



DEC 20 MEET

Well, we almost made it through the year without screwing up our contest schedule. Unfortunately the November contest didn't happen because fearless leader forgot to leave any instructions behind while he played hooky at last month's figure convention in Portland. Sorry!

To salvage the situation we will have to hold the belated November contest and the Model of the Year contest at the same time. Everyone who had an award winning model in this past year is urged to bring them in one more time. According to our records these are:

Larry Baldwin	Mania Ki-51
Steve Cook	Tamiya 6x4 Krupp Protze
Jeff Glockner	Superior "Thor"
	Cameo British Trumpeter
Doug Groesbeck	Tamiya Panther V
John Greer	Hasegawa Fw-190
Matt Hargreaves	Neiuport Triplane
	GAZW IK-2
Bruce Johnson	Supermodel Fiat CR-32
	T-60
Carl Kietzke	AMT Kenworth Firetruck
Bob Labouy	Hasegawa QP-9D
Steve Lewis	AMT GMC General
	Ford LN-8000
Terry Moore	Fujimi Fw-190D-9
Zak Pasco	"Rustmonster"
J. Prantil	Williams Bro. Wedell Racer
Wayne Snowdon	Airfix TBM
	Airfix Hurricane
	Airfix TBF-1
	AMT Gloster Meteor
	Tamiya Flakverling
Scott Taylor	IMC Yardmaster
	AMT DC 966 Dump Truck
	Cylon Raider
Joe Tinaco	Series 77 US Paratrooper
Gary Woodburn	French Legionaire
	Tamiya Jagdpanzer
	Aoshima Chokai

As we will also include the winners of this month's contest in the balloting for Model of the Year, models for the monthly competition should be entered promptly so we can conclude the judging early. (If you think this is confusing, wait until we try to do it!)

We have also arranged some additional entertainment. Matt Hargreaves will attempt to lacerate both thumbs while showing us how to rescribe panel lines. If Kodak and the USPS come through in time, we might even have a few slides of the Can-Am and the Portland figure contest.

This is the month for The Changing of the Guard. To keep things simple, we only have one elected position: Top of the Heap. If you want to be it, be there. It's that easy.

New in Town

TRIPLE ALLIANCE: Airfix 1/72 New Lancaster B.III, 1/48 Mosquito; Hasegawa 1/72 5000th Phantom (F-4E/F w/ slats) Testors 1/48 F-16, F-18, RF-4; Heller 1/24 BMW DIXI Alfa Romeo 1750cc, 1/400 T23 Torpedo Boat; ESCI 1/48 Mirage V; Tamiya 1/35 M106AL, 1/12 Ferrari 312 T4; Wings (ex-KPM) 1/72 Glen, He-178, Su-2, Ki-32, MiG-3; Microscale F-80 (2 sheets), B-36, F2H, Bf-110; Squadron publications: Airforce Colors, pt II, Bf-109 in Action, Blitzkrieg; Aerodata Fighters of WWII; Osprey Panzerkampwagen IV, Stuart Light Tank Series.

CAMPUS HOBBIES: Testors 1/48 F-16, F-18 two-seat, RF-4, 1/32 B0-105; Monogram 1/48 F-18; Heller 1/72 Alouette; MPC Star Destroyer; Minicraft 1/72 F-6F, P-47 Razorback and Bubble, A-37A/B (reissue), T-33A (reissue); ESCI 1/48 F-5E Swiss, Jaguar A, Mirage V and IIIE; Microscale B-36, F-80 (2), Bf-110, F2H; Scalemaster B-36, 1/200 Airliners; Rareliner Federal Express.

AMERICAN EAGLES: Aoshima 1/72 reissues of most of the old line including Shiun, Seiran, Zuiun; Tamiya 1/35 5 Famous Generals; MPC Snowspeeder and Star Destroyer; Airfix 1/72 New Lancaster B.III, 1/48 Mosquito; Monogram 1/72 Snap-Tite F-14, F-16, 1/48 F-18; Paine's How to Build Dioramas; Squadron publications Bf-109 in Action, Airforce Colors, pt II, Fighters of WWII, pt I, Kriegsmarine; Microscale Bf-110, F-102A (2), P-39, F2H, P-80 (2), B-36; Scalemaster B-36.

Bulletin Board

R C Byrne (827-7952) is looking for information on the AC-130H, specifically close-up photos of the forward radome and IR equipment installation by the crew door.

FOR SALE: Seattle Chapter Quarterly Volume 1 Reprints. Guess what we found! A little dated (1971) but still lots of good information. WWI markings, XP-77, Boeing 299, SdKfz 142/2, A-20 and more. 32 pgs. \$1.50, or \$2.00 ppd, while they last.

Reviews

ESCI 1/48 Mirage IIIE/S/O/EE, and Mirage 5BA Kits

The main parts of these two kits came from the same mold, so let's review them together. Starting with the IIIE/S/O/EE first, the opened box will produce 69 light gray parts and 3 clear parts molded on four trees, all sealed in one plastic bag. The parts have number key tabs molded next to them and the trees are marked alphabetically.

in two halves on the vertical parting line. There are only two locating pins on the fuselage halves, both on the bottom. This will probably cause alignment problems during assembly. There was also a warp in the bottom of one fuselage half in my kit. Panel lines are raised, but not too heavy. (I prefer engraved ones myself.) The rudder surface is engraved. As with most previous Mirage kits, the air intakes and shock cones are molded in four separate pieces. However, the cannon barrel recesses are molded separately and are to be glued to the bottom of the air intakes. There are no cannon barrels showing, just a groove molded in each piece. There is no detail on the inner walls of the cockpit area. Both fuselage halves are blanked off just to the rear of the cockpit area and at the very rear. The seat consists of four parts with the shoulder harness molded to the back piece. It looks quite bare as the licensed built Martin-Baker seat in the Mirage series has several straps and various other harnesses and fittings. The basic cockpit itself is molded in four parts, an instrument panel, back plate, tub with side consoles and a control stick. (There is room for lots of added detail in the cockpit.) The well detailed nose wheel well glues to the bottom of the cockpit tub in typical ESCI fashion. The lower forward leading edge of the vertical fin is a separate triangular shaped piece (dimpled in my kits). It is as though ESCI are going to mold the embargoed Mirage 5 that ended up in the Armee de L'Air and other foreign Airforces. That version has an extension to the vertical fin, ala the Mirage IIIC. Included on the tree with the vertical fin piece is a Doppler antenna cover.

For the exhaust section of the fuselage there is a tail cone piece and an exhaust nozzle piece. The tail cone piece has the drag chute housing molded to it. The housing is just a tiny bit undersized and the cap is too pointed. The exhaust nozzle needs petals engraved longer and more detailed as the exhaust nozzle on the SNECA Atar 09-C3 engine is quite prominent. This piece is also blanked off with no afterburner flameholder rings showing. The nose and radar dome consists of two halves with the pitot boom molded in the right half. The boom is slightly oversize. Two small pitot tubes mounted in the front of the windscreen complete this part of the fuselage. The clear parts consist of a windscreen with engraved framing, a gunsight glass and a canopy which has the frame raised above the clear glass section. This will need to be filed down a bit. The canopy may be fitted open or closed. The glass parts are thin and clear with little distortion.

Turning to the nose gear, which consists of nine detailed parts, we find it is assembled by trapping the nose wheel between two strut halves and then adding the other parts to this assembly. The landing lights are molded in light gray plastic instead of clear. The wings are molded and assembled in previous Mirage fashion. Two upper halves and a single, almost full span lower piece. The wings have both raised and engraved detail, however the engraved detail is just a little too deep. (Was Matchbox there twisting their arm?) The main wheel wells are well detailed with raised lines for the hydraulic lines and fittings. Each main gear consists of seven well detailed parts including wheels and doors. The wheels are molded in two halves. One drawback, the detail on the inside of the gear doors is so deeply engraved, the thin plastic on the outside of the doors is subject to dimpling. The elevator actuator housings are represented by four separate pieces to be glued on. There are five small scoops molded to the bottom wing piece and four small separate scoops to glue to the top and bottom of the fuselage.

Goodies to hang under the wings consist of two supersonic drop tanks molded in upper and lower halves with the racks integral with the upper halves. These pieces were warped in my kit, but once removed from the tree and glued together, no problems.

The only external armament included in this kit is a Matra 530 missile in four parts plus a separate rack to install it under the fuselage centerline. No Sidewinders or Magic missiles; a pity.

Feverishly tearing the shrink-wrap from the 5BA kit we find 6 trees of parts, one clear. I didn't know the 5BA was a night fighter, but this bird is molded in 77 parts of almost midnight black plastic! Except for the underwing tank parts, weapon load and nose section, the rest of the kit is a perfect fit and match for the IIIE kit. You can switch parts back and forth to your heart's content with no conversion necessary. Except for the following, all previous comments about the IIIE kit will repeat for the 5BA kit.

The runway barrier hook is missing for this Belgian version. The underwing thingsies consist of two long range drop tanks in six (warped) pieces with integral racks. The weapon load is two bombs assembled from eight pieces with separate centerline rack. As it should be, the 5BA nose section is slightly longer than the IIIE, but again the pitot boom is slightly oversize.

The two kits check out, scalewise, 4.25mm too great in wingspan. The IIIE is 5.93mm and the 5BA 7.25mm too long. Hardly noticeable after the kits are built. Both kits do, however require some filler in the seams.

Of the decals, the sheet for the 5BA is the better. The markings were all in register. There are Belgian national markings, instrument panel decals, and various stenciling. The IIIE sheet was badly out of register and the red incompletely printed. Swiss, Australian and Spanish markings are included. There are lots of possibilities in mixing the decals from both kits together, but unfortunately the carrier films are thick and very matte.

Okay, in the final analysis, what have you bought for yourself for a few coppers less than a picture of Alexander Hamilton? (each) Much better than the older Fujimi kits of the IIIC and IIIR, but not up to the standard of the Heller III C/B. If ESCI ever get their warpage problems, decals, more molded detail and square away their reference material, they'll be up there with the best of them. But if you are a "Mirage Maniac" like