



IPMS/Republic of Texas

SPRUE EXAMINER



The Grumman F7F-3N Tigercat

by

"Bondo" Phil Brandt, IPMS 14091

Background

Bondo loves black airplanes! Especially weathered, dirty airframes with exhaust residue all over the place. The hectic early days of the Korean conflict produced just such a combination when VMF(N)-513 cloaked their powerful F7F-3N nightfighters in just such a color scheme, operating from PSP matting, with dirt blowing in all directions. The Tigercat profile and planform have always attracted this non-navy troop. The slim fuselage and humongous recip engine nacelles are purposeful and 'mean', a proper nightfighter look, in my estimation.

The Model

Well before AMT released their definitive 1/48 injected kit, I had purchased the quite decent Classic Castings all-resin kit which provided parts for all versions. I didn't start the kit right away, and the project was overcome by events, namely AMT's release. Initially AMT released

only the F7F-3, so I converted the basic fighter to the -3N. In retrospect, this turned out to be a good decision because the later release of the AMT -3N had an undersized forward fuselage/radome.

Fuselage

The entire AMT fuselage forward of the windscreen was replaced by the correctly proportioned Classic Castings -3N resin version. This monolithic resin chunk also helped move the CG forward, but I still had to anchor the nosewheel to the base. Turns out that in real life the Tigercat at rest would sometimes tilt back on its tail if the fuel tanks were not adequately filled, and there are pics to prove it!

Cockpits

The aft cockpit was cut out and interior detail—Cutting edge had not yet done their very nice Tigercat cockpit sets—from the Classic Castings kit added to both cockpits. The aft canopy is the vacuformed one, also from the Classic kit. Yellow tapered rod antennas were added per closeup pics of the real thing. Note that the

(continued on page 10)

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

Roll Models

P.O. Box 27066
Golden valley, MN 55427

Show Schedule

CALMEX 17, Lake Charles LA	Jan. 19, 2003
ModelFiesta XXII, Live Oak Civic Center	March 8, 2003
MetroPlex Car Model Club	March 22, 2003
IPMS/Central Arkansas Scale Modelers, Little Rock AR	May 2-4, 2003
NCT ScaleFest, Mesquite Rodeo Center	May 24, 2003
IPMS National Convention, Oklahoma City OK	July 2-5, 2003
SuperCon, Fort Worth (Arlington)	August 9, 2003
West Central Missouri	Sept. 20, 2003
GASCON IV, Greater Abilene Scale Modelers, Abilene TX	Oct. 11, 2003

From the Editor...

OK, Gang ! Time for a new start on a brand new year. I hope you all had a great Christmas season and found just what you wanted in your stocking. Now it's back to work and modeling in 2003. First off, you may have noticed a name change on the cover of your newsletter. I decided that Confessions had worn a bit thin so it's now the Sprue Examiner. Sort of an old "newspaper" kind of name and probably describes better what the newsletter does—it examines new and old kits and all aspects of the hobby.

The first big item for the club in 2003 is elections and that's the main thing to occupy us at our January meeting which will be on Thursday the 16th at the Yarborough Branch Library on Hancock. Jarrod has said that he doesn't want to seek reelection so we have to find a replacement who will be willing to serve the two year term. I've not spoken to the other offices but generally, the elections are open to any who want to serve and who are nominated. A word of caution. While it's best to be present to accept or decline the nomination, we have been known to elect some poor soul who chooses to be absent on election night. I suggest strongly that you attend if possible.

If you missed it, the December meeting appeared to be a smash hit. I'm referring to the Christmas Party at our place. My house isn't the largest by any stretch of the imagination but by last count, forty-plus ASMS members and spouses or family showed up for a great evening of fellowship, fun, and food. Martha and I were happy to be hosts again and I have to say that she had as much fun as I did. It was a blast and thank you all for coming.

Milton

ASMS Officers for 2002

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

Austin Model Show Coordinators

Tim Vogt	447-2668
Bruce Burden, webmaster	250-9424
Web Site www.kithobbyist.com/ASMS/	
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.



Oh great, Just what I wanted. Right!



Carl picks another piece of armor. How did he do that?



“C’mon Drew, wouldn’t you rather have this great submarine model. And look, there’s some pieces of green paper to go with it!”

The politically incorrect Gift Exchange was a big hit and took some time to get finished. Everyone had a chance to select a gift from the unwrapped stack or take a previously unwrapped “treasure” from a fellow modeler. And we have to build them by the March quarterly contest!

Styrene Six

Jarrold Cunningham

“Returning To Base”

Well another year has passed, and the stack grows with each Hobby Lobby sale and the like. I wish all of you a “Happy New Year” albeit three weeks post hence. I hope that the holidays were all good to you and yours as well. Santa did leave me some plastic, but once again the “clothing thing” won out in my household. With the release of some really good kits, it’s hard to say no these days—for me anyway.

With the beginning of this year, we have some important business to attend to at our next meeting. The current administration’s tenure is up and this means that we need to elect or re-elect club officers. This is an important task. A club is only as good as its members, and as effective as its officers. No matter how good the club members are, without leadership and accountability not much gets accomplished. I have faith that you all understand this and will consider this when voting.

Regretfully, I will not be seeking re-election. I have decided that for me the hobby would mean more if I spent more time at the bench. Do not misinterpret this as dissatisfaction with my tenure—I was honored and privileged to serve you all as president and I would like to think my actions were satisfactory and adequate for all. In the past two years we have seen some changes. Some pleasant; some not so. I hope you all have been served well by Kenny, the “two Dave’s”, and myself. I know that I owe a great deal to all of my fellow officers for their efforts and contributions. I would like to express my appreciation to them all. I believe that they have also represented the club very well for the past two years. Thanks also to the members who have acted as “sounding boards” for me in the past. To those who gave me advice; THANK YOU. Do not be mistaken; I am not resigning the club—just stepping down. I will still strive to be an active member, and assist if asked.

I hope all of you who attended the Christmas party enjoyed yourselves. I know I did. I didn’t know that one kit could find so many different owners within a space of fifteen minutes! I know a couple of them sure did! In the end, the kits all found new homes. It will be interesting to see what you all do with them. In case you forgot, the next quarterly contest will be made up EXCLUSIVELY of these kits. With what was available, the results should be “intriguing” to say the least. Personally, I am trying to come to grips with a Lindberg “Gladiator” WITHOUT the “extra cheese,” i.e. photo-etch or resin (well...maybe a little resin, what was I thinking). I figure it’s therapy anyway. Call it “old school” if you like. Talk about a task! I find myself using things and ideas I haven’t tried in years! Oh well...Humility 101 I guess.

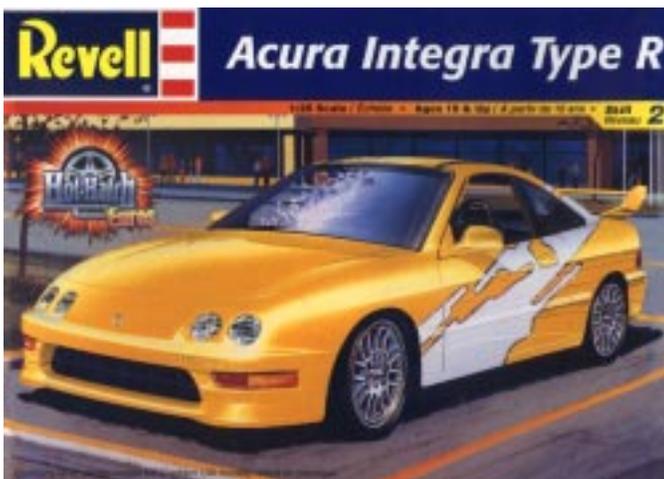
I hope to see all at the next meeting, the more the merrier!

Jarrold



by Skip Perrine
IPMS 40167

Skip's CAR CORNER



This month's kit is the Revell Acura Integra Type R— "R" for racing. This is the car that was the star in a recent movie about street racing called *The Fast and The Furious*. It is also a popular car on the Euro-sedan and coupe racing circuits. It has also been described as a fabulous sports car. That's what makes the Integra tick and what has everybody so excited—its versatility and "handling,"—that's the key word "handling"—especially on the twisty, country roads that sports car owners love. The rigid chassis, along with precise steering and well-tuned suspension combine to give excellent stability and balance.

The Integra has also taken on a whole new life as the car of choice for the custom and high performance crowd. A sheer delight to drive, nice to look at and fun to own, the Acura Integra is a car in its own class.

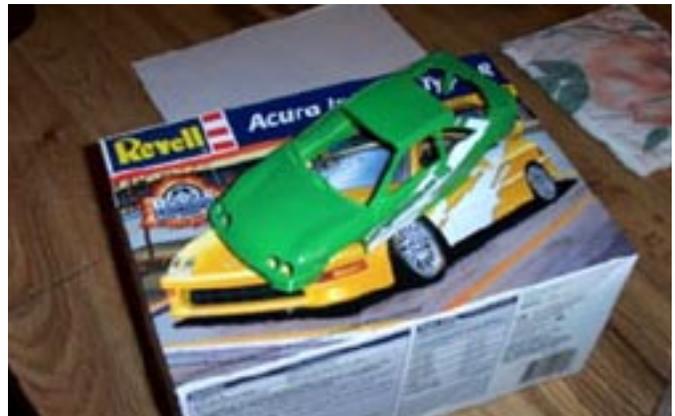
My Revell kit may be built one of two ways, and with the right sponsor decals, can be built as a Hot Hatch Euro Sedan racer. Included in this very fine kit are four complete sets of wheels for the discerning racer, two different front air dams, three rear spoilers with one being a Euro Sedan style rear wing, and two different styles of silk-screened custom decals.

To this reviewer, the kit looks like could be from Fujimi with the chassis molded in one color, the interior in another color. The body was separately bagged to protect it from tire smudge and other problems that happen with opened bodies in kits.

The kit is molded in white, gray, light gull gray, flat black, dark gray, clear, red transparent and chrome. The way this kit is assembled is very reminiscent of the more advanced Japanese kits of this type of car. (It's actually done in China.)

I was quite impressed with this kit and plan to get several more, possibly eventually a fleet of them in many differing colors, and after market decals and may even build one as a Euro Sedan racing version.

This version has a fully detailed 10-piece engine. One look at the instructions and you will see that this is not the old Revell kit that we are used to seeing. Parts in this kit actually go together as they should, without too much forcing. There is very little if any flash to trim, and it has the thinnest tires ever put in a kit.



I painted mine Park green, a Tamiya Color and the white with silver trim graphics were put on it with Solvaset and when completed looked as if they were painted on. There was a choice of two rear bumpers, a stock and a custom and a custom exhaust system with a big metal exhaust tip for the high performance look, to offset the bumper is a license plate that says "Boost."

That's about it for this time, I will be back in Austin on January 29th, so I'll be seeing you all in February.

Skipster



Alice King adds more to the food table. Kenny Rody photo

In Box Review:

1/35th scale HETZER 38(t) A.P.C.

Manufacturer: Commander Series Models, Inc.

Retail Price: \$ 37.62 (U.S.)

by: Terry D. Lowman

History—This was a very interesting looking, open topped vehicle which we probably could call a “1946” or “what if” except that at least one prototype was built. This prototype was later captured and photographed at the BMM factory where it was being developed in 1945. Several photos and an excellent color plate of this vehicle appear in *Wydawnictwo Militaria* No. 56, *Jagdpanzer 38(t) “Hetzer”*. Photos give good side exterior views and another of the interior layout with the engine and transmission relocated to the right side. The German name for this vehicle was a “Katzchen” or “Vollkettenaufkl’a’rer”. The vehicle in photos appears to be overall sand or dunkelgelb and the color plate represents the same.

It makes an interesting addition to anyone’s collection of German WWII vehicles. Add to that the lineage of this vehicle in the history and development of APCs long after the end of WWII, e.g. the use of the full, large roadwheeled 38(t) chassis system to base the vehicle on and welded, ballistically angled plates to form the upper hull areas. Its one large design flaw would be that it was open-topped and therefore lacked adequate protection for its crew and accompanying infantry inside.

Kit Review—The kit comprises fourteen, turquoise-green colored resin parts and one white metal MG 42. Molding and detail is very crisp, however, there are some air bubbles/sink holes which have to be filled in and sanded smooth. Get your file sets out as some of these are in very precarious, tight places. The instructions do not say which kit to use as the host for the conversion, but for detail purposes I would recommend any of the DRAGON/DML 38(t) Hetzer kits.

Instructions are very basic with only two simple blowups. One shows the instrument panel with gauges and radio position as well as the MG gun mounting plate along the inside edge of the front glacis plate. The other view shows that the fenders on the host kit must be removed from the lower hull piece to allow the conversion upper hull to set properly into place. The interior seems somewhat sparse as even the box top photo shows it to include racks, additional ammo cans for the MG 42, and a “Rackettenscrk” (Bazooka) to enhance the side walls. Refer to the box top photo for reference and placement of the side skirts. Painting is entirely up to the modeler as this was only a prototype, and again, falls into that “what if” category.

This conversion kit is highly recommended, especially if you like to build the 38(t) chassis system and vehicle variants.

References: *Wydawnictwo Militaria* No. 56, *Jagdpanzer 38(t) “Hetzer”* Photos: Pgs. 16-18, Color Plate: Pg.23

Terry

Mirage PZL P.11c in 1/48 scale

by Milton Bell IPMS #16702



Several years ago, I saw a 1/72 scale kit of the P.11c entered in a show and I really admired the lines of the aircraft. It reminded me of the kinds of airplanes my uncle drew when he was a kid (we were only five years apart) and I decided I wanted to build one when a decent kit came out in 1/48. Well, LTD brought one out and I bought it. And I was disappointed.

Finally, Mirage has come to my rescue. If you didn’t know, Mirage is a Polish firm and the model is made in Poland. So, I guess they should know what a PZL P.11 looks like—right?

OK, what’s a P.11c you ask. It was the most advanced fighter that the Poles had to put in the air when the Nazis invaded in 1939. It was maneuverable though lightly armed. But, in the hands of a skilled pilot—and the Poles had several—it was a match for most of the aircraft it faced. Unfortunately, there were not enough men nor adequate numbers of machines for the Polish armies and they were overwhelmed.

The P.11c was a parasol winged fighter, that is the gull-wing was mounted high on the fuselage. It has wing-struts, a fixed landing gear, and the pilot looks out over the top of the wing but also has an excellent view below and forward. It carried two 7.9mm machine guns, one on each side of the fuselage, and optionally, one in each wing. It was powered by a license-built Mercury engine of 600 hp. As far as I can tell, they were all painted in the same “khaki” color that had a lot more brown in it than green. The instructions suggest a faded FS 30118 for all the upper surfaces and the entire fuselage. The undersides of the flying surfaces was FS 35526, a light blue.

Now to the kit. This is not a typical short-run affair. There is very little flash, the moldings are crisp and the engraving is not overdone. I have yet to find a heat-sink in any part. The fabric pattern on the wing may be a little heavy but I believe most of it will disappear under a coat of paint. The stiffeners on the underside of the horizontal stabilizer and elevator and wing are very well done. Locations for the underwing gun pods and struts

(continued on page 10)

Building the 1/35 AER Moldova ASU-57

by Richard Eaton
IPMS 40101



Introduction

This is a neat little kit of an interesting Soviet airborne self-propelled gun. Mr. Alexander Popa of AER Moldova was kind enough to send Internet Modeler a review copy of this new model. AER Moldova has a line of very unique Soviet vehicles and aircraft. If you are into Soviet or airborne armor models, read on.

The History

Airborne combat experience during WWII revealed a need for a light, maneuverable, high velocity, self-propelled gun. The Soviet's answer in the early 1950s was the ASU-57. Weighing in at only 3.3 tons the ASU-57 could be landed or parachuted from military transports of the day. At that time this vehicle was the only self-propelled gun capable of parachute insertion.

Equipped with a 50 HP engine and partially built of duraluminum, this light vehicle packed a punch with a high velocity 57mm antitank gun which was capable of piercing 100mm armor at 1000 meters range. Its very small height enhanced survivability. With the conning armor lowered this vehicle came up only to the average mans waist. I wish I had time to do a figure to show scale. The ASU-57 was very successful and exported by the Soviets to Yugoslavia, Viet Nam, and Egypt. It served on into the '60s, taking part in the 1967 war between Egypt and Israel.

In the Box

The kit is boxed in a small, very sturdy box. Inside is a single bag containing all five of the gray trees of parts. Also included are a decal sheet and a small, single sheet of instructions.

The instruction sheet contains a busy exploded drawing on one page and markings and deployment drawings on the other. This drawing gives eight assembly steps. It illustrates four major areas of the vehicle and gives part numbers for the assembled

component. It does give one pause to figure out exactly what goes where. The instructions give nifty deployment drawings depicting the ASU mounted on its airdrop mechanism. This would make a great little scratch project.

The parts trees in the kit are not lettered or numbered at all. There are the little tabs—on the sprue next to the parts—where one normally sees embossed numbers in most model kits. However, these are blank. Tree drawings are provided that identify part numbers.

There are two trees of finely molded individual track links. The tank only used 3/4 of these parts. The molding is well done and fit was good. There is little flash, or push out pin marks to deal with in this kit. Several parts had sinkholes including, unfortunately, the gun barrel. The vehicle sides are thickly molded and lack any rivet detail.

Building the ASU-57

Well, I have never built an AER kit before. It is an interesting experience. The first set of assembly instructions read:

1 -4-37-38-40-39

After looking at the drawing and then the parts illustration for a while I figured out that it dealt with assembling the hull components. This process is too time consuming, and likely to give one a headache, so I decided to just assemble the vehicle as I would any other. I just referred to the drawings when I could not figure out what was what.

I assembled the hull and undercarriage components without difficulty. The drive and road wheels are nicely done with only minor cleanup. Suspension arms are molded in and are basic though convincing. After painting the lower hull and road wheels I then assembled the separate tracks nights and applied them after each had set a tad. Track parts are nicely done with good fit. I had to thin down the drive sprockets to get the tracks to fit around them. I then ran into trouble around the road wheels. They were too thick to fit in the track teeth races. Hmmmm ... 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.

I then assembled the lower hull, fighting compartment rear wall, and floor. Pretty much all the joins needed filling and sanding. The floor section has places for several projectiles at the ready. The compartment rear wall has what appears to be vertical strips of padding on the inside. Beats me, so I painted them as padding.

I then tackled the gun and gun mount. The breach is made up of four components that needed filling and sanding a tad to eliminate gaps. Then I cut out the long thin single piece barrel. The barrel had pretty rough seam marks and three areas of serious sinkholes. Hmmmm.. I first went after the seams—the plastic in this kit is brittle and sands very easily. Unfortunately, eliminating the mold seams took the barrel out of round. I filled the holes with CA figuring I would have to sand to restore barrel roundness

anyway. A few minutes of careful sanding and things were looking up. I then added the two-piece muzzle brake and sealed that up. I assembled the mount and went to put the barrel in place. Humm... The muzzle brake would not fit through the gun port. I removed it and installed the gun and fabric cover before reinstalling the brake.

I then finished installing the fighting compartment contents starting forward and working aft. Tank controls and instruments were basic but fit well. The seats are well done. I placed two mysterious containers on the shelf as indicated next to the driver. I assembled the three groupings of shells, painted them and put them into the various positions indicated. There was some mysterious, three-sided, bow-like thing broken in two in the box. I repaired it and then tried to figure out what it was and where it went. I figured it was either a fuel tank or refrigerator. It was one of the largest pieces in the build. I found a large square numbered 27 in the tree drawings and figure that had to be it. I placed it on the left side of the fighting compartment.

I then added the fighting compartment top surfaces and shields. The left surface had a contour that looked like it corresponded with the mysterious tank on that side. The tank was too large, however, so I pulled it out and cut it down until things dry fit well. That done, I put on the compartment shields. Again filling was required.

I then placed the various hull-mounted items around the tank as I identified them. The muffler and headlights cleaned up well and went on. There were two very thick straight light protectors that I can only assume were to be bent to shape and installed on the lights. They broke readily so I used brass wire. I wrapped up the assembly by putting the various hooks, tools, shields, and antennae mount in place.

Painting and Weathering



Kit directions give color schemes and markings for a Soviet, Czech, or Egyptian vehicle. The Arabic markings intrigued me early on so I went with that. I sprayed the entire kit Testors Desert Sand at various points during assembly. I painted the track with scale black. Once dry, I added a wash of a mix of acrylic scale red-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 steel to highlight detail all over the tank and treads.

I painted the tools wood brown and scale black. I finished up the weathering by applying ground pastel black and brown with a brush to the gun muzzle, breach, and pretty much anywhere I felt like it. I mainly accented the panel lines. I then 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 a gloss base using Future. The decals were thin and easy to work with. I then sprayed dullcoat over the model to seal things up.



Conclusion

I took the completed model and set it in 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 never before seen a kit of this interesting vehicle. I recommend it to the advanced level armor builder due to the separate tracks, fit, and instructions. This kit makes a good base for a model of this vehicle. Advanced builders would want to enhance kit parts in several areas. AER makes some one-of-a-kind kits. I can't wait to see what they come up with next!

I want to thank Mr. Alexander Popa, of the AER MOLDOVA Company, for generously providing this review kit.

Richard

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 KA-3B SKYWARRIOR

1:72 scale by Hasegawa

Kit #: 04442
Origin: Molding/decals: Japan
Vintage: 1998
Parts: 83 light gray, 3 clear
Markings:
· BuNo. 142662 VAQ-308, 1978
· BuNo. 147648 VAK-308, 1987
· BuNo. 147663 VAK-208, 1987

Conversion options (not included):
Aftermarket
EA/EKA/KA-3B conversions and decals

Historical Data

Also known as the "Whale," the Douglas A3D (redesignated the A-3 in 1962) Skywarrior first flew in 1952. Designed as a shipboard bomber, many A-3s were converted to flight refueling, electronic countermeasures-ECM, electronic intelligence-ELINT, photo-reconnaissance, crew trainer, and VIP transport platforms. A number of A-3s sported a strange variety of radomes, probes, and pods while on contract loan to companies like General Dynamics, Grumman, Hughes, and Raytheon for the development of radar, ECM, and navigation equipment. Later, the A-3 was the foundation for its biggest mutation, the Douglas B-66 Destroyer built for the Air Force in 1954.

Other Kits Available

The pickings are rather slim on this one. Revell released a box-scale H-241 A3D Skywarrior during 1958-59, later reissued during the mid-1990s. Not a bad kit if you just need a desktop display model mounted on a pedestal. Later came an excellent

Rareplanes KA-3B vacuform with injected landing gear and basic black and white decals. In the high end of the price scale (at a whopping \$200 plus shipping), Collect-Aire recently released a 1/48 solid resin A-3B with photoetched parts and decals.

First Impressions

A rather large box for the scale but worth the content protection. Excellent engraved detail overall. The kit is identical to Hasegawa's A-3B kit #04041 since they just reboxed it, and changed the decals and instruction sheet. The molding shows the usual annoying injection-pin marks in the engine intake halves, tires, landing gear doors, etc.

Instructions

As is customary, Hasegawa provides an excellent instruction sheet showing some basic aircraft historical data, good detail drawings and clear directions with markings and stenciling placement guide. The parts tree diagram indicates additional pieces (in gray screen) not needed for the KA-3B. Add them to the spares box.

Decals

All three A-3s depicted in the kit are in the standard U.S. Navy white bottom, flaps and ailerons while the rest of the fuselage is overall gray. I don't spend too much time on this section but I'll make an exception this time. Although close to perfection, Hasegawa lets the kit down with its decal sheet. They are sufficiently thin, correct, and with a good amount of stenciling, but they can't compare with aftermarket decals made by AeroMaster and Superscale/Microscale.

The colors in Hasegawa's decal sheets are bland with light colors such as white having a show-through effect. The red areas looked bland, resembling those done in a laser printer, rather than silk screened. In contrast, the colors in other manufacturer's decal sheets are vivid, inviting you to apply them to your model. For those who like to weather their models, the non-slip gray top service area on the decal sheet is too dark, so paint your own. Remember, mechanics step on it and scratch it so weather it just like they do. Also this sheet shows small glossy and matte pools on the surfaces within the same marking. It appears the decal sheet came in contact with the plastic protective wrapper and stuck to it, causing this effect.

Fuselage Fit and Finish

As with all current generation Hasegawa kits, this one fits without a hitch. All panel lines link both fuselage halves with little to no rescribing required. The surface finish has a polished finish with a few small scratches you need to fill or polish. You'll probably add some of your own during assembly. The clear parts didn't have a single molding, injection or packaging blemish. Amazing! To protect the clear parts from scratches, buy yourself a box of small size reclosable lock-seal sandwich bags and immediately store them in there until you are ready to construct the model.

Wings

Although very well done and thin, the three-piece wings have one defect. The model outboard leading edge slats don't have the drop down option. All photos will show the slats in the dropped position while the aircraft is at rest on the ground. If Hasegawa, Hobbycraft, and Monogram provided this option on their 1:48 A-4 Skyhawks, why didn't Hasegawa do the same on this kit? Also, there's no option to fold the wings and the flaps down.

The Interior

Ever been inside a Skywarrior? I have, and it's cramped inside and not for the claustrophobic! It's loaded with masses of electronics, protective quilting, lots of instrumentation and yes; the obligatory relief tubes on the seats. Hey, don't ask me what they're for! Sufficient to say they are necessary, OK? Otherwise ask Bondo Phil.

The kit's cockpit is too basic. The kit's extensive canopy panels let you see most of what's inside so an aftermarket cockpit is recommended. The canopy needs the overhead instrumentation panels and protective quilting. The A-3 has no ejection seats since egress from is done through a chute in the belly of the aircraft. According to Aerofax's book on the A-3 Skywarrior, the crew entry hatch varies according to the type of A-3. Let that publication guide you.

Landing Gear

The A-3 has one of the most complicated exposed main gear assemblies and Hasegawa makes a good effort. A few wires and stenciling will complete the job. The gear does sit a tad high so try to lower it a bit. The nose gear is molded as a single-piece gear/wheel assembly. I wish Hasegawa would mold the wheels and legs separate to make them more realistic and easier to paint.

Small Assembly Details

In spite of the kit's quality, small areas have been forgotten. The two-piece hose drogue in-flight refueling assembly has no catch basket sticking out of the aft section.

My Recommendations:

- Replace the kit decals with new AeroMaster #72-161 decal sheet with markings for VAQ-131, VAK-308, and VAH-10 tankers. Other sheets available. However use the kit's decal stenciling since the AeroMaster sheet has none.
- If available, replace the cockpit with a resin and photoetched detail set.
- Make sure your model's landing gear sits low enough. Built up photos indicate the model sits too high and the tail should be lower than the nose.

Final Comments

Hasegawa did it right! It took a long time to get an acceptable 1:72 A-3 Skywarrior but instead we got an excellent one. A little work (decals, detail sets, etc.) will complete the job if you are really picky. Is there a 1:144 or 1:48 scale injection molded plastic A-3 Skywarrior in the future? Hmm!

References

Here's a large amount of reference material available on the A-3. Note that I included Internet websites since they are just as essential as regular books, and they are free!

Books

- *Aerograph 5: Douglas A-3 Skywarrior* – René Francillón/Edward Heinemann (Aerofax, 1987) A must-have book!
- *In Action 148: A-3 Skywarrior* – Jim Sullivan (Squadron/Signal Publications, 1995)

Plans/Drawings

- *Warpaint* – *Douglas A3D Skywarrior* (1:72 plans) – Chris Bowley (Aviation News, issue # unknown)
- *Tailhook Topics: A-3 Whale Versions* – Tommy Thomason (IPMS Quarterly, 1986)

Photo-Articles

- *Aggressive Whales Over The Pacific* – Frank B. Mormillo (Koku-Fan, Oct. 84)
- *Decline Of The Whale* – Lindsay Peacock (Air Forces Monthly, Sept. 87)
- *Skywarrior – The U.S. Navy's "Ultimate" Nuclear Bomber* – Norman Polmar (Air Enthusiast 35, 1988)
- *We Are The Enemy: Fleet Electronics Warfare Squadron* – Frank B. Mormillo (Koku-Fan, May 88)
- *Whale Country: NAS Alameda* – Takashi Hashimoto (Koku-Fan, Jan. 87)

Related internet websites (Lots of photos!)

<http://www.a3skywarrior.com> (Official A-3 Skywarrior Association site)
www.worldzone.net/technology/mike1087/a3/a3fairford.htm (Good detail shots)
<http://www.xs4all.nl/~designer/models/a3/a3.htm> (Building and modifying A-3 models)

Aviation Links to Check Out

CAF <http://www.commemorativeairforce.org/>
 OV-10 Bronco Association <http://www.ov-10bronco.net/>
 Flight of the Valkyrie <http://labiker.org/xb70.html>
 Gathering of Corsairs <http://corsairgathering.com/>
 Habu <http://www.habu.org/>
 Lockheed Blackbirds (John Stone) <http://blackbirds.net/>
 Planes and Pilots of WWII <http://home.att/~c.c.jordan/>
 San Diego Aerospace Museum
<http://www.aerospacemuseum.org/>
 USAF Museum (Dayton-wsright)
<http://www.wpafb.af.mil/museum/>
 USAF <http://www.af.mil/photos>

Luft'46 <http://users.visi.net/~djohnson/luft46.html>
 Jasta38DD <http://www.wwimodeler.com/jasta38dd.html>
 New Zealand www.kiwiaviationimages.com/aviation.html

(Tigercat continued)

yellow color fades at the antenna base; it's not that Bondo forgot to paint the whole thing!

Ordnance

Tigercats often lugged napalm for night interdiction missions, so I used the same type external fuel tanks, painted in OD, that I saw being used as nape canisters in a Korean War pictorial publication. Standard rockets were also added to the model. Extra piping was added to the centerline external fuel tank.

Finishing

I first shot the overall airframe in Midnight Black acrylic, then masked off various panels that were shot in Interior Black. Gear struts and wheel wells were done in dark blue per the practice of the day. The copious exhaust stains were done with two or three separately mixed shades. Light streaks of exhaust color were airbrushed over the stabilizer surfaces as well. Pastels work very well in simulating the filthy, dusty grime accumulated in combat conditions. My main weathering references were the excellent color pics in "Wings" Vol. 18, No. 5 (October 1989). I also added very lightly brushed streaks over all flying surfaces. The aluminum skin poking everywhere through the chipped black paint was done with silver pencil.

I noted that the hue of the squadron markings on decal sheets was much redder than the "bittersweet" or orangy-red shade in the color pics. The "WF" squadron markings were handmade, cut out of decal paper that had been sprayed with the proper, custom mixed color. National insignia is from aftermarket sheets.

**Presentation**

As Texas show goers know, Bondo doesn't like to just toss his contest entries out onto the Plain Jane white tablecloths that are used by most clubs. In this case I skipped my trademark base with a simulated aircraft panel held down by stainless screws for a very nicely cast aftermarket PSP resin base. Weathering here was done over a basic aluminum coat washed with OD, and stained by simulated oil drip areas under both recip.

Bondo Phil

(PZL P.11c continued)

are indicated by smooth, non-detailed spots. The elevators and ailerons are attached but the ends are molded free—a neat trick!

The cockpit has separate pieces for the internal framing and a floor. The instrument panel, floor, belts, and some exterior details are done in PE. The one piece of resin is the oil radiator and it looks pretty nice; just needs thinning. The tiny windscreen is thin enough; just don't drop it.

The Mercury engine is good enough and you may want to add some plumbing. Thankfully, the exhaust stubs are molded into the front of the cowling, the exhaust collector. The cowling is in three pieces but the seam should not be a problem. The shroud that covers the gear-box, etc. is well detailed and if you want, you can open the vent holes. The two-bladed prop and its spinner assembly should go together without a hitch.

The only complaints I've heard of the kit are that the decals may not stick as well as what we are accustomed to—enter diluted white glue—and that the wing struts are a bit short. In case your struts are short, I suggest adding a shim to the bottom end.

If you want to check out some photos of a P.11c in a museum go to: <http://www.modelarstwo.org.pl/lotnicze/dokumentacja/galerie/p-11/kadlub/08.html>. You don't need to know Polish to find what you need. Be aware that the example in the museum was modified by its captors. The wheels—too small—and the outside handbrake were added. I'm not sure about the instruments but I believe the interior should be natural metal.

Mirage is offering three versions of the P.11c; a fighter, a fighter-bomber and one in Rumanian AF markings. Dave Orloff has already finished his fighter version so we may expect a review and pictures from him in a future issue.

This is a very nice kit of an important historical aircraft and high time we had one in 1/48. Considering the prices for less exotic fare, the \$23 or so asked for the PZL isn't bad. I recommend it.

Milton

Feedback Requested

We are beginning another year for ASMS. In fact, it will be our 30th year as a club. I have been doing the newsletter for several years now and for the most part have had good participation from most members.

Several of us have shared our background in modeling and told a tale or two about how we got into the hobby. These modeler bios make good reading. If you haven't written one, please consider it.

Now for the feedback. I want your comments about the newsletter. Do you like it? Don't like it? Do you want to see something different. Do you like the new name, like the layout, or just don't really care. Whatever, I'd like to know. My email address is mbell6@austin.rr.com That's where to send your contributions also. Thanks for your help.

Old Rumors & New Kits

It's a short page this month but there's quite a bit of new information. There are a lot of new kits in the shops, everything from the huge Trumpeter USS Hornet to some new rally cars. Probably the most popular is the new Tamiya P-47D Razorback and it's a really neat kit. Probably the best single engine aircraft kit I've seen in a while.

I just took a look at the two new Classic Airframes "Hornets." I especially like the Sea Hornet with optional radar nose. Both these kits have a fair share of resin details and very clear vacuum-formed canopies. The moldings are clean with finely engraved details and I'm sure they can be built into convincing models. Just one thing—I sure wish CA would get away from that butt joint where the wing joins the fuselage. That's tough for a new modeler and no snap for old ones either!

I saw a new product that looks intriguing to me. It's a PE mask from Eduard designed to paint the mottles or splotches on the fuselage of an Me 109. There are two masks—one for large mottles and one for small. No idea how well they work but I bet Floyd will have a report soon enough. Scale is 1/48.

Eduard has a couple of neat little 1/72 scale Albatross two seaters; an L-39ZA and an L-39C. Each kit has the now usual canopy masks. Either should make a very sharp little model of this Czech multi-role aircraft.

Hobbycraft is showing their new P-59s on their website and indicate a January release. This is the first time this first US jet aircraft has been done in 1/48 and in injected form. There are two versions due and the photos look like some pretty good detail. A

note of caution: HC says the kit will have "real rubber" tires. If they are the soft, squishy, vinyl that AMT used in their F9F, don't let them come into contact with the styrene. Be on the safe side until you know for sure. The earlier tires dissolved styrene. I expect a good set of resin details for the P-59 soon.

Trumpeter has a boatload of kits out now. Newest are the 1/35 Mi4A "Hound" helo, the 1/72 TU-95MS Bear, the 1/24 P-51D and the already mentioned 1/350 USS Hornet. Look for a 1/32 F4F Wildcat next month.

Gavia has a new three-gun nose La-7. This is the same plastic as in their earlier release, it just has a new resin nose with three gun ports and new decals. They also have a new WWI Bristol Scout that looks good in the box. Both are 1/48 scale.

There is some unexpected news from Grand Phoenix, the folks who brought us the two Firefly kits last year. This time it's a jet and a most welcome one too—an FJ-4B Fury in 1/48. The release date is supposed to be "around February." At least three decal versions are shown on their advance info.

There is some new armor from Dragon, a 1/35 Sd.Kfz 164 Hornisse and a late Panther A.

And, if you want a model already "built" and painted, check out Dragon Warbirds latest. A pair of F-16s—one in Tiger Meet markings and one in Wolf Pack 2002 colors. There are actually some parts to "add" to these very well done 1/72 die-cast replicas and if that's what rings your bell, go to it.

That's it for this month. Don't forget that it's time for dues so bring your money Thursday. Now go build a model.

Milton

IPMS/USA NEW MEMBER APPLICATION

IPMS No.: _____ Name: _____
(leave blank) FIRST MI. LAST

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ email: _____

VISA/MasterCard Account # _____

Exp. Date: _____

Signature: _____

Adult: \$21 Junior (17 years old or younger): \$9 DOB: _____
 Trade Member: \$21 Canada & Mexico: \$25 Other Foreign: \$28
 Family (Adult dues + \$5, one set magazines, # of membership cards required: ___)
 If recommended by an IPMS member, list his/her name and member number _____ (name) _____ (IPMS#)

IPMS/USA

P.O. Box: 2475
 North Canton, OH 44720-2475

Check out our web page: www.ipmsusa.org

Are you a current member of IPMS? Well, here's your chance to join the largest organization dedicated to advancing the hobby of Plastic Modeling!

As a member you'll get the Journal six times a year and you can participate in the National Convention to be held in Oklahoma City in July.

And, if you want to be an officer in ASMS, you *MUST* be a member.

And remember, we need to keep our **IPMS Charter** alive and healthy. Join Today!

**Next Meeting:
Thursday, January 16**

