



IPMS/Republic of Texas

SPRUE EXAMINER



Musings on the Atlanta Nationals (In No Particular Order!)

by Tim Robb

In two words: WOW! (1) AWESOME! (2)

Entries: The number I heard on entries was 3240. That's entries, not models. In the 3240 number, dioramas and collections counted as one entry. The total number of models on display in the display room was close to 4000 and included maybe 600 models that were there on display only, not entered at all. The display models even included some city planning type models of buildings and plazas from a local architectural firm, which IMHO was a very interesting thing to see at a model convention, as it was a professional application of scale modeling. These models, there were about five or six of them, appeared to be made mostly of mat board rendered with colored pencil.

We (Miriam and I) arrived about 4:30 PM opening day, Wed. 7/23, an hour and a half after the convention opened at 3:00 PM. Having attended two previous nationals, this time I had a time schedule plan for myself and we executed it pretty well. We spent the first evening totally in the vendor room (yes, Miriam went with me everywhere and never complained once about my spending. I think I'll keep her!) The vendor room closed at 7:00 that first evening - I wish it had been 9:00. We got shooed out and went back to the hotel room and watched TV.

When we turned out the lights, visions of the vendor room filled my head and it took me three hours to fall asleep!

The model display room was going to be closed for judging at 8:00 PM Friday night, the third day, so we spent the entire second day—Thursday—bouncing back and forth between the vendor room and seminars. I figured to make one thorough, comprehensive sweep of the model display room on Friday afternoon (when all the entries would be in) after attending seminars and getting my own models onto the contest tables Friday morning.

We started the one thorough sweep of the model room Friday afternoon about 3:00, and with a short break for dinner, were only half finished looking at the models when the room closed at 8:00. We resumed in the model display room Saturday morning. Bouncing back and forth between Saturday Seminars and the model room, we finished our "thorough, comprehensive sweep" of the model room about 2:30 PM Saturday. The vendor room was going to close at 4:00 and the bargains were being unleashed so this was sheer panic time—gotta make sure I don't miss a super bargain on something I can't live without!

New kits: The AM Vindicators were there and in good supply. They were not discounted much and did not sell out. Also in abundance were Trumpeter 1/48 FW-200s and 1/48 Vigilantes,

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**John Seaman****Bill Delk****2005 Show Schedule**

IPMS/Emerald City, OZCON 2005, Wichita, KA	August, 2005
IPMS/Ft. Worth Supercon, Vandergriff Park Arlington, TX	Sept. 10, 2005
IPMS/Baton Rouge, Modelfest XXI, Baton Rouge LA	Sept. 17, 2005
IPMS/SWAMP Calmex XX, Lake Charles, LA	Jan. 2006

**Editor's Notes...**

Well, the IPMS/USA Nationals are over and we had several ASMS members attending. We even had a couple of winners too, but that's covered in one of the articles on the Nats in this issue.

The next "local area" show is the Fort Worth Supercon set for Sept. 10 up in Arlington at Vandergriff Park, the show's usual venue. It has been a good show in the past and if you've never been, this is a good time to attend and perhaps participate. If all goes well, I plan to be there. If you can't make that one, you might want to try a trip to Baton Rouge for Modelfest XXI a week later on Sept. 17th.

Our next meeting will be August 16 at the Yarborough Branch Library on Hancock Drive in north central Austin. As usual, meeting time is 7 PM. Bring a finished (or not) model for a little "show and tell" and some good stories from the nationals.

Tuesday evening's program is another two-parter. Tim Robb will talk about using drafting tools in modeling and I will do another quick demo on building Plexiglas display cases. The original program with Greg Springer doing a biplane rigging demo had to be postponed because of a work conflict. Maybe we can get Greg at a later date.

Last month's meeting consisted of a swap meet. Since almost all our officers were out of town, we dispensed with the business and just went for the swaps. It was a lot of fun.

Congrats to Tim Robb and John Seaman's son for their IPMS National Convention wins. Thanks to Tim and Jeff, we have two views in this issue about the nats. Jeff and family got to break-in a new camp trailer. Sounds like everyone had a great time.

*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.

## Jeff's Musings

August is here and our meeting is fast approaching! First off, I'd like to apologize for not getting anything out for the newsletter last month, my life was in fast overdrive trying to pick up a new car and buying our trailer and getting it ready in time for the trip, no free time was available!

The Forster clan loaded up and left Austin on Friday the 15th for our first ever camping trip. We arrived in Charlotte, N.C. to visit family and had a good time. Before we left for the trip to Atlanta, my in-laws suggested we leave the kids with them and meet back with them up in West Virginia, which turned out very nice! (Thank goodness for grandparents).

We camped out at Stone Mountain, Georgia, which if you're ever down that way is a very nice park to stay at. We didn't get to the show until Thursday due to blowing out one of the trailer tires which delayed us enough to wait until the morning to hit the show. The convention site was very easy to find and we immediately hit the vendor area.

There were well over 400 tables filled with just about any goodie you could want! All the vendors I'd wanted to meet were there. The first guy I looked for was the Culttvmann. I had shopped his website and was on his news list and I finally got to see him. I was able to buy the mask sets for both the Polar lights 350 scale star trek kits, the NX-01 and the refit Enterprise as well as a couple of figure sets, the space babe, Judy Robinson (who happened to be there signing autographs) and the creature babe, from the creature from the black lagoon movie.



Then I hunted down the new Vindicator kit from Accurate Miniatures who happened to have a table set up. Some other goodies I managed to find next door at the Dragon show were the new 1/72 Hasegawa Lancaster bomber kit which is a little jewel. It was the only kit left that day, (plenty more showed up the next day). The new Hasegawa Japanese battleship the Mikasa from the 1903 Russia-Sino war turned out to be an excellent purchase.

There were so many first rate vendors on hand and I was surprised to see how many were just armor or naval vendors. You Armor guys would have loved it! I found some items that I had been looking for awhile from the naval vendors, Yee Haw!! But all good things must come to an end and after the big

boss told me I needed to put a collar on it and leave the vendor area, I decided I would spend the remainder of the second day taking pictures of the models. Wives seem to know that as long as you're in the vendor area you will always manage to find something you can't live without.



I had managed to take close to a thousand pictures and was on my second battery and I still had four rows to go! I just started taking pictures of models that stood out and caught my eye for being different or well built or something I just liked. Some of the models that caught my eye were a long building which housed about 20 different Panzer tanks on display, it was about six feet long and had some handouts for the taking in front of it, and they were advertising the Panzer Museum outside of McKinney Texas!

That got my blood pumping—a museum I hadn't found yet! I brought that flyer home and showed it to my partner at work, who happens to be a real tank nut. We looked all over the internet for information on this new museum but could not find any. Well, I was looking over the handout and noticed the fine print which stated that this museum is not real and is just a model! What a bum deal!

Another kit that I thought would take home all kinds of gold was a model AC-130 that I believe was in 1/72 scale. This guy spent 4300 hours building it; he had a photo album with pictures of each stage of construction shown. Engine nacelles were opened up as well as the radar nose and the doors. The detail was exquisite! Every wiring harness, coupling, hose connector, brace and thingamabob that was shown on the real a/c was in this model! A good example of the detail was the radar nose, the radar set is in great detail with all the waveguide and harness and black boxes shown, but the kicker was the reflection of the mirror it was sitting on. The nose tilts upward and you could see all the detail up inside the nose cone! Another good kit that I'm sure got more than a few laughs was a figure of a gruesome looking monster holding the head of Jar Jar Binks (Star wars fame) by the ears and the sign said "How Rude"! Quite Funny.



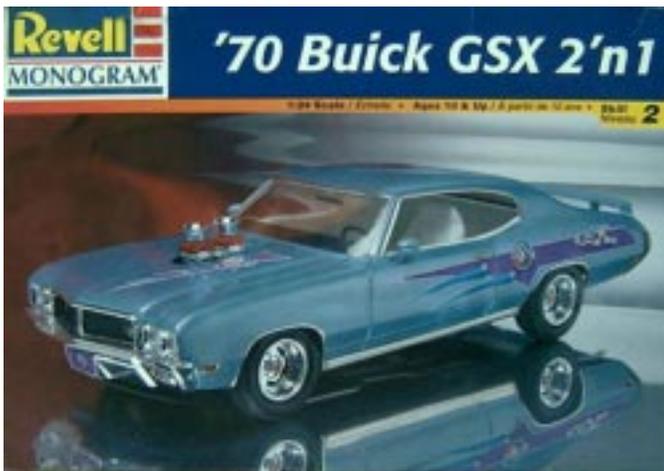
(continued on page 10)



## Nathan's Classic Rides

by Nathan Perrine IPMS 40167

This month I am looking at one of my all-time favorites, the 1970 Buick GSX. If there's any one example of the muscle car era that I would like to have before I die, it's this one. The American muscle car era hit its peak in 1970, at a time when all of the manufacturers had a little something more for the muscle car scene and Buick was no exception.



Buick was right in the thick of things with the GSX which was an add-on package to the GS455 that included a heavy-duty suspension, front disc brakes, chrome 15X7 wheels, front and rear spoilers, a hood tach, and Saturn Yellow or Apollo White paint with stripes and GSX markings. Most were ordered with the Stage 1 upgrade, which consisted of a 3.64:1 Positraction rear end, performance transmission modifications, and engine tweaks like ported heads, larger valves with stronger springs, revised carburetor jetting, and a hotter cam. The "official" horsepower rating from Buick was 360, but to be honest a more accurate estimate would be over 400, with torque factory rated at a "stump-pulling" 510 foot pounds.

Every trait that makes a muscle car desirable, the GSX has it in spades. It's rare—only 687 GSX's were built in 1970. It's flashy—the eyeball searing yellow or pure white paint, hood tach, spoilers and stripes make a bold performance statement. It's fast—way faster than the brochures said. Muscle Car Review put one of them head-to-head with a Hemi Road Runner, and this was only a GS (Gran Sport) with the same engine—a 455—and it beat the Runner 3 for 3. And the Runner guy said they were cheating, so they had a rematch and the same thing happened again. This is the engine that made the GS an all-star. Motor Trend Magazine drove one to 13.38 seconds in the quarter mile at 105 mph. The editors crowned the GS 455 Stage 1 "the quickest American production car we have ever tested." A stage 1 can easily keep up with most Hemi's, plus with its

front and rear stabilizer bars and tuned shocks, the GSX is a surprisingly capable handler for its weight.

Because of its rarity and desirability, most muscle car enthusiasts would never customize a real GSX, so that's why this kit was produced with some custom "goodies." The Revell/Monogram 2-in-1 kit has all the stock GSX features plus a set of custom wheels, raised rear suspension, custom body graphics, custom hood, and a high-rise dual quad intake manifold with velocity stacks.

The assembly is quite basic, and the pictures that accompany the instructions are very well done and easy to follow. First I do the engine assembly which consists of left and right block and heads and valve covers, an intake manifold, a chrome carburetor (I painted mine gold to depict a copper or brass finish) left and right exhaust manifolds, front engine cover, fan belt assembly, starter, and a chrome transmission pan cover.



Next is the interior which is very basic—two 2-piece front bucket seats, two arm rests, dashboard, steering column and wheel. Third is the front suspension assembly and then the engine is installed and the exhaust system is attached. And don't forget to put the exhaust system on BEFORE you put the rear end assembly on or it is nearly impossible to get it on, I found out the hard way. I had to cut the exhausts and put a pipe in "under" the rear end and glue the two parts to make a complete pipe, but it worked out OK.

Next is the radiator and the windshield front and rear in the body followed by the interior assembly in the body shell. And then the chassis assembly fits to the body and it's ready for the final assembly, front and rear bumpers, and rear deck spoiler, in the engine compartment I added the chrome air cleaner, brake master cylinder, upper and lower radiator hoses and the distributor. Finally the wheels are attached and then the hood and hood molding. And there we go another GSX is ready to be put out on the boulevard.

NP



## Accurate Miniature's 1/48 SB2U-3 Vindicator

by Milton Bell IPMS 16702



Well, the Vindicators are finally here. I picked up mine early, having pre-ordered from SMO, and it's the -3 Battle of Midway version.

So far the model has, as they say, "opened to mixed reviews." From my perspective, the review is mostly good and that's with some pluses added on.

Let's get those niggling little problems out of the way first. All the kits I've seen (or heard about) have heat-sink or depressed area(s) just behind the cockpit. This sink goes around the fuselage and across the fabric detail and has sent some reviewers and assemblers into hysterics. The reason for the sink is the molded in bulkhead section that's largely out of sight inside the fuselage. When the runner with these parts is removed from the tool too soon, there is a lot of shrinkage. You can see by the photo below how severe this is. Without some work, there will be an unsightly ring around the fuselage.



You have to fix this and it's not all that hard. What you need is a bottle of Mr. Surfacer, some cotton balls, and some alcohol. Use either isopropyl, denatured, or gin—if you're desperate. Just give the offending area two or three coats of Mr. S or whatever it takes to completely fill the sunken area and a little more. Wait until it completely sets. I recommend at least overnight. When it's hard enough to not dent easily with your fingernail, it's probably cured.

Now, soak a cotton ball in alcohol and start rubbing. Work the cured Mr. S just like you would with sandpaper. In a fairly short time you will see plastic begin to show where you've removed the filler. The real beauty of this method is that the alcohol doesn't affect the plastic at all so no detail is removed or altered!

I spent about five minutes on each fuselage half and now have the problem area filled. All that's left is a little more alcohol and some judicious and careful work with a flat fine-grit sanding to flatten out the fabric detail.



The other problem has to do with a detail—and the kit has super detail as any Accurate Miniatures kit does. All the data I can find suggests that the -3 usually carried a single 50 cal. wing mounted gun usually in the right wing. The kit has it in the left wing so if you want to move it to the right wing you'll have to engrave the shell ejection/link ports in the right wing.

And finally, what began as a problem has been shown to be an oddity of the Vindicator. The area just behind the pilot's compartment is sheet metal but it has framing on it as if it was a canopy. Go figure! Anyway, the kit is essentially correct so just paint the clear part as the artwork shows.

There's a minor problem that shows in the photo above. For some reason, the lift point hole was omitted from the right fuselage half. Just drill a new one and insert a piece of rod or sprue, then drill it out. Or use a piece of metal tubing. I have some for 20mm cannons that should work just fine.

Some of the kits have clear parts that are, well, not so clear. There's no real fix for this problem other than contacting AM for a replacement. My example has good clarity but on a couple of pieces there is a blemish or line that is inside the plastic. I can live with this, even to the couple of tiny bumps inside the windscreen. Of course, you can always vac-form a new canopy or wait for SMO to offer one but Accurate Miniatures has a good reputation for attending to the needs of their customers.

These are very good kits so don't be put off by reviews that find all the faults and then give no recourse. Most of the problems can be fixed with simple Model Building 101 techniques. The

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*(Atlanta Nationals continued)*

at good discounts (unless they ever show up in a Hobby Lobby half price sale!) Revell-Monogram had a test shot of the sprues of a 1/48 Ryan NYP (Spirit of St. Louis). Some lucky soul will get my old Glencoe kit as a white elephant prize this coming December.

AMtech had a built up 1/48 F2H-1 Banshee at their booth. They told me that they will be doing the full line of Banshee kits, -2, -2N, -2P, and -3 & 4 (which are the same externally), and that they will be for full distribution, not just at Hobby Lobby. Classic Airframes will continue their very aggressive release schedule of 1/48 aircraft kits, about 10-12 new kits annually, but would not announce any subjects. I lobbied for a SAAB J-35 Draken. Milton would have found out about other scales and genres on the new kit front, but I was pressed for time and didn't. Target builders please accept my apology on this.

Seminars: There was a full day's worth of seminars planned for every day, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday! The lineup was truly awesome. There were two occasions on which I had to choose from between two seminars I wanted to attend that were running at the same time. We attended seven seminars total in the three days.

The Venue: Great Venue. The convention rooms were upstairs. Downstairs was a little mini shopping mall that connected to the convention hotel (which we were too late to get registered in). The mini mall had about a dozen boutique type stores aimed at women so any wife bored to tears by three days of nerd heaven could slip downstairs and shop. Miriam bought three pairs of silver earrings and I didn't make a peep. The mini mall also had a small food court and one attached sports bar type restaurant that had great food. This was outstanding because with this arrangement we lost minimal convention time to eating.

International Event: If you ever think the term "international" in International Plastic Modelers Society sounds a little grandiose, think again. I know there were people in attendance from Canada, Mexico, England, Australia, the Dominican Republic, the Czech Republic, Belgium, and Thailand at the USA National convention this year.

The Banquet: Good food served from four buffet style serving areas. All 640 in the room got their food pretty quickly. The crowd was so large we could not locate any Austin buds to sit with but this turned out to not matter at all since everyone was a modeler and everyone was just giddy with happiness after three full days of nerd heaven. We sat with some folks from Shreveport and some from Maryland, just south of Washington D.C., and had a great time talking models (we also found this to be true at lunch time in the mini mall, you could sit with anybody there and have a fun conversation about modeling).

The after dinner speeches and IPMS chapter awards were not too long. Our neighbors in San Antonio won the chapter of the year award. The 2007 convention was awarded to Orange

County California. All this went pretty quickly and then they got ready to announce the winners of the model contest.

They photographed every model entry and had planned to show the photo of the model on the big screen as the winners were announced but with 3240 entries, the program crashed and couldn't be fixed, causing great embarrassment for the Atlanta guys.

But the result of this was that they announced only the best of category awards, theme awards, special awards, and best of show at the banquet and turned everybody loose from the banquet room about an hour and a half ahead of schedule—a really good thing IMHO, and I think I wasn't alone in feeling that way. The other awards—first, second, and third place—were placed next to the models on the tables, and I was stunned to find a second place award waiting for me next to my yellow winged Brewster Buffalo!



Hooray for category splits! All the photos are promised to be on the convention web site soon—go to [www.ipmsusa2005.org](http://www.ipmsusa2005.org). You HAVE to see them. There were maybe only 10-20 amateurish looking models in the contest and EVERYTHING else was primo stuff.

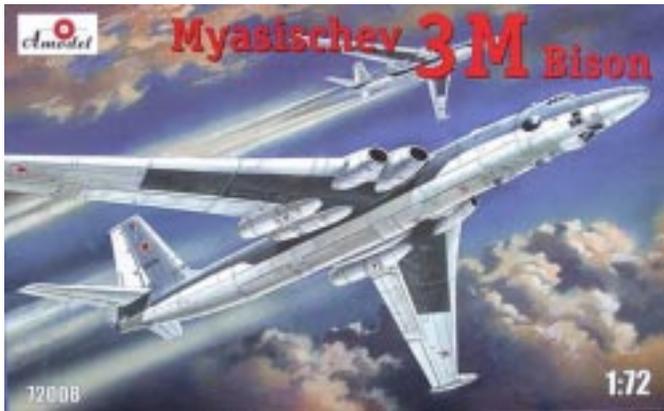
Overall, the convention was a day or two too short! At the end of it I felt like everything we did had been hurried and done incompletely because there was just SOOO much to do. I felt like I hadn't really been thorough in perusing the 425 vendor tables and 136 vendors. I hadn't thoroughly looked at all the models—I missed seeing the piece that won best of show entirely because it was a teeny tiny tank displayed under a magnifying glass and in my hurried skimming of the tanks, I did not peer through that magnifying glass. I missed several seminars I would like to have attended—like some of the veterans forums that I heard were fantastic. I did not visit with the panel of Tuskegee Airmen and their families at all. And I didn't take a step into the re-enactors area where many authentic uniforms and weapons were on display.

The 2006 convention will begin on August 2, 2006 in Kansas City. Be there if you can. Nationals are great!

*Tim Robb*

**The Evil Empire Strikes Back...**  
**Amodel's 1/72 Myasishchev 3M "Bison"**  
**Kit 72-008 \$170.00**  
**Obtained from Linden Hill Imports;**  
**also available from Squadron**  
**(for approximately \$100 more!)**

Review by "Bondo Phil" Brandt, IPMS 14091



**Background**

The advent of the Boeing B-52 and Convair B-60 (jet version of the B-36) in the late Forties was a serious wakeup call to defense planners of the Soviet Union, whose frontline bomber up to that time was the Tu-4 "Bull," a reverse-engineered B-29. Stalin personally directed the newly reopened Myasishchev OKB to fast track Project 25 M, a heavy four-engined, bicycle landing gear, sweptwing airframe. The prototype, which first flew in early 1953, quickly morphed into the production M-4, known to NATO as the "Bison-A." The mid-Fifties brought a major airframe redesign to the Bison, as well as more powerful engines. Known as the 3M, or "Bison-B," the significantly revamped bomber was essentially a new aircraft and was the definitive Soviet strategic weapon for decades, until the SALT II agreement of the Eighties resulted in the scrapping or conversion to tankers of most of that fleet.

Some Bison bombers have remained in the Ukraine, and this long-lived design is still in Russian service as a highly modified transport of space launchers, components and even the Soviet "Buran" space shuttle.

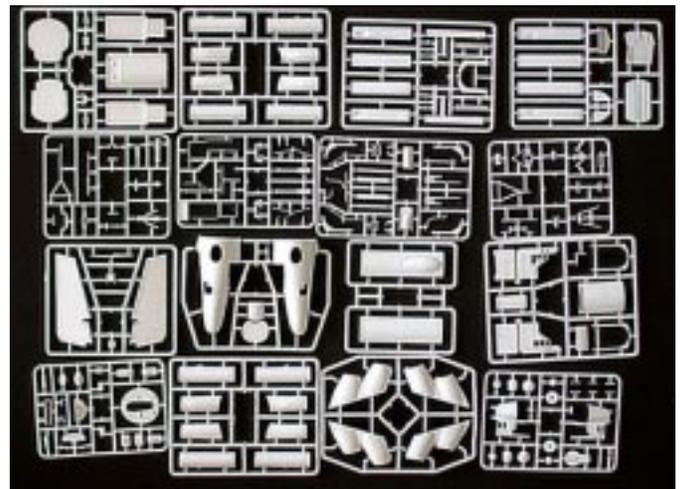
**The Kit**

With the exception of the Trumpeter Bear, the Ukraine's Amodel company has essentially cornered the 1/72 Soviet heavy bomber model market with their distinctive "Monster" series of releases: the Tu-95MS Bear (preceded the Trumpeter release by many months), Sukhoi T-4 Sotka, Antonov giant transports, Tu-160 Blackjack and now the 3M Bison B which can be completed as a bomber or tanker. Amodel's unusual design philosophy is to produce factory-completed fuselages, wings and tail components in hand-laid epoxy fiberglass, and all other components of

injected plastic are to be attached to the fiberglass with CA glue. The only other 1/72 Bison kit is the long OOP Conrail vacuform kit of the sharp-nosed "Bison C," but there is simply no comparison with the advancements in this latest Amodel release.

**Molding**

Epoxy glass certainly overcomes "droopy" vacuform construction problems inherent in long fuselages and large wingspans; you could kill someone with these parts! And, the engraving of said epoxy glass parts seems to be improving with each succeeding release. Although the smooth outer surface is more than adequate, the inner surface of the fuselage is marred by large, very sloppy bubbles and ridges, all of which would mach nichts if it they didn't seriously interfere with the landing gear bays which have to be dropped deep into fuselage cutouts (did I mention that you, the modeler, get to do the cutouts!) I had to use various power tools, including a large automotive die grinder to obtain the necessary reach inside the fuselage tube to obliterate the obstructions. I know Amodel could do better here....



An eye-watering profusion of injected components (371!) are generally OK, with fine engraving equal to big dog manufacturers. Allow lots of time for parts cleanup, though, because the horde of injected components come with typical limited production, industrial-sized spigots, not only where they join the sprues, but spread onto flat joining surfaces, too. And, we haven't even mentioned flash which, although not gross, is also well-represented.

**Fit**

Overall fit of epoxy glass components seems very good, but injected parts are typical for Amodel, that is, so-so, certainly not up to Tamiyagawa quality. Amodel uses exceedingly tiny alignment pins which often don't fit easily into the mating holes of adjacent parts, and those holes must be slightly enlarged with wire drills and a pin vise. Part thickness discrepancies also exist, especially in the very complex gear bays.

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# WEB AT NIGHT ..... ON AFTERBURNER

by Rafael Power

## Crossing e-borders to the south

During the August and September issues of the ASMS newsletters we'll be visiting South America and the Caribbean. From Baja to Patagonia, from the Galapagos Islands to the Windward Islands in the Caribbean; there's a lot of territory in between ready to be explored. But don't go trooping down to the local Abercrombie & Fitch or L.L. Bean outfitters for this one. Your mouse will do just fine.

As a visitor to the web, you will find many interesting websites covering a variety of subjects. There are sites dedicated to a particular air force, navy, or army as well as a particular aircraft, armor, military unit or airline. And let's not forget the model organizations since most countries have a national or local chapter of the IPMS. For modeling devotees there are personal sites of someone's collection with their own photo or model handiwork featured.

So, before the takeoff roll starts, mix yourself an ample supply of Margaritas, piña colada or whatever quenches your thirst (for knowledge, that is) and let's go visit our neighbors down south.

<http://www.laahs.com/>



The Latin American Aviation Historical Society (LAAHS) is South America's version of the American Aviation Historical Society (AAHS). This is one of best aviation history sites

in the web. LAAHS presents historical information on particular aircraft types, air forces, airlines, and personal histories based on Latin American aviation. As an example, there is a piece on the "football wars" (soccer) fought between F4U Corsairs and P-51 Mustangs between the Honduran and El Salvador air forces. There is another piece on the U.S.-supplied antisubmarine patrol aircraft used in South America during World War II. Flying boats, helicopters, jet fighters, and commercial airliners are all part of this excellent site. This is one of the best aviation historical sites in the web. Worth a visit!

**Downside:** needs larger images and profiles.

<http://www.ara.mil.ar/>



The official site of the Argentine Navy. Aircraft, ships, subs, news, and technical

specifications for all the weapons.

**Downside:** no English version and the medium sized photos with second-class quality.

[http://primahost3.prima.com.ar/faa/index\\_win.html](http://primahost3.prima.com.ar/faa/index_win.html)



The official site of the Argentine Air Force. A map divided by regions showing the airfield locations and the units based there. Every fixed-wing

and helicopter is described with technical details, a fine mid-sized color profile and a color photo. Also a complete section on the Malvinas/Falklands War including all the aircraft that fought on both sides with color profiles, unit insignia, and the base or ship assigned. Aircraft of the Argentine Air Force and Navy, the Royal Air Force and the Royal Navy are all included as well as ships on both sides; air and sea losses and maps make this a very good and concise coverage of this conflict. Recommended.

**Downside:** photos and profiles are medium sized.

<http://www.elsnorkel.com/esp/default.asp>



An all-submarine site for Latin America and Spain operators. This is an excellent site

which also covers submarines worldwide from all eras. Loaded with photos, wallpapers, articles, forums, DVDs, modeling reviews and news from the silent services of the world. Superbly done with good images!

**Downside:** no English version and you must be registered (free) for some of the articles, etc...

**La Página Extraoficial de la Fuerza Aérea de Chile**

<http://www.fach-extraoficial.com/espanol/portada.htm>



Lots of hard to find aircraft photos, unit information and production serials of the Chilean Air Force.

<http://www.geocities.com/licanwin/homeffaa.htm>

This site covers the aviation, armor, and fighting ships of Chile's armed forces. There is a section dedicated to prototypes of fighting vehicles that did not reach production. The site also looks at the neighboring countries, armor and artillery. Among them a selection of color and B&W photos of the Argentine M4 Shermans and Fireflies tanks.

Rafael

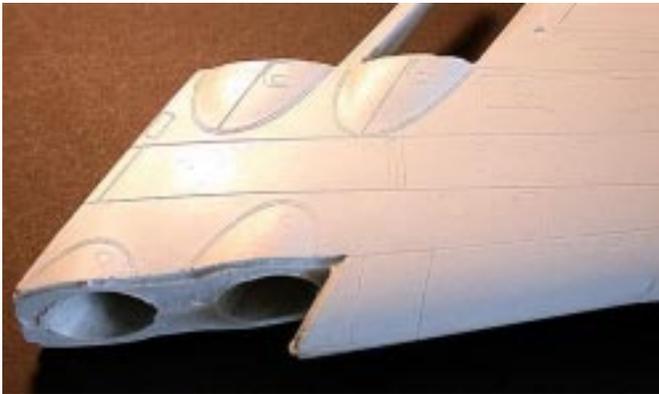
(Amodel's *Bison* continued)

### Cockpit

The entire forward fuselage section comprising all crew positions except the tail gunner is built up with injected parts and then CA'ed to the epoxy glass main fuselage. Various furnished decals are used to represent switch panels on the cockpit sidewalls. Seats are not detailed and have no harnesses, but then the cockpit windows won't allow much viewing anyhow.

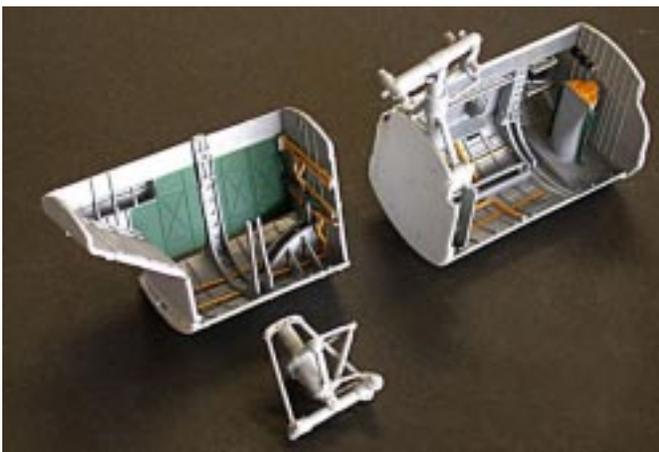
### Engines

The four jet engines are buried in the wing roots. Amodel has designed multi-component tube assemblies which slide into precast holes--tight fit; I had to shave the outer diameter of the tubes--in the epoxy glass wings. Both compressor and turbine faces are included, as well as FOD covers for intakes and exhausts—a nice touch. Separate nacelle panels cover the intakes and aft engine tubes, and needed moderate trimming to fit.



### Landing Gear and Bays

The forward and aft bicycle gear bays are very complex and are each built up of numerous parts. I had to do much fitting and altering to effect proper alignment--the instructions could have been much more detailed at this phase. Some pre-painting of larger panels was done here, but the tangle of individually-added piping was painted after assembly. The overall "busy" effect, though, is quite nice. The effect of detail complexity shows nationalistic pride, whereas Trumpeter may have better fit but doesn't go to this level of detail.



The construction sequence of the gear bays needs serious revision (IMO) by Amodel. The instructions would have the modeler do the brunt of bay assembly by reaching way down into the fuselage cutouts to glue many small parts that don't fit that well. This procedure would probably work fine with customary Tamiyagawa micro-clearances, but here it's a whole different ballgame. I've already heard from one modeler doing this kit, who says that bay assembly per instructions required approximately eight hours and was more akin to assembling a ship-in-the-bottle!

I took this problem to Bondo Industries employees of the Difficult Kit Division. They recommended that the bays be completely assembled and painted outside the fuselage and then dropped into appropriately enlarged (Dremelled/filed) fuselage cutouts. After the completed bays have been glued into the fuselage, I'll piece-in or epoxy putty the additional fuselage areas removed. The scheme has worked nicely so far, and the bays are ready to be inserted.

Complexities of the main and nose gear strut assemblies have been realistically rendered by Amodel and comprise numerous spindly struts and small parts, all with seams and minor flash to be removed.

Multipart outrigger struts and wheels mount in separate injected pods glued to each wingtip.

### Wings and Control Surfaces

The epoxy glass wings feature cast-in dowels (nibs, really) which mount into predrilled holes in the fuselage. The fit is decent, but I'd recommend epoxy glue here because you'll need the time to make sure everything is properly aligned. The vertical fin is factory integrated with the fuselage, and the horizontal stabilizer/elevators is a single epoxy glass unit which will need some "adjustment" to fit into the slot in the fuselage.

Flaps, ailerons and the rudder are of built-up construction. Four large injected wing fences are to be CA'ed to the top of the wings, and this will require patience and care so as to not mar the pristine epoxy glass surface. If you can get the fences to perfectly mate with the upper wing surface, this might be a place to tack the fences in with white canopy glue, and then lay on a fillet of CA or Mr. Surfacer 500.

### Tail Section

The far aft fuselage comprises the tailgunner's station and is built up and glued to the main empennage much like the cockpit.

### Clear parts

The main canopy and smaller windows are relatively thin and very clear; I've not yet tried the fit.

### Miscellaneous Small Parts

Amodel is very faithful to even the smallest protrusions (antennas, pitots, etc.) on the wings and fuselage, and there are a bunch!

*(Jeff's Musings continued)*

For you armor guys there was plenty of armor! I would make a guess there were as many armor kits on display as aircraft, if not more. There were also quite a lot of naval models to be seen; I thought the automobile side looked a little light but still lots to look at. Aircraft were in good number as well as dioramas and figures and the work on all these was excellent. I even saw a Nike Hercules missile in a configuration I never knew existed; the builder had even included a military manual for it. Thank goodness it never made it into the field, I hate things with wheels, and it makes for big time field duty!

The raffle was handled very professionally with the kits being assigned a ticket number on the computer and then being shown on the screen by the computer for you to look up your numbers. I managed to win two door prizes!

I would say that the national convention was a great success. The last word I got was about 4300 entries and close to 450 tables paid for by the vendors. Sponsorships paid for all but six or seven trophy categories and I believe the attendance was great! They also put on about 40 clinics during the show.

We left early Saturday to head to the folks' house in West "by God" Virginia. After a great visit with the folks, we all piled into our RV's and convoyed over to Wright-Patterson AFB and the Air Force Museum. They have opened up the new Cold War building and the Missile and Space wing since the last time I was there. The Cold War wing is very large. I didn't count how many aircraft they have in there but for size imagine having the B-1, B-2, B-52, B-47, B-58, C-133, C-124, C-121, AC-130, and a ton of other aircraft in there. That's a big building. I was a little disappointed because with all the shuffling of aircraft they now have all the X-planes across the field at the Presidential aircraft hanger and that included the B-70. We could never get our names on the list with all the people there.

After almost three weeks and 3000 miles it was time to go home. I will try to make several sets of discs for the club if anyone wants to check out the pictures of the show or the Air Force museum.

Hope everyone can make this month's meeting and look forward to seeing you there!

*Jeff*

*(Vindicator continued)*

detail in the interiors is super and it appears that it will be an easy build. As with all Accurate Miniatures kits, I recommend using the instructions, no matter how many kits you've done. With the -3 kit, you get a lot of information on Midway aircraft, a lot of basic decals, PE seat belts, and a set of masks for the canopy. You also get a choice of wheels (flattened or not). The only question left for me is interior color. I think it should be DDG or Bronze Green but if you want to do it natural metal, have at it. But buy it and build it. I think it's a good kit.

*Milton*

*(Amodel Bison continued)***Decals**

The decal sheet features Russian national insignia with many separate airframe stencils, all in that irritating flat-finish loved so long ago by ESCI. Bondo's gonna try to pre-spray the sheet with Micro Superfilm.

**Instructions**

Parts and assembly steps are shown in no-text, isometric exploded fashion and generally do the job, except where the gear bays are involved. More detailed closeups are needed here because even this experienced modeling curmudgeon was at times mystified as to how certain components fit in to the scheme of things. Hmmm, mebbe I shouldn't've tol' that! :)

**Conclusion**

A highly detailed, injected plastic Bison is a long overdue subject for modelers entranced by aircraft of the old "Evil Empire." Amodel's release has obviously been done with nationalistic pride, and while not an inexpensive afternoon project, and with the comparative roughness of limited edition kits, is nevertheless a quantum step beyond vacuform multimedia kits of the past. This modeler welcomes it.

*"Bondo" Phil*



*Some of the Japanese and Axis 1/48 aircraft at Atlanta.*



*A nice bunch of helicopters. Both photos courtesy of Jeff Forster.*

## Old Rumors & New Kits

Well, I'm late again this month. Thanks to all the members who contributed articles this month, especially Jeff who sent in a lot of photos from the nationals along with his "musings," and Tim who stayed until the bitter end and gave us his impressions of the affair. And thanks to the other regular contributors. I couldn't do it without you.

I had to attend the out-of-town funeral of one of my two remaining uncles. When I was quite small, he inherited a model I had been given as a parting gift when we moved from California. It was a P-38 stick and tissue model and William eventually got the model. He was about 14 at the time and had never seen, let alone built a model airplane. Flour paste does not a model make! Scraps of the model lasted for years.

Happily we live where we are exposed to a variety of crafts, tools, and kits. There are some new ones too and news of kits to come. Come to think of it, Guillow still has a P-38 flying model available.

Hasegawa's new 1/48 F/A-18F is now available, coming right on the heels of the R-M F/A-18E super bug. Both are very nice kits. Look for Hasegawa's Lancaster next week. This "little" beauty in 1/72 was available in Atlanta and from what I hear it's a very nice kit. I wonder, will the vendor tables have some good deals on the older Airfix Lanc?

Hasegawa has a couple of new re-releases too. First is their still excellent 1/48 F-4J Phantom in the markings of VF-84—black tail with skull and bones—and another "marking" variation of their 1/72 EA-6B. Hard to believe that kit hasn't been retooled

Classic Airframes is still busy and has announced several new kits and re-releases of some of their better but older kits. Their fabric wing Hurricane will soon appear in a new box. Their Supermarine Attacker will be out this month and their Gloster Meteor night fighter NF11/13 is out now in some shops. In the future, look for a family of early Bf 109s as well as more single seat export versions of the Vampire in various markings.

Another version of the night fighter Vamp in RAF and Italian markings is in the works as well as a couple of Vamp two-seat trainers in RAF, Royal Navy, Japan, and Iraq markings. Should be fun.

In case you missed out on the Midway era F2A-3 Buffalo from Special Hobby, it's available again as is the Vigilante from Trumpeter and the Academy Flanker. All three are in 1/48. There has been a general restock of all the Hasegawa 1/32 kits. I've heard that the number of entries of 1/72 models was down a bit at the nationals with an increase in 1/32 scale.

And speaking of the Nationals, the Dragon Expo '05, hosted by Dragon Models, was, hear, largely devoted to large scale "toys"

although several model manufacturers including Hasegawa, Trumpeter, and Dragon were represented there. Trumpeter had test shots of their 1/32 A-7E Corsair II and Me 262. Both of these should be popular kits whenever they are released. I can imagine all the resin details that are in the pipeline for both but especially for the A-7.

I hear Mike West, one of our vendors, sold out of his 1/48 P-9 catapult kit soon after opening! Way to go Mike! I saw the early version of the kit at the Regional in Oklahoma and I think it's one of his best pieces.

Cutting Edge has a very nice and impressive conversion kit to make a PB4Y-2 Privateer from the Monogram B-24 kit. Actually, all you need from the Monogram kit is the wing; the rest is resin. And you'll need some money too. The conversion will retail for a modest \$250. But it sure is pretty.

Hasegawa's 1/350 Battleship Mikasa is still new and will be joined shortly by a Russian Battleship of the same era, possibly from Roden.

As Tim reported, Revell-Monogram had a test shot of their Ryan monoplane "Spirit of St. Louis" at Atlanta. No word on the release date. They also had a test shot of their new 1/144 scale An-124. Seems like the right scale for that one.

Neither Tim nor Jeff mentioned it, but I heard that the convention site took a lightning strike to the roof which resulted in a major leak that encouraged some hurried covering of tables in the vendor's area. No word of any damage to models on display.

Several years ago, Monogram Publications released a book on Luftwaffe Camouflage and Colors. It was a sellout and used books sold for a sizable amount. As with most "accurate" publications, information changes and today the monogram publication could stand some updating. Classic Publications has released a new and supposedly "correct" book on Luftwaffe Colors and Markings, 1939-1945, Vol I. This first volume sells for about \$90 and comes with a set of authentic color chips. You need to check it out if you are at all interested in WWII Luftwaffe markings.

Tamiya continues with their 1/48 armor/vehicles. A few days ago I picked up a very nice little Citroen car that can be built as a Wehrmacht staff car, French staff car or French civilian car. It isn't highly detailed but it has all that's needed for a diorama accessory. Tamiya has also released a Universal Carrier that looks good in the photos I've seen. And they have a Hetzer on the way. They have also released a set of WWII U.S. figures

Polar Lights has released a version of the 2005 Ford GT 40. You can get it in red, silver, blue, and yellow. And you can have one for under \$20. Fujimi has a couple of new car kits—a Ferrari F550 Maranello and an F355 Spyder.

Milton