items. The side shields did not fit quite flush so filled the gap between the lower shield and upper hull with putty and sanded till you could not tell. I installed the engine covers in the open position to show off that nice PE screening. I then sprayed the upper hull works with Afrika Mustard. Then I dry fit, and assemble the upper and lower hull parts together. They fit like a dream.

The Big Gun

The big Sig-33 150mm gun is basically just the field piece with the wheels removed and some special mounts added. Big Ray said Alan has recently put out the field piece version of the gun. I know of no other injected kit of that piece. Following steps 12



through 15 I assembled the gun shield, barrel assembly, and carriage. Fit was fine through out. The only problem I ran into was with the two-piece barrel and breach. There was a very noticeable seam right down the top of the barrel. I use zap a gap CA and light sanding and it clear right up without distorting the roundness of the barrel. The gun shields were scale thin and well detailed. This is one mean looking instrument of war! I think I'll pick up their separate kit of this piece.

Following step 16 I placed the gun shields on the gun and tucked the entire assembly into the fighting compartment. It fit beautifully and really looked sharp. The kit supplied MG-34 was OK but I replaced it with a sharper Tamiya version. I then added two rear most tarpaulin braces. I left off the front most one because I thought it detracted from the view of the gun. The skipped last step in the instructions that called for assembling the teapot! I saved the parts though!



Painting and Weathering

Kit directions give color schemes and markings for the 15th Panzer Division,

North Afrika so that is what I went with. I don't think the vehicle was very successful mechanically and that was the only theater it served in. I sprayed the entire kit Testors Afrika Mustard at various points during assembly. Once everything was together, I then sprayed the model with gloss coat to aid in dark washes and decals. I painted the tracks with scale black. Once dry, I added a wash of a mix of acrylic scale black and brown to the entire tank. Then I washed the tracks again with rust.

And now my favorite part of armor modeling, dry brushing! I used Testors light gray to highlight detail all over the tank and treads. I painted the tools wood brown and scale black. I painted the nice one-piece shells and casings olive and accented with brass. Two different size shells are included with decals for each.

I then lightly dry brushed the treads and hull with Testors Steel. I finished up the weathering by applying ground pastel black with a brush to the gun muzzle, breach, and pretty much anywhere I felt like it. I accented panel lines mainly. I then

(continued on page 10)

1/72 1/72 1/72 1/72 1/72 1/72
1/72 1/72 1/72 1/72 1/72 1/72

1/144 1/144 1/144 1/144 1/144
1/144 1/144 1/144 1/144 1/144

Small Scales A closer look

1/200 1/200 1/200 1/200 1/200
1/200 1/200 1/200 1/200 1/200

by
Rafael Power

DOUGLAS DC-6B "LEGENDS OF AVIATION" 1/144 scale by Minicraft

Kit #: 14442

Vintage: 1997

Origin: Molding: China / Decals: Mexico

Parts: 67 gray, one clear

Markings: N6528C, Pan American World Airways-PAA
"Clipper Miles Standish" LN-LMO, Scandinavian Airlines
System-SAS "Hjalmar Viking"

Possible conversion options (not included): Fire bombers and
commercial freighters. Conversion to a DC-4/C-54 and C-118
military transports.



Introduction

I am a Pan American World Airways freak! Got that? I flew Pan American many times, regularly read books on Pan Am and revere the holy Blue Meatball logo. Sounds like Mecca and football fever rolled into one! Turns out I grew up in the Caribbean watching the arrival and departure of the old piston-powered Douglas DC-4s, DC-6s and Constellations during the 1950s. Being an international airport, San Juan received flights from the U.S., South America, the Caribbean and Europe. But being the regional host (the hub system had yet to be invented in those days) to DC-6 operators like Pan American, Eastern Air Lines, Delta, my interest gravitated toward those carriers. The stupendous roar of their pistons announcing their departure is still hidden inside my brain. So, now that I've come out of the hangar, I can sip my Valium Piña Colada and continue with this review.

When Minicraft announced its DC-6 and Constellation in 1/144 I just had to have them. Of course, the announcement stretched for several years due to Minicraft's policy of procrastination. I thought it would never get to the local hobby shops. So, what's it like?

Other DC-6s on the Market

This is a very sparse landscape when it comes to the DC-6. Except for the old odd-scale Revell DC-7 (which passes for a DC-6) and Heller's excellent DC-6B, no one has issued any other DC-6. I know there are some vacuformed DC-6s in 1/144 and 1/72 but we can dispense with them. As I mentioned last month, Heller has the lead with their DC-6 in 1/72. Ditto with their Constellations.

First Impressions on Minicraft's DC-6B

First things first. The box art is one of the worst I've seen. So, dump it and get on with the model. Welcome to Flash City. Although not to the extreme, this kit needs some sanding and polishing. As in the Boeing 707, the fuselage and wings need some fine sanding and polishing. Other than the control surfaces and doors, there are no panel lines or details visible. Even then, you have to improve the engraving since they are a bit nebulous. To have a clear idea of the type of aircraft you are building, good reference materials are essential. To build this kit I recommend Harry Gann's Airliner Tech Series, Vol.4: Douglas DC-6 and DC-7. It has excellent background material and detail photos and artwork.

Instructions

The usual Minicraft layout: six-page folded sheet with an introduction to the Douglas DC-6B. The assembly steps are clear and easy to follow and the part tree layout shows the part number locations, including the optional parts. A nicely done paint and marking placement layout for the Pan Am and SAS DC-6B completes the instruction sheet.

Fuselage Fit

The fuselage halves fit well but need a bit of sanding in places to remove bulges. Keep in mind that the fuselage is thinner than usual in places and if you sand too much, you may sand right through the fuselage. To be safe, add extra plastic support inside the fuselage as you would do with a vacuform kit. Avoid uneven surfaces and excessive sanding. You won't have to worry about repositioning the control surfaces since they are usually in the neutral position while on the ground. The clear windshield section is very thin and requiring a bit of sanding to achieve the correct placement. This kit represents the more aerodynamic nose housing the weather radar.

The engraved doors are poorly done and incorrect so fill them in and redo them. In contrast to the jet airliners which have two passenger doors in front and behind the wings, the piston liners had only one passenger door always located behind the wings on the left side of the fuselage. The crew access door is located just behind the cockpit on the right side.

Wings Fit

Although not engraved (except for the control surfaces), the wings are thin but some sanding on the flaps/trim tabs and the wheel wells is needed. The fit on the wing roots is acceptable but you have to use some filler here. The belly/wing area is where you'll need to exercise caution to get a good fit. Some sanding and filler will do the trick. Remember that unlike the DC-4, the DC-6 did away with the leading edge de-icer boots on the wings and horizontal/stabilizer. You can add some engraved detail to enhance the otherwise plain wing surfaces.

Landing Gear

As usual, the landing gear wells have no detail with only the landing gear leg mating holes provided. The legs are petite and the doors need some sanding to get the right shape.

Engines

As I mentioned in my Boeing 707 review, you can use Evergreen plastic tubing on the thin cowling halves to improve the engines. The engine ram air intakes are solid, not hollow so you may carefully drill or carve them open. The engine cowling liners on the model are on the closed position. On the actual aircraft they are always deployed open while the aircraft is on the ground but closed while on flight.

The propeller spinners are too blunt and show some molding dimples. Either sand and clean them up or replace them with something else. Remember to consult references and photos to see if the aircraft you are modelling used the optional spinners or not. Contrary to the photos on the box, SAS and Pan Am did not use the spinners but the latter retrofitted them. Most carriers did not have them.

Decals and Markings

They are nicely printed but are no match for those on the Boeing 707. Although rather minimalist, the Pan Am markings are fine except for three things:

1. Wrong registration/Clipper pairing. "Clipper Miles Standish" was actually assigned to Pan Am DC-6B N5119V (later to Airbus A310 N805PA in the new billboard style). N6528C was really "Clipper Midnight Sun."
2. Windows arrangement is wrong. You may have to paint the blue cheat line yourself and cut out the windows from the decal to put them in the right sequence.
3. Also missing is the Douglas Aircraft Corporation logo on the tail.

The SAS markings are very good, colorful and correct but you still need to add the sleeping berth upper windows. So, get your scissors and come up with a correct PAA registration from your decal box.

Colors

Most available model white paints are not really pure white but rather bone white, etc. To replicate the real white color scheme on the Pan Am/SAS DC-6s, the best ones I found were acrylics Polly-S 505011 RLM 21 White or Badger Air Opaque #7-02 White available from your local art supply store. Ensure the

gloss coat for decaling does not add tint to the white. Also, all airliner paints of the era turned semi-matt to matt after a few flights.

Aftermarket Items

Dedicated DC-6 decals are almost non-existent but you can "cut and paste" available decals to decorate your DC-6. If you like dioramas, the Starr Miniature 1/144 Ground Support Equipment is now available. They offer all sorts of ramp service vehicles from all eras. They are available from The Aviation Hobby Shop mail order, located near London Heathrow Airport. Check aircraft model mags like Scale Aviation Modeller for more information.

My recommendations

- Add landing gear and navigation lights,
- engrave needed panels and improve the control panels,
- add two high frequency communications wire antennas from the top of the nose to the vertical stabilizer and
- choose the appropriate air scoops, ADF loop and root wing ADF antennas according to the carrier you are modelling.

Final Comments

When Minicraft issued their outstanding PB5-5A Catalina in 1/144, I thought they had opened Pandora's Box. Not so. To be fair with Minicraft, this is really part of their first effort in airliner kits. This quality of this DC-6 and the companion Constellation and Electra is like that of "limited run" kits. But there's hope since their new generation Boeing 757 and MD-80 are very good.

References:

- *Airliner Tech Series, Vol.4: Douglas DC-6 and DC-7* (1999) - Harry Gann (Specialty Press)
- *Delta—An Airline and Its Aircraft* (1990) - R.E.G. Davies (Paladwr Press)
- *Pan Am—An Airline and Its Aircraft* (1987) - R.E.G. Davies (Orion Books)

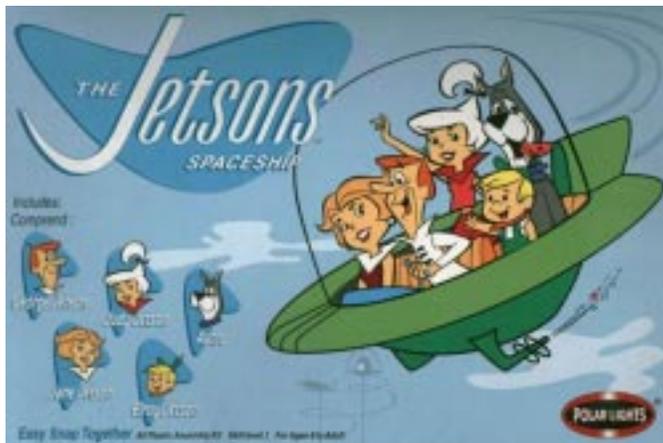
Articles:

- *Firebombing's Recycled Airliners* - Ed Davies (Airways magazine, Apr. 1998)
- *Four-Engine Flagship* - Jon Proctor (Airliners magazine, Winter 1991)
- *The Story of an Aztec Viking* - Capitán Angel Luis Jiménez Aparicio (Airways magazine, Oct. 1999)
- *The Story of a Propliner* - Andrew Breeden (Airliners magazine, Nov/Dec 2001)

CLARIFICATION: Re. my last review on the Minicraft Boeing 707. When Pan American introduced the 707, it featured the full fuselage PAN AMERICAN titles with the Clipper's name painted right next to the passenger door at eye level on the white top, just over the blue cheat line. Later, when the carrier shortened its titles to PAN AM, it moved the Clipper's names to the white cheat line level with the floor. Also the actual "Clipper Mercury", a DC-6B, can be seen in William Holden's film "Love Is A Many Splendor Thing."

Out Of Box Review
by Jeff Forster IPMS#30833

The Jetsons Spaceship Polar Lights Kit # 06810



This is a new kit from Polar Lights based on the old Hanna-Barbera cartoon show, The Jetsons. I don't know about the rest of you but I sure remember spending more than my share of time in front of the TV on Saturday mornings watching the Jetsons. Did you every think that someone would put out a kit based on the Jetsons TV show?

This is a pretty simple kit to put together, it's a snap-together kit, so those of us with small ones in the house, better plan on picking up the required number for your household. The kit consists of five clear parts, nine plastic parts, and pre-painted figures of George, Jane, Judy, and Elroy Jetson as well as Astro, that wild mutt. The figures are much better than I would have thought they would be. The paint is nice and crisp with no bleed over, each one looks really fresh off the old film tape, like they've stepped right out of your TV screen. The kit itself is on par with other polar light kits I've seen, very crisp, and what seems to be their trade mark, no flash of any kind.

The space ship fits together very well and is molded in color so you don't have to paint it if you don't want to but it would look great with a really nice paint job with some metallic flakes. One of the clear parts is a large round globe on which you will mount a stand to hold the ship, also you have some clear parts that represent the small puff's of smoke from exhaust just like the cartoons. This looks like it's going to be a really fun kit to build and you should'nt have to spend a lot time at it. Great for when you want something different than the usual. I can imagine all the different things I'll be able to do with this kit. Some great dioramas or collections come to mind pretty quickly. I would recommend buying it just for the sheer fun of building a nice simple kit, It may not be a car or tank or even, heaven forbid, an airplane kit, but I would still recommend it as well as some of the other polar light kits that are out now or will be in the near future.

(Bison II continued)

weathered the tracks and lower hull with heavy brown pastel chalk.

Decals

Kit decals went on without a hitch. I applied the kit decals over the gloss coat using Future. I wished that the crosses were a tad smaller as they looked a tad awkward on the gun shields. I then sprayed dull coat over the model to seal things up.

Conclusion

I took the completed model and set it in the soil of my garden for the completed shots. (Sorry we gave away the sand box.) This kit builds up fairly easily to a really nice representation of this self-propelled gun. I have a collection of Sig-33 equipped vehicles so this one really hit the spot. I recommend it to the average level armor builder due to the separate tracks. The way Alan Hobby's quality keeps improving with every kit and their variety, I can't wait to see what they come up with next!

(Rapier Review continued)

A decent Scale-Masters decal sheet is provided, but the national insignias are smaller than those seen on pix of the fullscale mockup.

Although the fullscale mockup was done in the all-white test scheme common in those days, it is highly probable that production versions would have been painted in typical Deuce/Six ADC gray overall. And, since the F-108 was to replace the Six, and the vertical fins of both aircraft are remarkably similar, I see no reason why currently available F-106 tail logo decals couldn't be used as well.

The instruction pamphlet is interesting from an historical point of view, including lotsa press releases from the Fifties and a decent three view, but the assembly drawings are very rudimentary, really just rough sketches, not even in the same galaxy as Bill Koster's hand-drawn work!

She would've been quite an aerochine, the Rapier, and it's truly unfortunate that the consummate designers at North American had to run into Kelly Johnson and his storied magicians at Lockheed's Skunk Works, especially since only three YF-12s were ever built. Warts and all, Bondo still likes the kit, and it's got real potential. Just grit your teeth, get out your checkbook, and get with the program!

(Minutes continued)

Quarterly Contest

We had thirteen (13) models this time and it was quite a diverse group. The winners received gift certificates from Kings hobby. Third place winner was Bob Keiras for his Dash 7 aircraft. Second Place went to Richard Eaton for his 1/350 scale Arizona, and Phil Brant's T4 Sotka aircraft won First place. Congratulations to all the winners.

D. Ranney

Old Rumors & New Kits

Probably the biggest news this month is that the Tamiya Me 262 will soon be available. It's already out in Japan and some local souls already have it. Not me. I'll wait. You see, I now have this problem with new kits—I have to catch up on the building before I buy anymore. Besides, that kit will be around for a while. I haven't seen it but I hear it's really nice with a molded metal nose wheel bay that gives just the right amount of weight to keep the nose down. And it looks like we'll see another version or two before the kit runs its course. Except for the two-seater—that one, if it comes, will need an all new fuselage.

There are a lot of items in the pipeline right now, trying to get in during the "first quarter." Unfortunately, some of the things I really want to see have made their presence felt. There has been absolutely no word for example on the Hobbycraft B-36s or their Cougars. I'm hoping the B-36 will be as good as the B-47.

One of the best bits of news comes from Roden. No, not the Japanese flying monster...the Ukraine modeling company. Their site shows them venturing into the proper scale: 1/48. And the kit I really want to see is the Gloster Gladiator (it even has a number; kit 408) in 1/48. The Gladiator is a very interesting little airplane and the only ones around are the old Pyro/LifeLike/Lindberg kits. Not that these can't be built into good representations of the real thing, they are hard to find and the detail and engineering are sort of dated. So now Roden will do one, the early two-bladed prop version.

If you like WWI stuff, Roden has you covered there with a lot of good kits at reasonable prices, generally in 1/72 scale. But not to leave out the WWI modeler, they show three versions of the Sopwith one-and-one-half strutter biplane.

And just to show that they can also do modern aircraft, their list includes an An-12BK modern Russian transport in 1/72. This one has a release date of July.

AMTech has released their P-40E, which is basically the kit that AMT never released. It's pretty nice but is basically the parts that AMT had for their earlier N, L, M, and K versions of the P-40. This new kit builds up pretty well and with the much improved decals, makes a very convincing P-40E.

You may have heard that the resurrected Accurate Miniatures company plans on doing a P-40 as well, at least that's what their

(Styrene Six continued)

I'm sure that others have the same thing happen, but it really hit home I guess. Maybe I'm just rambling on about an inconsequential thing, I hope not. I like to think I got to see the very best that our hobby has to offer. In any event, I'll get off the soapbox with one last recommendation to you the reader; if yourself in a similar situation (frequent business travel), reach out. You may pleasantly surprised. I was.

web site indicates. Which version? Hmmm. Lets hope its a B-C to start with. Could be a series. If you're curious, go on-line and have a look at accurateminatures.com.

For you armor builders, the Fonderie Miniatures LCVP should be on the way by meeting time. I've always wondered by no one had bothered to do a decent landing craft. FM has done some good work so let's hope they do a good job on the LCVP.

Revell-Monogram's new 1/72 B-1B Lancer is supposed to be shipping this week as well. I hope it's a real "B". Absolutely no word on the Me 163 Pro Modeler kit (ex-DML) nor on the other kits announced last year. R-M has re-released their excellent PBY amphib version and a late version of the Ju 52 so they are certainly active.

Italeri is supposed to have their Priest out again and soon, if you believe the ads. Since my old NG unit was equipped with the Priest I may have to have a go at one, although it was not my favorite piece of equipment!

For helo fans, the Battle Axe Piasecki HUP-2 should be ready very soon. This one is in 1/48 and I really hope it's a good kit. Battle Axe reputation isn't great but the prototype was a fairly simple shape so let's hope the kit is doable.

I hear that Heller will be marketing a G-91 and AT6 Texan in 1/48 and that these are indeed from the Occidental molds. Not bad but the T6 is "too smooth" for my tastes. I still prefer the older but still very good Monogram kit. The G-91 is another story and probably one of the best things from Occidental.

Blue Max Phoenix D-2 in 1/48 should also be along pretty soon. These kits are for serious WWI builders and usually need quite a bit of work—make that patience. The Phoenix D-2 is one of my favorite WWI designs, having some of the most intricate all-wood fuselage designs.

For plastic and resin butchers, C&H has a set out to convert the R-M Harrier kit into a TAV-8B. No information on price or availability but the set includes ten pieces of resin to convert the kit into a two-seater. I'm assuming that the canopy is vac-formed.

If you aren't a regular reader of the HyperScale site, you should check it out. Bondo is a regular contributor and has some nice photos of his modified B-47H in 1/72. This is a good site to see first hand some of the new resin parts that are coming as well as excellent kit reviews. Just go to www.hyperscale.com and check out "What's New." This site developed and operated by Brett Green and it's full of really useful links. Brett is also a respected author of books on the Luftwaffe and a fine modeler.

That's about all I have for April. I hope you are building something. Bring it along to the meeting Thursday and show it off. See you there!

Milton

Air Show Schedule

Galveston, Tx Apr. 27-28 Spirit of Flight

Georgetown, Tx. May 3-5 Georgetown Airport

Abilene, Tx. May 11 Dyess AFB open house (Blue Angels)

El Paso, Tx. May 11-12 Amigo airshow

Laughlin AFB, Tx. May 12 Air Amistead (Thunderbirds)

Naval air station Ft. Worth May 11-12 (Blue Angels)

Little Rock AFB Ark. June 1-2 Warriors in Flight

Oklahoma City June 15 - 16 (Blue Angels)

Lubbock, Tx Sept. 7-8 (Thunderbirds)

Enid, OK. Sept. 21 Vance AFB air show 2002

Midland, Tx. Oct. 11-13 Gathering of Memories

San Marcos Tx Oct 11-13 Gathering of Memories

Ft. Worth, Tx Oct. 11-13 Ft Worth International Air Show (Thunderbirds)

New Orleans Oct. 25-27 N'awlins Air Show (Blue Angels)

Houston, Tx Oct 26-27 Wings Over Houston (Thunderbirds)

Lackland AFB, San Antonio Nov. 1-2 (Thunderbirds)

**Next Meeting:
Thursday, April 18**

