

Newsletter



The
Winners
Circle

“Guns of August”

WW-I Subjects August 2017 Theme Contest Winner:
1/48 Siemens-Schuckert D.III by Mark Webb

Photos by Paul Tomczak

Mark Webb’s fine build of Eduard’s 1/48 scale kit of the Siemens-Schuckert D-III biplane fighter. Mark’s work on the model included very realistic varnished wood finishes on the fuselage and propeller blades and clean decal work on the distinctive German lozenge-pattern camouflage.

The Siemens-Schuckert D.III first entered service in January 1918 with the delivery of 20 pre-production aircraft. 30 more were delivered in February, most going to Jasta 2. The D.III was quite nimble, with an impressive rate of climb.

NEXT MEETING

September 1
Theme Contest...
“Rising Sun”

Armament consisted of two Spandau machine guns. The Siemens-Halske rotary fitted to these early aircraft proved troublesome and the D.IIIs were withdrawn from



service to receive the improved ShIIIa engine. These aircraft were returned to service in July 1918 on home defense duties. ■

Visit the DVSM website: www.dvsm.org

President's Corner

by Paul Tomczak

I can't believe summer is over already! Seems like it went by pretty quickly. My son is already back in high school and we took our daughter to college on August 23rd. My daughter is a freshman and I was afraid I would have to call campus police to get my wife out of the dorms after the move in. Luckily, after about three hours, she was all moved in and we let her go do her thing. My wife's not happy about this yet, but it's quiet around the house which is perfect for me to get some modeling done.

Speaking of modeling, I have had a great month with six models completed, including three started and built in August. My Shelf of Doom build is complete and waiting for our Holiday party in December. I also built my first vacuform kit which is for our November theme of Scratchbuilt/Resin/Vac builds. See my article about that in the newsletter. I can also say my 2017 New Year resolution of building two models outside my comfort zone is done. First off was my vacuform build and I also completed a bunch of Warhammer 40K figures using Citadel paints. After watching some videos, I taught myself layer painting, shadowing, edge lining and working with textured paints. Definitely outside my comfort zone for both the Warhammer figures and constructing a vacuform kit.

Our next theme is "Rising Sun" and any model of a Japanese subject qualifies. I am looking forward to a wide selection of builds on our theme table on September 1st. Also, don't forget to bring your thoughts on new themes for 2018. Should make for some great discussion at our next meeting. See you there.

Happy Modeling!... ■



Members mingle while awaiting the August revelry.
Photo by Paul Tomczak

THEME CONTESTS 2017

January "Big & Small"

Winner: USS *Kearsarge* by Howard Rifkin

February "What If?"

Winner: 1/72 Bf-110T by Paul Tomczak

March "Delta Wings & Giant Fins"

Winner: 1/48 Convair F-106 by Marty Blum

April "Wild Thing"

Winner: 1/72 Grumman X-29 by Mark Webb

May "A Day at the Beach"

Winner: 1/32 OS2U Kingfisher by Glenn Hoover

June

No theme. Judged Gold, Silver, Bronze Contest.

July "Fourth of July"

Winner: 1/32 F-86F Sabre by David Anderson

August "Guns of August"

Winner: 1/48 Siemens-Schuckert D.III by Mark Webb

September "Rising Sun"

Model of a Japanese subject.

October "Scratch-built/Vacuform/Resin"

Model must be a scratch-built or vacuform kit, or be a completely resin kit.

November "Dungeons & Dragons"

A model in orange and black (Halloween) color scheme and/or with a spooky name, e.g., "Spectre", "Banshee", "Phantom".

December

No theme. "Shelf of Doom" (pictures of entrants taken through March meeting) & Favorite Five contest.

QUESTIONS about DVSM's Contests should be directed to Mike Turco at MATurco@aol.com

Monthly Contest Theme Proposals 2018 *by Mike Turco*

I'll take a leap of faith and assume we will carry on with the monthly theme contests next year. If not, scratch the following, but if so, it is not too early to start putting a theme list together so we can pick ten for 2018. I'd like to get everyone's ideas and suggestions before the November meeting and compile a slate of themes such that we can finalize them at the November or December meeting. Put on your creative thinking caps.

Here are those from the past two years that were suggested but not selected:

- **“Steampunk”** [alt. **“Steam Punk”**] – There is no absolute definition of steampunk. It can be characterized by Victorian-era science fiction devices, like those of Jules Verne and H.G. Wells (e.g., “The Time Machine”). Steampunk can be considered as a subgenre of speculative fiction usually set in an anachronistic (chronologically inconsistent) or Victorian or quasi-Victorian alternative history. For our purpose, it could be any model that has been modified in any fashion to represent “steampunk”. The sci-fi mechanisms in the show “The Wild, Wild West” can be considered steampunk. In that era, power was supplied by “steam”. It is often characterized by modifying one's gadgets to make them look a century out of date.
- **“Watch and Listen”** – Model of anything related to a TV show, movie or song, e.g., “Little Deuce Coupe”, “409”, “Hot Rod Lincoln”, “Little GTO”; aircraft from the movie “Strategic Air Command”; a specific ship, plane or armor from any war movie or TV show; the Batmobile, Broderick Crawford's “Highway Patrol” car, “Rat Patrol” jeep, Star Trek “Enterprise”.
- **“To the Rescue”** – Any model depicting a first responder or rescue vehicle, e.g., a civilian or military ambulance; an Air-Sea Rescue plane; police and fire fighting vehicles; hospital ship; life boat, etc.
- **“Pink”** - Any model painted pink or related

to something pink, e.g., desert pink camouflage, Pink Panther car.

- **“Twice as Nice”** - Two kits of the same subject but of different scales, e.g., a 1/48 and a 1/72 of the exact same P-51. For cars, 1/24 and 1/25 are considered the same scale.
- **“In the Thousands”** – a model of something that was mass-produced in large numbers for its type, e.g., US Army 2½-ton truck; B-24 bomber; stock Chevy Bel Air or Ford Fairlane; P-47; WWII Destroyer; F6F Hellcat; M4 Sherman Tank; Russian T-34 tank; 105mm Howitzer.
- **“Best & Fastest”** – a model of a speed-record setting plane, car, ship, rocket, tank, motorcycle, etc.

Here are some new ones. Add your ideas to these and bring them to the next meeting.

- **“My First Time”** – Must be the first time you build a specific type of model, e.g., first tank, ship, plane, spacecraft or figure if you've never built one of those; also can be first 1930s era car if you've only built modern cars, or first biplane if you build aircraft, etc.
- **“Rivals”** – Two models of subjects that fought or competed with each other, e.g., F-86A and MiG-15; Ford Mustang and Chevy Camaro; T-34 and Tiger tanks; HMS Hood and Bismarck; Hawker Hurricane or Spitfire Mk. I and Messerschmitt BF-109E, etc.
- **“The Seventies”** – Model of a subject from 1970-79. ■

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Any era! Any scale!

September 10th, 2017 / 9AM- 2PM
Gilbertsville Fire Hall / Route 73 1456 E. Philadelphia Ave.
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Admission is STILL JUST \$5 and covers your registration!
Please limit your entries to 10 per class per person. A sit-down breakfast is available next door starting at 8AM and there are plenty of tables nearby!

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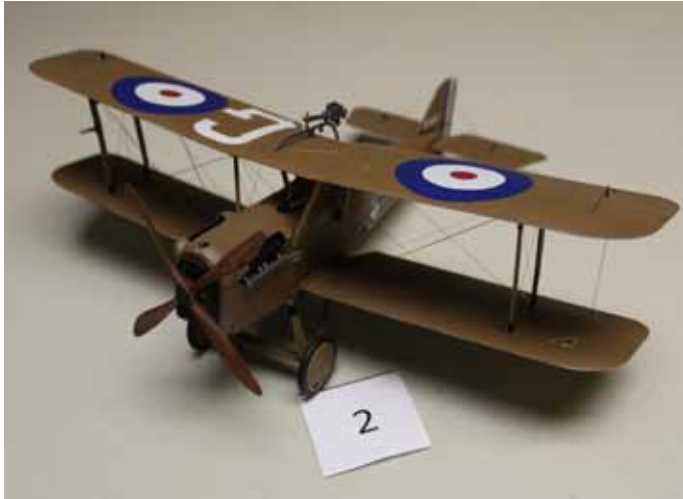
Contest fee (up to 3 entries):
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August Display Highlights

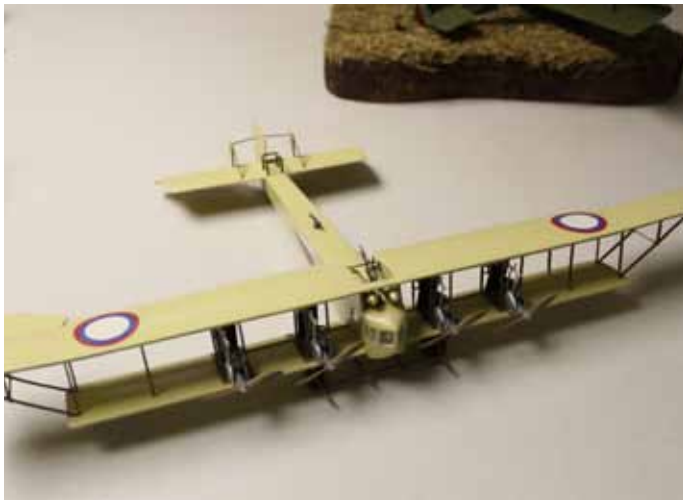
Photos by Paul Tomczak



Royal Aircraft Factory Se.5a, 1/32, by Mike Turco



Sopwith Camel, 1/48, by John Goschke



Sikorsky Ilya Mourometz, 1/72, by Howard Rifkin



Roland C.II, 1/72, by Logan Brown



Sopwith Camel, 1/32, by Dave Anderson



HMS Queen Elizabeth, 1/700, by Bob Cicconi

August Display Highlights

Photos by Paul Tomczak



Wespe, 1/48 in-progress, by Paul Tomczak



54mm Figures & French 75mm Cannon, by B. Stonnier



Grumman F4F-4 Wildcat, 1/72, by Paul Tomczak



Tojo, 1/32, by Paul Koppczynski



Northrop HL-10, 1/72, by Howard Rifkin



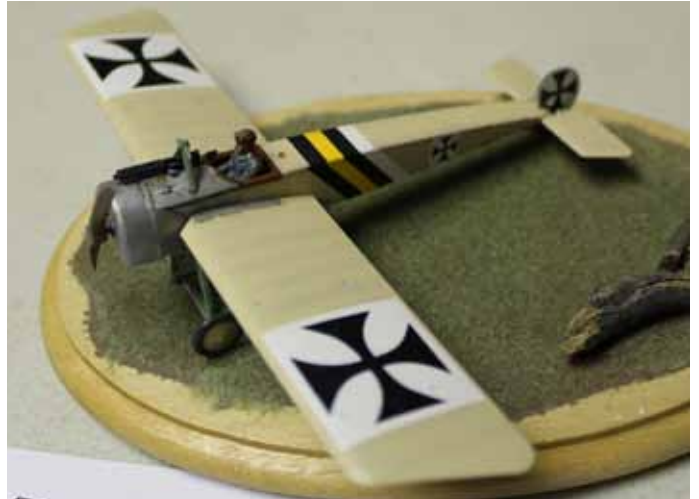
"Elvira" and her custom '58 T-bird, 1/24, by Dave Anderson

August Display Highlights

Photos by Paul Tomczak



Harrier Display, 1/48, by Glenn Hoover



Fokker Eindhoven, 1/72, by Paul Tomczak



HMS Hermes, 1/700, by Bob Cicconi



Cessna Skymaster, 1/72, by Howard Rifkin



P-47D fuselage with flak damage, 1/32, by Paul Kopczynski



P-47d, 1/32, by Paul Kopczynski

I Built a Vacuform Kit!

by Paul Tomczak



My New Year's Modeling resolution for 2017 was to build two models that were outside my usual focus of aircraft, Armor or Sci-fi. So far, the opportunity has not come up but with our Scratch built/Resin/Vacuform theme coming up in October, I decide to make this my first "something different" build. Yup, I am going to build a Vacuform model and tell you all about it.

My first thought after unpacking the kit – a Wings72 Skoda Kuaba V4 – was what have I gotten myself into!

And, I also had to figure out how to do this. First up was watching a few videos on YouTube, but that only scared me further. If my dentist said you need a root canal and we are out of Novocain, I would respond: "That's OK, drill away, I have a Vacuform kit at home that needs to be worked on and I would rather be here". Well maybe it's not that bad, but stick around as I walk through my first attempt at building a Vacuform.

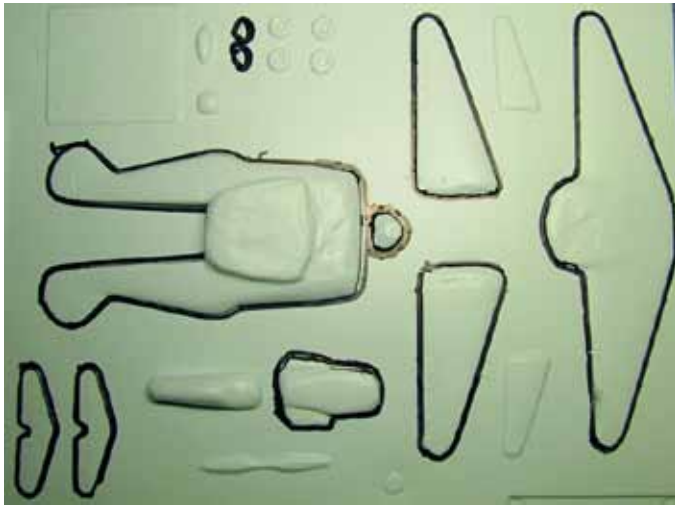
What is a Skoda Kuaba?

First up was some research. I know Vacuforms can often provide some strange and different builds you would not normally see in injection

kits. What is a Skoda Kuaba? This was supposed to be the German primary fighter trainer late in WWII and would have been built out of non-strategic materials. The order was eventually cancelled due low construction quality of the prototypes. The kit provides no decals, which means I am on my own sourcing the decals, including finding the strange Skoda logo for the fuselage. The V4 prototype was not the pre-production model. It was what was tested and the Germans ordered a slightly larger version with a bigger engine as the Model 257. So, what to do? I don't have a decal printer but the four model 257 prototypes were delivered with German insignia and camouflage. How about marking this as an in service "What if" aircraft. The V4 had a 2 blade prop and the 257 had a 4 blade prop. I probably have one of those available from an older build. So, I decided to kit bash my Vacuform into the "What-if" in service German primary fighter trainer used in early 1946. Now that I have a plan, it's on to construction. I decided to follow what most of the web sites and videos told me to do and here are the steps laid out.

Starting to Work

Step 1: Mark off the parts on the plastic sheet. Most sites suggest tracing the parts with a Sharpie marker or pencil. I traced the parts on the white plastic with a large Sharpie marker. Ultimately when I remove the parts I should be able to clearly see the plastic that needs to be sanded compared to the black lines on the kit parts. I often review the sprues in complicated kits to find parts and identify optional components before I start an injection kit. I think this process is quite similar for both styles of kits.



Step 2: Separating parts. This is a major task. Put the sprue cutter away. Actually, you can just throw it out the window. I will need to remove 1mm thick plastic around all my kit parts. I decided to use the trick of keeping plenty of extra plastic around the part and careful sanding and cutting what you don't need from the part. It is recommended you trim around the parts and snap the plastic off. What!? I can tell I will miss those tiny sprue connections that are so easy to cut. Back to the task at hand. I used a newish but slightly dull blade (That's what the video said!) and cut around the part. In relatively straight lines. Then it was time to snap. Eyes closed. Gentle bends and snap. Hey it worked! Now on to the next. Well that wasn't so bad. I can do this. In a short time, I had the parts I needed separated and waiting for cleanup. There are a number of small parts I did not bother to remove. Wheel halves? Come on, I can find some substitutes. Prop blades? I got some damaged kits that can donate. I decided to work with the horizontal stabilizers first and take them through the next steps before I tackled the bigger parts.

I quickly learned I could cut pretty close to the edge and snap most of the plastic away. On curves, I just cut multiple lines and it was easy to remove most of the plastic.

Now I had a piece with just a tiny bit of overage to work with. Once I rough cut both stabilizers, I decided to move on to the next step – sanding.

Sanding & More Sanding!

Step 3: I will admit when I watched the videos and they talked about sanding, I did not realize what I was in for. I also did not understand why. As soon as the parts were cut and free I now understood. While the stabilizer halves had the shape on the top, they now had

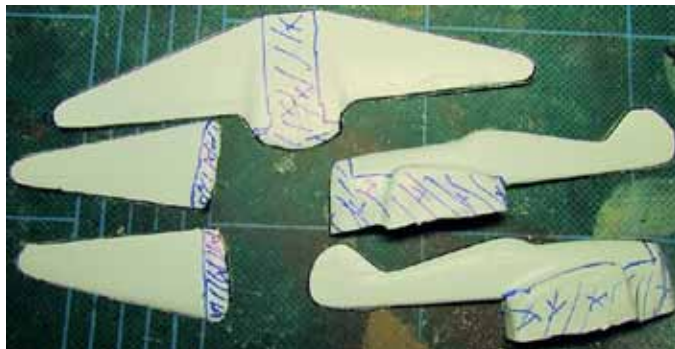


more than 1mm of extra thickness, on each half! When I put them together, they would be a thicker chord than the main wing assembly should be. What I needed to do was completely sand the wing down almost flat. One video suggested making some handles out of tape – basically fold the tape over and attach – which is what I did and then I started sanding.

I started with the horizontal stabilizers of the aircraft, basically 1 inch long and ½ an inch wide. I used 100 grit sandpaper but I was very cautious with my sanding. I worked in circles checking as I went along. I was also careful to switch sides often so I did not apply too much pressure to one side. After thinking I had done enough, I test fitted both sides and realized I still had a lot of extra plastic to get rid of. Back to sanding until the plastic was almost see through. I sanded extra along the rear of the elevator to get an even tighter edge on the rear. After test fitting multiple times and sanding again, I felt I had the stabilizers at the right width. Almost all the indent has been sanded down to a flat surface inside the wing. My rear and tips were super thin. I finished sanding on some 400 grit sand paper, as the 100 grit paper had made the plastic very rough. You can see in the picture how thin my stabilizers are compared to the original plastic. I glued the tail together using the upside-down U in the tail as



a guide. With the halves together I carefully trimmed off the flash on the sides which was now wafer thin. After that I was able to get the stabilizers nicely shaped using an X-Acto knife and sand paper. At this point things were the same as any injection molded part. Time to complete the 1" stabilizers – 50 minutes. This is not a quicker way to build your models.



larger than the provided cockpit parts. So that means I will not be opening the cockpit area.

I did have a larger problem overall. Apparently, the fuselage should not have been totally sanded down for a good fit. When I test fit the front of engine cowling I had a roughly 1+ mm gap which went all the way back to the tail while slowly getting smaller. Should I have only sanded the tail area? Would have been nice if the instructions said that. As a fix, I attached the cowling front and glued the fuselage parts to either side of the cowl. I had already glued the tail before this step (1). I used a large piece of scrap plastic which I sand down at

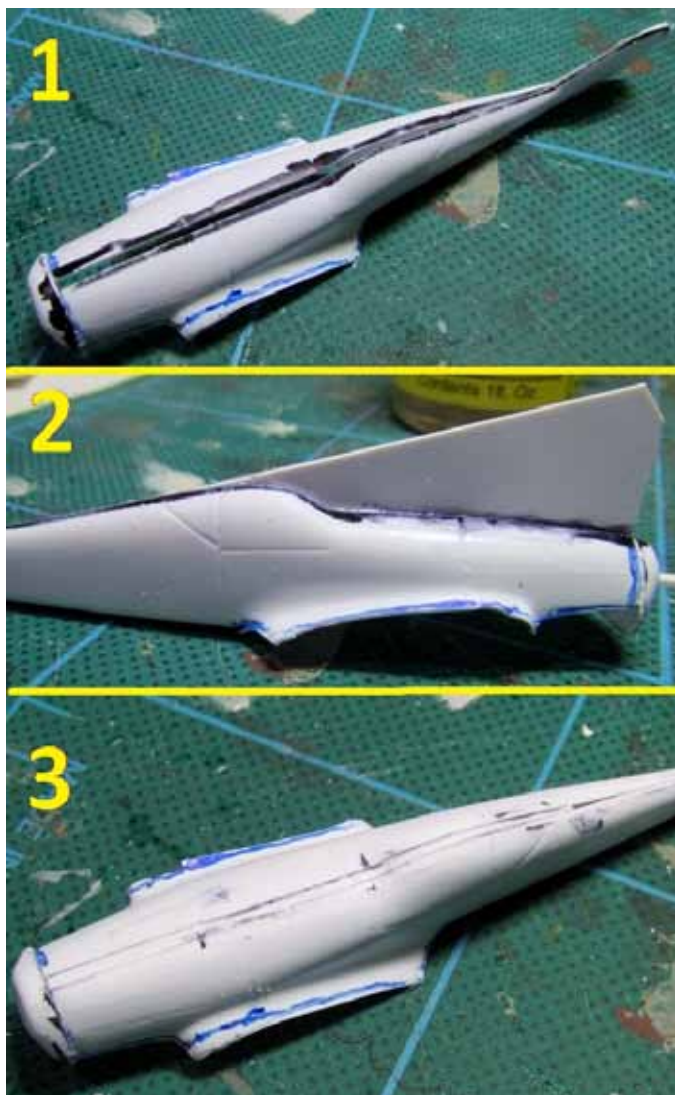
Getting the Hang of It

To be honest, I now felt I had a better handle on the sanding and cutting. I was able to tightly cut the main wings and fuselage. Using multiple tape handles on each piece, I quickly sanded down the pieces. Again, I focused on the rear and tips of the wings, as well as the tail on the fuselage. For the wings, I only had two test fittings to get a good match. The fuselage as well. Total time for completing the sanding of the main wings and fuselage was less than 1 hour. Now that I have good fits, I am still not done. Each of the wing and fuselage pieces have areas that need to be carved away so they will fit together.

There are some lines to identify where the actual part ends in relation to extra molding for structure. I used a colored Sharpie to mark the line and crossed over the areas to be removed. I was very afraid I would break some of my carefully sanded pieces. Long straight pieces were snapped off. Tight bends were cut with a fresh blade in my X-Acto knife. After that the ends were cleaned up and we were ready for assembly.

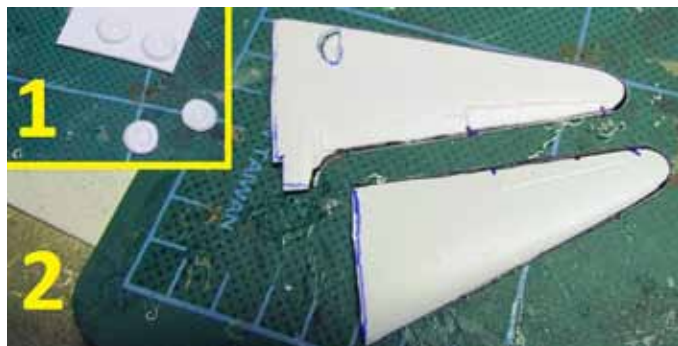
Assembly

Step 4: Assembly. The big question for me was whether to remove the cockpit area or just paint it black like a desk top model. I basic cockpit is provided – just 4 pieces to build the cockpit up and no seat, stick or instrument panel - or I could just leave fuselage plastic in place and paint it black. I did think the parts provided some support to the fuselage structure so I decided to go forward with opening the cockpit. The first thing I did was test the fit of the vacuform canopy. Good thing I did! The canopy would not fit even if I widened the fuselage



the end to a wedge. I slipped this in the gap. I had to add some thinner plastic in the front inch or so of the fuselage to completely fill the gap. I glued this in place (2). When dry, I used my sprue cutters to remove the bulk of the plastic sticking out, then tightened up with my X-Acto blade. I finished off with some sanding and my fuselage gap was removed. Adding the plastic here also seemed to strengthen the fuselage. I will need to finish off the last of the gaps with some filler.

Since I won't be adding a cockpit I decided to try another detail. Adding the wheels so they are visible with the landing gear up. Why take the easy road! What I did was remove one side of the wheels from the plastic (1) and sanded them down a lot! I mean almost flat. I outlined a half circle on the landing gear area and removed the plastic in the lower wing. I then glued the wheel in place over the opening. On my first attempt, I glued the wings together and tried to slip the wheel into place. That required multiple tries and I even had to slip a blade between the wings to remove a high point that was causing a bulge in the wing. On the second wing, I attached the wheel to the bottom wing and sanded it flush with the wing and then applied the top piece with no problem (2). If the plane had a third wing I would have had been an expert by then. I came up with my own innovation along the way as well. Notice the flaps have a blue sharpie mark on each end. I used those to align the wings when I put them together. I was able to get a good alignment for each wing and then cleaned up the remainder with sandpaper and an X-Acto blade.



Uh Oh!

With my wings and fuselage ready, it was time to put them together. The kit provides virtually no attachment points. After much test fitting and trimming, I felt the right wing was ready to be attached. To help I glued a small tab to the rear fuselage join to provide an additional glue point for the wing (1). Once the right wing was on, I added a tab to the centerline of the right wing and attached the left to my two added tabs. It made a nice bond for the wings and they seemed to be attached well (2). I then added the provided lower case of the engine which also covered half of the wing assembly, locking them into place. That's when I realized something had gone terribly wrong.



The wings did not look right. In fact, they looked lopsided. I had been careful to cut along the lines provided but I admit I did not actually measure pieces. At first, I thought it was my tricky wing join that messed things up. However, when I placed the parts on my cutting board I could see my rear wing line was (pretty) good. It looks like the wings were not exactly the same size and angle on each side. I don't think this was my sanding that caused this problem. To help correct things I did sand down the front of the left wing as much as I could to at least get them closer visually. The landing gear on the bottom makes this even more obvious. One is almost touching the center panel and the other is about 5mm away. Nothing I could do there to fix things. I guess I could have re-scribed the landing gear panels, but adding the visible wheels meant I could not move them. In the end, I pushed on with the build as there was nothing I could do. Hey I did say the original aircraft was cancelled due to poor construction quality! I added the tail wheel which I made from floral wire and the kit part and drilled out the hole for the prop and the single MG armament in the nose.

Step 5: Filler. I had to use filler on virtually every join on this project. The underside was the worst with the mismatched wings. The lower engine piece was wider than the fuselage so I had to bevel those into place with filler. My fuselage repair was a mess with filler needed all along the seam. All together I went through 5 rounds of filler and sanding. When I thought I had things well in hand I used lighter sand paper to insure a smooth finish. In the end, it was not enough. To check my work, I used German RLM 65 Light blue as a primer coat to check for any open seams. The paint helped identify quite a few gaps, bumps and poorly sanded filler. It was back to adding filler and sanding again.



Step 6: Paint and finishing. At this point my vac build was no different than any injection build. I use enamels for painting my aircraft and I will do the same here. I did some research on German training aircraft and it turns out they were painted a standard green on dark green splinter camouflage right up to late 1944. I thought my 1946 “What If” build should have a camouflage using late war colors. I re-painted my base coat of RLM 76 after I cleaned up all the gaps and bumps on my model. As you can see from the picture there was quite a few areas that needed to be touched up.

My model was completed by painting RLM 74 (Grau Violet – basically a purplish grey) and RLM 70 (Dark Green). I applied a splinter pattern on the wings and some RLM 70 along the spine. I taped off some canopy lines and painted the cockpit area black in desktop model style. Decals came from my spares as well as generic insignia sheets. My base was built from a tiny plaque that was painted blue and a small sign was added to identify the model. The model is mounted on a small wire to complete the inflight display. I could not find an appropriate propeller in my spares so I solved that problem by cutting a circle in clear plastic, scuffing with some sand paper and adding a small spinner I sanded to shape. That added a nice touch and hopefully it distracts viewers from looking at my mismatched wing.

Give It a Try!

Vacuform kits are not as hard as you would think.

If you have good building skills you can put a vacuform model together no problem. So, what did I learn?

- **Don't over sand your pieces** – “Measure twice and cut once” as Bob Villa says – you can easily remove too much plastic which puts you in a bind.



- **Test fit often** to make sure your sanding progress is on track.
- **Sharpie markers are your friend.** Use them to both outline the pieces for removal and to help guide your parts assembly.
- **Don't rely on the kit lines** to identify which areas should be removed as they may not be correct. Use a ruler and measure, it could save a lot of heartache later.
- **If you can, add some extra tabs** with scrap plastic to give you more glue points. You will need them.
- **Finally, make sure you have lots of filler handy.** You can use filler to fix a lot of mistakes. Ask me how I know...

Once you get past all the sanding and (sometimes) awkward assembly there is no difference between injection kits and vacuform when finishing off your build. I am glad I gave this kit a try. Would I build another Vacuform? Probably not, but I would not hesitate to add a Vacuform modification to an existing kit in the future. So, the experience wasn't that bad overall and certainly not on par with a root canal! If you have a chance to try a Vacuform, I recommend you go for it. ■

2017 Theme Contest *Point Standings to Date*

	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	April	May	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Totals
Turco, M.	2	4	2	3	2	4	4				21
Anderson, D.	3	4	2	2		5	4				20
Tomczak, P.	3	5	1	4	2	2	1				18
Rifkin, H.	5	1	1	1	2	3	3				16
Brown, L.	2	2	1	1	3	2	2				13
Webb, M.				5			5				10
Leonetti, J.	1	3	1	1		3					9
Blum, M.			5	2							7
Lockhard, C.	4	3									7
Goschke, J.	1		4				1				6
Ursino, L.	3		3								6
Hoover, G.					5						5
Rakos, R.	2	1		1	1						5
Vattilana, J.		1					4				5
Lacey, L.					4						4
Turner, R.				4							4
Cicconi, B.							3				3
Senner, D.	1		1								2
Stonier, B.							2				2
Volz, J.	2										2
Benner, J.		1									1
Schur, G.	1										1
Tiewski, F.				1							1

Monthly points are awarded as follows: Each person who enters a model into the theme receives 1 pt. 1st place = 4+1, 2nd = 3+1, 3rd = 2+1

Join IPMS/USA

Why? The International Plastic Modelers' Society/USA, of which Delaware Valley Scale Modelers is a chapter, finances the insurance required for our monthly meetings and for model contests around the country, and offers a make and take program for young modelers. Encourage the enjoyment of modeling in all its forms: aircraft, armor, cars, ships, fantasy, figures, military or civilian, beginner or advanced, join IPMS/USA! "By Modelers, For Modelers"

What do I give? Adult, 1 year: \$30. Adult, 2 years: \$58. Adult, 3 years: \$86. Junior (under 18 years), \$17. Family, 1 year: \$35 (adult + \$5).

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How? Clip and mail the coupon in the DVSM Newsletter or the IPMS/USA brochure, see our IPMS contact, Joe Vattilana, at the next DVSM meeting, or join online at ipmsusa.org. ■

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