Seattle Chapter News

Seattle Chapter IPMS/USA
May 2002

PREZNOTES

I had to recently fly to Las Vegas. It was a short trip, down and back in a day, and I had an exit row seat with a decent amount of legroom. The AM departure was very AM - not conducive to writing this column and on the trip back to Seattle in the afternoon (the same day), I was too tired to write. My recollection was that I saw no armed military personnel that morning. Of course, it was so early I was not totally conscious. Passing through security took a lot longer than my last trip, and the new thing was the random check at the gate before boarding - the old guy with the crutches being stopped and examined very carefully - the examiner must have recently seen the movie *Day of the Jackal*. It seemed very ludicrous. In my all-too-brief stay in Las Vegas, I didn't have a chance to visit any casinos but I found a way to spend the money I was saving for a bottle of Alclad II at the slot machine whilst waiting for my flight out!

I'm still slogging away with my two F-89s - they are not much farther along than when I showed them at the last meeting. There are a variety of reasons for this. Mostly, it's some of the new things that have showed up recently at the local hobby emporium: The new Classic Airframes SM.79 (didn't I just finish a resin version of this?), the new AMtech Ta 183 Huckebein, the new Craftmasters unlimited hydroplanes, the new Czech XP-56, and the new...yadda - yadda - yadda.

After suffering through the difficulties of the resin/photo etch Victory SM.79 kit, why would I ever think that I would build another SM.79 so soon after finishing a difficult resin kit, even if it's injection molded? Well, 1) my references haven't been put away from the one I just finished, and 2) there are still a handful of colorful schemes I'd like to do. I've narrowed the possibilities down to only three: a Luftwaffe transport (oooohh), a captured British example (mmmm), and a pre-war racing scheme (awwww). Decisions, decisions. Of course, I still have that SMER kit as well....

Then there is the Ta 183. I started it. Within an hour I had the basic model assembled and ready for paint. It'll not need putty, just careful sanding along the seams. I already have the scheme picked out and decals selected. It's truly a quick and easy build. Mike Morrow and Mike Millette have finished theirs and I know there are a handful of you that have one on your shelf (or workbench). Those of you that do have one or are about to purchase one, what do you think of a group project to enter at the Region 7 contest in McMinnville in September or the Fall show in Vancouver, BC in October? No matter how many are there, it will accurately represent the total production of the actual aircraft. Let me know.

Of course, there are the new Craftmasters unlimited hydroplanes. I could not have just one! The problem with the first two kits is that there are so many color schemes you can build! I just know I'm going to lose sleep wrestling with the decision on which one to build first. Then there are the next two kits in the series about to be released. Arrggh!

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Public Disclaimers, Information, and Appeals for Help

This is the official publication of the Seattle Chapter, IPMS-USA. As such, it serves as the voice for our Chapter, and depends largely upon the generous contributions of our members for articles, comments, club news, and anything else involving plastic scale modeling and associated subjects. Our meetings are generally held on the second Saturday of each month, (see below for actual meeting dates), at the **North Bellevue Community/Senior Center, 4063-148th Ave NE**, in Bellevue. See the back page for a map. Our meetings begin at 10:00 AM, except as noted, and usually last for two to three hours. Our meetings are very informal, and are open to any interested plastic modeler, regardless of interests. Modelers are encouraged to bring their models to the meetings. Subscriptions to the newsletter are included with the Chapter dues. Dues are $24 a year, and may be paid to Norm Filer, our Treasurer. (See address above). We also highly recommend our members join and support IPMS-USA, the national organization. See below for form. Any of the members listed above will gladly assist you with further information about the Chapter or Society.

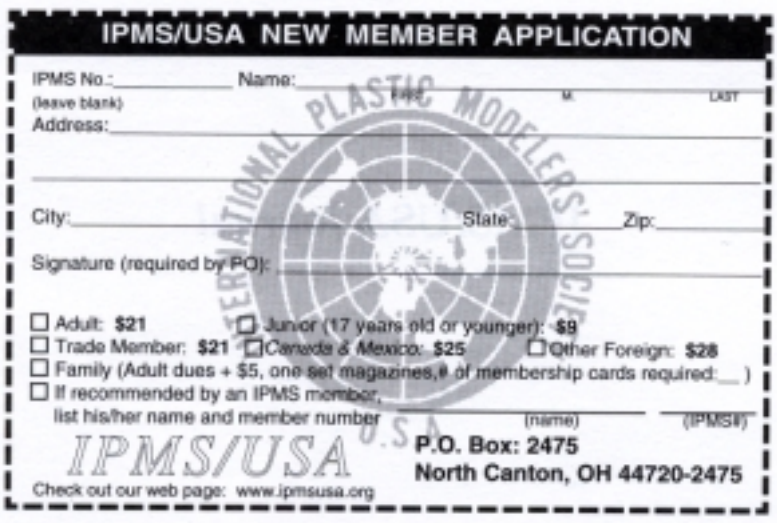
The views and opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the individual writers, and do not constitute the official position of the Chapter or IPMS-USA. You are encouraged to submit any material for this newsletter to the editor. He will gladly work with you and see that your material is put into print and included in the newsletter, no matter your level of writing experience or computer expertise. The newsletter is currently being edited using a PC, and PageMaker 6.5. Any Word or WordPerfect document for the PC would be suitable for publication. Articles can also be submitted via e-mail, to the editor's address above. Deadline for submission of articles is generally twelve days prior to the next meeting - earlier would be appreciated! Please call me at 425-823-4658 if you have any questions.

If you use or reprint the material contained in the newsletter, we would appreciate attribution both to the author and the source document. Our newsletter is prepared with one thing in mind; this is information for our members, and all fellow modelers, and is prepared and printed in the newsletter in order to expand the skills and knowledge of those fellow modelers.

Upcoming Meeting Dates

The IPMS Seattle 2002 meeting schedule is as follows. All meetings are from **10 AM** to **1 PM**, except as indicated. To avoid conflicts with other groups using our new meeting facility, we must **NOT** be in the building before our scheduled start times, and **MUST** be finished and have the room restored to its proper layout by our scheduled finish time. We suggest that you keep this information in a readily accessable place.

May 11 (Meeting is from 9:30 AM-12 Noon) **June 8**
July 13 **August 10**



The Champlin Project Fokker Dr.I Replica

by Tim Nelson

The Fokker Dr.I is an icon of World War 1 aviation. Everyone knows what it looks like, and almost everyone thinks it should be red. Well, a couple of 'em were mostly red. The Dr.I's reputation stems mainly from the fact that some top German aces scored a fair number of victories on the type during its short operational career from late 1917 to mid 1918. Skilled pilots were able to put the Dr. 1's superior maneuverability and high rate of climb to great use. Low time pilots had to concentrate more on staying alive with its early structural problems, slow top speed, and less than stellar altitude capability. At any rate, legendaries such as Manfred von Richthofen, Werner Voss (in the prototype F.I), Ernst Udet, Josef Jacobs, and others helped build the Dr.I's aura.

Translations of Japanese instruction sheet information are almost always insightful and profound. DML/Dragon's historical summary lauds the Dr.I's "...dog fight aerobatic quality..." as one of the reasons the type "was passioned by many ace pilots."

Of course, the subject of this article is the Fokker Dr.I replica of the Champlin Fighter Collection. This collection, currently in Mesa, AZ, has been acquired by the Museum of Flight in Seattle. MOF plans to build a new wing to house this collection in the coming years, and in the interim, has commissioned members of the NorthWest Scale Modelers and IPMS/Seattle to reproduce the aircraft in 1/48th scale for promotional purposes.

According to the MOF's web site: "Dentist Richard Coughlin of New York began construction on the Champlin Collection's aircraft during 1958. It was completed during 1972. Following an accident wherein the Dr.I was seriously damaged, Doug Champlin acquired the wreckage and during 1978 had it completely rebuilt. During 1990, the Warner Scarab radial that had been used by Coughlin was replaced with an authentic Le Rhone rotary. It is interesting to note that there are no known surviving original Fokker Dr.Is. The last original aircraft was destroyed during an Allied bombing raid on Berlin during World War II."

I signed up for the Dr.I in the Champlin project because a) I had the DML/Dragon 1/48th scale kit in my possession, b) it was a departure from my "normal" modeling of the past few years, and c) for a WW1 subject, it had minimal rigging. Reason "c" loomed large.

The DML/Dragon kit dates from around 1992 and is part of their popular 1/48th scale "Knights of the Sky" series. The parts were molded in light gray styrene with very little flash, with reasonable detail throughout. Two photo-etched sheets were included; one with various "detail" parts such as cooling jackets for the guns, and another (much stouter) with items such as landing gear struts and cabane struts. Two segments of fine steel wire were provided for rigging and control surface cables. Decals for the German ace Fritz Kempf's well known "Kennscht mi' noch?" were included.

The Champlin replica was built to fly and therefore made several sensible concessions to modernity: several additional cockpit instruments, a Warner Scarab engine with an extended nose section to accommodate it, and a castering tail wheel rather than a skid. The exterior markings, although similar to several known Dr.I schemes, appears to be a fictional composite. These modifications would make the project a little more challenging than it originally appeared.

The cockpit was built out of the box as much as possible. I used the kit floor, seat and belts, aft bulkhead, and some detail sidewall parts. The crossbar for the kit's single instrument was retained, but I added several scratch-built instruments to look similar to (note avoidance of the term "match") the Champlin replica. These instruments ended up being a little bit over-sized for the scale, and to make matters worse, the cross-bar later bowed slightly under the subsequent rigors of fuselage join, seam-filling, and sanding. But, I've committed bigger sins as a modeler. I painted the fuselage interior a light gray based on photos from Mesa. I created the "EXPERIMENTAL" placard seen in the Champlin Dr.I's cockpit, and installed it forward of the instruments and under where the guns will later be mounted.

The fuselage consisted of two left-right halves, and the fit was disappointingly uneven. I biased the positions so that the upper, more visible seam would require less work. That, of course, left even more work on the bottom side. I have developed a preference to fill all but the most massive seams with gap-filling super glue, and used liberal quantities on the underside seam. After several iterations, I finally got it smooth. The cockpit was masked off at this point.

The fuselage would be complete at this point for a true Dr.I model, but the Champlin replica had an extended nose to accommodate its original Scarab engine. Being elated to discover that the Champlin airplane now sports a Le Rhone engine, I elected to simply displace the model's "firewall" forward based on estimates made from photos of the subject. (Photos obtained near the end of the project showed that the Champlin Dr.I's firewall is actually at the same location as the original; at the body station where the forward cabane struts attach to the fuselage. When the airplane's Scarab engine was replaced with a Le Rhone, it was mounted on a truss structure attached to the firewall, which holds it in the proper location relative to the engine cowl. Oh, well.) I was fortunate to have a wooden dowel of the exactly appropriate diameter on hand, used in the groove of our sliding deck door. Under cloak of darkness, I excised about ¼" off of it. I did some rough shaping, primarily of the upsloping underside, prior to mating with the fuselage. The remainder was done after joining as part of the seam filling exercise on the bottom and left/right sides. The upsweep of the new extended nose required some minor surgery to the bottom of the engine cowl, to which it would eventually be attached.

Because of the need to fair into the new extended nose, I mounted the mid-wing assembly next. The unmodified DML/ Dragon kit has a fit problem between the center mid-wing deck and the engine cowl. With the extended nose now installed, that problem transferred to the aft side of my nose dowel. Here, more copious injections of gap-filling super glue and interminable sanding achieved a reasonable transition back to the proper diameter at the forward end.

The task of modeling the engine was greatly simplified with the knowledge that a French Le Rhone had been installed on the Champlin airplane, as sometimes occurred with real Dr.Is in the field. The DML/Dragon kit parts are based on the German Oberursel rotary engine, which forms a fine basis for a Le Rhone. I used the kit cylinder bank and forward and aft shafts, but excised the air intake plumbing and discarded the (flat) photo-etch valve lifters. The fine steel wire supplied with the kit worked well as substitute valve lifters, and some wire of the appropriate gauge that I had on hand was pressed into duty for the air intake tubes. This gave me a chance to try the new Alclad copper to match the look of the Champlin engine; it worked great and held up to the later handling of installing on the cylinder bank. (Yes, just using copper wire would have been simpler, but I couldn't find the correct gauge wire in anything but the standard-wire variety.) Enjoying a small victory here, I set the engine aside for a while (read "weeks and weeks").

For a little extra realism, I separated the elevator from the one-piece horizontal tail assembly, and reinstalled it in a trailing edge down position. This would cause problems later come riggin'-time. Prior to painting, I installed the little foot-stirrup on the left side of the fuselage and fashioned two ground-handling loops for installation on the aft part of the fuselage.

The strategy for painting, given the white "box" areas on the fuselage and wings, was to use white primer and complete the white coats first. Then, I used the great Tamiya yellow tape to mask off the larger areas to remain white. Some strips of Chart-pak tape worked well to mask the two circumferential stripes. I applied Testors flat black, cut with about 20% flat white for scale effect, for the primary black color. The biggest painting challenge was to achieve the white striping around the edges of the horizontal tail and, especially, the rounded edges of the elevator. I sought advice from several local modelers and tried a few of the ideas before going with frisket film as the vehicle to mask those rounded edges. It would have worked fine except for a little bleed-through of the black to the white; this led to a lengthy touch-up battle between black and white with a neat line of demarcation being the main casualty. But, after lightly sanding all of the above painted surfaces and several coats of Duracryl clear, I was ready for decals. Almost.

To achieve the look of the Champlin replica, I sought some local talent to create customized decals. Chris Banyai-Riepl kindly agreed to help with graphic work. I scanned some photos provided by some helpful soul in Mesa, and provided those to Chris, who created the side-of-fuselage stencils and the "Iron Cross" insignia on the top of the horizontal tail. Chris provided a file with these graphics, plus a set of Maltese Crosses to Norm Filer, who printed a fine set of decals (including white ink) on his ALPS printer. These decals looked great, worked great, and had no problems with the Microset/Microsol treatment or subsequent Duracryl topcoats. My final topcoat for the shiny looking Champlin Dr.I was a semi-gloss coat of clear, a mixture of about 90% thinned Duracryl clear gloss and 10% thinned Testors Dullcote.

I had decided to defer installation of the lower wing until after painting, in order (I thought) to get good paint coverage on the upper part of the lower wing and the lower part of the mid-wing. This was a tactical error, compounded by my failure to dry fit prior to painting. The lower wing "spar" which is to reside in a slot in the fuselage bottom did not begin to fit. The many coats of paint and Duracryl didn't help matters. I had to devote a couple of hours of very careful spot scraping and sanding to get a decent fit.

I didn't spend a lot of time on the aesthetics of the lower wing/body interface because the Champlin Dr.I has a natural metal underside forward of the pilot's foot stirrup, which extends up to the firewall. Good photographs of real Dr.I undersides are hard to come by, but I received a couple of revealing shots of the Champlin Dr.I and decided it was too significant a feature to ignore. I cut a sheet of very thin styrene to match the lower fuselage contours and shot it with SNJ metallizer. This thin sheet offered the advantage of covering that lower wing spar/body join problem. The finished horizontal tail

assembly and rudder were attached at this point.

Now we come to the tail wheel. The Champlin Dr.I has a castering tail wheel that appears similar to that of a Piper Cub. It is attached to the rudder via two cable linkages, and essentially is back-driven by the rudder. The smart thing for me would have been to buy an old 1/48th Piper Cub model from which to swipe the tail wheel assembly. Instead, I found the smallest spare wheel in my parts box (from a Hasegawa 1/72nd Harrier outrigger gear), and scratchbuilt a tail wheel assembly. This process was actually fun if a little tedious. Some spare flat steel (from the "stout" photo-etch sheet mentioned above) made a nice strut for the wheel. The control arms came from a 1/72nd Panther tank photo-etch sheet. The linkage cables again made use of the DML/Dragon kit's fine gauge steel wire. I tightly wound two sections of softer wire into "springs" to slide onto the linkage cables to match the look of the Champlin Dr.I. The whole tail wheel assembly looks good, but ended up being slightly over-scale (like the cockpit instruments), driven mostly by the size of the Harrier wheel and tire. So sue me.

We are getting near the finish line now. The DML/Dragon kit comes with two nice Dr.I machine guns, made of plastic gun bodies with photo-etch jackets and cross hairs. I replaced the plastic gun barrels with small diameter steel tubing, but grafted the kit barrel tips back on to get the "flared" barrel end look. The kit comes with the "crash pads" that many Dr.Is had to provide something softer for a pilot's face to impact than the butt of a machine gun; the Champlin airplane does not appear to have these pads and I deleted them. Installation of the guns was made a little tricky by the bowed instrument crossbar in the (now unmasked) canopy. After some (gentle!) jiggling around, I got the two guns mounted.

The mounting of the upper wing on a World War 1 aircraft is something new to me, the thought of which made my blood run cold. My solution was to mount the interplane struts on the mid-wing first, and making sure that they were absolutely vertical. After waiting a day, and then test fitting, I attached the upper wing to these struts. Waiting another day, I then attached the cabane struts, taking advantage of the small amount of flex afforded by the upper wing and the main struts. This process worked, but it generated a couple of scratches on the lower part of the upper wing, which had to be touched up and re-coated with semi-gloss clear.

The kit's landing gear assembly was used out of the box with the exception of the support struts connecting the main landing gear struts to the aft end of the airfoil structure to which the wheels are attached. These struts did not appear to be on the Champlin Dr.I and in fact are not evident in photos of some real Dr.Is.

The fine steel wire provided in the kit was used on several side projects as discussed above. However, a carefully measured segment was set aside early in construction for its actual purpose; rigging and control cables. Although somewhat tedious, I managed not to damage the model with my ham-handed handling of the Dr.I's relatively simple rigging. The biggest problem became apparent when attaching control cables for the elevator. The horizontal tail has pass-through openings for the cables; my deflecting of the elevators to a trailing edge down position caused this cable run to no longer be a straight line through the opening. A slight kink in the cables is thus evident in a profile view. Tackling the tail wheel linkages completed the rigging chores.

We now have a Triplane sans propeller. The kit comes with a decent prop, but Jack Matthews kindly donated a hand-made prop which he created using an extremely clever process. This is a topic deserving of an article in its own right, so I won't describe the method here. Let's just say it results in a beautiful rendition of a laminated propeller that I could not begin to match with paint. I took Jack's propeller, lightly sanded it, and gave it a coat of Duracryl gloss. It looks hand-carved by some tiny (1/48th scale) Teutonic gnomes. Jim Schubert was nice enough to let me have a couple of photo-etch prop bosses to add the final touch.

I'm pretty happy with the final result. It has the look of the Champlin Dr.I replica, and its tail wheel causes the same double takes as the real McCoy. It made me stretch as a modeler, which, like broccoli, can be both unpleasant and good for you at the same time. Thanks to Chris Banyai-Riepl, Norm Filer, Jack Matthews, and Jim Schubert for their friendly and helpful contributions to this funky little Triplane model.

This model, and the 23 others in the Champlin model project, can hopefully be viewed at the Museum of Flight by the middle of 2002.

References:

Museum of Flight's Champlin Fighter Collection web site

Fokker Dr1 Aces of World War 1, Norman Franks and Greg VanWyngarden, Osprey Aircraft of the Aces #40

Fokker Dr.I in Action, Heinz J. Nowarra, Squadron/Signal Publications

Mike Grant Decals 1/48th Scale Convair B-58 Hustlers

by Robert Allen

The sleek Convair B-58 Hustler is remembered far more for its looks and technical innovation than either the length or breadth of its service. Only 116 examples, including pre-production and test aircraft, were made of the first operational Mach 2 bomber. They served with only two USAF Bomber Wings, for just ten years from 1960 to 1970. Perhaps because of this limited service, kits of the B-58 have not been plentiful; there are just three reasonably modern kits, thankfully in three different scales – in 1/144th by Academy, 1/72nd by Italeri, and 1/48th by Monogram.

The 1/48th scale Monogram kit has been in and out of production for several years. It's generally a fine kit that has suffered from substandard decals in each of its incarnations. For this reason, Mike Grant's latest screen-printed decals are especially welcome. There are three separate sheets – one large sheet with national markings, USAF titles, and stenciling, and two smaller sheets with the necessary individual markings for two aircraft apiece. Both the stenciling sheet and one or the other of the individual sheets would be needed to complete an aircraft. Instructions are black and white profiles, but as with other Mike Grant Decals, the full color artwork is viewable on their web site.

"Convair B-58 Hustlers: Stencilling Sheet" includes national insignia, titles, and stenciling. Many of the decals are intended as direct replacements for the ones on the Monogram sheet. Only one upper wing insignia is included, as most B-58s had no underwing insignia. The stenciling is crisp and quite readable, and a full set of walkways is included, though the instructions don't indicate where the walkways go.

"Convair B-58 Hustlers: 1" contains markings for two B-58As; 61-2053 from the 305th BW, and 58-1011 from the 43rd BW. Both are in the B-58's standard natural metal scheme with SAC bands on the port nose and unit badges on the starboard - the long rumored "camouflaged B-58" has to be the Loch Ness Monster of aircraft markings! Both have distinctive touches – 12053 has a yellow "winged 2" on the fin, and 081011 has "The Pulaski Hustler" marked on the forward fuselage. If you have the Barnes & Noble book *The Gatefold Book of American Combat Aircraft*, 12053 is the B-58 featured in the four-foot long gatefold.

"Convair B-58 Hustlers: 2" includes two B-58As from non-SAC squadrons. "Super Sue" is 58-1007 from the 6592nd TS, while 55-662 is from the ARDC at Edwards AFB. The second aircraft is visually the most impressive of the four choices, with a white-bordered black flash, which includes the USAF Flight Test Center badge, on a red fin. If it looks familiar, it probably is; this is the aircraft featured (incorrectly marked, it turns out) on the cover of Kenneth Munson's *Bombers* entry in the classic *Pocket Encyclopedia of World Aircraft* series.

As with all of the Mike Grant Decals I've so far seen, the artwork and printing is exemplary. Although the B-58 is handicapped by not having that many different schemes to choose from, these are all interesting examples, and if you're planning to build the Monogram kit, the quality of these decals as compared to the kit decals makes them a must.

www.cadvision.com/mikegrant/MikeGrantDecals/

A Picture Is Worth a Lot of Words

by Bill Osborn

When I write these articles, I don't have the equipment to illustrate them. If our overworked and under appreciated editor wants to fill out the column or show what model I've written about, he has to search the Internet, or root through his store of models or books to use as a reference. And he is very good at it. *[Thank you! – ED]*

The reason for this missive is that I see people all over taking pictures of models and other things with these new digital cameras. Along time ago, when Uncle Sam decided that I should go to Korea, I splurged and bought a nice 35mm camera. I didn't know beans about how to take good pictures or how to work the camera, but away I went to the land of Kimchee. As time passed and the pictures I took turned out less than perfect, I realized that I needed more equipment to get better pictures. So, I acquired a light meter and some filters. And do you know what - my pictures turned out just about the same. Well, this was a blow to my pride. So all that great gear was tossed into my duffel bag until Uncle and I parted company.

As time passed and I came north to seek my fortune with the Boeing Co. and found out about all the neat air shows that used to abound in the Great Northwest, I dug out the old 35 and started taking pictures. It didn't take long to find out that I needed a telephoto lens to get some of the shots I was missing. So I took myself down to the local camera shop and shelled out big bucks for a long lens and a camera to put it on. Well things were going along fine until I found out I could get the long shots but the close-up didn't get the entire subject in the frame. Back to the camera shop for a wide-angle lens. (Do you see a pattern here?) Now I've got all the stuff to be a great photographer. As time went on I started missing some good pictures

because I had the wrong lens on the camera. I knew just how to fix this problem - get another camera and put a lens on each one.

While all of this was going on my wife wanted a camera to take pictures of the kids. She wanted a good, easy-to-operate camera and mine were too much trouble to work in a hurry. We got her a nice 35 that had a zoom lens and a built-in flash. As things went along the air shows started to go away. When we would go on vacations or to a convention I would lug my camera bag with three 35s, two lenses, tripod, and various other associated gear. Let me tell you that lugging it all around got to be a chore. By this time my wife decided that her camera was too bulky to carry in her purse. We bought a smaller camera. By now all the air shows are history, and we started using my wife's camera for all our photos.

We went on vacation a couple of years ago and another couple had a real small camera (cigarette pack size). Yup, another camera. So now we have seven 35s, an eight millimeter movie camera, and a lot of old accessories. The whole point of this sad tale of woe is that I want a new digital camera. That way I could illustrate my own articles and save Robert all that sorting through his dusty files. Come to think of it a scanner would be nice too. Maybe in five or ten years…

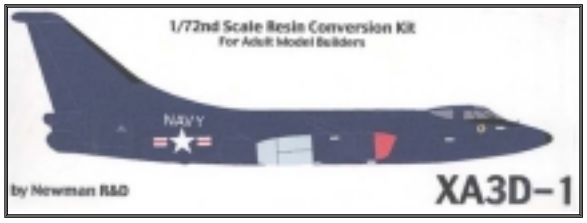
Special Thanks

Special thanks to Chris Banyai-Riepl and **www.internetmodeler.com** for permission to use several of this issue's articles, including Tim's, Bill G's, Norm's, Chris', and Bill J's.

Newman R&D 1/72nd Scale Douglas XA3D-1 Resin Conversion Kit

by Norm Filer

If you are interested in prototypes or early Navy jets, this one is right up your alley. This neat little box of parts and any of the several versions of the really nice Hasegawa A-3 Skywarrior will produce a very neat model of the first Whale, with the stovepipe J-40 engines.



The set contains the two resin engines, new pylons, a pointed nose and tail turret, and the football shaped fairing that goes on the tip of the vertical tail. Also included are a new canopy and a very nice set of ALPS-printed decals. If you have the "Early Version" of the Hasegawa kit you know what the new nose and tail turret look like. The parts in this kit are not copies; there are small differences but they are the equal of the kit parts. The nice thing about this kit is you now can do the prototype without using the rare "Early Version" kit.

Everything is first class resin casting. The engines are cast in two halves, front and back, and require careful alignment in the middle. The advantage is a very nice and deep intake with the splitter plate in the opening.

The kit includes two letter-sized pages of instructions with full sized drawings to help with the surgery. Since the nose and tail cuts are on panel lines that should not be too painful. The engines are of course replacements for the kit engine/pylons, so they should be straightforward as well. Also included is a full-page color illustration and drawings for decal placement.

The early Whales had a rather different canopy-framing layout. The kit has a very effective process for accomplishing that. They give you a new vacuformed canopy and the framing is done with decals. Getting the proper shapes painted on the canopy that match the decal frames will be interesting. All the help you need is provided in the drawings.

There were not a lot of blue Whales, and the J-40 engines are significantly different than the normal J-57s, so this easy conversion would give you a different looking Whale for little effort. All in all, a very innovative and interesting conversion kit.

Thanks to Newman R&D for the review sample.

Revell-Monogram 1/72nd Scale F-104C with Albatros Decals "Exotic Stars"

by Bill Glinski

Volumes have been written about the Lockheed F-104 Starfighter, nuff said. Numerous kits have been released in various scales since the F-104 first flew and I could no doubt fill pages about those kits. In 1/72nd scale nine model manufacturers have produced versions of the Starfighter. Most of the kits fell way short of the mark when it came to accuracy. The new tool Hasegawa F-104 series of a few years ago are hands down the best of the bunch followed by the ESCI series.

Revell-Monogram first released this kit back in 1996. The kit was collecting dust on shelf waiting for me to get up the nerve to do a natural metal finish aircraft. As luck would have it with the availability of the new ALCLAD II lacquers and the release of Albatros's *Worldwide F-104s* sheet, I thought why not. I wanted a quick build kit with nice detail so I could concentrate on finishing and decaling and wanted to do it on a cheap kit so if I screwed up I wouldn't mind the loss of a kit so much. After fondling my stack of F-104 kits I settled on the Revell-Monogram.

The 90 pieces are molded in light gray and clear plastic, with finely scribed panel lines and excellent detail throughout. Sadly, the decal sheet just makes me scream in frustration. After all the years of overly thick decals, Revell-Monogram switched to super thin Vitachrome decals and those guys can't figure out the right shades of red and yellow! True in 1996 and true today. The kit provides parts to allow the builder several options. Two sets of wheels and main gear doors are provided for the USAF and foreign versions. Six fuel tanks, four Sidewinders, and associated pylons allow for several configurations of stores. Clear parts include a single piece canopy, gunsight glass, navigation, and landing lights.

The canopy has a defect that looks like a crack running from side to side in the center section. It's actually a molding defect since I checked another kit and had a friend check his. Sure enough, the same defect was in the same place on all canopies. I sanded and polished the defect on the inside and out, and then dipped the canopy in Future floor wax. At certain angles you can still see the defect, but not as badly as you could before. Little did I realize the canopy was an omen of things to come.

Construction is straightforward. The cockpit is nicely detailed with the instrument panel and side consoles being finely engraved. The C-2 ejection seat is in three pieces with raised belt details. I painted the cockpit Light Ghost Gray and picked out the instrument and consoles in black, good enough since the canopy is a single piece. I installed the cockpit and nose wheel well into the forward fuselage halves. I then added lead weights to the nose cone and glued that into place. Next the gun fairing was trimmed and fit nicely into the fuselage. I left the pitot tube off for last.

Parts breakdown of the fuselage and rudder gave me the impression that future versions were planned. The fuselage is separated right at the forward end of the main gear well. I assembled the aft fuselage and rudder per instructions, omitting the aft fuselage navigation lights and exhaust nozzle. I chose to close the speed brakes and left off the elevator to make painting easier. The main landing gear bay is assembled then slides into the aft fuselage, while the wheels were left off for final assembly.

Now it came time to mate the forward and aft fuselage sections and this is where the first big problem arose. There is a slight gap between the sections. Fortunately, it's at a panel line, which careful sanding and dryfitting takes care of. Then there is a noticeable step from the rear to front sections, which took hours of sanding, filling, and rescribing to correct. This flaw was a big disappointment; a lot of plastic was removed almost destroying the overall shape of the fuselage. Next came the intakes that are poor fitting and do a modest job of capturing the shape of the actual intakes. Again there is a noticeable step, this time from the intakes to the aft fuselage. Another several hours were spent blending the intakes to the fuselage. The wings were attached requiring a little filler to fill the wing root gap. Fuel tanks were assembled, the wing tip tanks requiring removal of 4mm of the inboard fins to model the USAF version. Landing gear doors, canopy, and wing pylons were set-aside for final assembly. The instructions tell you to attach three ECM blisters

(one under the nose and two aft); this is incorrect for most F-104Cs.

I masked the cockpit, then gave the whole plane a coat of automotive lacquer primer. Once dry I wet sanded with 3200 grit sanding cloth. The wings and rudder were painted with automotive white lacquer and the nose with Testors Model Master Light Ghost Gray. When the white dried after an hour, I painted the rudder with Testors gloss red enamel.

The next day the painted areas were masked off and several light coats of gloss black enamel were applied to the plane, wing tanks, pylons, and gear doors as per the ALCLAD II instructions. I let the enamel cure overnight and then checked for dust and imperfections, using polishing cloth to take out any flaws and resprayed the problem areas.

I've used ALCLAD II on a couple of kits already, but this is the first time I used the chrome for an entire plane. The stuff is impressive. Just follow the correct instruction for the shade of ALCLAD II used. I applied four light coats and was dazzled with the shine. Later that day I removed all the masking tape except for the cockpit area and gave the entire plane a coat of Future Floor Wax using a Badger 150 with fine tip at 12-14 psi to seal the chrome finish. The ALCLAD instructions say no sealer is necessary, but my experience with metal finishes and decals prove otherwise. I use Future because it won't destroy the finish by biting into it. I masked off the fuselage and rudder, and painted the shaded areas of the aft fuselage with Testors Metalizer steel and titanium. I then sealed it with Future.

Now came the decals. I loved them and loathed them. Albatros is to be commended for giving us unique choices of F-104s. Their decals are well printed, in register, and the colors are opaque. On the down side the artwork is inaccurate, and the shading effect leads to confusion - especially with the light grays and white, they look the same to me. I chose the popular scheme for George Lavin's aircraft of the 479th TFW. The lightning bolts on the fuselage and wing tanks are too long. The angle of the lightning bolts for the fuselage don't allow for correct positioning as in the artwork and in a photo of the actual aircraft. The result is that they sit too high and forward. I cut a ¼ inch from the middle to get the right length. The fuselage Air Force logos were too large, so the ones from the kit were used. The wing tank stripes were troublesome and had to be trimmed to get them to fit, as were the shock cone stripes.

Thankfully the rest of the decals went on with no problems. The next day the entire plane was given several coats of clear automotive lacquer, wet sanding between coats to even out the decals.

The nose was masked and the anti-glare panel painted flat black. The canopy was painted and installed. Wheels, nozzle, pylons and tanks were added, as were the antennas and pitot tube. The six navigation lights are provided as clear parts, too small to cut, trim and sand. I used five-minute epoxy to make new ones. The wing tip tank and shock cone tip should be painted white and the tires should have white walls. The pitot tube should have painted-on color stripes. The Albatros artwork missed those points.

Overall, I'm pleased with the results. Detail wise this kit is as nice as the newer Hasegawa 1/72nd at about half the cost. The kit scales out nicely and captures the sleek look of the Starfighter. The fit and engineering problems of the fuselage and intakes makes for a lot of unnecessary filling and sanding. The fit problems, the canopy defect, and the problems with the decals turned this project into a chore at times. I guess I set myself up for disappointment since my expectation was to relax and enjoy a simple out-of-the-box project. Despite the problems the Revell-Monogram is the best F-104C kit available in 1/72nd scale.

Special Hobby 1/72nd Scale Messerschmitt Me 264 Amerika Bomber

by Chris Banyai-Riepl

The Me 264 came about through a requirement for a bomber capable of taking the war to the United States by bombing East Coast cities. Messerschmitt stepped up to the plate with their Me 264, a huge plane with long, thin wings, and four engines. The streamlined appearance of the plane gave it an attractive, graceful look both on the ground and in the air.

As successful as it might have been in its original role, it was quickly squashed as an intercontinental bomber and relegated to maritime reconnaissance roles. As a result, only two were built, the Me 264V-1 and V-2. The differences between the two were constrained to the wings, with the V-1 utilizing complete engine nacelle assemblies from the Ju 88A-4. The V-2 had its wings extended from 127 feet, 7.5 inches to 141 feet, 1 inch and replaced the earlier Jumo engines with BMW 801D engines (much like what happened with later models of the Ju 88/188 family). Unfortunately only the Me 264V-1 ever flew, as the V-2 was destroyed on the ground during pre-flight ground tests.

Who would have thought that we'd have an injection-molded Me 264 in 1/72nd? Not me! But here it is, and boy does it look nice. You get four light gray trees of plastic parts, two sets of vacuformed canopy pieces, a handful of tan resin parts, and a small decal sheet. The kit features recessed panel lines throughout, all of which are quite fine so take care that you don't sand them off in assembly. That covers the basics, so let's take a closer look.

The interior is all resin and has plenty of detail. This is a good thing, as the vacuformed canopy is very clear and will show everything off quite well. The main office is made up from a floor and a rear bulkhead, with the instrument panel mounting on a pedestal that makes up the front end, as well as the nose gear attachment point. The nose gear well is a separate piece that fits onto the bottom of the cockpit floor. The cockpit is finished off by two seats, separate rudder pedals, a two-piece control yoke, and details for the sidewalls and cockpit roof. There is also a note suggesting a minimum of 30 grams of weight on each side of the rear cockpit door. That's a total of 60 grams minimum to keep this plane on its nose, and in a pretty small area. If you run out of room in the fuselage you could also fit a bit of weight in the front of the engine nacelles.

Speaking of the nacelles, these are made up from right and left halves, with a resin front piece. There's two exhaust shrouds on each side and a large fairing on the underneath, all provided as separate pieces. The one downside to these parts is the cowl flaps. These are molded in the closed position, and all the photos of the Me 264 on the ground that I've seen show them in the open position. The good news is that the Me 264 used the same nacelles as the Ju 88, so you could replace them with aftermarket ones if you want. The back sections of the nacelles are separate parts from the wings, with the outboard ones being made up from two pieces. The inboard nacelles cut across the wheel wells so they're a bit more complicated. In front of the wheel well is a three-piece nacelle, including a blanking plate. The back end of the nacelle is one piece, fitting onto the lower wing behind the wheel well opening. The wings have marks on them to show where all of these parts go.

While on the subject of the wheel wells, these are provided as one-piece resin inserts. The wheel well openings in the wing have their edges tapered, though, so the fit isn't as flush as it should be. This can be remedied by chamfering the edges of the resin inserts, which will result in a very snug fit. The wings themselves are split into upper and lower halves and are very long and thin. In fact, each wing measures almost exactly 11 inches! Unfortunately, this is a problem. According to the information in William Green's *Warplanes of the Third Reich*, the Me 264V-1 had a wingspan of almost 128 feet. The kit scales out to having a scale wingspan of around 140 feet. Now the Me 264V-2 had a wingspan of 141 feet, so problem solved, this is a kit of the V-2 version, right? Wrong. The V-2 version had BMW 801D engines, not the Jumo 211 engines given in the kit. What to do, what to do? Well, if you want to do the V-1, you can cut the wingtips off at the panel line that's about an inch in from the tip and fashion new, squarer tips. Or you can find some BMW engines from a Ju 188 kit and use those to make the V-2 version. Either way you'll have to do a bit of work.

The landing gear on the Me 264 is probably the most impressive part of the plane, mainly due to the incredibly large wheels used. The kit provides all the parts in

plastic, with the wheels split into right and left halves. The nose gear strut has a split fork, allowing you to mount the wheel without difficulty. The gear doors could probably use some thinning down, a simple enough task. The main gear doors incorporate the curve of the lower inboard nacelle as well. The tires are perfectly round, but in this case you'll want to flatten and bulge them a bit, as the low-pressure tires used on the Me 264 did bulge out on the sides.

There's not much in the way of options for the plane, as only one example flew. The instructions state that it was finished in a splinter camouflage of RLM 70/71 over RLM 65. Initially designed as a bomber, these colors make sense, but it also was suggested that maritime reconnaissance would be a good role for it, so it's possible that RLM 72/73 was used for the upper surface camouflage. Once you've got the camouflage figured out, it's on to the markings. Crosses, swastikas, and black code letters are it for this plane. The kit provides markings for the V-1 aircraft, coded RE+EN. It is unsure what colors the V-2 was finished in, if it was even camouflaged, and it is uncertain if it wore code letters, so if you're planning on modeling this example be prepared to do some heavy research.

This is a very impressive model, no doubt about it. While there is a question as to the actual length of the wings on the real plane, there's no question about the length in the kit. This model has a completed wingspan of nearly two feet, making it the largest model produced to date by Special Hobby and its parent company MPM. What this means is that MPM et al can now produce large bombers in 1/72nd or even medium bombers in 1/48th. Personally I'd like to see them do a Stirling and Halifax for WW2 bombers, and to round out a Berlin Airlift collection, an Avro York and C-54.

Of Stukas and Jugs

by Hal Marshman, Sr.

As is my habit, I am working on several models at the same time. Two of these are the Hasegawa Ju 87R Stuka, and the newest reincarnation of their P-47 Razorback Thunderbolt, now in Gerald Johnson's *In the Mood* markings. While working these up, I've noticed a few little items that weren't apparent when I did my original reviews on these two 1/48th scale kits.

Regarding the Stuka, the basic problem on -B birds is the construction of the engine cowling, a separate unit. You have to get this thing together just right, and position it exactly right on the forward fuselage, or the whole thing takes on a twisted appearance, further exaggerated by the off center mounting of the upper intake. What you've got to do is make sure all mating edges are clean and smooth before carefully cementing them together, checking alignment closely as you attach each part. I found it expedient to brace the seam between upper and lower cowls with strips of sheet styrene backing the seam from the inside. I also made a spreader from sprue to maintain the proper inside width. Might be overkill, but that's the best way I found to ensure correct alignment, and not get squeezed-out glue on the outer surface to deal with.

Now, to the Jug. Thunderbolts are where I live, and that's certainly no secret to anyone who knows me. I was beside myself with delight when I saw Hasegawa doing *In the Mood*. For the first time in recent recorded history, the old guy decided to use the decals provided in the kit. At least the personal markings. I'll probably stray elsewhere for national markings as I do not care particularly for how Hasegawa renders the white in them. That aside, in addition to Gerald Johnson's bird, they also offer one of Dave Schilling's *Hairless Joe* Jugs, this time the one with the "Hewlett, Woodmere, Long Island" dedication on the port side. All nicely rendered, with one exception. I had built this bird some time ago, and researched it pretty thoroughly. It seems that Hasegawa missed a bet here, as the wheel covers were decorated with a white star against an insignia blue background, surrounded with a red ring. Gotta keep checking those references troops!

The moulds for this kit are getting older, and what were minor problems on the original issue kits are now becoming more problematical. In particular, the lower wing to fuselage gap is now a wedge shaped gap at least 1/8" at the bottom of fuselage. It's difficult to fill, and still maintain the detail in which this area abounds. Another problem area is the separate engine cowling. Just to the rear of the forward cowl ring, both top and bottom, are peculiar indentations, with a small amount of vertical flashing, which must be filled. On the original kits, this was just a minor marring of the plastic, but now it is something demanding your attention if you want a decent looking model. Might as well give Hasegawa a compliment, also. The separate cooling flap ring is proper for a P-47D-1, in that it has the same sized flaps all the way down, not the scalloped lower flaps that we are used to seeing on later -D models. Nice touch!

If you're into one of these kits, or plan to be, don't let the above discourage you. Aside from these little problems, they are both excellent kits, which can be built up into contest quality models, just requiring a little extra work here and there.

Trumpeter 1/48th Scale HH-65 Dolphin (Dauphin) In-The-Box Review

by Gordon Erickson

This latest kit in an ambitious two-year program of new releases from the fledgling Trumpeter model company (**www.trumpeter-china.com**) gives considerable reason for optimism about the quality of their future releases. While far from a perfect kit, many things are well done and the subject fills a significant void for us rotor heads.

Inside a sturdy box with mediocre cover art you'll find 91 parts in light gray and clear plastic, instructions, and a decal sheet. No pilots or other crew figures are provided. Overall, the molding of the fuselage and tail parts compares favorably to a current Hasegawa kit. The exterior detailing features finely engraved panel lines and a miniscule amount of flash. The only rivets present are on the tail and of the recessed variety. A dry-fit of the fuselage components made me smile.

Is it accurate in size and shape? Well, it looks like an HH-65 to me. Plus it's been on the market for more than 48 hours and I have yet to see any Internet postings by the "Micrometer Brigade" ripping it apart – so I'm happy with it.

The Hasegawa comparisons break down once we get into the cabin, though. It is here that the biggest disappointments will be found. The quality is closer to what you would find in the early 80s than in today's state-of-the-art kits (Think Academy's 1/48th scale Blackhawks). The main instrument panel is represented solely by a decal – there is no molded detail at all. There is some raised detail on the center console, but only on a small section of it. The photos that I have seen of the console show it to be almost completely covered with switches and knobs. The rendering of the tail fan pedals and the cyclic and collective control sticks is basic, but not bad.

The seats are one-piece units with little detail and no seat belts or shoulder harnesses - not even as decals. The pilot and copilot seats are missing the distinctive U-shaped tubular head restraints. There is no detailing whatsoever on the rear cabin wall and no ceiling other than the featureless top of the fuselage.

Back outside, all of the cabin doors have been molded in the closed position, an unfortunate choice. There is also a rather prominent exhaust vent on the port rear fuselage (APU exhaust?) that Trumpeter represents with just a decal.

There is no wheel well detail and none of them appear to be large enough to accommodate the gear. The gear itself is somewhat plain as are the tires and wheels, but the main gear legs do include tie-down rings - a nice touch.

The detailing on the main rotor assembly is, once again, nothing fancy but I don't know much about this part of the Dauphin so it may accurately reflect this area. One thing missing is the sensor mast that is mounted on the rotor hub cover, part B29. There is a flashed-over hole in B29 for it, and it is shown on the box art, but it is nowhere to be found on the sprues.

The clear parts are fine, though not quite as thin as you'd find in a Hasegawa kit, and of adequate clarity. The main windshield/front door assembly is molded in left and right halves – I would recommend gluing each half to its respective fuselage half and then gluing the fuselage halves together.

The instructions are very well done – the illustrations are quite large and leave little question as to where the parts go. Although not noted as such on the instructions the color callouts are Gunze Sangyo paint numbers. All but two of the colors listed are obvious, e.g., silver, white, flat black, etc. One that may not be is H-11 Light Grey; this should be FS 36231. The other one, H-68 Red Madder, is the color Trumpeter wants you to use as the basic exterior color, this is close to Insignia Red. While USCG HH-65's frequently appear red in photographs they are actually Coast Guard Orange, FS 12197, also called International Orange (thanks to Rich H on **Hyperscale.com** who called the San Diego Coast Guard Air Station and got the info direct from the source). In addition, the wheel wells should be painted Gloss White not IJN Grey or "Fuselage Color" as stated in the instructions.

The decal sheet is well printed but surprisingly small. The markings provided allow you to do Dolphin #6508 in overall USCG Orange - stationed at CGAS Traverse City on the shores of Lake Michigan. You are given no other marking options. The white and blue rear fuselage stripes need to be painted on - no decal is supplied (and no FS number is given for the blue stripe – you should match the blue on the Coast Guard emblem).

I hope some aftermarket decal company decides to do a sheet for this kit, giving us the option of doing Dolphins stationed at other Coast Guard Air Stations (like Port Angeles) and the older white and orange paint scheme.

While I may have found a lot of things wrong with this kit, I still think it's a good early effort and it should build into a nice representation of the Dauphin/Dolphin. Trumpeter has shown continual improvement with every 1/32nd scale kit they've released so far. The A-10 was a "quantum leap" in quality over their first kits, the MiG-15/17, and the MiG-21 was a similar improvement over the A-10. I'm hoping this will be the case with their 1/48th scale line as well. The Dolphin is about the same level of quality as the 1/32nd A-10 - I can't wait to see the next kit!

Catalogs

by Bill Osborn

I don't know about you, but my wife and I get catalogs from just about every dealer that we could possibly be interested in, and a whole lot that we have no interest in at all. However, once in a while I get one that makes me drool with longing. It could be for golf clubs or bowling balls, but most of the time it's for aviation related items. I suppose you armor guys get catalogs for your interests too.

Well, I just received a new one that sells books, paintings, balsa models, and cast or carved wood models. As I paged thru the latest offerings, my mouth began to water and I could feel the urge to order one of everything come over me. However, knowing that my wife would scalp me if I started to indulge my fantasies, I just managed to control myself. She wouldn't really do it of course, as I don't have enough hair to make it worthwhile.

You ask how a person could get so worked up over a few pictures in a catalog? Well I'm not too sure how or when airplanes became a fascination in my life, but I know it was a very long time ago. I don't even know where it came from, but it has been a passion all my life. You'll notice I didn't say aviation, I said airplanes. I would like to have been a pilot, but I wasn't that motivated to learn.

For a while it was only seeing them fly over or looking at drawings in comic books. Then when my mother thought I was old enough that I could handle sharp things I started building tissue covered stick models. So anyway, that's why I got so worked up over this new catalog.

Now back to the story. Said catalog is filled with some great books that a modeler really should have in his library. Also, it contained many paintings that would look real nice on the rec room walls. There is a lone print of a Spitfire coming out of a storm cloud on the wall now, and it sure looks lonesome. However, there are so many books and prints that if I indulged myself there wouldn't be any room for my models. And we wouldn't need to paint the inside of the house again what with all the pictures covering the walls. Maybe there is an up side to not getting all those prints; my fingers would probably look like tennis rackets from being whacked with a hammer while driving nails into the walls to hang them on.

It's a good thing I can overcome these temptations, and save my money for more important things. Where is my Tu-95 Bear? Could be one of these days when I get older and more senile my wife will humor me (like she doesn't already) and let me hang a few more prints on the downstairs wall.

P-40E Replacement Fuselages for AMtech Kit

by Alan Griffith, AMtech Models, via Gordon Erickson

Good news from the P-40E front!

I am pleased to report that **new** fuselages will be produced for the 1/48th scale P-40E, most likely in the next week *[as of April 19 – ED]*. I'm still awaiting specifics on that and when I can expect delivery. I have been assured they will not have the terrible mismatch that occurred on the fuselage sides (especially the left one) in the kit.

There will be a very slight step between the rear of the fuselage and the tail section. It is due to...well...I guess I don't know **what** it is due to, since if the tool had been produced by me it wouldn't have had it in the first place! Enough of my editorializing. Anyway, there will be a very slight step, and anyone that has ever even walked by a piece of sandpaper can deal with it easily. Personally, I get my "sanding sticks" by the gross at places specializing in beauty supplies. Yup, the foam-core nail polishers work great! And boy, are they cheap.

The bumps on the sides of the fuselage are a permanent part of the tool, and thus the kit. These, too, are extremely easily dealt with using that same piece of sandpaper that you just walked by. For those of you who did not see my earlier post on this, it appears that at some point in the life of the tool, the ejector pins were jammed into the opposite wall of the tool. Since the tools are made of beryllium/copper alloy, they cannot be patch welded as steel tools can. The gouges were sort of polished out, and that left the bumps and fine scratches. Again, these are very easily removed.

If you purchased one of our P-40Es and want replacement fuselages, please read the following carefully:

Cut out the UPC label (in the white box on the side with the aircraft descriptions) and mail it to us at the address on the bottom of the first page of the instruction sheet. Please be sure to include your return address! If you purchased more than one kit, you must send the UPC label from each kit.

We will ship you the improved fuselage pieces just as soon as we have them.

For some **good** news, the P-40F/L long-tail fuselage, while it has the slight step at the tail, does not have any bumps - at least as of this writing! The fuselage uses an entirely separate tool from that used on the E, K, and N kit. We are planning to release it this later this summer, and will let you all know when. I'm digging up some really interesting camouflage schemes. Expect at least three, and probably four, including a Tuskegee airman.

Thank you all for your patience and words of encouragement. Well, most of you, that is. LOL I'm a modeler, and I intend to treat you with the same respect and honesty that I expect to receive.

It's a **hobby**. Enjoy!

Craftmasters 1/48th Scale Unlimited Hydroplanes

by Terry D. Moore

In the dark ages (1950s and 60s), before the Seattle Mariners, Seahawks, and Sonics, the only major league sport the Seattle area had was unlimited hydroplane racing. The annual event in Seattle was (and is) an event called Seafair, with parades, shows, and concerts, concluding with the annual Seafair Trophy Race (or Gold Cup race) for unlimited hydroplanes. Fans were positively rabid about the sport, attracting upwards of 500,000 at the shores of, and on, Lake Washington. All three local TV stations that broadcast on a daily basis had coverage of the time trials and the race itself. Kids carved hydros out of wood and raced them on the grass in their back yards or towed them behind their bicycles. Housewives knew about quillshafts and nitrous oxide. As far as Seattleites were concerned, the hydros from Detroit were the "bad guys" and were better off at the bottom of the lake. Our heroes then were Mira Slovak, Dallas Sartz, Bill Muncey, and Lou Fageol among many, many others. When *Slo-Mo IV*, the first hydroplane from Seattle, was destroyed in an accident, thousands of people turned out to view her remains. The hydroplanes of the time were built of wood and aluminum and powered by Rolls-Royce Merlin or Allison engines, which were in great abundance after WW II. They were loud and some had a tendency to break down, but when the one-minute gun went off before the start of every heat, it was a very exciting time. Today, the boats are different, powered by turbines (they "whoosh", instead of roar), are made of exotic materials, and run really fast. But, it's just not the same...

When Shawn McEvoy of CraftWorks Models announced a series of vintage unlimited hydroplanes in 1/48th scale, I could hardly contain myself (wipe drool from chin). I saw his first efforts almost a year ago and now the first two kits have been released under the Craftmasters label. My patience has been rewarded with a 30' round bow and 30' pointed bow unlimited kits, with three more versions due for imminent release. The models are resin kits with alternative parts including different cowlings, tails, and engine exhausts, a vacuform windscreen, plus decals for several versions in each kit. The instruction sheet is a very basic exploded view drawing. There are color three-view drawings illustrating the different color schemes you can build, although there are no callouts specifying colors.

Terry, age 14, in the cockpit of Miss Exide

The resin parts on my examples were reasonably well cast, with very few bubbles or flaws; however, the main hull will require a fair amount of work to remove seam lines. Mating surfaces on all parts will also require sanding and filing to achieve a good fit. On my examples, the cowlings were slightly warped and will require slight bending to conform the shape of the upper deck. Where the kits shine are the decals. Markings are provided to build nine different schemes for the pointed bow and eight different schemes for the round bow kit. The decals are very concise and appear to be very accurate color wise. It will be very difficult to choose just **one** color scheme. These models are definitely designed for someone with modeling experience, especially with resin kits and working with gloss paints. Some schemes require a natural wood finish hull, which will also be a challenge to some modelers. The kit is packaged in a very sturdy box, perhaps a bit small considering the size of the decal sheet and the numerous pages of color schemes but well packaged nonetheless. If you have even the slightest interest in vintage unlimited hydroplanes, then these are the kits you need.

The models retail for $45 and are available directly from CraftWorks Models, 872 SW 174th, Seattle, WA 98166 or from The Hydroplane and Raceboat Museum, at **www.thunderboats.org**.

Czech Master 1/72nd Scale Supermarine Type 300 Spitfire Prototype

by Bill Johnson

If I'm wrong, please bear with me, but I personally know of no other complete kit for this aircraft. Finally, someone has seen fit to do justice to a much-needed model to fill out a Spitfire collection. *[Actually, Pegasus has attempted it twice, the second time with an improved gull wing – ED]*

The model is of the Supermarine Type 300 Spitfire prototype. This is a complete kit and not a conversion. Paragon Designs of England, in 1996, offered a very well done conversion kit to convert a 1/48th scale Tamiya Spitfire Mk.I kit into a model of the prototype. But for many modelers, this produced a model that was not in what some refer to as "God's Scale." Search no further – your prayers have been answered! Czech Master Resin have produced a very well cast model of this desirable prototype in 1/72nd scale.

I will not bore you with the history of what has become known as K5054, as it has been told many times over the years since it first took wing. There is one note I find very interesting, though; K5054 cost the British taxpayers £15,776 Sterling. In light of what was to result from this expenditure, I'd call that a real bargain.

There are three pages of instructions furnished. One sheet, printed on both sides, details assembly, and is very clear and straightforward. The other sheet details color, and decal location.

On removing the parts from the plastic bag in which Czech Masters package their kits you are confronted with 28 resin castings. Three of these are cast in a white, slightly soapy resin – the two fuselage sides, with cockpit sidewalls cast in place, and a one-piece wing. The remaining 25 parts are on eight separate casting plugs, and are cast in an off-white resin. The resin parts all appear to be well molded with properly scribed panel lines that match the painting instruction sheet furnished in the kit. Six parts are devoted to the cockpit interior. If you should choose to model the plane at rollout, the rudder hinge line will require modification, as the rudder balance area was changed after the first few flights. Parts are supplied to build the model with the landing gear extended or retracted. I find the provision of two Watts propellers, complete with spinners, to be a very nice touch. One is low pitch and the other high pitch; the dates each was installed is included.

I find no fault with this kit as far as the resin parts are concerned. The criticism I have is for the decals and the poor quality of the cockpit canopies. Four (I have no idea why) vacuformed canopies are on a single sheet of clear plastic.

The decal sheet has the required roundels and serials/numbers to model the prototype either at rollout, or as displayed in the

Continued on page 16

Upcoming Model Shows and Contests

Saturday, May 18
HobbyTown USA Redmond Model Contest and Show. 10AM-3:30PM. Registration 10AM-12 Noon. Entry fees – Adults/Youth, $5 for unlimited entries; Juniors (12 and under) $2; Display only $2. Model sale – All kits 20% off day of show only. HobbyTown USA Redmond, 16421 Cleveland Street, Redmond, WA. Phone 425-558-0312.

Saturday, June 8
6th Annual OSSM Model Contest and Swap Meet. 9AM-6PM. Entry fees: $5 for up to 3 models, $1 each additional; Adult spectators $4; Seniors and Youth spectators $3. Primarily Autos, but a few categories for airplanes, armor, ships, etc. Clackamas Meeting and Banquet Facilities, 15815 SE 82nd Dr., Portland, OR. (Inside Denny's). For more info call Floyd Blakley at 503-666-7563.

Saturday, June 15
Spring 2002 Invitational Model Show and Contest. Hosted by IPMS Lt. Alexander Pearson Modelers in conjunction with Masterpiece Models Swap Meet. 9AM-5PM. Clark County Fairgrounds, 17402 NE Delfel Road, Ridgefield, WA. For information, send SASE to 2804 NE Hancock, Portland, OR, 97212, or call 503-282-9371 or e-mail **budds@easystreet.com**.

Saturday, September 14
ReCon 7. Hosted by IPMS Oregon Historical Modelers Society and IPMS Salem. Capt. Michael King Smith Evergreen Aviation Educational Institute, 3850 Three Mile Lane, McMinnville, Oregon. More details next issue.

French Fighters of World War II In Action by Alain Pelletier

review by Robert Allen

The latest entry in Squadron/Signal's *In Action* series marks a significant departure. Rather than profile one aircraft type, or a related group of types from the same company, this book includes all operational French fighters of WW2. While a large amount has been published on the subject, most of it has been in French. Probably the best similar reference for non-Francophones has been John Brindley's *French Fighters of World War Two*, in the old Hylton Lacy series.

Pelletier's book briefly details the development and operational histories of the MS.405/406, Potez 630/631, Bloch 151/152/155, CR.714, D.520, and Arsenal VG 33. Because only French-designed fighters are included, the Curtiss 75 is noticeably absent. As with all *In Action* books, the best part is the wide selection of photos and drawings. The development of many of these aircraft was convoluted, and the illustrations make sense of the differences between the variants.

Czech Master Supermarine 300

from page 15

New Types Park at the RAF Pageant staged at Hendon on June 27, 1936. The problem is that there are no white surrounds, as shown in period photographs, to any of the supplied numerals or roundels.

This kit is well done, and fills a great hole in the history of a famous aircraft.

Preznotes

from page 1

I have written an in-the-box review on Shawn's new hydroplane kits that appears on page 14.

Also on deck is our 1/1 scale home project. We seem to have gotten in line with a number of members who are in the middle of a remodel/new home project. Ours is not as extensive as others: just a new kitchen/dining room/entry/bedroom/windows/carpet/roof/landscaping/etc.

In addition to Jill getting a like-new house, I'll be getting a new built in display case so I'll have four display cases available for those that may need a new or additional one (I have consolidated one of my cases already - it's a lighted 4' long case - available now. It needs to go so we have room to move things when our project starts later this month. Call me @ 425-774-6343). Oh yes, if you make me an e-Bay type offer on some of my kits (including some old Auroras), I'll let those go as well.

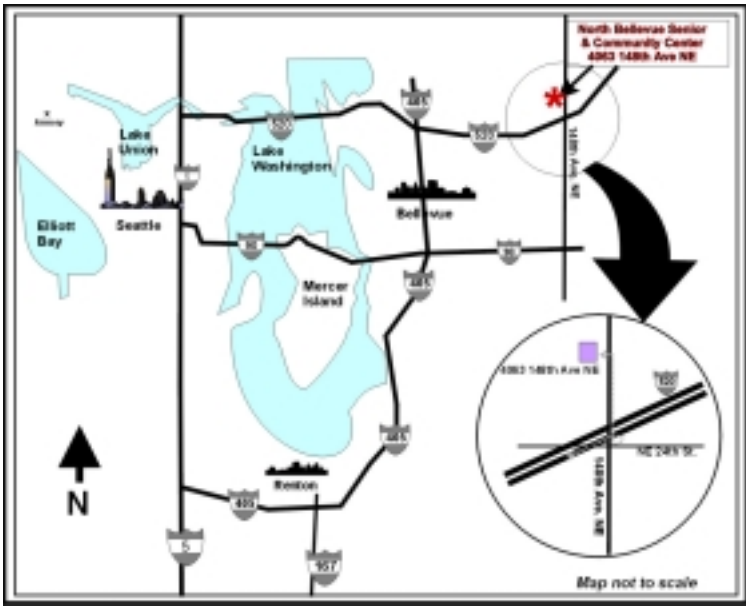
I won't even mention the effect the Mariners are having on my modeling efforts. It would appear that my F-89s might not see the light of day for quite a while!

Please note that our May meeting starts @ 9:30! There is a wedding at the facility that afternoon so we have to be out of there by noon (unless you are a member of the wedding party).

See you at the meeting,

Terry

Meeting Reminder



Saturday, May 11

9:30AM - Noon

(note the different time)

North Bellevue Community/Senior Center
4063-148th Ave NE, Bellevue

Directions: From Seattle or from I-405, take 520 East to the 148th Ave NE exit. Take the 148th Ave North exit (the second of the two 148th Ave. exits) and continue north on 148th until you reach the Senior Center. The Senior Center will be on your left. The Center itself is not easily visible from the road, but there is a signpost in the median.