



SPRUE EXAMINER



**Building a Yellow White Elephant
Fujimi's 1/24 Grand Bretagne Look
Renault Megane Coupe 16V**

by
Milton Bell, IPMS #16702

Yes, I built a car. No, I've not gone "over to the dark side"!

This was my "white elephant" gift that I ended up with at our last Christmas party. I felt sort of obligated to build it since someone wanted to pass it on, and I was the "lucky" winner!

To be honest, this is the third model car I have built. The first was an MGA that was probably about 1/32 scale. I built it almost 45 years ago when Martha and I were first married. I drove a real MGA at the time but had sold it for a new, shiny, white VW. I missed the MG, so I built a model of it — black with a red interior!

Years later when I got back into model building, I built a 1/43 Monogram "Cobra." Nice little kit. I still have it, dust and all.

But this little Rally Car was a real departure from my usual aircraft models, and I actually

looked forward to building it. The box art was flashy, and the parts seemed to be well molded with crisp details. A disclaimer on the box said "This model kit is not rally car." I guess that is why it says "look" in the description. It sure looks like a rally car to me!

This Renault rally car is really a simple kit. There is no engine, no working suspension and no real steering—just a body, a bottom "pan", an interior "tub", front and rear suspension, four wheels, and a few essentials. With the exception of the tires and light lenses molded in clear plastic, the body of the car is molded in bright yellow. I suppose that was to make things easier for those who don't like to paint yellow. All plastic parts were well done with only a slight heat sink on the roof, which I fixed with a light coat of Tamiya putty thinned with Testors liquid cement.

After sanding it down, I primed the body with two coats of Tamiya spray-can white primer. And just to be sure there were no late surprises, I did the same to the interior and underside.

When the primer was very dry, I began sanding it down again with a piece of 600 grit wet/dry paper and a lot of water. I had to go slowly since
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IPMS/El Paso, Annual Show/Display, El Paso, TX	July 16, 2006
IPMS USA, National Convention, Kansas City, MI	August 2-5, 2006
IPMS/Fort Worth, SuperCon 2006, Arlington, TX	September 9, 2006
IPMS/Emerald City, OZCON 2006, Wichita, KS	September 16, 2006
IPMS/Central Arkansas, CASM 2006, Little Rock, AK	September 29,30, 2006
IPMS/El Paso, DesertCon, El Paso, TX	October 7, 2006
IPMS/FAC Museum Modelers, FAC Model Contest, Fort Worth, TX	October 14, 2006

Editor's Notes...

Recently I did something I have never done before: I spent an evening at my coworker's house showing his two boys how to build models. Both young lads have never build anything before, and they were excited with the old Tamiya armor kits I dug up from the garage. I showed them just the basics: how to follow instructions, cut, glue, and decal. No sanding, filling or painting. Remembering Russ's rule of "building for fun", I then let them loose and have their ways with the models. That was around 7:45pm.

Five hours later, they were still at it, showing no sign of losing interest. At 1:00am, I quit and went home. The next day my half-asleep coworker told me the boys stayed up till 3 in the morning and finished everything, decals included. They woke their parents to show off their first models and persuaded the adults to take them later on to Hobby Lobby to buy more kits. Somehow I have accomplished something most parents failed to do: I lured two twelve years old away from their TV and video games to build something constructive for more than seven hours!

Russ was absolutely right. Fun over accuracy. So the parts were glued backward, and the decals were placed upside down, but who cares? They were having a ball. At the end, they finished what they started and built something out of a pile of disjointed parts. No wonder they were proud of themselves. I'm proud of what they did too.

This month we meet on **Tuesday the 11th** at 7:00pm at the usual Yarborough Branch Library. The clinic topic is **diorama bases**, and it will be conducted by **Mike Becker**.

Eric

ASMS Officers for 2006

Jeff Forster, president, jrforster2@aol.com	331-4644
Tim Robb, vice president, TimRobb209@msn.com	512 392-0611
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Eric Choy, editor, mechoy@att.net	249-9184

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Austin Model Show Coordinators

Kenny Roady, KAR66@swbell.net	260-2907
Kathy Roady, vendor Liason, kroady@swbell.net	260-2907

Austin Scale Modelers Society (ASMS) is affiliated with the International Plastic Modeler's Society (IPMS) as the Republic of Texas Chapter. ASMS meets the second Tuesday of each month except December. Dues for full membership are \$20 yearly. Subscription to the newsletter *Sprue Examiner* is \$15 yearly.

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...

Only four weeks away from the Nationals in Kansas City, and I'm ready to go! I hope everyone will try to make it, as it is sure an experience. I've been to two national conventions so far, and they have been something I will always remember.

Once again, I would like to thank Mike and Sally Kachoris for letting us have our annual picnic and auction at their place. Despite the low turn out this year, we all had a great time. Those of you who couldn't make it sure missed out some good bargains. I couldn't wait to go home and drool over all the goodies I bid on!

There has been a boat load of kits showing up at King's these last few weeks. The bank of Jeff sure has taken a beating trying to keep up. Actually I've been falling way behind, so I will have to work a few more hours to make up for it.

Well, go build some models, and I will see everyone at the meeting.

Jeff

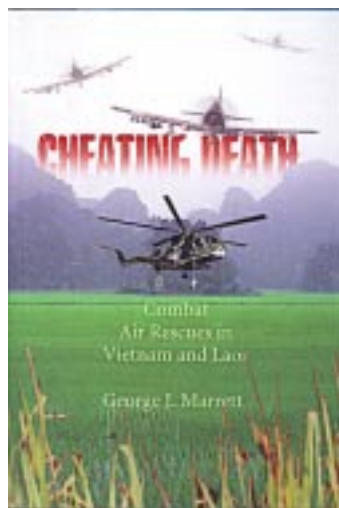
Jeff's Book Reviews

IPMS# 30833

Cheating Death

Combat Air Rescues in Vietnam and Laos

by George J. Marrett



Published by Harper Collins in hardback format with 225 pages, 3 maps and 16 pages of b&w photographs. Price \$25.00. ISBN 1588341046

This book is the story of the courageous A-1 Skyraider "Sandy" pilots battling Viet Cong behind enemy lines to rescue fellow airmen shot down in South East Asia.

On May 31, 1968, word came down that an US Navy A-7 Corsair II, call sign "Streetcar

304", was shot down in the area of Ho Chi Minh trail, about 25 miles west of Khe Sanh, South Vietnam. Four Sandys were airborne, with two heading to the rescue site and two escorting Jolly Green 20 and 37 to a safe area to attempt a rescue. When the first two Sandy's arrived on scene, they went about trying to determine where the downed airman was located. While making

their second flypass, the lead plane was hit in the engine and left wing. Immediately it was pulled off the target area and escorted back to base by his wingman. This led the author Marrett's team of Sandys to leave the Jolly Greens in their orbit and head to the target area to find the downed pilot.

Upon arriving and while orbiting over the area, the lead plane of the second pair of Sandys was also shot down, leaving now two pilots on the ground. Marrett's aircraft was the only one left, and he was ordered to fly to a safe altitude.

The next day at first light, six more Sandys were assembled for another rescue attempt. For this attempt, 32 F-4s and F-105s stood by to soften up the enemy. The weather condition was bad, with only 500 feet ceiling. Marrett and his flight leader dived down through an opening in the clouds and start weaving their way to find the downed pilots. After only a few minutes, the flight leader's plane was hit and on fire, and he had no choice but to eject. Luckily, Jolly Green 16 came in and plucked him out of a 75 ft. tree. But there was still no radio contact with the first Sandy pilot shot down the previous day.

That afternoon the Air Force decided to throw everything at the enemy and launch a rescue regardless of cost. Four Sandys, three Jolly Green helicopters, four Spads with disabling gas and twelve jet aircraft were assembled. On the way to the rescue site, Jolly Green 20 reported an overheated transmission, and it had to be put down. All forces were recalled to cover the rescue of Jolly Green 20. This third attempt to rescue "Streetcar 304" had failed. During this time the pilot of shot down Sandy was captured by the Viet Cong.

On the third day, another rescue attempt was made. Three Jolly Greens were dispatched, and while en route to the rescue site, one of the Jollys developed hydraulic problems, and it was escorted back to base by another. This left only one Jolly to effect the rescue.

The Nail FAC finally pinpointed the downed airman, and he started to direct ordinance to suppress AAA fire. One of the fast movers, an F-105, was hit, and it had to return to base. As the last F-4 peeled in to drop his bomb load, it came in too close and laid its drop right on Streetcar 304's position. Fortunately, no one got hurt. While the escorting Sandys began their firing to wipe out artillery positions and any enemy soldier strapped up in the trees attempting to shoot the downed pilot, the Jolly moved in and made a successfully extraction. All in all, two Sandys, one Jolly Green helicopter and one Sandy pilot were lost in the effort of rescuing one downed A-7 Corsair II pilot.

This book is filled with hair raising tales such as this, and it will capture your attention till the end. Recommended.

Jeff's rating - ★★★★★

(Building A Yellow White Elephant continued)

I didn't want to sand through the primer. Naturally, I spent most of the time on the exterior for a smooth surface since the interior would not be seen very well.



The front suspension parts fit pretty well. It allows the wheels to caster a few degrees left or right with no connection to any steering device. You just pose them turned to the degree you want, more or less. As I discovered later, this is definitely a case of "less" rather than "more".

The rear suspension is a bit different from the front, as one would suspect from a FWD vehicle like this Renault. It sort of "floats", and again the fit was pretty good.

The wheels are held on the spindle/axles with vinyl inserts. These inserts are molded in clear and only four are supplied. In no time at all I was down to two! Since finding little bouncy vinyl bits on my floor was beyond the ability of my bifocal aided eyes, like any good modeler I have to improvise.

While I thought about that improvisation, I bought two cans of Tamiya Spray Color: chrome yellow and bright blue. I thought chrome yellow would be a better match than plain yellow, and the bright blue is a dead ringer match to the box art color.

Before I applied these colors, I painted the exhaust tunnel and rear collector with Alclad duralumin. When the paint dried, I masked both parts well, and I shot a test coat of yellow on the body. As I expected, the chrome yellow is truly yellow! And best of all, it covered the white primer like a blanket.



I was on a roll! I gave the body a light coat of yellow. Again, no slips and no drips. It was looking good. As I set it down for an overnight dry, I slipped and almost dropped it! Fortunately, I caught it in time, but the damage had been done. I left four beautiful fingerprints in the fresh paint!

The next morning I woke up to find the prints were not as bad as I had feared. A session with a worn-out piece of 400 grit wet/dry (lots of water) soon rendered them invisible. The primer and the paint stayed intact throughout the sanding. I like this Tamiya paint.

Now I was back to the wheel insert problem. The nearest material I had that would work was some plastic tube (no, the Hasegawa inserts are the wrong size). They were not nearly big enough, and the rear wheels wobbled. The only thing to do was fill the space with Tamiya putty, attach and align the rear wheels (the front two had the vinyl inserts), and keep my klutzy hands off the model overnight!



The interior was painted overall Polly Scale Neutral Gray, and the dash was painted neutral gray and flat Black as shown in the instructions. The seats were painted flat black. A decal with instrument faces is included on the generous decal sheet, and it aligned fairly well. After the decal solvent had done its work, I added a drop of Future to each instrument to simulate the glass lens. A silver pencil brought out a few more details on the dash (Once the model is assembled, most of the interior detail is virtually invisible. Next time I'll not bother with all this extra detailing).

Now comes the most challenging part of this build — painting the black portions on the clear part interiors. I did some careful masking with small strips of tape and sprayed on flat black. I thought that an overcoat of Future would protect the black paint. But when I removed the tape, I removed a good portion of paint, so I had to repaint several areas. Luckily, the clear parts fit perfectly. White glue was used to install the rear side windows. The other windows are in one piece, and liquid cement was used in the roof to hold it in place.

Meanwhile back at the paint shop, I sprayed two more coats of yellow paint on the body. Once convinced it was thoroughly dry, I used Tamiya tape and followed the box art sketches to lay out the blue portion. I warmed my can of bright blue in a pan of very warm water for a few minutes before spraying. Again, the Tamiya Spray Color worked like a champ. I got a very smooth finish. When I removed the tape, I had a near perfect line between the Bright Blue and Chrome Yellow. I used 1200 grit paper to start the polish/rubdown process and remove the slight ridge between the two colors. Then I finished up with Novus plastic polish. I ended up with a surface so shiny and smooth it was almost like glass. Believe me, there is no need to gloss coat before applying decals!

The decals (and there are lots) went down without a hitch. The yellow Megane decal could have been more dense, but it works pretty well. The worst spot is the white square for the number 5 which appears on each door. This area lies over the yellow/blue demarcation line, and the white is not opaque enough. In hindsight, I should have cut two squares of white decal sheet and put these down first.

With the roof antenna attached in a predrilled hole, I glued the windshield wipers and interior rear view mirror with white glue. I used Bare Metal Foil on all the mirror faces and areas behind the brake/tail light lenses to add more shine. The red brake and yellow turn signal colors were painted with Tamiya clear colors over bright silver.

Attaching the body to the frame is a bit tricky, but trust me, it works. There are notches and tabs to guide you. As for posing the front wheels turned? Forget it. The body fits so closely to the wheels you may wonder how the real car can be driven.

And that's about it. This was a real challenge for me, but I have to say I totally enjoyed it. I guess sticking little pieces of styrene together can be fun, no matter what the subject or outcome is. It was a lot of fun painting glossy paints. And I have to say that 1/24 scale parts are definitely easier on my eyes than 1/48! For something different, I recommend building one of these flashy car models.

Milton



Region 6 Update

by John Vanek, RC6

Greetings, Region Six!

I went to the mailbox last week and WOW! My copy of the new and improved IPMS Journal was neatly wrapped in the plastic. (Well, not for long after that.) Again, WOW! I sat down immediately and read through the whole issue. High five to the new Journal team. Job well done and keep up the good work. I am really looking forward to the next hundred or so issues.

Included in the Journal are the amendments for this year. If I recall correctly there are eight of them this time. I wouldn't want to influence anybody so I will just leave it up to each member to read through them and make their own decision. But please make sure to vote on these amendments. For those who prefer you can vote on-line at

<http://ipmsusa.org/Election2006/Amendments2006.htm>

It is just a little over a month until the Nats in KC. I know the folks with WCM (West Central Missouri) have been burning the midnight oil to make sure this is an event to remember. Just looking at their site they still have some trophy sponsorships available. So if your chapter has not yet gotten yours in or if you want to sponsor another category the time is getting real short. Here is a link to the current listings on the site:

<http://www.ipmsusa2006.org/SponsorsList.php>

I know that we are still a couple of months away from it, but there have been some changes (for the good) to the charter renewal for next year. Our illustrious DLC will be emailing out the renewal form and the chapter fact sheet to each chapter contact. It is now a fillable form so you don't have to print it out and UGHH...fill it in by hand. This should make the process much quicker and relatively painless. Now, what I need from each chapter is to verify your chapter contact's email address. The information that I have is on the IPMS/USA site at

http://ipmsusa.org/Groups_Contests/region_select2.asp?RGN=6

Please let me know either yes this is correct or no we need to make a change.

The next couple of months should be rather quiet in our area. We have no events in July or August other than KC. But September is a rather full month, starting with Supercon in Arlington on the 9th (<http://www.fwsm.com/>). Next up is Ozcon in Wichita on the 16th (<http://members.cox.net/tcdowen/>), and finally the CASM show in Little Rock on the 29th and 30th (http://www.casmmodels.org/2005_show.html). So if you didn't get your fill this spring there are still a few more chances before the year is over with.

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ASMS Annual Picnic and Auction

Despite a lower than usual turn out, this year's picnic at Mike and Sally Kachoris's house was another success. The unofficial count for the auction is around \$600.

Here are some pictures taken by Milton at the scene.



Two hungry campers: Carl and Pat...



Visiting before lunch: Kathy, Tricia, Ray, Kenny and Eric.



Frank prepared to sample the brisket



...And two proper gents: Bill and Mark



Sally, our host, and her gift.



by Rafael Power

Modeler's Guide to PT Boats

I feel a jump start coming—mine! Coming out of the Language Savvy debacle, I need to return to my usual routine of individual sites. Something soothing and relaxing perhaps. Aah yes, fast and loud PT Boats fit the bill quite nicely.

Buzzing Mosquitoes Irritating the Enemy

Mosquito, PT or Pig Boats, no matter what they were known as, these remarkable armed plywood speed boats carved their own niche in the history of WWII in the Pacific and Mediterranean fronts. Whether it's the history of PT-109, the escape of General McArthur from Corregidor, or just Hollywood's productions such as *They Were Expendable*, the U.S. Navy's Patrol Torpedo Boats (PT Boats) legend is written and cast in stone. But, are there any PT Boat legends in styrene plastic?

Remembering the Old and the New

Ever since I began building model kits as a kid, I have always been interested in PT Boats. But for years, model manufacturers generally ignored PT Boats. Of the major kit manufacturers, only Revell, Lindberg and Hawk have had examples in their catalogs. Revell first released a box-scale 78' Higgins (H-304) and later the 1/72 scale 80' Elco PT-109 kit. I remember building the 78' Higgins so many times and yet always coming back for more. The Higgins kit may be found in show sale tables or periodically re-released by Revell, while the Elco is currently still available in hobby shops and catalogs.

In the 1960s, Hawk had a 1/187 scale 80' Elco as part of a range of small warships. Although now marketed as 1/200, Testors recently re-released it under the "Easybuild" line. Despite its small scale and age, model reviewers have given it a good grade with some good possibilities for detailing. For a review of the Testors PT Boat by Tim Reynaga, visit: http://smmlonline.com/reviews/models/ptboat_testors/ptboat_testors.html.

While you are there, visit the site's Model Review page <http://smmlonline.com/reviews/models/model-reviews.html> for more ship models.

Another interesting showcase is a superb scratchbuilt 70' Elco by Mike Salzano based on the Airfix RAF Rescue Boat. It is featured in the Hyperscale site at: http://hsgalleries.com/pt18ms_1.htm. This same boat was also featured in one of the Fine Scale Modeler reader's galleries.

Lindberg

A motorized box-scale Elco 80' "Patrol Sea Raider" (#723M) appeared in the 1962 Lindberg catalog. Around 1989, Lindberg released a 1/32 Elco 80' version (#812), which was still available in 1998. However, Lindberg did have one more boat up their sleeves in their 1962 catalog. Although not a true PT Boat, there was an armed Air Force Rescue Boat (#7415). For a review of the Lindberg 1/32 Elco kit visit: <http://www.zendner.com/boats/ptboat.htm>.

Independent Crafters

On the smaller scales, JAG has a 1/350 resin 78' Higgins 78' (#303) while Skywave has a pair of 1/700 Elcos (#0002). White Ensign Models also offers a 1/700 80' Elco (#K741), complete with photoetched details. The kit measures only one inch, and it includes two hulls. GMS Modeling, a new model company from St. Petersburg in Russia will also release a 1/350 USN 77' Elco as well as a German Schneelboot.

To top this bill of fare, Italeri is set to release a 1/35 80' Elco this summer. This leads me to another stage of our hobby.

The Big Boys

The Radio Control (RC) aficionados haven't been forgotten either. As a matter of fact, they score BIG!

Dumas Boats (<http://www.dumasestore.com>) offers two 80' Elco PT Boats: a 1/30 scale one (#1233) made of die-cut mahogany plywood and mahogany veneer planking, and a larger 1/20 scale (#1227) fiberglass hull with die-cut plywood decks and super structure. Both include all fittings.

Bluejacket Ship Crafters also has a 1/4" scale (whatever that means) 80' Elco with full fittings.

The Best For Last



www.geocities.com/mosquitoboot/pt159.html

Mosquito Boat Hobbies from San Pedro, CA is my favorite of the large scale model manufacturers. Why, you ask? Well, they are the only ones to feature all three types of boats: the 70' and 80' Elcos as well as the 78' Higgins in 1/20 scale.

These kits include fiberglass hulls, decks with removable center sections and cabin structures. Also included in each kit is a set of 1/20 scale detailed plans along with complete set of weapons and fittings. These are really outstanding kits, but they are expensive. At least you don't have to contend with wooden plank hulls, etc.

Keep in mind these large models make exceptional display
(continued on page 8)

(Web at Night continued)

models without the enormous expense of buying gas or electric motors, radio controls gear, etc. However, if RC kits are your interest, be prepared to jack up the investment price that will put you precariously close to Chapter 11 bankruptcy.

To the Sites

Now that your voracious appetite for these mosquito boats calls for more, here are some excellent sites with tons of reference material:



<http://www.ptboats.org>

Interested in PT Boat history, color information, variant details and more? All on one site you say? Well, look no further as this mega site is the "command center" of the PT boat enthusiasts.

Located in Germantown, TN, this site is run by PT Boat veterans and other enthusiasts. For historian and model buffs alike, there are information on squadrons, variants (and sub-variants), production numbers, armament, radar and torpedo tubes, postwar fates such as losses, museums, restorations, sales to civil users and more. There is also a list of links which include model kits as well as unit/association reunions information, and other ship related sites.

While you're at it, check out the on-line "Ship's Store". It offers caps, shirts, jackets, unit emblems, books, and videos among other interesting items.

Downside: No scale model information or reviews of any kind, not to mention limited wallpapers. Neither ANA/Federal Standard color paint information nor zebra camouflage scheme is available. No pre- or postwar color schemes or markings. Color profiles could be larger.

Whether you are a modeler or simply interested in patrol boats, PT Boats, Inc. is an indispensable source. No doubt about it - Highly Recommended!



<http://www.ptboatworld.com/links.htm>

If your search for PT Boat information seems incomplete, naval historian T. Garth Connelly's site fills many gaps in areas not found in PTBoats.org. For modelers seeking information about PT Boat model kits, Connelly's PT Boat World offers color information as well as the elusive Zebra camouflage. There is more historical and production information about Higgins, Elcos and other manufacturers. Very good site.

Downside: Needs more model kit reviews, no wallpapers. No pre- or postwar color schemes or markings. No color profiles.

Other Recommended Sites

<http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/mandm/ptboatp1.htm> Michael J. Hoyt's PT Boat Page.

<http://www.ptfnasty.com/> The "Nasty Class" Fighting Boat, all about the Patrol Torpedo Fast (PTF) boats in service during the Vietnam War. A little-known and forgotten boat with an interesting history.

Before We Shut Down Our Engines

With all this excellent reference material, we are missing something: more PT Boat variants in the hobby shops. I really must gun my supercharged engines and climb up on my soap box for this one. Except for the Revell 78' Higgins, the mainstream plastic model manufacturers show no inclination to come up with a new 78' Higgins or a 70' Elco model kit. They seem to be stuck on the 80' Elcos. Just like the P-38 Lightning and the P-39 Airacobras were classic aircraft of the early part of WWII and later replaced by the more powerful P-51 Mustang, so were the early Higgins and Elcos. Instead of the surplus of Bf.109s, P-47s and F-16s at the expense of other much-needed kits, we need some fresh prospects in our hobby.

Before the air gets too stale, would you model manufacturers give the 80' Elcos a rest and give us some Higgins for a change?

Rafael



I want to be an Author!



Have you ever thought of writing something for our newsletter? How about sharing that new technique, doing a review, show off your latest built, expressing an opinion, or whatever. *Sprue Examiner* is your soapbox, and we always welcome your contribution.

To get your article into print, type it in your favorite word processing software and send it to us via email or any other electronic media. Don't be afraid you are not up to it. We can edit anything we can read, and we are willing to work with you to dress up an article. If you have drawings or photos to accompany your article, we can help you scan it. If you need a photo of a model, we can take pictures for you too. If you don't know how to do a review, just look at any past issue's article on *Sprue Examiner* or other model publications.

Being an author is not as hard as you think, and others will enjoy getting your slant on things. Best of all, it beats paying your shrink to listen to your rant!

Editor

Old Rumors & New Kits

Well, if you missed our annual picnic, you missed some great food and fine company, not to mention some real bargains at the auction. The club made a little money too, thanks to those who came and donated models for the auction. None of which could have happened without the support and hospitality of Mike and Sally Kachoris. (All stand and applaud!)

On the modeling scene, there are a few new kits and accessories just out and hints of what we can expect in the last half of 2006. Yes, the year is half gone, and IPMS/USA National Convention is right around the corner.

And speaking of IPMS, you probably got a surprise when the May/June Journal arrived. Gone is the heavy paper wrapper. Instead it arrived in a see-through plastic envelope with a new up-to-date look that should appeal to any modeler. The cover is all color that "bleeds" on all sides with a flashy photo of a Yamaha motorcycle model. Your name and expiration date are no longer printed on the wrapper but on the journal itself. Chris Bucholtz, the new editor, has assembled a fine staff to turn the bimonthly journal into a really sharp publication. Not to say that the old one wasn't good, but this new look and layout is most impressive. Easily worth the IPMS annual dues.

Just heard via HyperScale (<http://www.hyperscale.com>) that Jules Bringuier is bringing out a line of models under his own name —Bringuier Model Kits. Jules is the man at Classic Airframes, and he offers kit subjects that few main-line kit producers will touch. I assume this will be a new product line in addition to Classic Airframes, at least in the beginning. All will become clear in the near future.

Look for the 1/48 Anson as well as a re-release of the Grumman Duck soon. And we should see a Vietnam B-57B Canberra later this summer or fall. Jules is a busy man. No doubt he will soon be busier!

A pleasant rumor (probably fact) is spreading that the next 1/72 WWII twin from Hasegawa will be the B-26B. That's good news for modelers who are still relying on the old Monogram Snap-Tite kit as the most accurate Marauder kit available. Let's hope Hasegawa gets it right.

Still to come from Hasegawa is their Ju-88 which should be out this summer. That B-26 is supposed to be ready late in the fourth quarter (can you say Christmas?). And we should see the P-400 (P-39) in August. Will it be a "new" Hasegawa tool or the Eduard kit in new wrappings? Hmmmm.

In their latest newsletter Eduard has included several "new" products. First off are two Spitfires, the Mk.22 and Mk.24, which are in fact the old Airfix kits. These are both very good kits and will probably be even better with the Aires interior set that Eduard says it's bundling. These kits will sell for about \$45

MSRP, pretty reasonable for multimedia kit with resin parts and PE. Eduard will also issue a Fokker D-VII as a dual combo set two complete kits in one box.

Look for a couple of really good deals coming from Eduard as well. Just as they did with two versions of their excellent Yak 3 kits, they will reissue Nieuport 17 and the Bf.108 Taifun for just \$10.95 each. That's a deal nearly impossible to beat. Both kits build up very well and have plenty of details.

Look for the I-16, Type 24, in August. (I'm still waiting to see the first one released! Ah, the mystery of distribution.)

Eduard will have an early shot of their new 1/48 Fw-190A-8 at the Nationals in Kansas City. They have made just enough for demo and "critique". No word yet when we can expect it in stores, but I would expect it much later this year. They are still working on the Me 110 and have collaborated with Revi Magazine to ensure that the kit is accurate. ETA and price will be available in the near future also.

And of course, Eduard has a lot of their bread-and-butter new PE coming for everything from Helldivers to M113s. There are four very nice looking Zoom sets slated for a July release. All are for 1/48 aircraft; the He 162A, Fw-190F-8, RF-4C, and Helldiver. At \$7.95 per set, the price is just right!

Tamiya has released their new 1/32 A6M2 Zero, and it should be in Austin the week of our meeting! As good as the first Zero A6M5 was, I've heard that this one is better. I know a couple of local modelers will be latching onto this one. Tamiya has also developed a new Gray Green paint that some are touting as the most accurate Japanese color for early war aircraft. I've yet to see it.

Also next week, look for the new 1/32 SBD-3 from Trumpeter. Their first SBD was probably their best kit yet, so I expect this will be in the same league.

When Tamiya's He-162 landed on my workbench, I discovered I was lacking in reference material. A quick search of what was available revealed a very recent MBI publication on the Spatz (Salamander was the code name for the project, not the aircraft.). This publication has some very nice B&W photos as well as several in color of an existing aircraft. I recommend it if you are interested in late-war Luftwaffe aircraft.

Bronco, a new company from Hong Kong, has a very nice 1/35 Cruiser A-34 Comet on the shelves. Their next release comes as a real surprise: a 1/35 scale Piper Cub in WWII markings. If it's as good as their armor, it should be a show stopper. You'll have to scratch up your own figure of Henry Fonda if you plan a mixed media Battle of the Bulge diorama!

See you all at the meeting Tuesday. Keep on building!

Know Thy Fellow Member

Name

M. E. Choy

Day job

Systems analyst for a software company specialized in adult probation data processing.

I'm a...

"Lifelong" modeler since fourth grade.



Primary modeling interest

I have built nothing but armor all my life until six years ago when I finally lost my "armor mojo". Since then, I have been building mostly aircraft. Occasionally, I'll indulge myself with a sci-fi subject. Once in a long while, I'll build a ship or a car. I have no desire to build any dinosaur, insect, or naked/half-naked female (or male) figure.

Favorite era and subject of my primary modeling interest

No preference on era. Favorite subjects: Spitfire, Spitfire, and Spitfire! Plus anything RAF (especially 28 and 80 Sqn), Fleet Air Arm, RHKAAF/GFS, Soviet/Russia, Texas ANG, and ROC (Taiwan) is flying or flew in the past.

I am also attracted to "colorful" (aerobatic and ceremonial) and "cross-dressing" (captured) aircraft.

Main reason why I build models

Growing up in the 70s before the arrival of video games, I had a choice of either sports or geeky hobbies like building models or wargaming. Since I was not tall/fast/strong enough for any athletic event, I picked building models. I couldn't stop ever since.

When I was a teenager, I loved the smell of Humbrol enamel. (No, I never sniff paint or glue. I swear!). "Yorkshire finest" might have inadvertently contributed to my addiction to the hobby!

Other than building models, I like...

B&W photography and competition scrabble. "He was a fine scale modeler, decent photographer, and a bad-ass scrabble player" —that is how I would like to be remembered when I'm gone.

I was influenced/inspired to build models by...

Anyone who builds better than me.

My favorite "master" modelers are

Modeler who can build good models regardless of subject (armor, aircraft, ship), era (Civil War, WWII, Korea) and scale.

The work of Sheperd Paine, François Verlinden, Milton Bell, and Russ Holm are among the finest I admire.

I consider myself...

Definitely a builder. I don't collect. Everything I buy I intend to build it, sooner or later. If I can't build it, I rather sell it than let it take up valuable space in my closet.

The size of my unbuilt collection

Around 150, I believe (I lost count long time ago). I used to have more, but lately I have sold big part of my armor and military figure collection via eBay since I lost my "armor mojo". I'm hoping by reducing my inventory, I can recover some of my money, manage and plan on what I want to build better. At least, that's the plan.

My family's opinion on my hobby...

Low, way low when I was growing up. I wasted too much time building models when I should be studying. Nowadays, my family seems to accept and respect what I like to do in my spare time, although I still feel guilty and embarrassed to show my model closet to my parents whenever they come to visit.

Best and worst excuses I used for buying yet another model kit

1. "Well, if I don't like it, I can always sell it on eBay."
2. "Hey, isn't that kit what my friend/cousin is looking for?"
3. "This is definitely the LAST model I'm buying this year!"
4. "I had a bad day. Let's go shopping."
5. "I can't wait. I need it NOW!"

Plan for my unbuilt collection when I die

I don't plan on dying until I build most of my models. And for the leftovers, some will be buried beside me six feet under :-)) (including any unbuilt Spitfires, of course), and I'm sure a lucky few in the club will be mentioned in my will.

First model I completed

Tamiya 1/100 Mirage III, circa 1974. I had no access to paint, so I tried to color it with watercolor and created a big mess. The instructions were in Japanese, which I can't read. I have no idea what to do with the decals, so I cut them out nice and neat and glued them on with tube glue.

Longest time I took to finish a model

Three years. It was Revell Germany's 1/72 Fiat G-91 Gina. I still have a few unfinished armor models on the "dark side" of my workbench since 2001. I'm a slow builder by nature, and I don't like to be rushed when it comes to my hobby. I guess I will never make it if I work for commission for a living.

There is an old saying in computer programming: *you can never finish writing a program, only stop working on it.* To me, it applies to building models also.

Best model I built so far

Tamiya's 1/72 Corsair F4U-1D I built for a friend of mine.
(continued on page 11)

(Know Thy Fellow Member continued)

Good details, easy construction, and reasonably priced. I delivered that kit on time and under budget!

Worst model I ever encountered

Too many. Among the worst: Airfix Scout, Revell/Monogram Lincoln Futura, and Modelcraft T-60 light tank.

I'm currently working on...

1. Tamiya 1/48 A6M2 Zero (for the adult modeling class)
2. Italeri 1/48 SH-60B Seahawk
3. Airmodel 1/72 MiG-21 Ye-8
4. Fantasy RAF Space Shuttle *HMSS Albion*

Dumbest thing I ever did when building a model

I once submerged the upper half of my Revell Lincoln Futura in a pot of "not too long ago boiling, but now hot" water to correct a slight warp problem. Ten seconds later, the warpage had turned from "slightly" to "hugely". By the time I took it out of the pot, my Futura had already flattened out like a pancake.

Worst thing I ever did to express my anger or frustration while building
I don't recall I ever do anything bad to my models. I just stopped working on them, and eventually some parts will disappear, and some will end up in my parts box, aka "sprue junkyard".

Modeling experience I would like to share with my peers

On a cold winter night seven or eight years ago, I was in my garage airbrushing my model with the garage door opened. I was getting numb and light-headed, not knowing it was freezing outside, and I was high on enamel fume. The next morning I woke up with a sore throat and a huge headache. After I recovered, I went down to King's and started buying acrylic paints. I still handpaint with my beloved Humbrols, but my enamel spraying days are finally over.

Over the years I have amassed quite a collection of photo-etched detail sets, but my skill, not to mention my vision (even though I have 20/20), was never up to par to take full advantage of them. Earlier this year I finally gave in and got myself an Optivisor. What an "eye-opening" experience that is! Now I'm totally addicted to it, and I highly recommend it to anyone who works with small parts.

(Region 6 Update continued)

I am still looking for a bid for the '07 Regional Convention. So if your chapter has been thinking about hosting the event please get back with me. I will give you all of the information that I can and of course any help that I can. I would like to get this on the calendar by the end of August.

That's all the news that I have for this time. Just drop me a line if you have any questions or need anything. Happy 4th to one and all! I'll be the small mushroom cloud of fireworks just over the horizon.

John Vanek

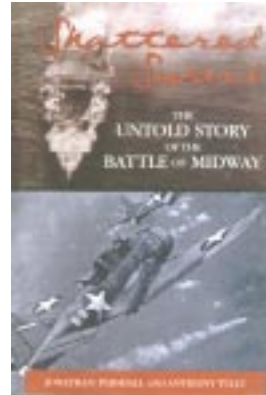
Shattered Sword

The Untold Story of the Battle of Midway

By Jonathan Parshall and Anthony Tully

Reviewed by Tim Robb

IPMS #26266



Published by Potomac Books in hardback format. 613 pages. ISBN 1-57488-923-0

This is a brand new work on the Battle of Midway, just published in 2005. I saw a review of this book in National Review magazine a few weeks ago, and the public library in San Marcos was kind enough to obtain a copy per my persuasion with the librarians.

This is another revisionist history of the battle of Midway fought in June, 1942. The authors assume the reader is a student of the Pacific War and has prior knowledge of the circumstances and basic course of battle. Specifically, they assume you have read *Incredible Victory* by Walter Lord, *Miracle at Midway* by Gordon Prange, or perhaps *Midway: The Battle That Doomed Japan* by Mitsuo Fuchida (published in Japan in 1951 and translated into English in 1955), who was on board the Akagi on June 4, 1942.

Parshall and Tully did excellent research on the subject, although they have almost nothing to add to the American side of the battle. In fact, aspects of it that took whole chapters in Walter Lord's and Gordon Prange's volumes are treated with little more than a paragraph by both authors.

Instead, Parshall and Tully concentrate on the Japanese side of the battle. They studied Japanese aircraft carrier design, hanger deck design, aircraft servicing and arming procedures and cycles, aircraft spotting and launch procedures, ship's logs, and tactical doctrine of the Imperial Japanese Navy. In doing so they uncovered a number of discrepancies in previously written accounts of the Japanese side of the battle. Their book addresses these areas comprehensively, and they arrive at some very different conclusions than what has been previously published.

My only complaint about the book is about the authors' style. They sometime lapse into modern slang in their text, which for me did not seem appropriate for a major study of history. However, the content far overshadows the style, and this is a fascinating book and a "must read" for anyone with an interest in the Pacific War.

Tim



Upcoming Video on Natural Metal Finish

Preview by
Floyd S. Werner, Jr. IPMS #26266

Here is a shameless plug for our new modeling video which will be available at the Nationals. In this DVD, I will take the mystery out of a natural metal finish and show you how to do a factory fresh paint scheme, a worn finish, and a weathered and beaten aircraft. I will also show you how to do chrome for car parts and brass ship propellers. I believe you will find this DVD as good as the first one, if not better in some respects. (I can be taught. LOL It won't be nearly as long though.) This is actually a Master Class Technique Briefing, so for basic construction you will have to refer to the first DVD.

Three of the four 1/48th P-47 models I built for this DVD are Tamiya kits. The other one is an Academy kit, which was the test bed for the NEW techniques in weathering. I use the ALCLAD system, but I show you how to develop it as distressed without all that scraping and sanding. This method is highly effective, and it adds a lot of life to the model.

The first kit is a factory fresh P-47M. It is so shiny it hurts to look at it in bright sunlight. Notice you can even read the tail numbers in the reflection. Way cool.



The second kit is a Tamiya P-47D-30 depicting Glenn Eagleston's aircraft. It is only weathered slightly. It represents the type of finish seen on most jets.



The third kit is the Academy P-47D-25 with the Pyn-Up decals of the 56th FG showing "Shack Rat". It was the test bed for the new techniques.



The fourth kit is the culmination of my effort to make a natural metal aircraft look used and abused. It also has the Pyn-Up decals for the P-47D-25 "Dottie Mae" that was recently salvaged out of a lake and is being restored.



No price has been set for this DVD, as we have to wait for the replication costs. As soon as I get the finished cover photo I will send it out to you all.

Floyd

**Next Meeting
July 11, 2006**

*Austin Scale Modelers Society
Eric Choy
13213 Marero Drive
Austin, TX 78729*

