



IPMS/Republic of Texas

Newsletter of the Austin Scale Modelers Society

January 2004

SPRUE EXAMINER



Revell Germany 1/72nd P-47D and P-47M Thunderbolts

by
Rafe Morrissey and Floyd S. Werner, Jr.

History

The P-47 developmental history has been well covered so we won't go into it here. It is worth noting the differences between the D and M models, however.

With the introduction of the -51 in the European Theater, P-47 units transitioned to the Mustang until only the 56th Fighter Group flew the P-47 in escort duties. Republic sought to improve performance and endurance to enable the Thunderbolt to better compete in air-to-air combat. The M model was basically a D model with an upgraded engine. Pratt and Whitney upgraded the R-2800 to a 57C series with a new supercharger and gearbox. For the model builder, the gearbox is the same as the one used on the F4U-4 Corsair and the P-47N. The R-2800-57C engine was plagued with developmental problems that weren't ironed out until the final months of the war. All but a few developmental airframes were sent to the 56th Fighter Group in England.



The Model

The Revell of Germany P-47 kits are little gems. Available in the US for under \$6.00 these kits are a testament to the state of the art in 1/72nd scale. Molded in light silver or gray plastic, the two kits differ only in the engine and underwing ordinance sprue that is included. The D model offers two 75 gallon and one 108-gallon flat drop tank, as well as two 250 lb bombs. The M model offers only two long range "P-38 style" drop tanks and under wing rockets, (not a likely weapons load for an air-to-air fighter in the ETO). The canopy is a two-piece affair that is rather thick. The decals for both kits are very thin, opaque and well registered (the stenciling is legible even in this scale), but a bit brittle. They wouldn't stretch enough to suck down into panel lines even with Solvaset.

Cockpit

The cockpit is a joy to put together. The detail is equal to or greater than most 1/48th scale aircraft. It is very complete and contains all the major elements. It just needs a coat of bronze green. *(continued on page 6)*

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2004 Show Schedule

ModelFiesta XXIII, IPMS/Alamo Squadron, San Antonio, TX	Feb. 28, 2004
IPMS/Metro Car Modelers Association, Dallas, TX	March 20, 2004
IPMS/Tulsa, OK	March 27, 2004
CASM III, Little Rock, AR	April 2-3, 2004
Austin Scale Model Show, IPMS/ASMS, Austin, TX	May 1, 2004
IPMS/NCT Squadron ScaleFest, Mesquite, TX	May 29, 2004
Region VI Convention, IPMS/SWAMP, Lake Charles, LA	June 12-13, 2004
IPMS USA National Convention, Phoenix, AZ	August, 2004
AMPS Centex Regional 2004, Austin, TX	October 2004

Editor's Notes...

Happy New Year to you All! Now it's time to start another club year. First off, it's DUES time. Check the box below for information on what you may owe. Make your checks out to ASMS and get them to Dave Orloff at the next meeting.

Our meeting will be Tuesday, January 20, back at the Yarbrough Branch Library on Hancock Drive. Meeting time is 7 PM. Starting off this new year will be a program by Dave Orloff on aircraft weathering. Jeff Forster has given me a list of programs already scheduled for the year but there are some months not taken. If you want to present a program on any phase of modeling, see Jeff.

The end of last year saw two of our members spend some time in the hospital. Philip Wright was there for back surgery to correct some problems resulting from a car accident a year earlier. He is home and doing well.

Kenny Roady, our president, spent his Christmas at St. Davids after suffering a brain aneurism that caused him considerable pain and his family and friends a lot of anguish. As most of you know, Kenny had to spend some time in ICU and in the aneurism watch section and was in a tough spot. Kathy was by his side through it all. He's much better now, and will probably be at the meeting, gavel in hand. His recovery has been slow but steady thanks to some good medicine and a lot of prayer. Let's hope he continues to improve. See ya'll Tuesday!

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 Tuesday of each month except December. Dues for full membership are \$20.00 yearly. Subscription to the newsletter *Sprue Examiner* 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.

Kenny's Korner

...or, what I did on my Christmas vacation.

I am sooooo glad to see this new year. It holds so much potential for me and Kathy. I hope everyone had a great holiday season. I had a bit of an unusual one. For those who have not heard, I went into the hospital on Sunday, Dec. 14th with a tremendous headache. The ER did a CAT scan on me and they found out that I had bled onto my brain. They immediately sent me to the neuro ICU at St. David's hospital and while the doc could find no evidence, he believes that I had a self-healing aneurysm. They kept me for 16 days (I really don't remember the first week because of the pain and the pain medication) and some of you guys came and visited me!

I appreciate all the well wishes, prayer, and especially the personal contact. I feel that I have been blessed by God more than once. First, I did not die. That is a very common side effect of a brain aneurysm. Next, I can still: walk, talk, feel with my fingers, see, breathe, and build models. As a matter of fact, except for the headaches (almost gone and much less severe) and the double vision—seems to have disappeared—nothing is the matter with me. I have also lost over 25 pounds! But most of all, God has shown me how much I am cared for. The overwhelming concern of all of you touches me deeply. I tear up every time I think that you all were concerned for me. You don't know how much that means to me. So, thank you all for the best Christmas gift I have ever received in my life.

Kenny

Jeff's Book Reviews

By
Jeff Forster IPMS# 30833

LADIES IN WAITING

A pictorial review of Davis-Monthan AFB

By Scott Wonderly & Richard Dunham

This book is a softbound edition from Squadron/Signal Publications. It consists of 64 pages full of black and white and color photos and lots of good information. My family used to be stationed at Davis-Monthan and out of all the bases we've been to I still think of it as a giant treasure box, with always something of interest to see! The last time we visited friends there in 1974 I was amazed at the aircraft that was stored there—F-111s, F-14s, aircraft that I thought were too new to be in the bone yard.

The book contains many interesting photos of aircraft at the bone yard—Texas F-101s, F-105s, lots of F-106s, and some great looking T-33s. I spotted some pictures of 5th FIS F-106s from Minot AFB, ND, and that was of interest to me. On page 18 is a picture of the T-33 I flew in from the 5th FIS. That sure brought back some memories. Lots of shots are included of the transit ramps showing the variety of aircraft passing through. There is

an unbelievable amount of Navy, Army, and Air Force aircraft stored at Davis-Monthan.

If you happen to make it to Davis-Monthan be sure to take the tour. The book also contains a couple of pages taken at the Pima Air Museum.

This is an interesting book showing the aircraft stored there as well as showing some of the process involved in preserving the aircraft. I would recommend it as some interesting reading.

Jeff's Rating - ★★★



An OOB Review

JAG 1/700 CGN 38 USS Virginia

by Milton Bell, IPMS 16702

I should say this is an "Out of the Tube Review" since the kit came packed in one about two inches in diameter and a foot long! I'm not lying. I've wanted a kit of a Virginia Class Nuclear Cruiser for some time. CGN 38 was the first of the series but CGN 39 was the USS Texas! They were sister ships and the differences between the two are slight enough that with care you can build Texas or any of the four ships of the Virginia Class.

What's pictured above is what you get for your \$47. Oh yes, there are instructions that consists of one large sheet printed on both sides. There are two exploded views of the ship with arrows and codes pointing to where the various bits go. The single fret of PE has railings, ladders, radar, and various antennae. They are small. Very, very small.

The resin is all in gray and is cleanly molded. The flash is thin and will be easily removed but the parts are small and I know that I'll have to be very careful. The small decal sheet contains markings for all four of the class; Virginia, Texas, Mississippi, and Arkansas. None are currently in service; they were all decommissioned and are being scrapped, a sad ending for a fine class of warship. My wife designed the crest for the Texas and we were at the commissioning so, the ship is special to us. She is an honorary crew member and proudly so. I look forward to building this model, small though she is.

Milton



Skip's Classic CAR CORNER

by Skip Perrine IPMS 40167

Hey gang, Skipperino here, this review this month is a double portion, I am reviewing two similar kits because it is taking both of them to build the one.

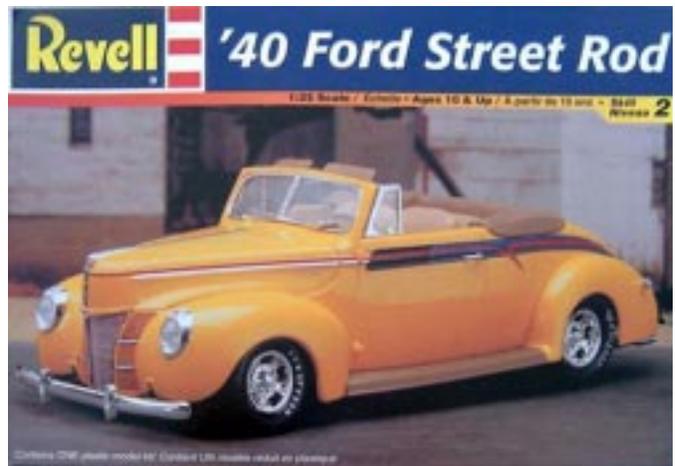
The kits I am reviewing are the Revell '40 Ford Standard Coupe kit#2387 and Revell '40 Ford Street Rod kit#2344.

A little background on the '40 Ford; the Fords of the '30s were designed by Henry Ford and painted black, all black for ease of production. Then in 1940 Henry's son Edsel began designing cars with style. The '40 coupe and convertible were just such cars. For the 1939 model year, Edsel and his staff moved the headlamps on the new Ford DeLuxe out to the fenders instead of on either side of the radiator grille. The 1940 Ford was a carry-over from that year with new front end styling to include both the DeLuxe and the less expensive Standard models and convertibles as well as a new body nearly nine inches longer than the previous model.

The result was not only a car that was good looking but was also more spacious for its occupants. Have you ever looked in the interior of a '40 Ford DeLuxe coupe? There's so much room in the back that a 6'2" man such as myself can stretch out full length and be extremely comfortable. David Orloff would be comfortable in one of them, and your knees are not in your stomach, like some of the newer cars, I can't even get in the new Mazda RX8—I am just too big.

Anyway, back to the review. Also commonly referred to as an "Opera Coupe" at the time, the '40 Standard came with a 60 horsepower version of the famous flathead V8 along with a new for 40 steering column-mounted shift lever. Available colors included Lyon Blue, Cloud Mist Gray and of course the ever popular black with the upper dashboard finished in Briarwood Brown, the wheels were painted black on Standards regardless of body color and the right side tail lamp remained an extra-cost option.

Now, what it says about the convertible street rod, is that the 1940 Ford is one of those few cars that could very easily be considered a perfect design everytime. Every line, curve and detail works to create a rolling work of art. Drop a high performance V8 under the hood, add a set of Halibrand racing mags and a spiffy paint job, some graphics and it becomes perfection on wheels. It is, in the immortal words of Dennis Gage of My Classic Car, a "Time Honored Classic." Seen at car shows, on magazine covers and probably in your own neighborhood this true hot rod is still today one of the favorites of many hot rodders and model car builders alike.



Molded in white, clear, chrome and transparent red, the kits have over 132 pieces, vinyl tires, and silkscreen waterslide decals. They both have highly detailed V8 engines. The street rod has a complete chassis (26 pieces) that's almost like scratch-built, while the stock Standard Coupe has a very basic chassis with 15 pieces.

Now you may be wondering why I took two identical—for the most part—kits? Well the reason is really quite simple. I was watching an old episode of Leave It To Beaver in which Lumpy (Clarence Rutherford) had a really neat looking '40 Ford convertible, so, I set out to try to build one from what I could see of it on the show and from memory. The end result will be, I hope, the '40 Ford Convertible done stock.

Skipster

Want a Real Blast?

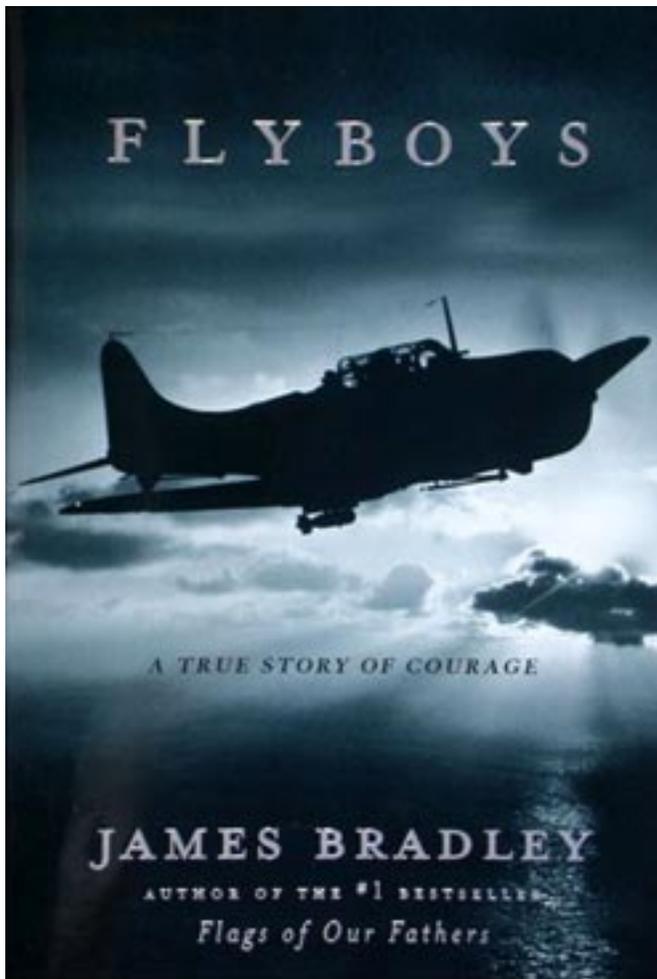
Turn up the volume and point your browser to this site.
www.clarkindustries.on.ca/spits.html. It lasts about five minutes.

Bondo's Books

“Flyboys” by James Bradley

Little-Brown, 2003 \$25.95

Most of us know that President George H.W. Bush, the youngest U.S. Navy pilot as of early 1945 was shot down in his TBM Avenger and daringly rescued by a submarine just off the coast of Chichi Jima, a tiny mountain top sticking out of the vast Pacific Ocean between Iwo Jima and Okinawa. What I didn't know was that all of the squadron mates accompanying Ensign Bush on that hairy mission were also shot down, he being the only one to be rescued and to survive. This book is the telling of the horrific events which befell the future president's brothers-in-arms.



Bradley comes to the writing of this book well qualified to talk about The War in the Pacific; his father was one of the Marines pictured hoisting the flag on Iwo Jima, arguably the most famous photo in American military history. Although Bradley's book tends to jump around historically, and he uses the corny terms, "Flyboy" and "Billys" (B-25s) ad nauseam, his extensive recounting of the foundations of the Samurai warrior tradition and Japanese Code of Bushido not only explains in a dark way

the routine torture, execution and cannibalism practiced by the Japanese military on captured opponents, but in this military man's mind, makes an exceedingly strong case for President Truman's fateful decision to unleash "Fatman" and "Tallboy" on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

What I personally gleaned from this book was a new appreciation for the mind-numbing ferocity of the Pacific Conflict—in my opinion way beyond that in the European Theater—and how it can all be traced back to feudal Japan, the landing of Admiral Perry and the demonic twisting of the proud Samurai tradition by Twentieth Century militarists.

Bradley covers in fascinating detail General Curtis LeMay's relentless B-29 firebomb strategy and operation which literally wiped out hundreds of square miles of major Japanese cities, a direct precursor to the atomic bombs. As a young lieutenant, Bondo drove through the town of Hachioji, about thirty miles southwest of Tokyo, and marvelled at the unusually wide, American-style streets and the one-and-two story concrete buildings. I was told that these were characteristic rebuilding efforts in firebombed areas, and Bradley's book specifically mentions this town. And, no surprise, Hachioji was (in 1964) a hotbed of Communist activity; although we were still occupying the country, we were *persona non grata* in some areas.

Although Japanese military backs were "against the wall" after the U.S. took—at very high cost—Iwo Jima and Okinawa, Bradley's scholarship reveals the rigid Japanese mindset, borne of centuries of racial "purity" and geographical isolation, and the massive preparations by the mainland Japan populace for the coming fight-to-the-death. The suicidal actions of Japanese troops—to be captured was total dishonor, and made one less than human—on Iwo Jima and Okinawa, and the waves of Kamikaze attacks on the American fleet, were accurate but significantly smaller harbingers of what was to come in a mainland invasion.

This is a sad but spiritually uplifting book, especially the pictures of elder President Bush's recent visit to Chichi Jima, off whose beaches he floated in harm's way so many years ago. Although the gritty, courage-laden events related in this book happened almost sixty years ago, they remain poignant and just as applicable to members of today's armed forces.

Bondo

**Don't Look Now, But
Your Club Dues
Are Due!**

(P-47s continued)

Floyd used a Humbrol color with a dry brush of zinc chromate yellow and some silver pencil chipping. Rafe used a custom mixed color. The instrument panel turned out great after a coat of flat black paint and a little dry brushing. Details were picked out with Prismacolor artists' pencils. The overall effect once assembled conveys the sense of a great deal of detail with relatively few parts. There is no need for an aftermarket cockpit set here.

**Fuselage**

The fuselage fit together with no major problems and little need for any filler. The fillet for the vertical stabilizer is conveniently provided as a separate part for those who want to do earlier models. It needs some carving and careful fitting where it meets the stabilizer. Rafe forgot to test fit it on the P-47M and had to do a lot of unnecessary shimming and filling to get a good appearance. This was his error and not a problem with the kit. Floyd on the other hand installed the antenna so that it sat on the spine. It wasn't bad except he forgot that he was going to put on the fillet too. Oh well it looks better without one anyhow. One minor gripe is the cowl flaps, which are molded with a significant gap between them. On the real thing, a spacer would fill these gaps. Revell doesn't include them so Rafe fashioned some from .005 sheet plastic.

Wings and Tail plane

The wings are excellent and have a great deal of fine engraved detail. The bomb pylons are separate parts, which is a nice touch again for anyone wanting to do a P-47 without them. The fit wasn't the greatest and Rafe ended up gluing them on and filling the seam with Acryl Blue Putty and removing the excess with Q-tips soaked in nail polish remover. This technique worked fine but cutting off the locating pins and rubbing the pylons over sandpaper held tight against the wing surface would work just as well.

The guns are molded correctly so that they are parallel to the ground—a first for any 1/72nd scale Thunderbolt! Floyd did drill out the guns but in this small scale only people with a microscope could see them. Compressibility flaps are molded to the underside of each wing. They will have to be filed off if a plane without them is to be modeled.

One of our few minor gripes with the kit is the wheel wells. The kit includes some really super detail, again the best we've seen in any P-47 kit in this scale. Unfortunately, the model is tooled like the old Monogram 1/48th scale kit so the seam between the wing and the fuselage runs right through the corrugated roof of the well. Filling the seam and maintaining all that detail would be darn near impossible so Rafe just decided to live with it. Floyd filled it with Blue Acryl and did his best to make it go away without losing too much detail. If Revell had tooled this kit like the new 1/48 Tamiya P-47s, their kit would be nearly perfect.

Painting

Rafe first painted red trim on the cowling and the rudder of the P-47M with Testors Acryl Red with a tad of yellow mixed in. He masked the areas to remain natural metal because he planned on using Floquil Old Silver and knew the lacquer-based paint would craze an acrylic undercoat. After masking over the red trim, Rafe sprayed a base coat of Old Silver thinned with a 50/50 mix of lacquer thinner and mineral spirits. Good ventilation and a mask were a must here! The Floquil laid down nicely and could be handled within ten minutes. He let the Old Silver dry overnight before masking just to be safe.



Rafe masked the under surface and leading edge of the wing with drafting tape before applying a custom mixed color of Acryl Flat Black with a bit of purple added. When he peeled up the masking, Rafe realized that he had forgotten to mask the leading edge of the horizontal stabilizers. This caused a real dilemma because you can't spray the lacquer based Old Silver over an acrylic top color. Rafe ended up masking everything but the leading edge and spraying Pollyscale Bright Silver mixed 50/50 with clear gloss. This turned out great and the match between the acrylic Pollyscale and lacquer based Floquil metal colors was perfect.

Floyd first sprayed his kit with Future floor wax in preparation for the Alclad. He painted it with Alclad Aluminum overall. Then he went back in and painted the control surfaces and select panels with Alclad Duraluminum for added interest. When that was all dry he painted the cowling RLM 04 and the black stripes on the tail. The Olive Drab antiglare panel was the final touch.



Weathering

The P-47M was only in service for a few months so extreme weathering wasn't appropriate. Rafe lightened the base color of the topcoat with a few drops of white and sprayed this along the very top of the fuselage and the front edge of the wings. He applied a pastel sludge wash to the panel lines on the bottom of the plane using a blue gray color similar to Payne's Gray. Control surfaces received a sludge wash with black pastel. He brushed on exhaust stains with a mix of black and raw umber pastels. Finally, Rafe added a few ticks with a silver Prismacolor artist's pencil around the cockpit, gun bay doors and trailing edge of the wing next to the fuselage.

Floyd opted for just a light wash of Payne's Grey in the panel lines. Not wanting to dirty it up too much as he liked it a lot. He did use a burnt umber wash to discolor the turbosupercharger exhaust.

Finishing Touches

Landing gear, wheel bay doors and under wing ordinance were attached with white glue. Rafe painted the drop tanks on the P-47M with SNJ and polished them with aluminum powder to get a high shine to set them apart from the rather dull finish under the wings. A bit of dry brushing and a wash of raw umber oil paint brought the tires and wheels to life.

Conclusions

The P-47 is one of the most well known allied fighters of World War Two. Up until now, no manufacturer had really done this significant plane justice. The Revell Germany P-47s give the modeler everything he or she could ask for in a kit at a great price. Our only hope is that they will add a razorback version to their excellent line of P-47s and a series of Bf-109s.

Floyd and Rafe

References:

Thunderbolt, The Republic P-47 Thunderbolt in the European Theater
McDowell, Ernest, Squadron Signal, 1998 ISBN 0-89747-393-0

56th Fighter Group Davis, Larry, Squadron Signal, 1991 ISBN 0-89747-240-3

Modelers' Word Find

by Milton Bell, IPMS 16702

P Q W R T G F D S D I F O N J K F D C V
 Q L A G G Q W E E R F U B M A R K V B B
 S D A Y H N H Y H F X T R U D S E L O O
 P O G S H E R M A N T U B S G M E M G S
 F H F O T W A A H E T R W T A N K W T V
 A G S D X I R G O S S E G A H J S K G O
 J A L P O S C A R F V B C N R X T S I Z
 A J S E R E I K N R T E G G E O R G E C
 B N X D C A J J E M I L Y T R T A I E E
 M M V C E M E N T K T N J M O I C M U D
 A X S D W E S T Y R E N E H P L K M R E
 S E D W B G S E G D Y G U V T D G G R R
 E R F Q U O E C P U T T Y Z A X V R E S
 W D F C R G X B F S T X U G U B R E G X
 H F S P I T F I R E T C F D D X R I K O
 L O J F G D E W H E T Z E R R B H A U K
 A S E X C V G Y H J K E I H G F D X M N
 M I T S U B I S H I G R T G T B G H V S
 Y G E W A Q I Z X I I O S C A R Y J M B
 A W S V B M U Y E S I Y Y R T S J S I D

First off, Jack Johnston sent me one of these puzzles some time ago but I could never get it into a table format that I could import into PageMaker. Since I liked the idea, I decided to do one in a Table Utility I already had with PageMaker.

There are 24 words in the matrix, some easy, some not. Some are horizontal, some vertical, some diagonal, some ...not. There's no prize for solving the puzzle but you may want to print it out and give it a try. Just circle or highlight the words as you find them.

Here are the words. Plastic, Lagg, Future, MarkVB, Sherman, Mustang, Tank, Mig, Hornet, Essex, Oscar, Cement, Emil, Putty, Abrams, Spitfire, Hetzer, Zero, Mitsubishi, SBD, Seam, Styrene, Track, and George. And there may be some "unintentional" words as well. Ignore them.

Thanks for the idea Jack. Maybe I'll still figure out how to convert your puzzle to a format I can use. And for the rest of you, enjoy the puzzle.

Milton

Bondo's Boats

**An OOB Review of Some
Great Little Ships PE Detail Sets for the
1/72 Matchbox/Revell Flower Class Corvette**

by "Bondo" Phil Brandt

Price structure: inside article

Obtained via telephonic mail-order from David J. Parkins
(Flightpath)

**Background**

As guardians of the WWII North Atlantic convoy lifeline from America to Great Britain and Europe, Canadian, British and American Flower Class corvettes (basic designs were derived from whalers) performed heroic and hazardous antisubmarine operations handicapped by initially inexperienced crews, limited weaponry and under extreme sea conditions. Only one of these "Great Little Ships" remains today, preserved in Canada.

Reference

The best Flower Class reference by far (IMO) is "The Flower Class Corvette Agassiz" by John McKay and John Harland. The book is one of the "Anatomy of The Ship" series published by Vanwell Publishing, St. Catherines, Ontario. The book's wealth of detailed line drawings down to the smallest components is simply mind boggling; I cannot think of ANY other reference the modeler would need.

The Basic Flower Kit

Don't cha just love those huge ship models at marine, transportation or war museums? Matchbox tried to answer that modeling wish by releasing the Flower Class Corvette, "Bluebell" (lost in 1944), some twenty-five years ago. Since then, the big 1/72 ship's been released at least two more times, as the RCNS Snowberry and the USS Saucy. This is a big model, done in the rather clunky, thick style that many of we older modelers of the Sixties and Seventies came to know and 'love' as Matchbox. Built up OOB, the kit looks OK at a respectful distance. But museum quality? No way...until now, that is.

The Detail Sets

Years ago, David Parkins, principal of the well known model aircraft aftermarket photoetch firm, Flightpath, released a large PE detail set to successfully remedy the many crudities of the Matchbox kit, turning this plastic ugly duckling into a museum quality ship. These initial sets were quickly bought up, and the very desirable product went OOB for years...until about a year ago when Mr. Parkins released a revised and improved line of

separately available Flower detail sets under the logo, Great Little Ships.

Shock and Awe...Ya gotta be "shipping" me!

I think I'd be safe in saying that this assemblage of huge frets and hundreds of sharply cast metal components is easily the largest, most complex and complete model PE set extant today (well, the gigantic \$1700 resin submarine sold by Squadron is much longer, but there is no way it has the quantity of PE and castings in this set!). As you might expect, all this comes at a not insignificant price. Y'know, over the years Bondo has acquired a modicum of 1:1 boat building experience provided by the 1972 major restoration of his 1959 Owens cabin cruiser and by the unfortunately terminated construction of his 28-foot trimaran. A lesson painfully learned: "If you have to ask the price, you shouldn't be in boating." This principle applies in the ship model world, too, with the total price of all available Flower Class PE sets at more than \$400! But, look at it this way: it's the monetary equivalent of eight Tamiya Swordfish, four of der grosse 1/35 Deutsch railroad guns, as few as two Collect-Aire kits, or twenty big Eduard aircraft/armor PE sets, to achieve knock-ye-socks-off, museum quality, big ship detail.



David Parkins has segmented the daunting price and complexity of the overall task into more easily handled subsets so the modeler may spread out the project's financial and construction loads. Separately available (approximate price in U.S. dollars) are: Deck and Fittings (\$140); Type "C" Bridge (\$50), Funnel and Mast (\$28); Weapons (Mark IX 4-inch gun-\$50; Hedgehog \$10, Flares \$15; Pom-Pom Gun \$20; Oerlikon Guns \$22; Depth Charges \$50); Scuttles, Liferrafts; Lifeboats; Dinghies; Life Rails; etc., etc. (prices for these, relatively speaking, are nickel-dime!).

Construction

The hull, aft deck and engine room roof compartment are essentially the only Matchbox parts retained, and even they need work to remove the Matchbox chunkiness. Although CA glue may be used, Mr. Parkins strongly suggests soldering. Even for

(Continued on page 10)

Trumpeter CV-9 Essex in 1/350 Scale

by Richard Eaton IPMS 40101



Introduction

Trumpeter's second large-scale injected aircraft carrier has been eagerly anticipated since their release of the Hornet in late 2002. I was delighted when this review copy arrived in the mail. A 1/350 scale injected kit of CV9 USS Essex! Will the Essex live up to the recently released Trumpeter Hornet? I believe it does with room to spare! Read on.

Background

Essex (CV-9) was launched 31 July 1942 by Newport News Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Co. She was the first of the powerful Essex class fast fleet carriers that dominated the Pacific war till its conclusion. She was reclassified (CVA-9) on 1 October 1952, and (CVS-9) on 8 March 1960.

Following her shakedown cruise Essex sailed to the Pacific in May 1943 to begin a succession of victories, which would bring her to Tokyo Bay. She participated with in virtually every carrier operation in 1943. In 1944 Essex proceeded to San Francisco for her single wartime overhaul.

For the remainder of 1944 she continued her frontline action, participating in strikes against Okinawa, Formosa, and taking part in the battle for Leyte Gulf. While attacking Manila and the northern Philippine Islands during November, for the first time in her far-ranging operations and destruction to the enemy, Essex received injury. A kamikaze hit the port edge of her flight deck landing among planes gassed for takeoff, causing extensive damage, killing 15, and wounding 44. This "cramped her style" very little. Following quick repairs Essex supported every major action till the end of the war as part of TG 58. Following the surrender, she continued defensive combat air patrols until she was ordered to Bremerton, Washington, for inactivation. On 9 January 1947 she was placed out of commission in reserve.

Modernization endowed Essex with a new flight deck and a streamlined island superstructure after which she participated in four tours of duty in the Korean conflict. She was the first carrier to launch the F2H "Banshee" twin-jet fighters on combat missions.

In July 1955 Essex entered Puget Sound Naval Shipyard for repairs and extensive alterations, including installation of an angled flight deck. Modernization completed, she served as an

Essex received the Presidential Unit Citation, and 13 battle stars for World War II service and 4 battle stars and the Navy Unit Commendation for Korean War service.



The Kit

This review kit arrived bagged rather than in its retail box. Most of the 11 frets and numerous large free components are molded in hard, light-gray styrene. One is immediately impressed with the size of this model! The waterline hull is one piece! I can't imagine the size of the tool used to create this part. The kit can be built either as a waterline representation or full hull. A one-piece waterline hull base is molded in dark red. The lower hull is likewise. I had to test fit the hull pieces and was delighted at the fit (far better than the Hornet). There will be some filling and sanding here sure, but it doesn't

look like much trouble. There has been Internet chatter about the heavy bow on the Hornet kit. The Essex bow is thin and beautiful!



Large Components

The flight deck is molded in three large pieces. This normally would make me cringe but dry fitting again showed good fits. Just a touch of well-masked filler would make seams disappear. I recommend masking here because all flight deck surfaces feature



very fine scribed detail representing acres of tie-downs and one catapult. All three elevators can be posed in either a raised or lowered position.

The hanger deck is very well represented in three large parts. The foredeck has nicely done stanchions and miniscule molded in anchor chains. These should be easy to remove and replace with better anchor chains. The middle hanger deck piece features nicely scribed floor. The hanger deck should really shine with a couple of aircraft strategically parked. The afterdeck has nicely molded deck details.

Essex comes equipped with the same massive base piece and placards, as did the Hornet.

On the Trees

Trees A and B contain most of the under flight deck ship's bulkheads, catwalks, and ladders. Surface detail features are finely scribed. Numerous portholes line the surfaces should probably be drilled out during assembly. Ship's hatches have very fine latch detail molded in! Hanger deck doors are all molded closed with nicely represented corrugated doors. One might think they would leave a few open to show off the hanger deck. I may cut open one or two.

(continued on page 10)

(Essex continued)

Trees C and D contain most of the rest of the ship's bulkheads, intermediate decks, flight deck fore and aft pieces, and gun platforms, and ships screws. The gun platforms have molded-in details and underside supports are nicely represented.

Trees E and F contain parts for the ship's large island, elevators and the ship's rudder. There are two large slab sided halves that are rife with surface detail. The various decks slide into the main island pieces and feature gun mount detail and nicely thin splinter shielding. The ship's masts are near scale thin. Radar antennae are molded solid with fine grids molded in. I would recommend replacing them with PE parts. The ship's rudder has fine scribed panel detail. The ship's boat (one) is well molded with cockpit detail.

Tree G is duplicated and contains most of the ship's detailed parts. These include aials, guns, directors, ship's screws, drive shafts, and cranes. The 20mm guns are a tad heavy for the scale. There are no gun shields but PE would really dress these up. The 10 quad 40mm AAA mounts and guns can be posed and the open five-inch guns are well molded. The quad 40mm guns are very well done with scale barrels and cooling jackets. The ship's cranes are nicely represented without being overly heavy. The ship's screws are nicely shaped and very usable. The twin five-inch turrets are particularly nice and feature molded in blast bags. The ship's radio masts are molded solid and would best be replaced with PE parts.

The Air Wing

Trees J, L, and N contain the kit aircraft. The directions point out that four of each aircraft is included in the kit though my sample contained only two. Included are SBD Dauntless dive-bombers, F6F Hellcats, and TBF Avenger torpedo planes. This is enough to equip Essex for 1943 actions as the SBDs were phased out soon after that. The trees are done in a manner I have never seen before. Each tree is an assemblage of three different color molding! The aircraft are

molded in gray, undercarriage in black, and windshields are done in clear styrene. Each aircraft has very finely scribed details even to the point of representing the fabric control surfaces. These are some of the best in-scale birds I have seen. Trumpeter offers 10 packs of these birds for those wanting a full flight deck.

Directions

The sample copy instructions were copies containing four pages of parts identification followed by 16 pages of instructions. No doubt Trumpeter will ship a nicely done booklet in the production kit, as is their practice. Instructions in English and Chinese run throughout and are very clear.

Decals

One decal sheet contains markings for all parts. There are two huge number "9" decals in black for the flight deck. There are a variety of white flight deck dashes and markers. Unfortunately deck markings were normally black during the war years. My sample contained no aircraft markings though I am sure the production copy will. The decals are well registered and thin.

Conclusion

Going over this kit I keep flashing back and comparing it to the Trumpeter release of the Hornet last year. It compares well with the Hornet and, in many areas, betters it. This beauty should build up to an impressive (large) model right out of the box. Throw in a set of Tom's Modelworks Essex Detail Set and this should be a show stopper! I highly recommended this kit for intermediate to advanced ship builders. I would like to thank Stevens International for kindly supplying this review sample.

Source

Warships Number 10 Essex Class Carriers in action. Squadron/Signal Publications.

(Great Little Ships continued)

Bondo, who's been soldering for at least four decades this is a tall order for some of the most delicate pieces (for instance, each tiny scuttle, or porthole, requires four pieces...and there are at least forty scuttles!). I'm considering a resistance soldering set which does away with an iron, instead creating heat by the flow of electrons at the joint; ya just add solder! But, as always there's a price to be paid...\$250-\$300. After doing PE assemblage using rude-and-crude needle-nose pliers for years, I finally saw the light and bought a professional grade PE folding rig at the OK Nats.; I highly recommend it. All this PE still leaves room for innovation. For instance, one way in which I'm going to avoid the chore of soldering a 1/32" wide, long (16") strip to both sides of the brass main deck, is to cut off the strip—it's partially attached to the deck—and instead substitute some good ol' Evergreen angle stock, CA'ed to the bottom of the deck and, in turn, Tenax'ed to the plastic hull. Construction has just resumed, although the hull halves were glued together over five years ago!

Instructions

David Parkins always provides first class, step-by-step guidance to builders of his products, and those which accompany the various Flower subsets are characteristically voluminous. The Deck and Fittings set, for instance, contains no less than four large pages of text, four more pages of computer-generated, multicolored isometric assembly diagrams and two pages of color pics detailing features of the lone remaining Flower Corvette, the HMCS Sackville moored in Nova Scotia.

Conclusion

This is the type project that the average ship modeler might wish to do, or be able to pull off once in a lifetime...but, to this curmudgeon, it's worth it. Bondo's thumbs are reaching for the sky!

Bondo

Old Rumors & New Kits

Since our last regular meeting, 'way back in November, we've moved forward a bit. There are some really fine new kits on the shelves since I last wrote this column. And we had a pretty nice Christmas party at my house. Thanks to you all for coming. Martha and I had a great time and I hope you did as well. I figure we had about 60 people. That's the most "company" we've ever had and our little house was packed but still we had a fine time.



Kenny Roady unwraps another one as Jeff Forster waits his turn. Kenny "emceed" the Gift Exchange. Greg Springer is in the background with one of the Kupka kids.

Remember, those "White Elephant Gifts" you won will be the subject of our first Quarterly Contest so if you plan to enter, it may be time to give that kit a second look and see what you can do with it. Build armor and won a car? Tough. Now you can "broaden your horizons" so to speak.

Listing all the kits and accessories that have been released since November would take more space than I have. So, here are the high spots and a few notes about what I've heard that is coming.

First off, it's going to be a very good year, especially if you build large scale aircraft. Already on the shelves are the Trumpeter MiG 3—excellent kit—and an equally impressive P-40B. I hope someone who has the kits will come forward with an OOB or construction feature for a future newsletter. Trumpeter has announced a 1/24 scale Fw 190D but I've no idea when we'll see it. In case you were wondering, all the kits this Chinese company has scheduled have actually been released, even if some had to be "reworked" before a general release. Let's see just how long it takes to get the new P-38 on the shelves. In case you haven't heard, that's the next one scheduled for release and it could be here by April. (How fast can you build?)

Trumpeter does more than 1/24 and 1/32 kits, they also do 1/48 and smaller. For you 1/48 fans, they have announced production of one of the most requested subjects ever; an RA-5C Vigilante. There were rumors that one was coming (more than one?) but it's good that Trumpeter has one in the works for 2004. A big surprise was their announcement of a Fw 200C Condor, also in 1/48. This will be a big kit!

Another surprise was the announcement of a 1/48 Wellington Mk.1. I've seen the Koster vac kit of the Condor but I've never seen a 1/48 scale kit of the Wellington. Don't forget that a Halifax is also rumored for release in late 2004 or in 2005.

Getting into the large scale act also is Revell of Germany. They have announced a 1/32 He-162 Volksjager. Count on a lot of detail sets coming for this little gem. I can see a detailed resin engine as well as lots of PE and resin for the cockpit. This one is scheduled for late 2004.

I saw a brief note that Airfix plans a few new releases for 2004. For a company that once flooded the shelves with 1/72 kits, Airfix has been forced to limit their new kits to just a few each year. Last year saw new 1/48 Hawk kits and two new Mossies. This time they will have a 1/72 Concorde which will come packed with a DVD and other goodies. They also plan a new-tool, obviously, 1/600 Queen Mary 2, again with a DVD.

Other new kits include a 1/72 Willys Jeep, a GMC truck and a landing craft...of some kind. Look for a re-box of the Kitech Apache and Sea Cobra. I understand they also plan to re-box the 1/35 Challenger II from Trumpeter and the DUKW and M1A2 Abrams from Italeri. Re-releases include the 1/32 Alfa Romeo, Bugatti, and Bentley.

Now for what's on the shelves today. Just out is the totally new 1/32 Me109K from Hasegawa. This is a really nice kit. Just think of the 1/48 kit enlarged 150%, with a few more goodies, and you have it. So far, Hasegawa has a 1/32 kit of just about all the 109s covered in 1/48, except the Emil. Their ancient version of this important aircraft is sadly out of date and its inaccuracies and engineering problems really need to be addressed. Will they do a 1/32 "new-tool" E type? Let's hope so.

There are several new kits out for the armor builder. The Academy M36 and M10 Duckbills are now in stock, along with the early version Hummel and German Halftrack Crew from Dragon. Trumpeter's excellent SA-2 with launcher—no vehicle—is available again and at a very good price! Eduard has PE details for the Karl Morser (railings), a bustle rack for the M1A1, Hummel details and a gun barrel for the Tamiya SU-85. Warrior Miniatures has some new figure sets out as well, including a Flak 88 crew set and a Semovente crew. (Sure could use a review of some of these new armor kits.)

So, there's no excuse not to find a good kit to work on. Don't forget that White Elephant kit. Build it for the next Quarterly!

Milton