



IPMS/Republic of Texas

Newsletter of the Austin Scale Modelers Society

August 2002

SPRUE CONFESSIONS



Upgunning Revell's 1/72 PT 109

by Richard Eaton IPMS # 40101

I recently got back to a pet project I've contemplated for some time. I am a big fan of MTBs and had ordered some 1/72 metal guns from H-R Products at Floating Drydock. The idea was to bring the standard PT 109 kit up to late war configurations. Toward the end of hostilities, the PT boats were equipped with radar and a slew of really neat weapons. How does a 40 mm Bofors and a pair of 5-inch rocket launchers grab you? Read on.

PT Boat or Gun Ship?

"The Americans have a new weapon—a monster that roars, flaps its wings, and fires torpedoes in all directions" (From a captured Japanese war diary describing the "Devil Boats")

Throughout the war the ELCO 80' boats were periodically updated and reconfigured for missions they were called upon to perform. The boats actually took on a gun boat configuration, rather than their traditional torpedo role, because of the nature of wartime tactics in the Pacific. Many PT boats were given the tasks of harassing and controlling the enemy left behind on islands that were skipped over by the advancing allied forces. The PT boats became "Barge Busters" with their relentless attacks on enemy barges and boats used to supply and ferry the enemy from island to island. They were also called upon to support troop landings and rescues.

Their crews were made up of anywhere from 12-18 or more enlisted men and two or three officers. The actual number depended upon the number of guns and torpedoes that the boat carried and, to some degree, the manpower available. Boats were equipped with a variety of fire power and included two twin 50 caliber machine gun turrets as standard.

PT boat armament was an ever changing condition on PT boats throughout the war. This is a listing of various weapon systems found on PT boats:

- Lewis, 30 cal. machine guns
- Browning, 50 cal machine guns
- Oerlikon, 20 mm gun
- Bofors, 40 mm cannons
- M3 & M9 - 37 mm rapid fire cannons

- Thunderbolt System, 4 - 20 mm guns in turret mount (Oh man! Don't get me started.)
- Mark VII & VIII Torpedoes, (long, tube discharged)
- Mark XIII Torpedoes (short, roll-off rack)
- 300 & 600 lb.. depth charges
- 8 tube-rocket launcher for 5" rockets
- Hedgehog rocket launchers
- Deck mounted mortars

One can see that scratch and conversion projects abound for the Old Elco 80 footer!

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August 24, 2002
Sept. 14, 2002
October 12, 2002
October 19, 2002

From the Editor...

OK, guys, if it's not finished by now...! You get the picture; there's precious little time left to do it. I know some midnight oil will be burned before the 24th but we need you awake and alert for the show.

The next meeting of ASMS will be Thursday, August 15, at Luby's on North Loop at 7 p.m. Kenny tells me that the subject for the program will be Sci-Fi modeling resources and research. The meeting will also cover all the last minute details for the Austin Scale Model Show on Saturday, August 24. This is an important meeting so everyone needs to make a special effort to attend.

Well, the IPMS Nationals have come and gone and only a couple of local people made the trek back east. I hear that it was a good show, as usual, not large but adequate. The vendors were there but some of the big name manufacturers didn't show up until late. I guess that's indicative of their lack of announcements. I found a web site that had a lot of photos from the show but no word on what won what category. I still don't know much but we got the NCT (Dallas) Newsletter and it says their club took first place for the second year in a row for the Group/Chapter category! Congratulations to our fellow modelers from Big D! The title of the entry, which contained 32 models, was "100 Years of the US Navy Destroyer."

A few members ventured forth for a trip to Arlington on August 10 for the Forth Worth Model Show. Among those were Phil Brandt, Russ Holm, Carl Leidy, Marc Hobbs, Randy Steifer, Pat Rourke, Bruce Burden and Bob Bethea. I don't know who the other winners were, but Bondo took a second, a third, AND the President's Award. I'm sure there will be details aplenty on Thursday. See you then.

Milton

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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.

Contest Report:**The FINAL STRETCH**

Hi gang,

Well, I just returned from the Ft. Worth Supercon, where there was a record turnout for the contest. I am expecting the same thing for our show which will be less than two weeks away by the time this newsletter is distributed.

As usual, in these closing days, I am going to ask that everybody who has not signed up for one 2-hour work shift on Saturday please, PLEASE, do so. Here is a quick review of the jobs:

Cashiers: Greet the people entering, and take their money. General admission is \$5.00 per person over the age of 12, contest admission is a bit more complex, so we will have a sheet available to look up the entry fees.

You will also need to give contest entrants the appropriate number of contest entry sheets, and note on the sheet how many models will be entered in that category (juniors, aircraft, autos, dio, etc.)

For each paid visitor, provide an entry ticket. We need to get a “head count” of people who visit the show. These admission tickets are NOT raffle tickets!

Finally, you will also be selling **raffle tickets**.

This is perhaps the most difficult job that we have. For that reason, we have two people working this job to help distribute the load. This is probably the most important job as well, as everybody who visits the show will form opinions of the show on how well this area goes.

Registrars: Here you will collect the contest entry sheets, record a contestant number FOR EACH COLOR SHEET using the automatic stamping machines, and provide the contestant with the appropriate number of MATCHING COLOR contest display sheets.

Copy the contestant number from the contest entry sheet, then provide a sequential model number that always starts with “1” for EACH COLOR SHEET.

(The contestant number + the model number create a unique ID number for each model entered)

Contestants may have model entry sheets already filled out. In that case, use their sheets instead of the color matched blanks.

Judges: This one, I trust, is self explanatory. And, we NEVER HAVE ENOUGH JUDGES! If you have never judged before, no problem. It is simple, and we will pair you with experienced judges, who will explain what to look for.

Make 'n Take: Work with our young visitors and help them build what may be their first model. However, I would like to stress that this is not intended to be a baby sitting service! Encourage at least one parent to sit with their child(ren). With luck, you may get an adult interested in the hobby along with the child(ren).

Raffle: Sell more raffle tickets, draw winning tickets, post the winning tickets, restock the raffle prizes at intervals, and verify
(continued on page 10)

Styrene Six

Jarrold Cunningham

“Showtime!”

Well “plastic fanatics,” it’s time—the culmination of our collective and individual efforts is here. Time again to show our wares, observe others’ efforts, and scavenge the vendor tables. Every year it seems to me that we always build to this one event. Another “Christmas” if you will, the event that we look forward to from the time that we close the doors on the previous year’s event to the week or day before it starts. Some of us are always frantically trying to complete that last detail or pulling a “marathon” to get something finished.

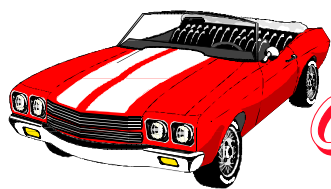
For me things are different. I see this year as a new challenge. A challenge to see if we can get it all together on our own this time. This the first time recent years, that the show will be solely OUR responsibility. For me, this will be a true determining factor to see if we can or are ready in the future to possibly take things up a notch and entertain the idea of hosting a Regional. I think we can, and I feel confident that the present show coordinators have the vision that I do. I would like so much for us to be in a position to do so financially, if we decide in the future to do this. This year’s event should tell us a great deal.

I won’t be showing anything this year. I have decided that, my involvement in the “make and take” takes precedence over completing anything worthy of exhibition. I very much enjoyed my time with this event last year, so I didn’t hesitate volunteering for it this year. For me it brings the “magic” back, even if it is not my model. I do wish all who have completed models the best of luck. I will enjoy seeing your efforts and I know that you all have worked very hard on your projects. I have had the pleasure of seeing some at the quarterly contests, and am looking forward to seeing the rest at the show.

Our next meeting will be the last before the “big event”. I know that there are still some “holes” in the job roster. Not every job is the most enjoyable, but they ALL have to get done. Please refer to the sign up sheets at the next meeting, and see what needs to be done. I hope to see you all there. Best of wishes to the “marathoners” out there! I hope you get them done (the models).

Happy Modeling,

Jarrold



CAR CORNER

by Skip Perrine
IPMS 40167

This time I am looking at a reissue for the “what” time? Revell-Monogram must be running out of stuff to bring us, because they have once again reissued a '58 Ford Thunderbird Convertible 2 'n 1 kit. Now let's for the sake-of-our-sanity look back at how many times they've reissued this kit.



I can myself name off about three but there may be more. There was the Ricky Valenz T-Bird, then there was the El Vira T-Bird, then the Classics series, and now this one, and all are offshoots of the first one which was actually a 5-n-1 kit, it could be built stock, custom, wild custom, race, and something sort of—back then—space age .

Well it is back again and this time they decided to try to bring us more goodies in the kit, so it looks like they had some of the old original kit “surface” in this offering. It's molded in white, clear and chrome with transparent red for the taillights.

One of the more controversial designs of the 1950s, the '58 Thunderbird, has withstood the test of time and proven itself a milestone of the automotive world. Shunned by some car enthusiasts when it debuted, it has finally come into its own and gained the recognition it so richly deserved as a collectible car. It was also a resounding sales success in a year which was dismal for the auto industry as a whole.

The four-seater Thunderbird was one of the first in a long line of what would eventually become known as “personal luxury” cars. It wasn't long before customizers of the era started looking at it as the perfect canvas for their wild designs and versions of what they thought a personal car could look like. Before long, the new “Birds” were showing up on the show car circuit sporting everything from bubble tops to “toothy” grilles.

This kit gives me the choice of building my car the way the designers of that day in Detroit intended it, or going a little crazy and making it any way I feel comfortable with. I think since it comes with two different sets of wheels, I am going to put the mags on it and save the “flipper style” hubcaps for some other era custom or High School hot rod.

Mine started out to be purple but it just didn't have the “shine” that I was looking for, so I painted it a deep blue metallic with a blue and grey interior to compliment the exterior. I painted the 17-piece engine Ford Engine Blue. It also comes with wide whitewalls for the complete era custom look. On mine, since I liked the stock front bumper, I used household bleach to “bleach” off the chrome and painted it to match the rest of the car.

All in all this is a nice reissue and R/M is to be commended on a job well done, but I wish they would bring back some other kits that have since become major price takers on Ebay and on vendors tables.

The kit has very little, if any flash to be trimmed off and the chrome is very clean. It builds up nicely, and since I have several of these kits, it's no surprise to me that it is just as nice as its predecessors.

Skipster



Die Cast—like it or not, it's an eye-catcher. This is a '34 Ford 3-window Coupe with some really nice detail and a great paint job. This is from Skip's collection.



First Look!**Hasegawa's 1/48 Arado Ar 234B**

by Milton Bell, IPMS 16702



If you've been holding on to that Hobby Craft kit, waiting for just the right resin and PE aftermarket candy to come along, forget it. Hasegawa has released, in Japan at least, the definitive kit of this twin-jet recon/bomber that in many ways was superior to the vaunted Me 262.

This kit should be ready for general release later this month. I ordered one from Japan as soon as I found out that it was available. I figure it will be priced about the same as recent releases from Hasegawa or somewhere in the mid-\$30 range—the Japanese price is 3400 yen. Is it worth it? That all depends on what you want. Right away, I can say this is a very nice kit—possibly the best that Hasegawa has done. If you want a kit that has ample detail, relatively easy construction, and is an interesting subject, then yes, it's worth the cost.

As it comes, the kit will work up into a very nice model without the aid of after-market parts but with a kit this nice and as much extra work that can conceivably be done, someone will surely do some PE and resin extras. The only thing I can see that is missing is seat belts and here I recommend the new pre-painted ones from Eduard. I expect Eduard to come out with a set of masks for the canopy as well as the splinter camouflage pattern.

All that aside, what do you get for your money? You can build one of three 8.KG76 aircraft, including W. Nr 140312 which is the aircraft being restored at NASM Silver Hill MD. This Ar 234B was captured by the RAF in Stavanger, Norway. Markings for Ar 234B-2, a bomber version that participated in the attack on the Bridge at Remagen is included along with a well detailed 1000 KG bomb.

The third version is described in the instructions as an aircraft of 9./KG76 flown by Hpt. Joseph Regler in "winter camouflage." A photo of the same aircraft appears in the Monogram Close-Up 23, page 19, and is captioned "...W.Nr. 140173, F1+MT...shot down by American P-47s on February 24, 1945..." It goes on to say that it was captured before the Luftwaffe could recover it and it was shipped to the RAE for detailed examination and the

camouflage pattern was overpainted by liberal amounts of light blue at the unit level. So, which is right? Personally, I'd go with Monogram. I figure their researcher spent more time on the project and was after a different end than Hasegawa.

Those are the versions supplied in the kit. You get the 100 KG bomb, two fuel tanks that attach to the underside of each engine as well as two very well detailed rocket (RATO) engines.

Doing a kit of an aircraft that featured such a clear "glass nose" such as the Ar 234 is an engineering challenge. Hasegawa chose to make the canopy/nose in four pieces of very clear and well detailed plastic. The principal parts are divided into left and right halves and it will be necessary to paint these clear parts on the inside. Yeah, I know, it's a little scary but with some careful masking you can do it. There are several "fiddly bits" that are attached to the inside as well. These two halves of clear capture the cockpit tub which incorporates the good detail typical of Hasegawa. OK, I'm not into counting parts but the cockpit and clear nose contain 31 separate parts...not counting the decals that are included as an option to painting the fine raised details of the consoles and instruments. When you get all the parts for the cockpit together you have built the equivalent of a small kit!

Moving aft to the camera compartment, there are two cameras if you choose to model the recon version. These cameras are made up of only 17 parts and they look pretty convincing on the runner. Of course, a lot of detail can't be seen but the model has the camera port panel molded in clear.

After reading a couple of reviews by modelers who have built it, I can say that there are very few problems the average modeler will encounter. First off, be careful. Some of these parts are really small and you can spend a lot of time looking for a dropped part. Also, be careful how you cut them off the runner—I recommend good sharp clippers.

Construction problems? The first photo I saw of the Ar 234 under construction showed a problem with the wing-fuselage joint. I have since learned that this can be alleviated by simply removing the locator pins from the wing parts. The other problem can be with a bad fit of the aft cockpit bulkhead (A-18). It may be a little wide so, some careful fitting is called for.

What's missing? For starters, most of the photos I've seen show the step extended and the top hatch open. I suppose if you really wanted to open the hatch you could but there is a lot of detail you'll have to add. I think I'll pass this time however I imagine someone will eventually offer some alternate clear parts.

Summing up, this is an impressive kit, well engineered and well detailed. It should help fill a niche that's been neglected for a long time, that of operational Luftwaffe jet aircraft. The Me 262 wasn't the only one and the Ar 234 flew recon missions over London, in relative safety, even near the end of the war. An Ar 234C will be released through Revell-Monogram later.

Milton

*(Elco PT Boat continued)***The Model**

I won't write much on building the old Revell kit as there are readily available articles on how to build and improve on it. It has fairly good detail, little flash for its era, and provides a good base for detail and modification. I built it OOB, used H-R Products parts, and a few basic techniques add even more fire power to this already dangerous boat.

Starting with an assembled boat, my first step was cutting out the existing details where the new parts were to be added. I dremeled out the 20 mm rear gun mount and life raft mountings in the bow. I used .010 Evergreen sheet to cover holes and provide mounting plates. I planned to add the following toys to the boat.

A single 40 mm MK3 Bofors mount to the rear.
 MK50 5 inch rocket tubes to the sides.
 Single 20 mm Oerlikon gun to the bow.
 Single 37 mm M9 rapid fire cannon to the bow.
 Upgrade electronics including an early radar fitting.

Let's see, that on top of the pair of twin fifties and MK XVIII torpedo tubes. Yep, that ought do it!

H-R Products make excellent ship cast metal fittings and guns. The 20 mm Oerlikon gun and MK4 mount had a bit of flash and mold imperfections to them. Careful filing and sanding cleaned them right up. The scale and detail leave the original Revell part in the dust. I had a couple of guns so I used a spare ammo can as a ready up in the model. The guns were unshielded on PT boats so I did not use that part.



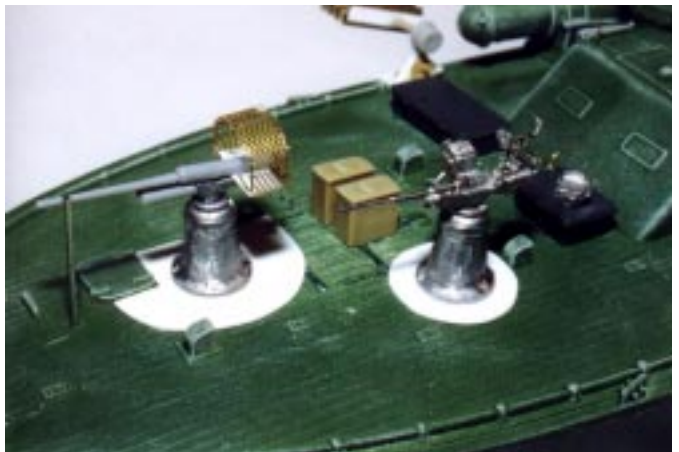
The H-R Products single 40 mm MK3 Bofors was a nice little kit in it self. It consisted of a base, gun mount, gun, sights, shell shoots, seats, and control cranks. I just cleaned up the parts a tad and put it together with CA using my references. Once assembled, I added scratched rear railings out of brass wire. The final assembly was pleasing and spot-on scalewise.

The MK50 rocket launchers were a scratch item that took a bit more planning. I had to have them though. I used brass tubing cut to length with a Dremel tool. Once filed and sanded I assembled the eight tube launchers with CA and added mounting hardware



out of stretched sprue and various hardware from the old parts bin. I fixed them in firing position rather than make them swing in to the loading/storage position.

Next up was that crazy looking M9 37 mm rapid firing cannon. Hmmmm, time to scratch again! I used one of the H-R 20 mm bases and cut down a 20 mm gun to form the base of the cannon. I used stretched sprue and a left over barrel to form the cannon and recoil systems. Brass wire and mesh made up the strange looking ammo basket on top. No kidding, that's the way it looked! This was originally the nose gun of the Bell Aircobra and was adapted for PT use primarily for fighting barges. That's one 37 mm the Navy did not have to borrow from the Army!



The last item I added was a mid-war radar system used in commander's boats. I reshaped the drop tank from a 1/72 Zero for the canvas cover and scratched a mount. A converted ammo box formed the base electronics. I also added additional aerials for the mid war radio systems.

I then modified and placed a few miscellaneous boxes from the parts bin for ammo containers in the various firing positions and the conversion was complete. A minor upgrade in fire power wouldn't you say?

I re-sprayed the assembled kit with forest green and dry brushed heavily to give it that sun worn look. The guns were painted with Testor's burnt metal. I finished the gun barrels with Testor's

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Box Review:**Academy M3 Stuart "Honey"**

by Bruce Burden, IPMS 30968



Once upon a time, a company in a land far away, released a kit of the M3 US light tank. That kit, in time, was joined by the M5A1 US light tank and the M8 Howitzer Motor Carriage, which utilized many of the components of the M3/M5 light tanks. Thus was the state of the market for approximately 25 years.

Finally, we received word of a new M3 kit, but, not from the plastic colossus that gave us the now long in the tooth kits of yesteryear. Word also came that there would be at least two kits, an M3, which gained fame with British forces in the desert, and an M3A1, which US troops were more likely to have had. Eventually, the Academy kit of the M3 Stuart (aka "Honey") arrived.

First look:

Upon opening the box, you are greeted by the sight of the upper hull, which is very nice. In the same plastic bag is the lower hull, which mates to the upper hull very well. Sorting through the plastic bags, you have a sprue with the welded turret and a turret basket (more on this later). A much larger bag provides two lengths of flexible molded track, and various internal and external bits, another bag contains even more internal bits like a floor and ammunition racks, two sprue of end connectors and finally, a fifth large plastic bag with two sprue of track pads and a large sprue of suspension components, including spoked and solid idlers and road wheels. A bit of string, instructions, one sheet of markings (two British and one American scheme) and some nicely printed decals finish up the contents.

Gaffs:

There is only one real mistake with this kit, and that is the aforementioned turret basket. The M3 didn't have a turret basket, which was one of the (few) complaints the British had with this vehicle.

Nits:

From what I have been able to gather, almost all of the M3s sent

to the British appear to have been early production vehicles. That being the case, there are two rivets missing from the right side of the sponson. The photo in the lower left of page 392 in *Stuart: A History of the American Light Tank, Volume One* by R.P. Hunnicutt shows the two rivets clearly. As the British did not share the American passion for festooning their tanks with machine guns, the sponson mounted, forward firing .30 caliber machine guns were removed, and the ports blocked off. Academy provides square plugs for this, but the photo at the top of page 392 in *Stuart* shows the British used something more akin to a conical rivet.

Finally, Academy did a very nice job detailing the underside of the lower hull. Unfortunately, they missed the rivets on the underside of the sponsons (space these rivets the same distance back from the edge and distance apart as the rivets on the side of the sponsons, including the front and back edges, and you are set), plus they may have missed the two "C" channel stiffeners between the two bogey pivots. See the photo on the bottom of page 146 in *Stuart*, and make your own decision.

Interior:

It is possible that the interior is that of an American vehicle. Certainly the interior provided with the kit doesn't match the British stowage drawings for an M3. However, it is quite possible that the British were desperate enough for these tanks (any tanks!) that they didn't wait to convert them to British W/T sets and stowage before issuing them to the troops. In *Stuart*, the British stowage details are shown on page 393, which are dated 20 September 1941. Since the M3s entered service in June, I wouldn't get too excited about the interior.

Gun:

A respected reviewer commented in his review that it would be difficult to fit an aftermarket gun to this kit. While his statement is certainly valid, I don't see a reason for an aftermarket gun barrel. Academy has molded the 37mm cannon in two pieces: everything from the breech to nearly the end of the muzzle, and a short cylinder which is then glued to the end of the barrel to form the actual muzzle. As long as the gun is molded reasonably round (and my copy does appear to be round), there really is no reason to replace the kit part.

Tracks:

The individual link track pads are marred with the presence of what appears to be heat shrinks on both sides of the pads. This is a minor, but tedious, condition to correct. The flexible lengths of track look very good, and don't appear to be so stiff as to insist on riding off of the return rollers, idlers and sprockets. Hopefully, they are the correct length, and won't pull any of the suspension bits out of alignment over time.

Overall:

Academy is to be commended for producing this kit. Aside from some minor nits, and the easily avoided turret basket gaff, they have done a superb job. The decision to include both individual

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Small Scales

A closer look

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Milton Bell

Minicraft 1/144 AIR-SEA RESCUE PB-5A CATALINA

Kit #: 14435/4435
 Vintage: 1995/1996
 Origin: ? / China,
 Decals: Mexico/Italy
 Parts: 70 (57 gray or silver, 13 clear)
 Markings: USAF Rescue/USN, early 1941
 Options: None

Background:

The initial version of the Catalina, the XP3Y-1, made its maiden flight nearly 70 years ago! The last cat came off the assembly line in 1945. The Catalina, or “Cat,” was a mainstay Patrol Bomber (PB) for the navy throughout WWII. It was operated by many other nations and was in use by civilian operators for years afterward.

When I was about five years old, my Dad worked for Consolidated Aircraft in San Diego. That’s where the “Y” comes in PBY. It stands for Consolidated. He worked on some of the tooling for the Cats for a time before moving on to the Coronado project.

Back then, seeing Catalinas flying by was not uncommon at all. Now you have to go to an airshow just to see one parked but some are still in use today as inter-island “taxis” or as fire-fighting

borate bombers. They made a name for themselves early on however as patrol craft, spotting the Japanese task force at Midway, finding submarines in the Atlantic—and sinking many—and as a rescue aircraft they spelled the difference between life and death for downed aircrews.

The Catalina was a good sized aircraft with a wingspan of 104 feet and length of 63.8 feet. As you can see, there was a lot of wing on this one! It wasn’t speedy, just 175 mph max and 113 mph cruise. Its range however was 2,350 miles. It wasn’t heavily armed, carrying only three .30 caliber machine guns and two .50 cal. guns in the twin “blister” turrets. It could carry four 1000 pound bombs or two torpedoes or four depth charges.

The Kit:

The latest version of this kit comes from China. For some reason I believe the original release back in 1995 came from Korea but I’ve not been able to confirm this. The latest version is still the same tool—it’s just older and shows its age a little. It can be built with wheels up or down and with the wing tip floats either retracted or extended.

If you choose to put it on its wheels, better get out the lead weights or you’ll have a tail sitter for sure. Adding weight can be a challenge. About the only effective place for it is around the nose gear well but be careful since it’s not boxed in. Neither is there a bulkhead between the cockpit and the areas aft. Place shot in the nose and if it’s not secured, it’ll roll to the tail! Not good. I recommend added a bulkhead just aft of the cockpit to seal off the nose compartment. There should be ample room for weight around the nose wheel but it’s going to be close.

There isn’t any detail around the nose gear but the main gear wells have adequate detail for this scale. Each main gear consists of five pieces including the wheel and in this scale they can be a challenge to get right.

Fuselage:

Construction of the Catalina is straightforward. Work begins with the cockpit which consists of a basic floor with molded in seats, what passes for an instrument panel and the molded in location for the front turret. There are three choices for the front turret including the twin .30 “eyeball” mount. Very little can be seen inside the cockpit but the two separate control yokes are not correct. I removed the stands and mounted the two “wheels” on a bar made from a piece of thin wire and bent to an inverted “U” shape. Painted black and drybrushed, it’s nearly invisible in the finished model but I know it’s there!

Fitting the cockpit in the fuselage can be tricky, so do a lot of dry fitting to be sure you have it in the right place. It should be centered in the opening but the raised steps needed to be modified in my examples.

Each fuselage half gets three very small clear windows. These are added from the inside and not a one of mine was long enough to extend through the fuselage wall. Solution? Grind down the

fuselage wall so they will reach or pitch the lot and use Krystal Kleer. In this scale, since the clear parts are quite small, Krystal Kleer is the way to go.

The two blister turrets are a different matter. These are signatures of the later Cats and are relatively clear but can benefit from a dunk in Future. The framing is not deep but is adequate for masking. The contours of the blisters fit the fuselage well enough and can be faired in with white glue if needed.

A real tricky area, and one of concern, is the wheel well. Each well is molded in a single piece which attaches inside the fuselage behind the opening. The problem is that the notches and steps will not let the landing gear attachment points line up. Solution? Line up the major vertical feature of the wheel well with the opening and sand the bottom of the well to fit. Unfortunately, this is a sand and fit...sand and fit operation but be patient—it will work.

The fuselage has no floor in the aft compartment. You can add one if you like but again, you can't see much through the blisters even after a good dunk in Future. It's your call. Be sure to mount the two .50 cal machine guns after the fuselage halves are together but before you add the blisters! Also, incline them inward. I used white glue to attach mine since it's more resilient than liquid cement or CA. You can hold off on installing the front turret until later. Do it now and it will be in the way when you start filling and sanding seams. That's right, you will need a little filler on the fuselage section between the turret and canopy. Generally, the fuselage halves go together with very little seam adjustment provided you give each piece a light rubdown with a coarse sanding stick. You may remove the locator pins if you wish—with a good liquid cement such as Tenax or Tamiya Cement you won't need them.

Wings:

Since I elected to have mine sitting on its landing gear, I opted for retracting the wing tip floats. First of all, I assembled the major wing parts. I lined them up with no problem, gave them a shot of liquid cement and they were dry in minutes. Again, I roughed up the mating surfaces with a coarse sanding stick. The tip floats were added last and trimmed and sanded to fit. The locator pins/hinge pins were removed. After I was satisfied with the fit, a drop of liquid cement held them in place. There are two pieces (parts A19 and A20) that fill in the major gap in the float struts. These needed special attention with the sanding stick to insure a good fit. Take your time and it will all work! That's about all there is to the wing. The engines will take a little more work though.

The horizontal stabs-elevators are one piece, left and right, and fit fairly well although I had to sand down the elevator portion and the tab which is inserted into the vertical fin. A round file is a good tool to remove the too-large fillet here and there will be some filling. That big cutout in the rudder is semi-accurate. It allows the rudder to swing over the mid-section of the stabilizer. Remember, there is no dihedral here!

Engines:

The two engines, their front cowling, exhausts, and intakes are separate pieces. First of all, there is some trimming to do to the engines. Paint them before if you wish but the tops of the heads will have to be sanded down severely to get them to fit in the cowlings. The engines should come all the way forward to the lip of the cowling. Otherwise, the props will be too close to the cowling. Paint the engines gunmetal or silver with a black wash and paint the crankcase gray. After the engines are attached to the wing assembly, add parts A44. These do not fit well because the locating tab is much too large. Either sand it down severely or remove it. These parts are really small so be careful.

Now, according to the instructions, you should be ready to attach the wing to the fuselage. I prefer to mask and paint mine before but it's your call.

Cockpit Canopy:

Why is this at the end? Well, I like to attack the troublesome parts after I've sanded down all the seams. By you probably have attached the blisters, the wing is ready to go (except for the props) and the last major work is the canopy. It's small, clear enough, but attached to the runner very poorly. If you aren't careful, cutting it off the runner will scar the clear window. Get out the candle and an old No. 11 blade. Heat the blade over the candle until it will slice through the runner with just a little effort. Try it on the runner first, then cut free the canopy...not too close—you don't want to damage it with heat.

Removing the cutoff point will require some sanding and polishing before the dunk in Future. This is one of the worst fits of the kit and will require some serious trimming and careful fitting. Attach it with white glue. After it sets up, you may have to do some more trimming and filling with white glue. Smooth your work with a wet finger, trying not to get glue all over your canopy. If you do, remove it with water. Don't use alcohol or Windex. Either one will remove the Future.

Final Assembly:

On paint jobs that require a lot of masking, I prefer to do the painting before the final assembly. In this case, the four struts that support the wing can be painted separately then added to the model. Any attachment point that needs it can be touched up with a small brush and the right paint.

This is a nice little model of an important aircraft. It's colorful in USAF markings and takes up very little shelf space—especially when compared to the 1/48 version. It's not a "shake-and-bake" kit but it's fun and that's what the hobby is supposed to be.

References:

PBY Catalina in Action, Aircraft No. 62, Squadron Signal Publications.
PBY Catalina Walk Around, Squadron Signal Publications
PBY Catalina, Detail & Scale, Bert Kinzey, Squadron Signal Publications

(Elco PT Boat continued)



steel to make them stand out from all that green. A decal upgrade to late war numbers rounded out the boat.

Conclusion

I recommend the basic Revell PT 109 kit to children of all ages. It builds up to an impressive model and includes a nice little history lesson. I must have built this 10 times over the years starting at around age eight. More experienced modelers could go to town detailing and scratching parts on this one as I have done. You don't have to stop where I did! Now let's see a 20 mm thunderbolt system and hedge hogs on the bow. Next time!

Richard

(Stuart "Honey" continued)

links and a flexible length should appeal to all modelers, and is something that I would like to see certain other manufacturers adopt. The parts, particularly the British stowage, appear to match period photos very well, and the basic kit parts appear to match various plans, including the no longer available sets released by the US Ordnance Museum at Aberdeen Proving Grounds, Maryland.

When you consider that all of this is available for approximately \$23.00 (while a decades old M3A1 kit from a certain plastic colossus costs approximately \$17.00), you appreciate what Academy has done all the more. Hopefully Academy will release more kits of this series, and not stop with the previously announced M3A1 kit (which does use the turret basket!)

Bruce

(Contest Report continued)

winning tickets, plus removing the claimed numbers from the board.

Photographers: I would like to get three or four volunteers to photograph each model entered. You will need a digital camera, storage for approximately 300 photos (or the ability to download the images to your laptop or my laptop.)

To keep this manageable, start recording the models around 10:00 AM. To track which models have been recorded, colored dots will be provided, which you put on the display sheet of the model.

Please bring your camera to the meeting Thursday if you don't have enough storage, and you want to try and download the photos to my laptop. I should be able to read everything **BUT SONY** memory sticks.

We have around 36 people at every club meeting. If everybody will sign up for one 2-hour job shift (other than judging), there is no reason for anybody to work more than two hours (except for the judges).

If you have already signed up, and I know a core group signs up for multiple jobs year after year, THANK YOU!

A word on Friday night set-up: Unknown! The last I heard, nobody had contracted Crockett Center for Friday night. As long as nobody does, we will plan to do the set up starting at 6:00 PM. Set up will mean table shuffling (but, not setup), adding the leg extensions, putting the table coverings down, setting up the contest categories and assigning vendor tables. There should be little heavy work to do.

Bruce

Next Year's Nats in OK City

Just a little reminder that next year's IPMS/USA National Convention will be just across the Red River in Oklahoma City. Any closer and it would be in Texas! It's not too early to start to plan on making the trek north. If you plan ahead, there's no reason a small group couldn't rent a van and share the travel expenses.

If you want to find more about the Oklahoma event and even download the entry forms, here is the URL:

http://ipmsmetrookc.org/Nats_2003/index.html

The site for the 2004 convention will be back in Phoenix. That's not too far to travel either. I hope several of us can attend both shows and "show the colors."

As far as I know, only two Austin modelers made the trip to Virginia Beach. They were John Hernandez and George Lewis.



Coming Next Month: Tamiya's 1/72 P-51D. How to build it.

Old Rumors & New Kits

There weren't a lot of announcements coming out of the Nationals this year. The biggest was probably from AMTech's Alan Griffith who displayed drawings for his new P-61 Black Widow and F-15 Reporter. These are totally new kits and in 1/48 scale. The old Monogram kit of the 'widow is beginning to show its age so a new and improved, i.e., current technology, kit will be welcome and a chance to do a Reporter will be a real treat. And that's not all from AMTech—look for an EC-135 and more variants of the P-40, based of course on the AMT tools.

There were no major announcements from Tamiya or Hasegawa or any of the other foreign based manufacturers. Most of these announcements were made months ago. Now, we're just waiting to see when they produce. One of the best rumors at the Nats, and one that has surfaced before, is that Tamiya will do a 1/32 Corsair to go with their excellent Zero. It makes sense to do a pair of adversaries but I'd almost rather see them do a Hellcat since Trumpeter has already announced a Corsair.

Revell-Monogram was on hand and had the box-art for some re-releases plus some "new" Pro Modeler series kits that include a -5N Corsair, a Blue Angels A-4E/F, and F-4E, all of which will be Hasegawa kits in PM boxes with new markings. Two other kits from this arrangement are a 1/32 Bf109G-4 Trop and a 1/48 Ar234C. Kits to be re-released are the F-102 Delta Dagger (Monogram boxing) and the F-105G and the venerable Wright Flyer (Revell boxing). While not evident by box art, there was a strong rumor that the EA-6B would also be re-released next year. Let's hope we see the A-6E again some day.

R-M's next release, if it's not there already, should be a Ju 87R2 and a 1/72 F-14D Tomcat with a book. Adding a book seems to be a new trend.

Those folks at Hobby Craft have apparently fixed the problem with the missing clear parts from their 1/144 B-36 Ficon kit. I hear they were selling them at the Squadron Open House in Carrollton last weekend. If you get one, be careful opening the box—the clear parts for the F-84 and Goblin are in a separate bag that measures only about an inch on a side!

Also seen at the SMO Open House was the new T-34 Turbo Mentor, or at least a sample of the runners and parts. This 1/48 scale kit should be out soon and will fill another gap in training aircraft. Speaking of trainers, the old Monogram T-28 Trojan will get a boost with the new resin interior from Black Box. I've not seen it yet but that's one of the major failings of the kit. Now maybe I'll get one of mine finished!

Gavia has a new and improved version of their La-7 kit that contains resin and PE parts. They have done the same thing apparently with the Lysander, making it a carrier for "special operations." Eduard has released a P-40M that's basically the

old but nice Mauve kit with lots of resin extras and PE plus some new markings. It's a similar kit to the earlier P-40N that had Eduard PE, Aires resin, and Aeromaster decals.

Roden has a color picture of the box art for their 1/48 Gloster Gladiator on their web site. Look for an October release. The other 1/48 releases from this company should be released at about the same time.

Tamiya isn't following the trend of adding books to kits; they're adding kettenkraftrads. Not only can you get one with the Me 262 but now with the Do 335 and the Ta 183. What would really look good, and authentic, would be one with the new Hasegawa Ar 234! Tamiya has released a very nice looking earlier version of the Gekko or "Irving." This is the hump-back version and features obliquely firing cannon, top and bottom. There's plenty of detail in the Tamiya style. They also have re-released their F4U-1D with a ground tug (tractor).

For armor enthusiasts, Tamiya has announced a Marder IIIM. Sorry, I don't have a release date. It's not a real biggie but I'm sure the type has some fans out there and it will probably be a good kit.

Trumpeter has a couple of Swedish tanks on the way, an STRV 103B and 103C, main battle tank. AFV has released an M41 Walker Bulldog that I hear is pretty nice and DML has a new Panther D.

Trumpeter also has released a series of MiG fighters. They have a MiG 19s, 19PM, and a Shenyang trainer. I've heard that these are essentially the same kit as the one released by HPM. The other kits are MiG 15s, a UTI two-seater and a bis "Faggot."

As usual there are some new decals. Actually there are more than I can keep up with but I've seen some really nice ones for P-51D Checker Tails and a new sheet for the Revell F-86D. That's the one with the 'chute door. Super Scale has a nice sheet out for Ju88A's as well.

Revell-Monogram seems to be doing more with cars than anything else. They have a new VW Beetle in the Tuner Series and in their NASCAR series they have the #6 Viagra Taurus. AMT-Ertl has a '64 Chevy Impala Low Rider.

Speaking of cars, a lot of car modelers like to display their models on turntables. That ought to work just as well for aircraft or armor or figures for that matter. I really hate having to go around a table to see the backside of a model, especially a figure. George Haines found a source for battery powered turntables and they aren't that expensive. You can get them from Orange Grove Hobbies, 11370 Hwy. 49, Gulfport MS 39503, or give them a call at 228 832-0100. The prices range from \$12 to \$20 or so.

That's all for this month. Good luck at the Austin Show!

Milton

Air Show Schedule

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, August 15**

